Getting Started with Journal Alert Services

Journal Alert Services are feeds provided by publishers to push new content in their scholarly journals out to researchers. Most large publishers provide an email alert service and many are integrating RSS feeds into their websites as well. All require registration.

Table of Content Alert Services
Most scholarly journals publish a feed that contains the Table of Contents (TOC) for the most recent issue of the journal. TOC alerts update the feed each time a new issue of a journal is published. TOC alerts provide a convenient way to stay informed about current developments in an academic field. Some publishers also provide a preview or early view option, which distributes the TOC or in some cases complete content prior to the release of the print edition.

Topic or Keyword Search Alert Services
These services allow you to define and run a search in the publisher’s database on a regular basis, sending you search results whenever there are new articles published that match those search terms.

NOTE: Alert Services on publisher websites are searching only content by that publisher. We recommend using alert services to supplement more comprehensive searching in multiple subject databases.

A few examples of alert services on publisher websites (by no means comprehensive).
- Science Direct (Elsevier) has My Alerts service for topic searches or journal/issue alerts
- Cambridge Journals (Cambridge U Press) has Content Alerts and Saved Searches
- Sage Journals has My Tools for Email alerts and saved searches
- Wiley Online (Wiley-Blackwell) has My Profile for content alerts as well as citation tracking (sends an alert when a selected article is cited)
- Springer provides My Springer alert services
- ProjectMuse Tools includes Journal Alerts
- JSTOR has the MyJSTOR service which provides email alerts for saved searches, tracked journals and tracked citations
- American Chemical Society publications has E-alerts, including daily alerts for pre-publication releases

In addition to alert services provided by individual publishers, there are also free, multi-publisher TOC services. One recommended site with almost 20,000 scholarly journals across multiple disciplines is Journal TOCs. www.journaltocs.hw.ac.uk/

If you have questions about setting up alert services in your subject area, please contact your liaison librarian or email us at: askalibrarian@elon.edu.