Reference Services Division Presents

Using Digital Magazines & Journals

via the **MasterFILE Complete** Database

SANTA MONICA PUBLIC
LIBRARY

City of
Santa Monica®

What is a database?

- There are many fancy, overly technical definitions of what a database is, but really, a database is a searchable repository of information. It can be large or small.

Examples of databases:

- The Santa Monica Public Library catalog
- Microsoft Access
- Search engines like Google (a huge database!)

What is MasterFILE Complete?

It's the library's most comprehensive periodicals database, containing:

- full text of more than 2,000 publications (magazines and scholarly journals) covering almost every subject area
- full text from hundreds of reference books
- thousands of primary source documents
- an image collection of hundreds of thousands of photos, maps and flags

MasterFILE Complete is one of several databases from the company EBSCO. It calls its search interface "EBSCO Host."

How Do I Access MasterFILE Complete?

There are three ways to access the database:

1. *From the Library's web site:*
- Under the Quicklinks menu at the bottom right of the Library homepage, click "Databases" (the third link from the top of the list)
- On the next page, click the MasterFILE Complete link (it's at the top of the list)
- If you're at the Library, you'll go right into the database. If you're elsewhere, you'll need to log in with your Library card number. You can access the database this way 24 hours a day.

Note: If you access MasterFILE Complete from a mobile device, you'll be automatically redirected to the database's mobile site, which is quite user-friendly.

2. *From the Library's catalog computers and the non-Internet workstations near the Reference Desk:*

The homepage on these computers' browsers is the Library's list of databases. Click "MasterFILE Complete" at the top of the list to enter the database.

3. *Through the Library catalog.*

If you do a library catalog search for a periodical, and it exists in the MasterFILE Complete database, it will look like this:


To access the periodical, click the "Full text available …" link.

I'm in … what do I do now?

There are two main ways to use MasterFILE Complete. The first is by browsing the **Publications** area. This is helpful if you are trying to find a particular magazine, journal, or primary source (or an article within one).

To get to the Publications area:

> After you log in, click the Publications link at the top of the screen (next to New Search.)
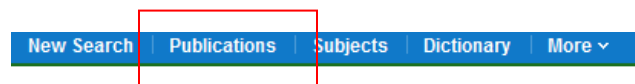
To Find a Publication:

Let's say you want to know if the database has *Consumer Reports.* The best way to find out is to browse the Publications area for it. Enter "Consumer Reports" and click Browse.
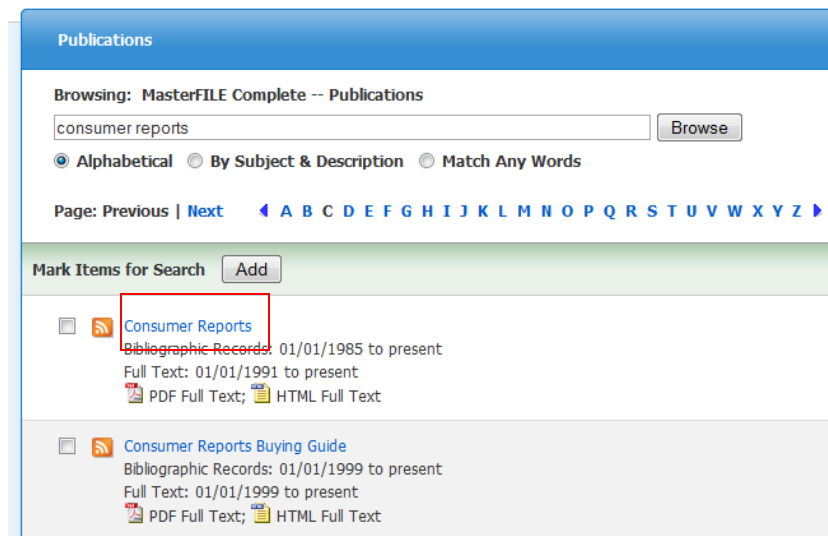
Click the title "Consumer Reports" from the list of results. You'll be taken to a screen where all the issues are shown at right.

- Click a year to show each issue the database has from that year.
- Click an issue to see all off its articles.

Searching Within a Publication:
You can also search a publication to find an article within it. Below is an example for *Consumer Reports*. Within the screen showing *Consumer Reports* publication years and issues, click "Search within this Publication" (highlighted in the screenshot below).
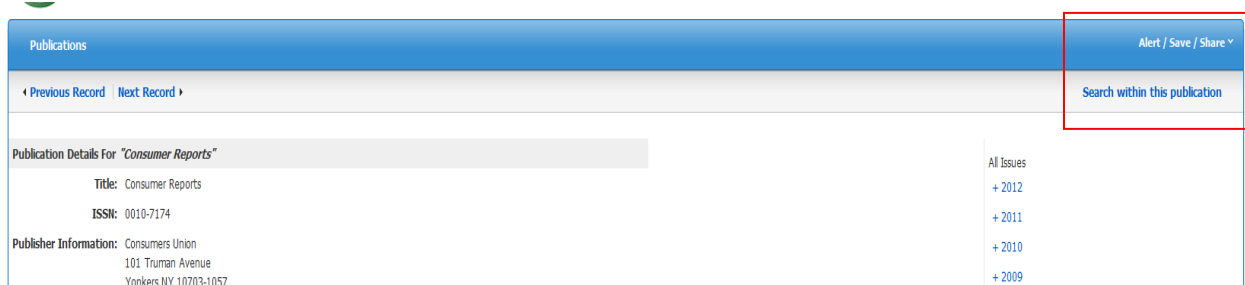
1. You'll be taken to a page with an EBSCO Host search box. Notice that the search box has been prepopulated with "JN Consumer Reports." (JN stands for "journal name."). Click the Advanced Search link under the search box.

2. In the Advanced Search window, you'll see the journal name ("JN") has again been prepopulated for you as *Consumer Reports.* Enter your search terms and choose your options under "Search Options," then click Search.

Speaking of searching …

The second main way to use MasterFILE Complete is to search across all publications, rather than for or within a particular publication. You can do either Basic Search or Advanced Search (the third option, Visual Search, is not currently enabled).

To perform a Basic Search (less precise results):
1. Click New Search at the top left of the screen to get to the search box.
2. You'll notice "Basic Search" is the default search method.
3. Enter a term (for example, global warming) in the search box and click Search.

To perform an Advanced Search (more precise results):
1. Click New Search at the top left of the screen to get to the search box.
2. Type a term like global warming into the search box, then click the Advanced Search link.
3. This prepopulates your search term in the Advanced Search window, as seen below. Also, notice that "Full Text" is also automatically selected as a search criterion. Click Search.

If you get too many results, or they are not targeted enough, try using the "Refine Your Results" area on the left-hand side of the screen. You can narrow the publication date range, choose to see only results from a certain type of publication – such as primary sources or reference books – or narrow the results by subject.

To save, email, or print articles:

1. From the search results, click the title of the article you want.
2. Once you are looking at the article, you'll see options to save, email or print the article.

If you choose email, change the "from" email from ephost@epnet.com to your own so that you later remember where it's from (and also keep it safe from spam filters). Give the email a subject that you will recognize.

Using the Folder to Collect Articles:

Say you do a search and there are a few articles you want, but you're scared if you don't stop and print them, you won't be able to find them later. You don't have to worry if you add them to the Folder.

To add articles to the Folder:

1. From any list of search results, click the "Add to Folder" link under the article(s) you want. After you do, those links will change to "Remove from Folder." That's how you'll know you successfully added them to the Folder.

2. The folder icon at the top of the screen, which looked like an empty file folder before, now has a little document sticking out of it, indicating it has contents:
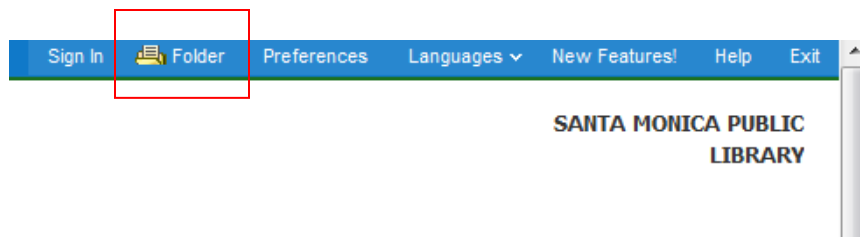
3. Click the Folder icon to see your articles, along with options to print, email, or save them.

Note: The articles will only stay in the folder until you exit the database. However, you have the option to create your own free EBSCO Host account, independent of your Library card account, so that you can store articles in the folder between sessions.

And just for fun … the Image Collection!

To search MasterFILE Complete's Image Collection:

1. At the top of the screen, mouse over the "More," link, and click Images from the drop-down menu.
2. Enter a search term in the box, and limit it by the choices under the green "Search Options" box.

3. You'll get a list of articles with thumbnail images. Click a thumbnail to see the larger image. Images can be printed, saved, or emailed.

This has been an overview of MasterFILE Complete's basic functions. There's so much more this database can do. Play around and have fun with it! If you need help, see a Reference Librarian, or check out the Help link at the top of any screen in the database. MasterFILE Complete's Help has nice overviews of the basic and advanced search, in-depth searching tips, and advice for getting better search results. There are some great quick video tutorials as well.