
Logout from the Aleph WWW OPAC

- **Article Type:** General
 - **Product:** Aleph
 - **Product Version:** 20
-

Description:

What happens on logout from Aleph OPAC?

Resolution:

There are two ways to log out from the Aleph WWW OPAC:

- * Manual logout: The patron clicks the "End session" link.
- * Automatic logout: After a pre-defined period of inactivity the session is automatically ended.

If your library offers public OPAC terminals, it is advisable to set an automatic logout, since many patrons forget to close their session. By defining an automatic logout you can minimise the danger of other patrons accessing the personal details of the patron who previously used the same terminal.

The automatic logout is defined in the file `www_f_[lng]/meta-tags`. Search for the line:

```
<META HTTP-EQUIV="REFRESH" CONTENT="1200; URL=&server_f?func=logout">
```

The value "1200" means that 1200 seconds (= 20 minutes) after loading a page the automatic logout will take place unless another page was accessed in the meantime. Most institutions will reduce this value. But note that the time measured here is the time that a patron spends on one particular page of the WWW OPAC; it is not the time of inactivity in terms of not moving the mouse or hitting the keyboard. So you should not define a very low value because otherwise patrons will be logged out while looking at a page or filling a form.

The logout - manual as well as automatic logout - will by default lead back to the login page. However, it is possible to define any other page. This is done by editing the file `www_f_[lng]/logout-1`. Search the line:

```
window.location = "&server_f_start";
```

Now we assume that you want to define find-c as the page that should be loaded after a logout. Change the above line to:

```
window.location = "&server_f_start?func=find-c-0";
```

The possibility to define a specific logout target is often used in institutions with several BIB libraries or logical bases where every base has an own OPAC design. In this case you maintain a set of files with the extension "-xyz01", for example `logout-1-xyz01` and `login-xyz01`. In order to load the file `login-xyz01` after logging out from a session in the `xyz01` base, you should change the line in `logout-1-xyz01` to:

```
window.location = "&server_f_start?func=find-c-0&local-base=xyz01";
```

NOTE FOR PDS USERS: If you handle logins and logouts via PDS, you need to change the file `pds-logout` instead of

logout-1!

A factor which is often causing confusion is that the term "session" is used for two different things:

1. The web session as described above is identified by the unique session ID in the URL. When the web session ends, the session ID is not displayed anymore in the URL. It is not possible anymore to access the search history, the lists of loans and cash transactions, the e-shelf etc.

2. The patron session is the period of time where a patron is logged in with a user name and password. This does not change the session ID. If a patron starts searching the OPAC and logs in later, he will remain in the same web session so that he is able to access the list of searches that he performed before the login action. Logout from the patron session is defined in the file `$aleph_proc/www_server`, parameter `www_a_session_time_out`. If this parameter is lower than the value defined in the meta-tags file it might happen that the patron is logged out from the patron session but remains in the web session, i.e. he is not able to access his cash and address details anymore but he can still access his previous searches.

NOTE: If you want to change the parameter `www_a_session_time_out`, you may copy it to the file `www_server.conf` and change it there. The value in `www_server.conf` takes precedence over the value in `www_server`.

(Note: This KB item was originally released as "Tips & Advice" letter no. 49 by the European Support Team.)

Additional Information

OPAC, logout, session, timeout, meta-tags

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