Article Search Strategies
Selecting your Keyword(s)

Identify keywords or terms from your topic. When possible, identify additional keywords from related issues that you would like to address in your paper.

Look at the sample topics below and identify how we can pullout keywords.

Sample Topics

Should DDT be re-approved for use in the wake of recent bedbug outbreaks across the country?

Keywords: DDT, Bedbug, side-effect/environment

Should juvenile offenders be tried and punished as adults?

Keywords: Juvenile Offender; Punishment
Selecting your Keyword(s) continued...

Sample topics

Social Media usage limits workplace productivity and contributes to lost earnings.
  
  Keywords: Social Media; Workplace; Productivity

What are the social consequences of physical and verbal abuse and social neglect for children’s life chances and socialization opportunities?

  Keywords: Abuse/Neglect; Children; Social consequences

Genetic testing can be used to diagnose birth defects in the developing fetus or to determine if someone possesses the genetic defects which would predispose them to develop certain diseases later in life, such as Huntington’s chorea or early onset Alzheimer Disease. What are some of the ethical implications of genetic testing?

  Keywords: Genetic testing; Ethical implications; Birth defects
Boolean Operators

Use Boolean Operators to help connect your search terms in order to broaden or narrow your search results.

**AND**

Use **AND** to combine your search terms and narrow your search. This is useful when you want to ensure that two or more terms appear in each article. Cats AND Dogs will appear in all articles.

Sample search:  
homelessness AND youth AND drugs
All articles retrieved will contain the three terms used
Boolean Operators

Use Boolean Operators to help connect your search terms in order to broaden or narrow your search results.

**OR**

Use OR to connect search terms and broaden your search. This is useful when searching for synonyms or similar terms. Cats OR Dogs will retrieve articles that talk about either Cats, Dogs, or both.

For example:

- youth OR teenagers OR adolescent

Articles retrieved will contain one, two or all three terms used.
Boolean Operators
Use Boolean Operators to help connect your search terms in order to broaden or narrow your search results.

**NOT**
Use **NOT** to exclude a term from your search results. Dogs NOT Cats will retrieve only articles that mention dogs and eliminate ANY article that talks about Dogs AND Cats.

For example:
- eating disorders **NOT** anorexia nervosa
  Articles retrieved will contain information about eating disorders, but will exclude the term *anorexia nervosa*. 
Boolean Operators

Use Boolean Operators to help connect your search terms in order to broaden or narrow your search results.

**AND & OR**

Use both AND & OR for advanced searching.

AND narrows your search by combining two terms, while OR broadens your search to encompass similar/synonymous terms. Pets AND (Cats OR Dogs) will retrieve articles that talk about Pets AND mentions either Dogs OR Cats.

For example:

homelessness AND (youth OR teenagers)

All articles retrieved will contain homelessness and either one or both terms in the bracketed phrase.
Use Truncations to Broaden your Search

Add the truncation mark * to the end of the root of a word e.g. adolescen*. This broadens your search to include all words that begin with the root e.g. adolescent, adolescents, adolescence.

The * is useful when appended to the singular form of a word in order to get both the singular and plural forms.

For example: child* will retrieve articles that include the keywords child, children.

Further Examples

Psycholog* = Psychology, Psychologist, Psychological, Psychologically

Root of word
Limit to Peer-Reviewed Articles

Peer-reviewed journals are distinguished from magazines and newspapers by a number of characteristics:

- They have editorial boards made up of experts in the field.
- Articles are research-based.
- Articles end with a list of references.
- Language is specialized, in keeping with the language of the discipline.

By contrast, magazines are geared towards the general public. They are often glossy, have advertisements, and do not include reference lists. See the document about [scholarly journals](http://example.com) for more details.
Limit to Peer-Reviewed Articles

Most databases provide the option to limit your search results to peer-reviewed journal articles.

Limit your search to peer-reviewed journal articles if your research assignment requires the use of scholarly articles.

The terms peer-reviewed, refereed and scholarly are used interchangeably.
Note Subject Headings

When you find articles that are suitable for your paper, check the subject headings assigned to them (listed on the detailed record screen). These subject headings are the words used by the database to describe the concepts you are researching. Use them to achieve better search results.

When the search term you used initially is not listed in the subject headings, try another search, using the subject headings that address your topic.

For example: in the Academic Search Complete database, the subject heading used for

\[ \text{body language} = \text{nonverbal communication (psychology)} \]

\[ \text{KEYWORD} \quad \text{SUBJECT HEADING} \]
Check the Reference List for Additional Citations

Check the reference list at the end of peer-reviewed articles for additional books and articles you may want to use to further your research.

References


