

Quick Reading: Searching in the PDF on multiple targets at once

A need: In most PDF readers, we can search (usually Ctrl + F shortcut) for a target string, e.g. if we are interested in whether a paper is using or referencing the work of Émile Durkheim, we can easily search for the term "Durkheim". But what if we have **a set** of religious studies classics we are interested in, e.g. we want to trace Durkheim, Sigmund Freud, William James and Clifford Geertz?

Can we search for them at once? Yes!

Solution: A PDF reader with *multi-search* or with *regular expression* support.

In the following text, you find a guide for two programs

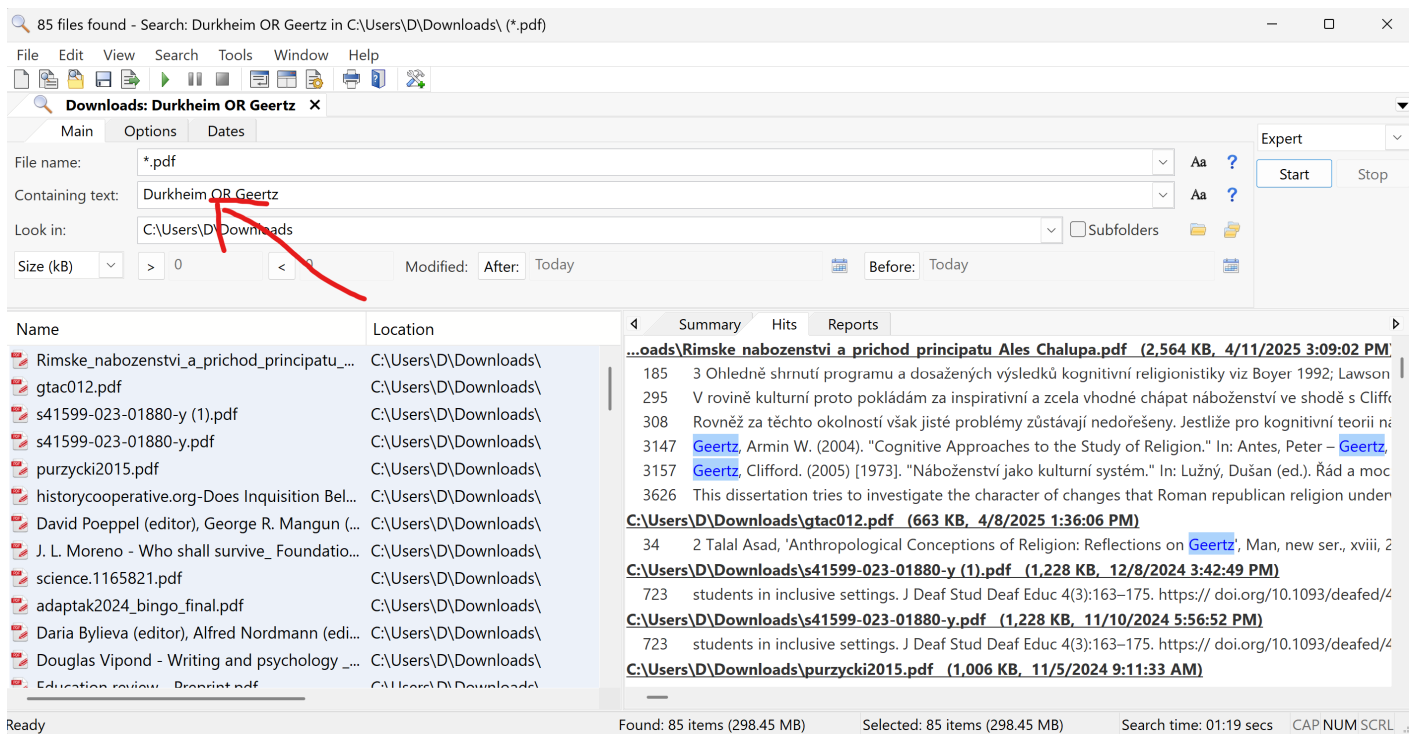
1. **FileLocator Lite** (more "searcher", can do over multiple directory-defined files)
2. **PDF-XChange Editor** (more comfortable PDF view with advanced search capabilities)

Multi-search PDF Reader: FileLocator Lite

Download link: <https://www.mythicsoft.com/filelocatorpro/download/>

This is more searcher than reader. It allows to search on multiple files defined by filename and directory.

- 1) Put your pdf files in one directory, e.g. C:\MyPDFS
- 3) Define the path to the directory in the Look in field
- 2) to File name field put a mask for all pdf file, e.g. "*.pdf" (if you are unfamiliar wildcards in filenames, look in <https://www.howtogeek.com/411002/how-to-use-wildcards-when-searching-in-windows-10-file-explorer/>)
- 4) Put a search query to the Containing text, separate word by OR if you want any logic



Multi-search PDF Reader: *PDF-XChange Editor*

Download link: <https://www.pdf-xchange.com/product/pdf-xchange-editor>

PDF-XChange Editor is comfortable PDF reader.

The full version of the program needs a license (useful if you want to edit your PDFs a lot), but the free version of the program is still a very powerful PDF reader!

How to search for multiple strings at once

- 1) Open PDF in the PDF-XChange Editor
- 2) Press Ctrl+Shift+F to open Advanced search
- 3) Look for fields under "Find text with"

The screenshot shows the Adobe Acrobat Reader interface with a document titled "Rimske_nabozenstvi_a_prichod_prin...". The document content is a table of contents with sections in Czech. A search panel is open on the right, titled "Search". The "WHAT would you like to search?" section has "Advanced Criteria" selected. Under "Find text with:", the "any of these words" option is highlighted with a red arrow. The "WHERE would you like to search?" section is set to "In the Active Document". The search results area at the bottom shows "Found: 0 documents, 0 entries" and "State: idle".

Obsah	s. III
Poděkování	s. v
Úvod	s. vi
I. Co je to náboženství?	s. 1
II. Co je to římské náboženství?	s. 10
II. 1. Římské náboženství: hlavní charakteristika a odlišnosti	s. 13
II. 2. Náboženství <i>polis</i>	s. 19
II. 3. Britská škola dějin římského náboženství	s. 20
II. 4. Alternativy a modifikace	s. 23
III. Strukturální popis římského náboženství	s. 28
IV. Náboženská změna v římském náboženství: období vzniku principátu	s. 36
IV.1. Změna v římském náboženství podle Whitehouseovy teorie dvou protikladných způsobů náboženskosti	s. 43
IV.1.1. Období pozdní republiky a raného principátu: doktrinalizační trend?	s. 53
IV. 1. 2. Reakce: prvky „obrazivé“ religiozity	s. 54
IV. 1. 3. Římské náboženství v období raného principátu ve světle Whitehouseovy teorie dvou protikladných způsobů náboženskosti: závěr	s. 56
IV.2. Tichá modlitba: kognitivní aspekt možné náboženské změny	s. 58
V. Prodigia a <i>omina imperii</i>	s. 67
VI. Hledání hranic: <i>superstitio</i> , magie a soukromá divinace	s. 77
VI. 1. Magie a <i>superstitio</i>	s. 79

4) For our example we will use the middle field "any of these words", which uses "OR" logic.

The search will return us any individual hits for any word from our list.

5) Click "Search"

The screenshot shows a PDF viewer interface with a search panel on the right. The search criteria are set to 'Advanced Criteria' with the text 'all of these words' and the words 'Durkheim, Freud, Geertz'. The search results show 1 document with 8 entries. The first entry is on page 9, and the second is on page 17.

Search Criteria:

- WHAT would you like to search? Enter word or phrase...
- Advanced Criteria
- Custom
- Find text with: all of these words
- Durkheim, Freud, Geertz
- none of these words

Search Results:

- WHERE would you like to search? In the Active Document ("Rimske_nabozenstvi_a_...")
- Search... Options...
- Found: 1 documents, 8 entries
- State: completed, 00:00
- Rimske_nabozenstvi_a_... Entries: 8
- 0. Úvod.doc, Page 9
- A. Geertz 2004; Sørensen 2005. 4 Dobře známá skutečnost, že v
- Page 17
- Cliffordem Geertzem (2005: 126) jako: „(1) systém symbolů, které (2) v
- Page 18

6) Look in the bottom right result field.

Note: You can search over multiple open files.

Search with regular expressions: complex solution over any/all files ?

Regular expressions are powerful concepts for computer science.

For an introduction, see for example <https://programminghistorian.org/en/lessons/understanding-regular-expressions>

A program: dnGREG

Download link: <https://dngrep.github.io/>

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