Locating a Substance

This is usually the easiest way to search for a substance if you know the registry number, common name, or trade name (e.g. aspirin). You can also search by chemical name, but complex chemical names can be difficult to search.

1. Click LOCATE. The Locate window should open.
2. Click SUBSTANCE IDENTIFIER. The Locate by Substance Identifier window should open.
3. Enter substance identifier/s
   - Use full names, not name fragments
     - ethane will not find chloroethane
     - ethan will have no hits (will not find ethane, ethanol, etc.)
   - Registry numbers can be with or without hyphens
4. Click OK. Search results should appear.
Exploring by Molecular Formula

1. EXPLORE → MOLECULAR FORMULA

2. Enter the molecular formula and click OK. Search results should appear. If you get an error message or no hits, check the tips below and try again.

GENERAL TIPS
• Formula order does not matter. SciFinder will place elements in Hill order if you use the BACK button.
• Case does not matter if the formula is unambiguous. To avoid problems, always capitalize the first letter of an element symbol. Also, do not capitalize the second letter of symbols.
• A space is needed between adjacent elements that could form a single element symbol (e.g., carbon and oxygen must have a space between them, CO, to avoid confusion with cobalt, Co). To avoid problems, you can always enter a space between elements.
• Separate parts of multicomponent substances with a period.
• For nonstoichiometric formulas, use dots between elements, but do not use ratios.

TIPS FOR INORGANIC SALTS
• Enter as parent acid.metal or metal.parent acid (e.g., H N O3.Na or Na.H N O3)
  • Exception: salts made only of monatomic ions can be entered normally (e.g., NaCl, CoCl2, K2S)
• Ratios do not have to be reduced. The following are all acceptable:
  H3P O4.3/2Ca 2/3H3P O4.Ca
  2H3P O4.3Ca
  2H3P O4.6Ca
• Use improper fractions instead of mixed fractions or decimal values (e.g., 3/2 instead of 1½ or 1.5)

Alternate search strategies:
• To eliminate isomers, go to EXPLORE → STRUCTURE and draw the structure.
• For nonstoichiometric formulas, try EXPLORE → RESEARCH TOPIC.