**Question 1:** *Hello,*

*I'm new to search engines, and there are a lot of concepts I'm not educated on. To make my onboarding smoother, it'd help if you could provide me with some definitions of the following concepts:*

- *Records*
- *Indexing*

*I'm also struggling with understanding what types of metrics would be useful to include in the "Custom Ranking."*

*Cheers, George*

Hi George, thanks so much for your question. Happy to help you

First of all let's talk about *Search* basic concepts

**Records:** Anything that is relevant for your business can be translated into a record. Since its relevant for your business it can potentially be searched and presented in a relevant way. If you think about McDonalds business, records for them can be:

- All the different types of burgers
- Fries
- Sauces
- Drinks
- Desserts
- Happy Meals
- Store locations
- Employees
- Promotions
- Etc

All those items are probably relevant to McDonalds and they want to allow their customers to search through them. Take a look at our official [documentation](#) around what records are for us.

**Indexing:** Before sending anything to Algolia, you need to think about where your data lives and what information you want to make searchable. For a retail outlet, it's products. For a music store, it's records and artists. For a real estate company, it's houses and locations.

The next question is what information you need to build a search experience. You don't need everything from your data source, just what's necessary to create a search experience. In the music store example artist and records are for sure key search terms but number of songs per record might not be (or maybe it is). Take a look at our documentation [here](#)

Now, let's talk about **Custom Ranking.** Finding matching records using typos, geolocation, filters, and so on, is only part of what makes a compelling search experience. Algolia's default ranking formula works well to handle this kind of record-matching relevance. Here are some examples that add popularity to the ranking formula. When you type "spielberg films", the custom ranking puts Spielberg's most popular films at the top of the results. For a retail store, if you type "t-shirt", then the most popular t-shirts appear at the

top. For a blog website, if you type in "positive thinking", the most popular articles on that subject appear at the top.

Typical custom ranking attributes include number of sales, views, likes, ratings, release date, etc. Any boolean or numeric attribute works with custom ranking. More info [here](#)

Records, Indexes and Custom Ranking work together in order to present the most relevant search results to your customers.

Can you think of any relevant "records" for your business? What could be *searchable* attributes in those records and what custom ranking attributes will apply to them? Happy to help you with the discovery around your business use case

Cheers!

**Question 2:** Hello,

Sorry to give you the kind of feedback that I know you do not want to hear, but I really hate the new dashboard design. Clearing and deleting indexes are now several clicks away. I am needing to use these features while iterating, so this is inconvenient.

Regards, Matt

Hi Matt

First of all thanks for the feedback. Any feedback is appreciated since it helps us develop solutions based on our customers requirements and needs. All our changes usually come with a UX analysis behind in order to determine usability for our customers.

Just to understand, how were you triggering these actions before (clearing and deleting)?

Have in mind that you can also perform the same actions via our API or even using any of our SDK if that applies for your use case

[Clear Index](#)

[Delete Index](#)

Lastly, there is a way for you to provide direct feedback to our team. You will find it in the bottom left corner of your Algolia Dashboard
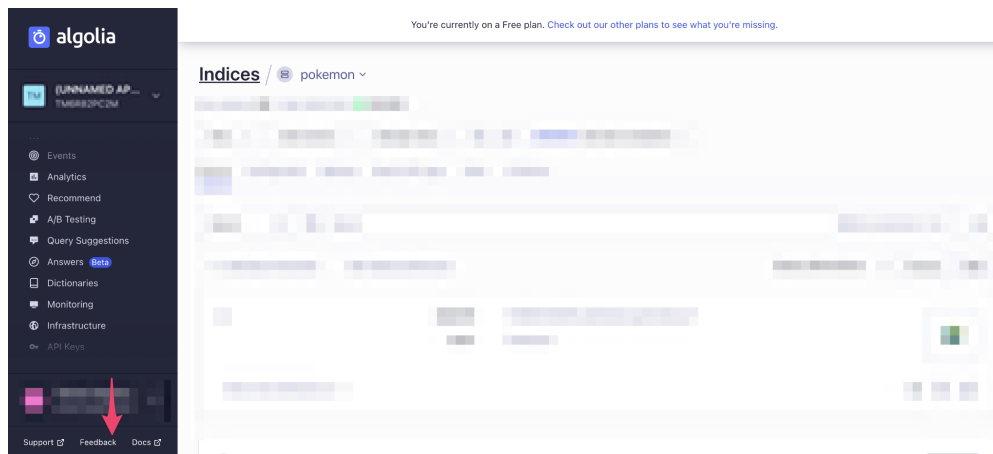


Looking forward to hear from your feedback

Cheers!

**Question 3: Hi,**

**I'm looking to integrate Algolia in my website. Will this be a lot of development work for me? What's the high level process look like?**

**Regards, Leo**

Hi Leo, very excited that you are considering Algolia for your search needs.

Answering your question, it's very easy. First step will be to load your searchable data into Algolia. In order to do that you have a few options (Management Dashboard, API, SDK) documentation around that here. After the data is there (have in mind that you most probably need to keep that data updated) you will need to define indices and basic relevance (sorting, searchable attributes, custom ranking etc) more info here and finally you can just use any of the supported mechanisms to expose search capabilities in your digital property.

First 2 steps are around loading your data and deciding how customers should be able to find/search that info. Final step is to decide how you are going to allow your customers to search.

You can use our InstantSearch Widgets and all the customization capabilities they offer; or you can just integrate search in your existing UI with any of our SDKs (you can even call our API's directly if you want and skip all the SDK), We offer SDKs for a range of frameworks and tech stacks front and backend (ruby, php, node, react, vue, swift, etc)

Can you share what is your tech stack and I can proceed to guide you to the best point in your documentation to start? There are heaps of code samples and demo projects you can use to get an idea of how easy it is to integrate with Algolia

Let me know if you have any questions

Cheers!