

Finding Journal Articles

How to select and search Databases

What are databases?

Bibliographic databases are online tools similar to internet search engines such as Google or Yahoo. Only instead of web pages, databases index journal articles, conference papers, book reviews, and other scholarly information. Some databases also index popular journals and news sources.


Why do I need to use them?

Databases provide access to scholarly material that can't be found elsewhere. Journal articles are not usually freely available on the Internet, nor are they searchable in the Library Catalog.

There are so many databases, which one should I use?

Different databases contain information about different subjects. You should choose a database based on the subject of your research topic. There are also interdisciplinary, multi-subject databases that are a great place to start for basic research. To find the database that will be best for your research go to <http://library.iit.edu> and click on Databases:

Find It

- Books
- Articles | Databases 
- Journals
- Info by Subject
- Info by Format
- more...

Services

- Borrowing & Circulation
- Interlibrary Loan
- Printing & Copying
- Computing & Wireless
- Services for...
- more...

The Databases page gives you three ways to find databases for your topic of research:

1. **Alphabetically** – use the alphabetical list when you already know the name of the database you would like to use.
2. **By keyword** – type in a keyword to retrieve a list of databases that have the keyword in their descriptions.
3. **By subject** – select the larger subject area your topic falls under to view a list of databases that are helpful for that subject.

You may also begin your searching using one of the interdisciplinary databases listed. These large databases contain information on a wide variety of subjects.

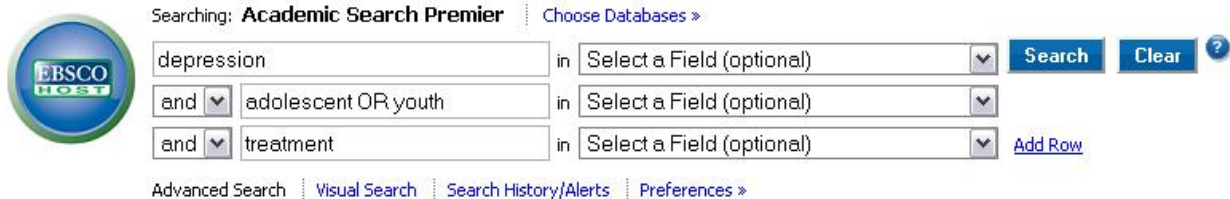
How do I search for articles?

The following steps will help you form effective searches:

1. Brainstorm a list of words related to your topic. Think of as many synonyms for these words as you can.
2. If the database has one, locate the **thesaurus** (sometimes called subject terms) link, and search the thesaurus for the standardized terms used in the database for your topic.
3. Mix and match the words from your brainstorming depending on how narrow or broad of a search you want to conduct. Use the following chart of **Boolean Operators** as a guide on how to combine terms:

Operator	Example	Result Type
AND	Depression AND Treatment	Both terms must be present. Reduces results.
OR	Depression OR Anxiety	Either term may be present. Increases results.
NOT	Depression NOT Anxiety	Excludes second term. Limits results.
*	Depress*	Retrieves records with the word depressed, depression, depressing, etc

An example search on **Academic Search Premier**:



Searching: **Academic Search Premier** | Choose Databases »

depression in Select a Field (optional) Search Clear ?


and ▼ adolescent OR youth in Select a Field (optional)

and ▼ treatment in Select a Field (optional) Add Row

Advanced Search | Visual Search | Search History/Alerts | Preferences »

This search will retrieve documents that include the terms depression and treatment, and also either adolescent or youth or both adolescent and youth.

I want to read the entire article, where is it?

 Some articles will have a direct link to the full text, either in HTML or PDF format. If not, click on the red Get Article button to find out where to obtain the full text.

The Get Article button will show you if the full text is available in another database. It will also direct you to our physical holdings or to **MyILL** to obtain the article from another library. See the **Get Article** guide for more assistance.

Need more help picking the right database?

Contact the Reference Desk at (312) 567-3616 for more help with databases. You may also email or instant message us. Click on Ask a Librarian from <http://library.iit.edu> for more information.

