



LibraryThing Match User Guide

Quick summary

LibraryThing™ Match is a calibre plug-in for comparing your calibre e-book list with your LibraryThing™ library.

Full summary

[LibraryThing](#)™ (LT) is a social cataloging web application for storing and sharing book catalogs and various types of book metadata. It is used by authors, individuals, libraries, and publishers.

LibraryThing Match (LTMatch) is a calibre plug-in for comparing your calibre e-book list with your LT library. It can be used to track which e-books exist in both, and easily identify books missing from either.

Usage

LTMatch uses the currently displayed calibre e-book list to perform its matching. This list could be a virtual library or a saved search. LTMatch also uses the same sort order as the calibre list.

Usage of LTMatch is slightly different for first-time use and ongoing maintenance. The below are suggestions only.

First-time use

For first time use, the calibre list should be sorted by Author then Title, and LTMatch should be configured to return all LT books in the same order. This encourages calibre e-books and LT books to be in roughly the same location in their respective lists.

A typical first time use proceeds as follows:

Once the calibre list is set up in your preferred fashion, click the LTMatch icon in the toolbar (or use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Alt+L) to start LTMatch.

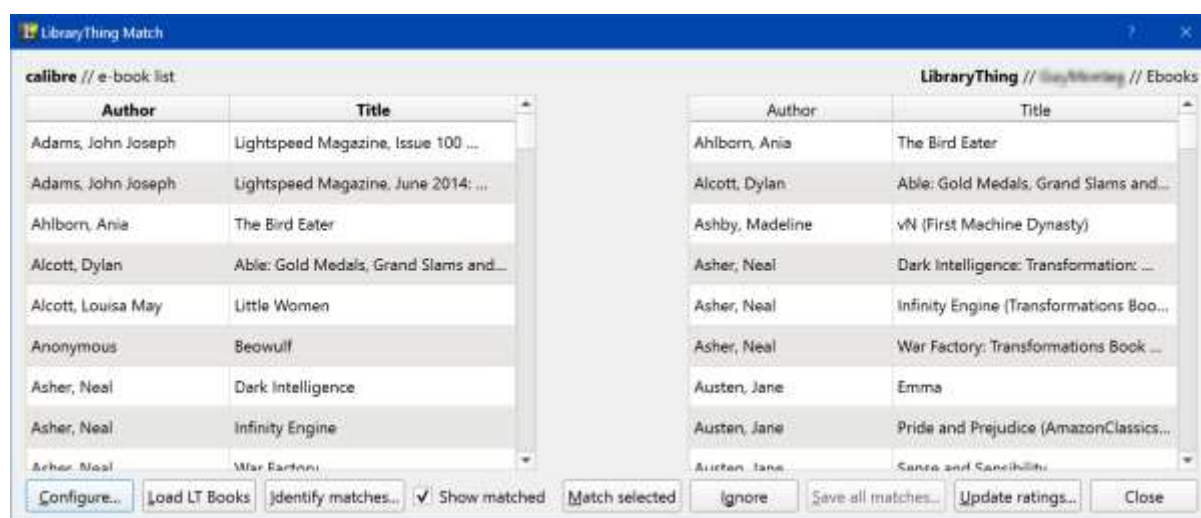
The screenshot shows the calibre application interface. At the top, there's a toolbar with 'Virtual library', 'Books to Match', and a search bar. Below is a table of books with columns: Author(s), Published, Title & Series, Date, Size (MB), Read status, and a dropdown menu. The table lists several books, including 'Lightspeed Magazine, Issue 100 (September ...)', 'The Bird Eater', 'Able: Gold Medals, Grand Slams', 'Little Women', and 'Beowulf'. A pop-up window titled 'LibraryThing Match' is overlaid on the right side of the table. It has a header 'calibre // e-book list' and two columns: 'Author' and 'Title'. It lists the same books as the main table, with the author names truncated.

	Author(s)	Published	Title & Series	Date	Size (MB)	Read status	D
1	John Joseph Adams & Se...	Aug 2018	Lightspeed Magazine, Issue 100 (September ...	27 Oct 2018	0.8	Completed	
2	John Joseph Adams	May 2014	Lightspeed Magazine, June 2014: ...				
3	Ania Ahlborn	Apr 2014	The Bird Eater				
4	Dylan Alcott	Dec 2018	Able: Gold Medals, Grand Slams				
5	Louisa May Alcott	May 2016	Little Women				
6	Anonymous	Dec 2019	Beowulf				
7	Neal Asher	Feb 2015	Dark Intelligence (Transformation 3)				
8	Neal Asher	Feb 2017	Infinity Engine (Transformation 3)				
9	Neal Asher	Mar 2016	Utopia (Transformation 3)				

calibre // e-book list	
Author	Title
Adams, John Joseph	Lightspeed Magazine, Issue 100 ...
Adams, John Joseph	Lightspeed Magazine, June 2014: ...
Ahlborn, Ania	The Bird Eater
Alcott, Dylan	Able: Gold Medals, Grand Slams and...
Alcott, Louisa May	Little Women

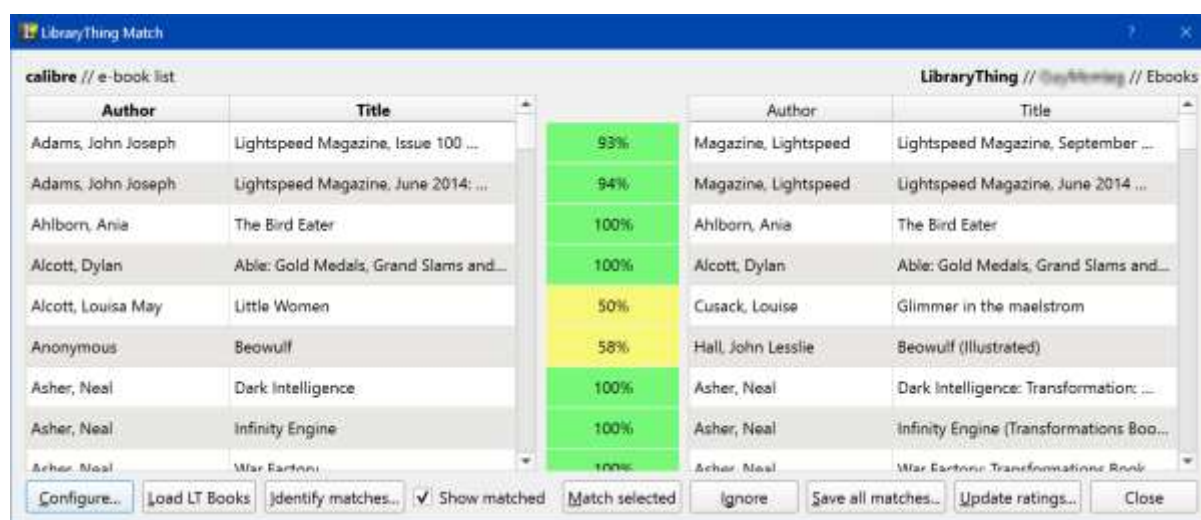
Update the LTMatch configuration if required. (See [Configuration](#) below.)

Click "Load LT Books" to load your LT books.



LTMatch will ensure the two lists always contain the same number of rows, so there may be blank rows on one side or the other.

Click "Identify matches..." to compare the two lists and identify possible matches between the two:



This uses a [fuzzy matching algorithm from seatgeek](#) to compare author + title on each side.

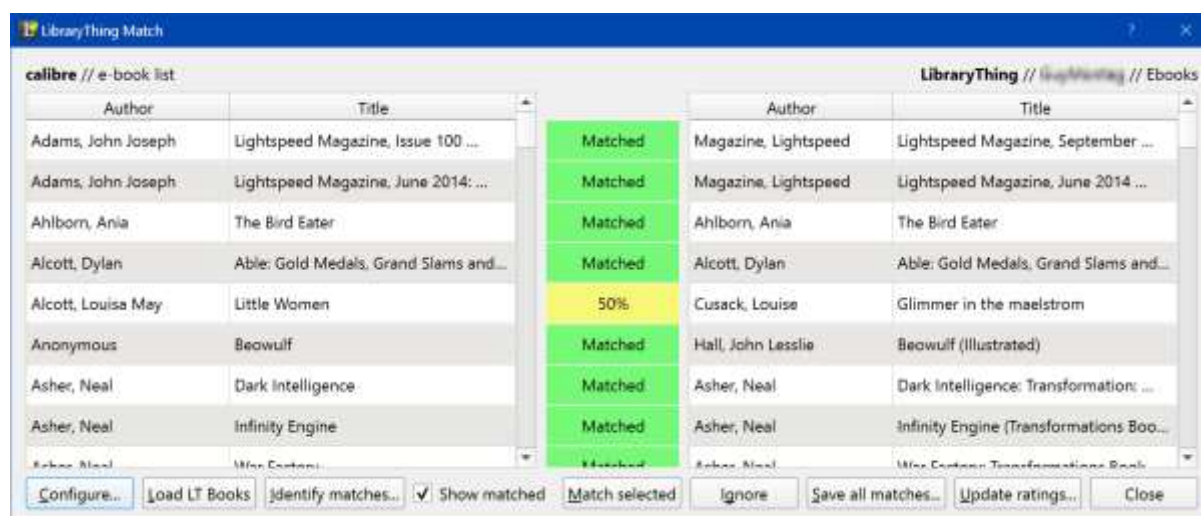
LTMatch is quite aggressive about re-sorting the LT list so that matched items are aligned. (Unmatched items are put in the first available row.) LTMatch doesn't re-sort the calibre list.

Green items have a match probability at or above your defined threshold (default 90%); yellow from 50% to the threshold, red from 10% to 50%, and blank have no match.

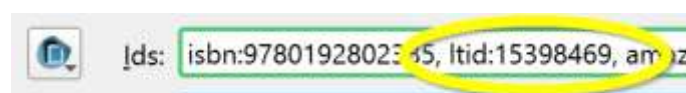
Once "auto-matching" is complete, review any close matches and manually match them using "Match selected". (For example, *Beowulf* in the above.)

You should also review any series matches, to ensure the series books are matched correctly. (See [Limitations](#) below.)

When you are satisfied with all the "green" matches, hit "Save all matches...", which will save the LT book id for high probability matches in the LibraryThing ID column:



If you have enabled "Use calibre identifier" it will **also copy** the LT book id into a ltid identifier:



If you have created the LT Rating column, you may now "Update ratings...", which saves the LT ratings in the relevant column:

Virtual library		Books to Match	Search (For advanced search click the gear icon to the left)			
	Author(s)	Published	Title & Series	LibraryThing ID	LT Rating	
1	John Joseph Adams & Se...	Aug 2018	Lightspeed Magazine, Issue 100 (September ...	181746931	★ ★ ★	
2	John Joseph Adams	May 2014	Lightspeed Magazine, June 2014: Women De...	114886792	★ ★ ★	
3	Ania Ahlborn	Apr 2014	The Bird Eater	110040557	★ ★ ★	
4	Dylan Alcott	Dec 2018	Able: Gold Medals, Grand Slams and Smashi...	179119603		
5	Louisa May Alcott	May 2016	Little Women			
6	Anonymous	Dec 2019	Beowulf	185439916		
7	Neal Asher	Feb 2015	Dark Intelligence (Transformation 1)	140567470	★ ★ ★ ★	
8	Neal Asher	Feb 2017	Infinity Engine (Transformation 3)	189229815		
9	Neal Asher	Mar 2016	Dark Intelligence (Transformation 2)	180330300		

Ongoing maintenance

For ongoing maintenance, you might sort your calibre and LT lists by entry date reversed, and return only a subset of books, e.g. the most recently added 20.

You may also be using tags to manage new books in LT, and searching by tags is fast and efficient in LTMatch.

Once the two lists are set up as required, the process proceeds as above:

1. Load LT books
2. Identify matches

3. Manual matching
4. Save all matches
5. Update ratings

Configuration

Initial configuration consists of:

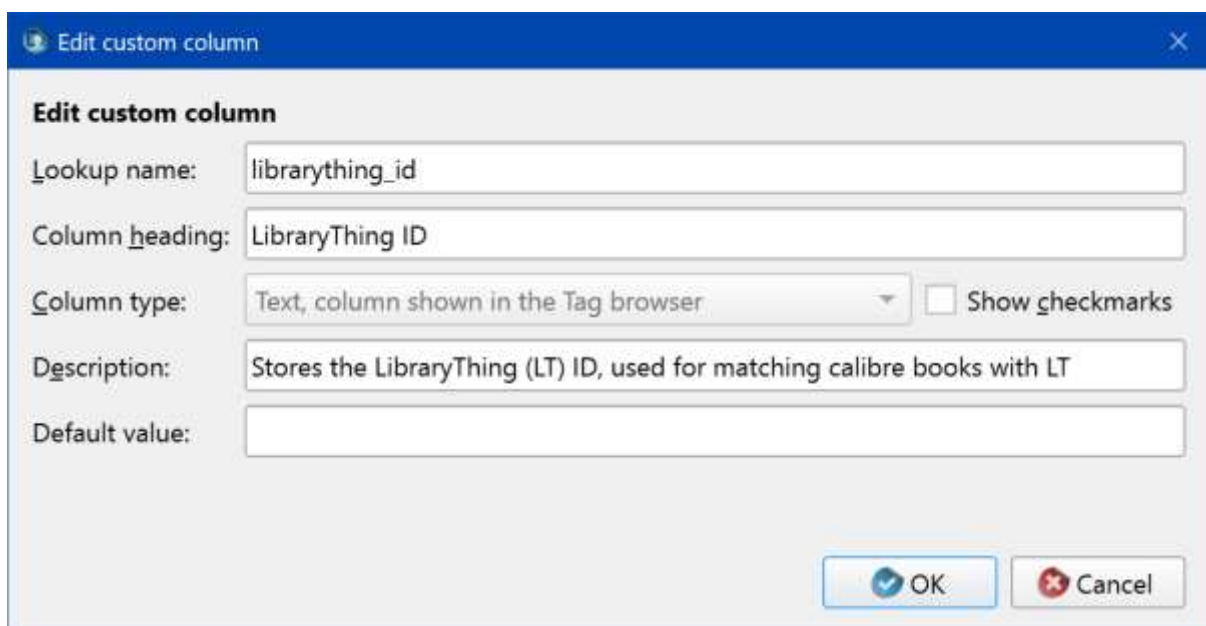
- Creating custom columns to hold LTMatch-related information
- Specifying LT-related connection details, such as user, collection, tags
- Ensuring custom columns in "Configure" match those created in the first step
- (Optional) Create a link directly to your book on librarything.com

Creating custom columns

When creating custom columns, it is suggested to use the default names, as this will provide the smoothest "first run" experience.

The "LibraryThing ID" column holds a LT book id for ongoing tracking of books that exist in both sources. This is the core functionality ("matching") of LTMatch, so its use is highly recommended.

The column should be created as shown below, with attention to the "Column type".



Edit custom column

Lookup name: librarything_id

Column heading: LibraryThing ID

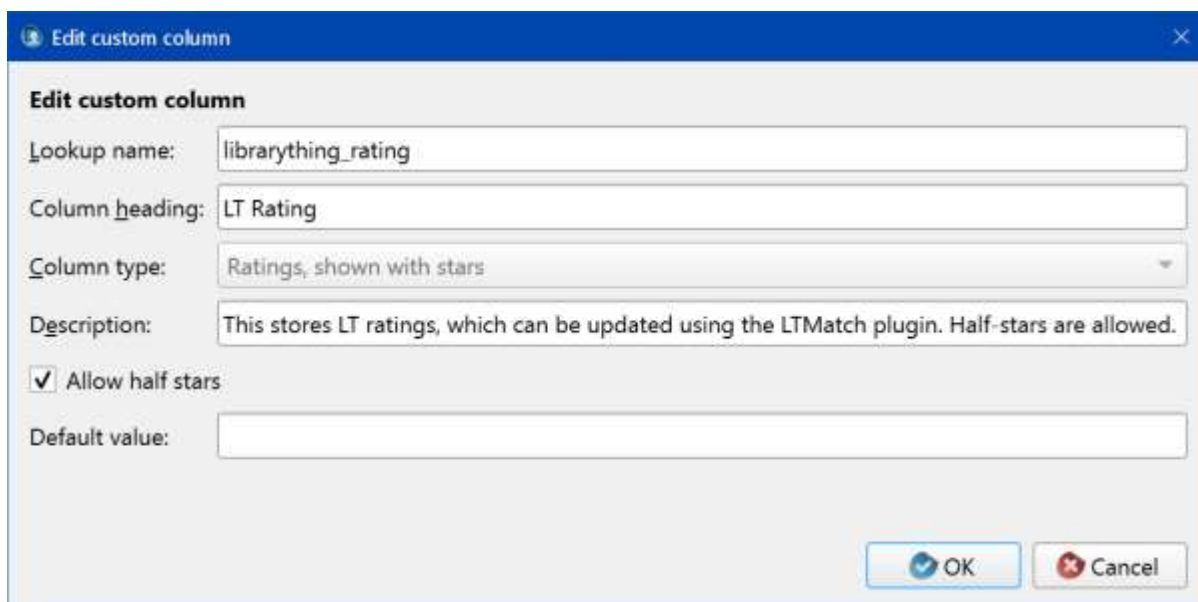
Column type: Text, column shown in the Tag browser ☐ Show checkmarks

Description: Stores the LibraryThing (LT) ID, used for matching calibre books with LT

Default value:

OK Cancel

The "LibraryThing Rating" column holds your LT ratings for matching books. As LT uses a half-star rating system, you should ensure the custom column is configured to do so as well. The use of the LT rating column is entirely optional.



The "Edit custom column" dialog box is shown. It has a title bar with a question mark icon and a close button. The main area is titled "Edit custom column". It contains the following fields and controls:

- Lookup name:** A text box containing "librarything_rating".
- Column heading:** A text box containing "LT Rating".
- Column type:** A dropdown menu showing "Ratings, shown with stars".
- Description:** A text box containing "This stores LT ratings, which can be updated using the LTMatch plugin. Half-stars are allowed."
- Allow half stars:** A checked checkbox.
- Default value:** An empty text box.
- Buttons:** "OK" and "Cancel" buttons at the bottom right.

LT Connection Details

LTMatch can be configured from "Customize plugin" in Preferences - Plugins, or from the "Configure..." button in the LTMatch main screen.



The "Customize LibraryThing Match" dialog box is shown. It has a title bar with a question mark icon and a close button. The main area is titled "LibraryThing connection". It contains the following fields and controls:

- LibraryThing user:** A text box containing "sample".
- LibraryThing key:** A text box containing "not required".
- LibraryThing collection:** A text box containing "All collections".
- LibraryThing taglist:** An empty text box.
- LT sort order:** A dropdown menu showing "Author then Title".
- Max results:** A text box containing "100".
- Buttons:** "Clear ignore list..." and "Test connection" buttons.
- LibraryThing ID column:** A text box containing "#librarything_id".
- LibraryThing rating column:** A text box containing "#librarything_rating".
- Probable match threshold:** A text box containing "90".
- Calibre Identifier:** A checked checkbox labeled "Use calibre identifier".
- Buttons:** "OK" and "Cancel" buttons at the bottom right.

The relevant fields and buttons are:

Field/Button	Purpose
LibraryThing user	Your LT username. Not case-sensitive.
LibraryThing key	Not required.
LibraryThing collection	<p>A LT collection with which to match, e.g. Your library or Ebooks. This field is case-sensitive and can contain spaces. Leave it blank or use All collections to return all books in your LT library.</p> <p>Note: If using a specific collection, the LT API does not support searching by Collection, so all books have to be returned then filtered by LTMatch. "Max results" should therefore be large enough to encompass your entire LT library. This is a less efficient method of searching LT.</p>
LibraryThing taglist	A comma-separated list of tags for which to search. This field is case-sensitive and can contain spaces, slashes, ampersands, etc. This is the most efficient method of searching LT, as searching is done on the LT server.
LT sort order	The sort order for books returned from LT. This should match your sort order in calibre as closely as possible.
Max results	<p>The number of books to return from LT, respecting the LT sort order set above. (Also known as a TOP N query.)</p> <p>This parameter might be used for ongoing maintenance of LTMatch, where only the most recently added 20 books are considered.</p> <p>(See note with respect to "Max results" above.)</p>
Clear ignore list...	<p>LTMatch can permanently ignore specific LT books. This might be useful if a small number of books are not able to be excluded using the filtering above.</p> <p>LTMatch stores this list in the LTMatch config file. This button will clear the list, restoring all the ignored books.</p>
Test connection	Not surprisingly, this tests the connection to LT using the parameters specified in the above fields.

Custom columns, etc.

The final four parameters should only need a quick review before you start LTMatching:

Field	Purpose
LibraryThing ID column	This should match the name of the "LibraryThing ID" custom column you specified earlier, with a # prepended.
LibraryThing rating column	This should match the name of the "LT Rating" custom column you specified earlier, with a # prepended.
Probable match threshold	This is a percentage value to be used when automatically saving high-probability matches identified by the "Identify matches..." function. Matches with a probability greater than or equal to this amount will be saved.
Use calibre identifier	<p>Select this check box to <u>copy</u> the LibraryThing ID to the calibre identifiers when saving matches. This will aid in downloading metadata from LT using the LibraryThing Metadata plugin*.</p> <p>The "LibraryThing ID" custom column remains the definitive indication of a match.</p> <p>* coming soon</p>

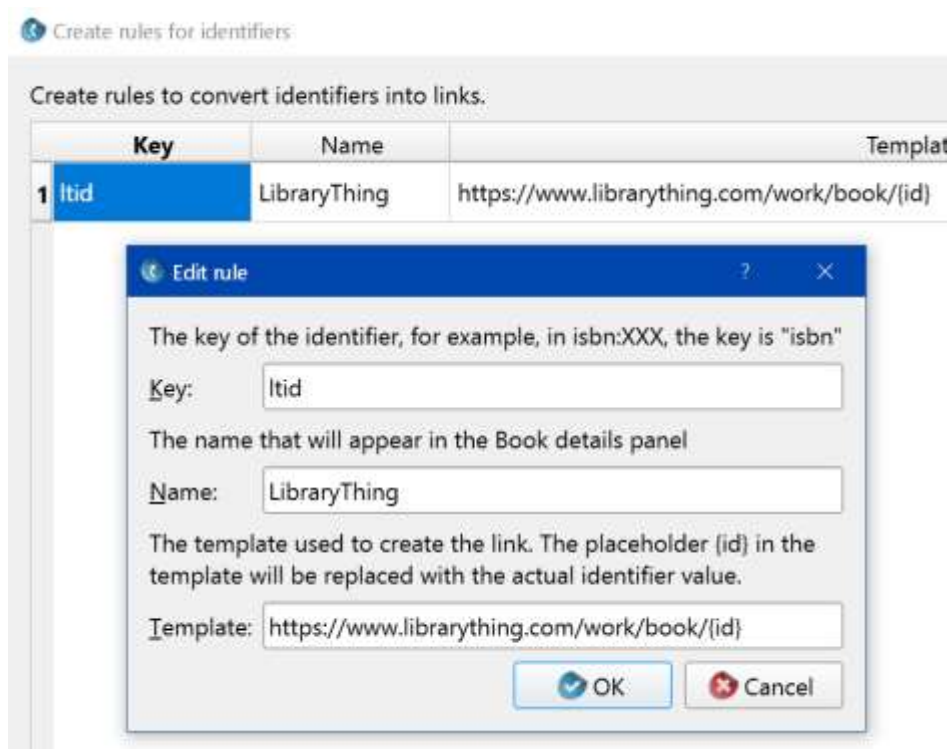
Creating a link to librarything.com

There are two ways to create links to LT.

1. Using "Rules to convert identifiers into links"

If you have enabled the "Use calibre identifier" option, your matched books will include an **ltid** identifier. You can add a rule for identifiers to create a link to your book on

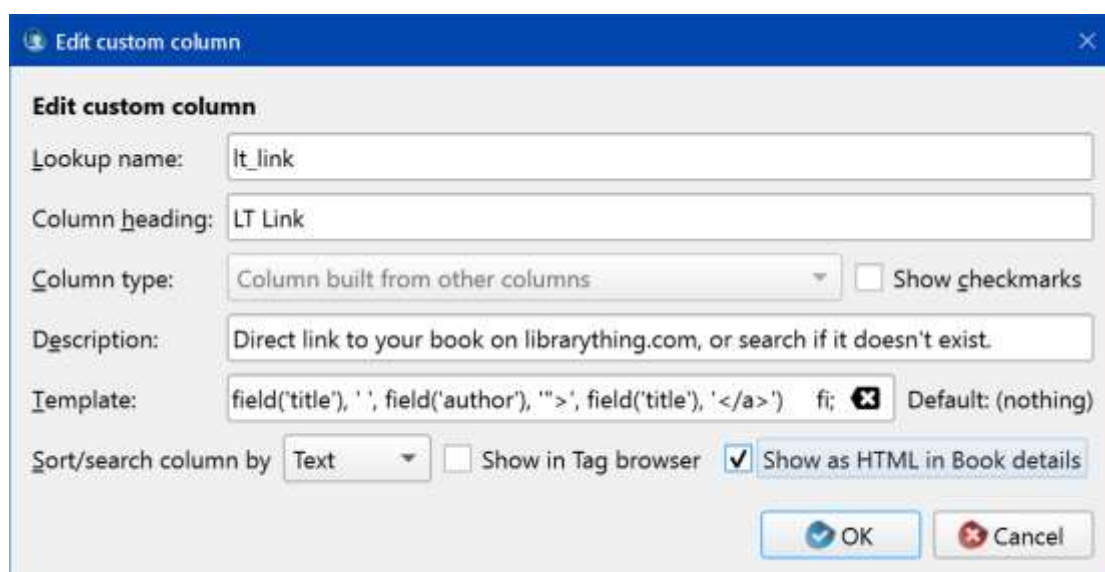
librarything.com. This is done in the preferences on the "Look & Feel" page and then the "Book details" tab. Press the "Create rules to convert..." button.



2. Using a Custom Column

You can create a custom column containing a link to librarything.com. Clicking the link will take you directly to your book on the LT website. Links are also available for books not in your LT catalog, in which case the link performs a "lazy search" using the book title and author.

Create a custom column using the following parameters:



The template text is:

```
{#librarything_id:'test($, strcat('<a href="https://www.librarything.com/work/book/', $ , '>', field('title'), '</a>'), strcat('<a href="https://www.librarything.com/title/', field('title'), ' ', field('author') , '>', field('title'), '</a>'))'}
```

Bulk Populating and Undoing calibre identifiers

If you have already performed matching without using a calibre identifier, it is a simple matter to copy the contents of the **#librarything_id** column into the **ltid** identifier.

Bulk Populating calibre identifier

You may want to backup your calibre library before performing the below steps.

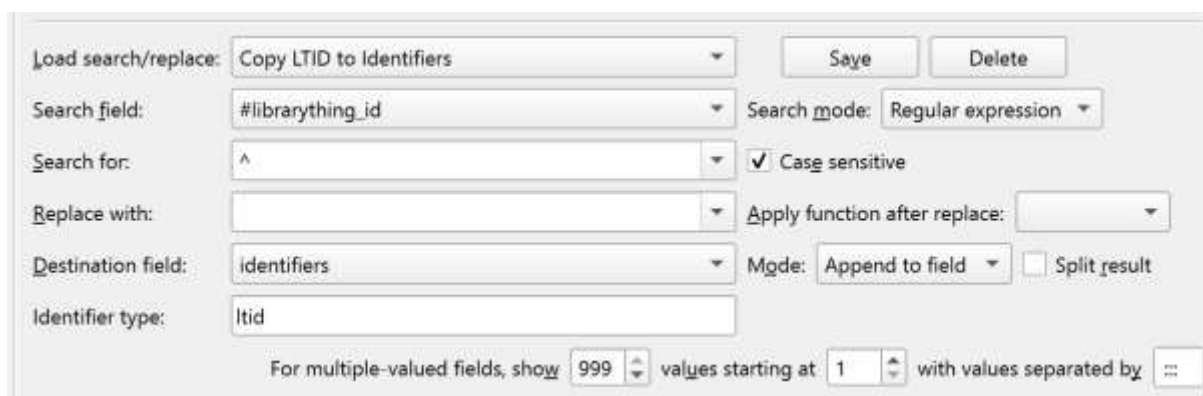
First, search for all books with a **#librarything_id**:

#librarything_id:true

Select all results and press E to enter bulk edit mode.

Go to the *Search and replace* tab and enter values exactly as they appear below, paying particular attention to the following points:

- #librarything_id is the name you chose for the custom column
- Search mode should be set to "Regular expression"
- Mode should be set to "Append to field"
- "Search for" is a circumflex
- "Replace with" is blank



Optionally save.

Click OK.

Clear all ltid identifiers

Per the [MobileRead post](#) on the topic, it is a simple matter to clear out a specific identifier from the calibre identifiers field.

You may want to backup your calibre library before performing the below steps.

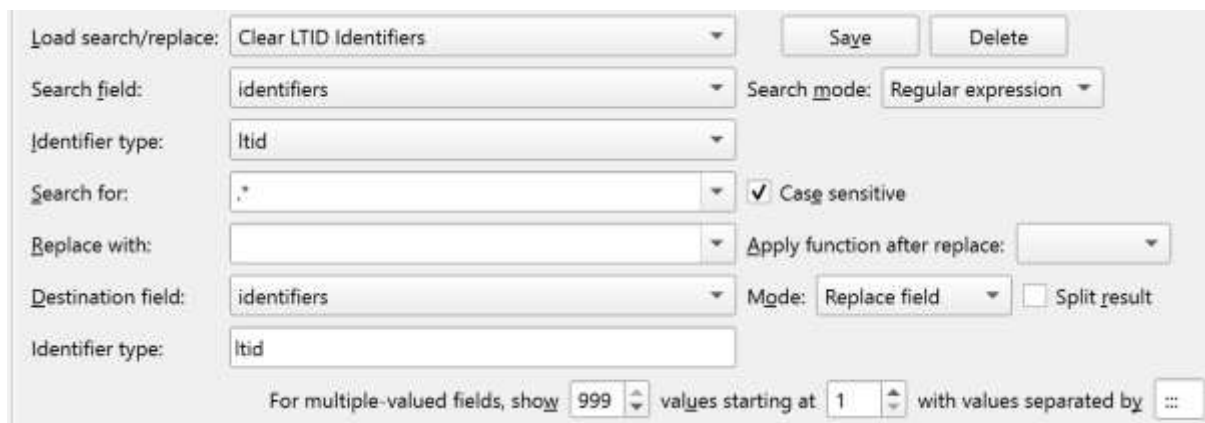
First, search for all books with a **ltid** identifier:

identifiers:=ltid:true

Select all results and press E to enter bulk edit mode.

Go to the *Search and replace* tab and enter values exactly as they appear below, paying particular attention to the following points:

- Select identifiers / Itid twice, i.e. for "Search field" and "Destination field"
- Search mode should be set to "Regular expression"
- Mode should be set to "Replace field"
- "Search for" is dot asterisk
- "Replace with" is blank



The screenshot shows a web-based search and replace interface. At the top, there's a 'Load search/replace:' dropdown set to 'Clear LTID Identifiers', with 'Save' and 'Delete' buttons. Below, the 'Search field:' dropdown is set to 'identifiers'. The 'Search mode:' dropdown is set to 'Regular expression'. The 'Identifier type:' dropdown is set to 'Itid'. The 'Search for:' text input contains '.*'. A 'Case sensitive' checkbox is checked. The 'Replace with:' text input is empty. The 'Apply function after replace:' dropdown is empty. The 'Destination field:' dropdown is set to 'identifiers'. The 'Mode:' dropdown is set to 'Replace field'. A 'Split result' checkbox is unchecked. At the bottom, there's a section for multiple-valued fields: 'show' is set to '999', 'values starting at' is '1', and 'with values separated by' is '...'.

Optionally save.

Click OK.

Limitations

Series

LTMatch may struggle with series where the series name is the same as the first book, e.g. Brandon Sanderson's Legion series:

- Legion
- Legion: Skin Deep
- Legion: Lies of the Beholder

These types of books should be reviewed (and manually matched if necessary) before hitting "Save all matches..."

Performance

LTMatch has been tested with a mid-sized library, about 3500 items on each side. It performs about 7700 matching operations per second. This would equate to almost an hour to match a 5000-item library. Bear in mind that this only applies to the first run, as once books are matched, they are not included in auto-matching in future.

Excludes "Private" books

The LT JSON Books API uses the public version of your LT catalog, so excludes books you have marked as "Private".