

How the Tiers Compare

Skill, cost, and effort across the four link-auditing tiers

	Tier 1 No-code	Tier 2 Low-code	Tier 3 Existing Platforms	Tier 4 Custom Scripts
Skill Level	None — anyone can run it	Basic — install software or paste a script	Basic-moderate — platform admin skills	Programming knowledge required
Example Tools	W3C Link Checker, Google Search Console, manual check	Screaming Frog, Xenu's Link Sleuth, DevTools JS snippets	LibGuides Link Checker, Siteimprove, CORAL	Python, PowerShell, Selenium, Playwright
Installation Required?	No	Screaming Frog / Xenu need install; DevTools JS needs none	No — uses your existing platform	No install, but a script must be built
Cost	Free	Free—low cost	Often a paid subscription (may already be bundled)	Free tool, but costs staff / IT time
Setup Effort	None — use as-is	Light — download and run, or paste a snippet	Moderate — depends on platform configuration	Higher — build and maintain a script
Involves IT?	No	No	Rarely	Usually yes
Best Scale	Small sites, spot-checks	Full-site crawls or quick single-page checks	Ongoing, scheduled audits	Large or recurring, automated audits
Best For	Quick, occasional checks	Regular audits without dev help	Libraries already paying for the platform	Large systems needing automation or custom logic

Your Take-Home Checklist

Every audit moves through the same five phases, start to finish.

PHASE 1 · DISCOVERY AUDIT

- ☐ Inventory every e-resource you offer
- ☐ Confirm visibility & click-depth from homepage
- ☐ Check label/terminology consistency

PHASE 2 · AUTHENTICATION LANDSCAPE

- ☐ Identify each resource's auth method
- ☐ Know what a valid Redirector/SAML link looks like
- ☐ Recognize post-login continuation URLs

PHASE 3 · CHOOSE YOUR TOOL TIER

- ☐ Match tier to skill level, budget, and IT support
- ☐ No-code through custom scripts, by need

PHASE 4 · ASSEMBLE YOUR INVENTORY

- ☐ Set up a tracking worksheet
- ☐ Auto-pull URLs with the Console Script (or similar)
- ☐ Note public vs. login-gated resources
- ☐ Record auth method + tool used per resource

PHASE 5 · ONGOING AUDIT CADENCE

- ☐ Decide how often to re-check
- ☐ Assign ownership for each cycle
- ☐ Treat the worksheet as a living record