



Article Indexes & Databases search worksheet

1. Define your question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your topic should be fairly specific. 	Search Topic:			
2. Analyse your topic into concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually 2 or 3 concepts give the best results. 	Concept A	Concept B	Concept C	
3. Choose database(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look in the Article Indexes list under the Subject Guide for your discipline to find the most relevant databases. 	Databases choices:			
4. Choose descriptors or subject headings applicable in this database. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine synonyms <i>within</i> a concept group with OR. Combine different concepts with AND. Different databases may have different subject headings for the same concept In databases that don't use descriptors or subject headings, or when you can't find a subject heading for the concept, use <i>keywords</i>. When using keywords, remember to search for synonyms, spelling variations (British vs. American), plurals, etc. 	Concept A	A N D	Concept B	Concept C
	OR		OR	OR
5. Limit your retrieval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you're getting too many hits, try using the limits to narrow your results. Some databases allow you to limit by date, by age group, by publication type, by language etc. 	Limit options:			
Helpful Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>scope note</i> feature is often useful in finding out the definitions of subject headings. Take note of and use the subject headings used in the articles you find most relevant to build better searches on your topic. In some databases, you can use <i>subheadings</i> and the <i>focus/major topic</i> feature to further narrow your subject headings. 				