

Search

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This page provides suggestions for making sure that your OpenSearch feeds work properly and can be discovered by search clients.

## Use the proper namespace

Get your XML namespaces right. Invalid namespaces will make it impossible for search clients to parse your OpenSearch content.

The [correct namespace](#) for OpenSearch 1.1 is:

```
http://a9.com/-/spec/opensearch/1.1/
```

## Use autodiscovery links

This can't be said enough. To help your OpenSearch feeds get found, use an "autodiscovery" link; it is a simple <link> element that points to a related [OpenSearch Description document](#).

Include these autodiscovery in your HTML web pages, in your OpenSearch Response feed, and in any other RSS or Atom feed, who's content is searchable via your OpenSearch.

Read all about [OpenSearch autodiscovery in the OpenSearch 1.1 specification](#).

## Adding your search to browsers (javascript)

Aside from using autodiscovery links, both **IE7** and **Firefox 2** can be pointed to your [OpenSearch Description document](#) using a javascript call:

```
window.external.AddSearchProvider("http://mysite.org/odd.xml");
```

## Write informative OpenSearch description documents

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Don't mention "OpenSearch" in the ShortName, LongName, Description, or Tags elements (unless your search engine is *about* OpenSearch). Here is a bad description: "This searches for books by author via OpenSearch." Use "Book search by author." instead. In general, you should avoid using the word "search" except in the Description element.
- The Tags element contains a list of keywords that describe the search engine. Tags such as "the" and "and" are not needed. Remember, this is not a human-readable sentence; it is meant to be tokenized and parsed by a machine. Also, tags are space-separated, so make sure you don't separate them with commas or anything else.

- You can specify more than one Image element. You should probably include at least two: one 64 by 64 pixel image, and one 16 by 16 pixel image, so that search clients can display a small icon for your search engine and a larger one for a detailed information page. Please [refer to the specification](#) for more details on the Image element.
- Put a valid email address in the Contact element, so that you can be notified if your OpenSearch feed is broken.
- You can specify multiple Url elements, and you should do so if your search engine can return search results in HTML, RSS, Atom, or any other format. Include them all to give search clients maximum flexibility.
- Specify at least one [Query element](#) containing an "example" search. This example search should always return at least one search result. Search clients will use this example search to validate your OpenSearch feed.
- If your search engine supports multiple languages, declare them with the [Language element](#)! Or as an alternative, create a separate OpenSearch description document for each language your search engine supports, with the Description and other text in the appropriate language. If you do create multiple OpenSearch description documents, be sure to refer to all of them with [autodiscovery links](#), making use of the hreflang attribute as appropriate.

## Check for common errors in the search results

- Try a search that doesn't have a match. Make sure you get a legitimate OpenSearch response indicating the lack of matches. Don't generate a 404 or 500 error. See [The Developer how to guide](#) for more information.
- Try a search with many results to make sure that paging works. Try requesting the second page of results, and see that you do indeed get the second page of results. What happens if you request a page beyond the last result?
- If you also have a web based search, compare the results of the web search to the OpenSearch search. Do you get the same first result in both cases? Assuming that the page size is the same, do you get the same first result on the second page?