Information Literacy Program

Search strategies and subject databases

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# Table of contents

Outcomes ................................................................................................................................. 1
Getting started .......................................................................................................................... 1
  What are subject databases and e-journal collections? ...................................................... 1
  When should you use subject databases? ........................................................................... 1
  Why should you use journal articles? ................................................................................. 1
Access databases and journals .............................................................................................. 2
  Off-campus login.................................................................................................................. 2
  Find it at ANU - 360 Link ..................................................................................................... 2
  Databases by subject ......................................................................................................... 3
  Database titles ................................................................................................................... 5
  Full text e-journals ........................................................................................................... 5
    Title search....................................................................................................................... 5
    Browse by title ................................................................................................................ 6
    Browse by subject .......................................................................................................... 6
    Catalogue search ........................................................................................................... 7
  ArticleReach ....................................................................................................................... 9
  BONUS+ ............................................................................................................................... 9
Topic analysis and search strategies ..................................................................................... 10
  Topic analysis – an introduction .................................................................................... 10
  Search strategies ............................................................................................................. 11
Reference Encyclopaedias and Dictionaries ......................................................................... 12
  Oxford Reference Online ................................................................................................. 12
Search results list .................................................................................................................. 13
  Select records.................................................................................................................... 13
  Citations ............................................................................................................................ 13
  Full-text ............................................................................................................................. 14
    Find it at ANU ................................................................................................................ 14
    Library catalogue ........................................................................................................ 14
SuperSearch ............................................................................................................................ 16
Web of Science ....................................................................................................................... 17
  Basic search ....................................................................................................................... 17
  Advanced search ............................................................................................................. 18
Current Contents Connect ................................................................................................... 19
  Search Options ................................................................................................................ 19
  Refining a search ............................................................................................................. 20
Scopus .................................................................................................................................... 21
  Search Options ................................................................................................................ 21
  Sorting results ................................................................................................................... 21
ProQuest .................................................................................................................................. 23
  Ebrary e-books ................................................................................................................ 24
JSTOR ...................................................................................................................................... 25
SAGE Research Methods ...................................................................................................... 26
Current affairs and news sources ......................................................................................... 31
  Factiva ............................................................................................................................... 31
  PressDisplay .................................................................................................................... 32
Alert Services ......................................................................................................................... 33
Database searching techniques ............................................................................................. 34
  Boolean operators ........................................................................................................... 34
  Search symbols ............................................................................................................... 35
    Truncation ...................................................................................................................... 35
    Wildcard symbols ........................................................................................................ 35
    Phrase searching .......................................................................................................... 35
  Advanced search ............................................................................................................ 35
Other resources .................................................................................................................... 36
Search strategies and subject databases

Outcomes

This course covers how to select information sources and translate the searching skills acquired to a range of subject specific and multidisciplinary databases.

The following areas will be covered:

- Topic analysis and the formulation of effective search strategies
- Skill in selecting and evaluating appropriate sources of information and
- Applying search skills across a number of different search interfaces.

Getting started

What are subject databases and e-journal collections?

- A subject database (also called a periodical index) is a cumulative index of journal articles covering a particular subject area or academic discipline. Subject databases are searched using keywords to find information on a subject.
- Each subject database contains a selection of citations covering a particular discipline or group of related disciplines. Databases can be highly specialised and subject-specific, or general and multidisciplinary.
- The information provided varies from database to database. However, all databases will provide basic bibliographical information (author, title, journal title, date and pages). Some will also provide additional information including an abstract (summary).
- Some databases will contain full text articles, but most of the time actual periodicals will have to be located for the full-text articles through the Library catalogue.

When should you use subject databases?

- When you need to find published sources, especially journal articles, on a particular topic.
- When you commence the ‘scoping exercise’ for your research project – anywhere from an essay to a PhD thesis – and need to determine the current state of research in your subject area.
- When you start work on your literature review
- Although literature searching can be done using internet resources such as Google Scholar, subject databases contain sophisticated search interfaces that allow you to perform highly refined and specialised searches. Subject databases are your best means of accessing reliable, authoritative literature on a given topic.

Why should you use journal articles?

- Articles in journals provide the most up-to-date information.
- Articles are more prolific than books.
- Articles can be very specific.
- Articles published in scholarly journals are refereed, so the information should be reliable.
- Professional and scholarly journals are the key forums of academic debate.
Access databases and journals

The Australian National University Library subscribes to databases and electronic journals which give you access to all the latest information, articles and research from your computer via Library home page. There are different methods of searching for the information you require, so we will take a look at a few of these now.

Off-campus login

ANU staff and students can login from outside the university to access databases, previous exam papers, electronic journals and other electronic research materials.

Access the ANU remote login (ql.anu.edu.au/43lp) or log in when prompted while using the Library’s subscribed resources.

TIP: Some electronic databases require a separate account number and password for access. Obtain these from the E-Resources passwords page at ql.anu.edu.au/qc7l.

Find it at ANU - 360 Link

When there is no full text or direct link to the article in a database, either:

- **Find it at ANU** will enable access to the full-text article in another database with full-text content. The full text will open in a separate browser window.
Occasionally, there will be an extra step to obtain full text access. Details of alternative ways to access the full-text article (via Cross Ref, the Library Catalogue or ArticleReach) will display, along with options to email or export the citation.

**TIP:** If there is no **Full Text** option, the ANU Library Catalogue (ISSN Search) will direct you to the catalogue entry for the journal and provide details of the ANU Library’s online and print holdings for that title. If these options are not available for articles, use ArticleReach. For books, try searching the National Library of Australia’s [Trove](https://trove.nla.gov.au/) website.

**Databases by subject**

Use this search function to identify databases related to a particular topic or subject area.

1. Select the heading **E-resources & databases**.
Search strategies and subject databases

2. Drop down the **(choose a subject)** list and Scroll through the list until you find your area of study. Select a topic and press **Go**.

![E-resources and databases](image)

The following list is part of the selection of databases for **Political Science & International Relations**. You will have a similar list for your subject area.

3. Select the name of the database required, or select **show details** to see information about the database as shown in the second image below.

![Journal Citation Reports](image)

![JSTOR](image)

**TIP:** A number of databases have a *limited number* of concurrent users; please remember to logout from these immediately after use. A small number of databases have *restricted access* and can only be used from a particular computer, or require certain software in order to display correctly.
Database titles

The databases screen also allows you to look for a particular database, rather than having to look for it in the alphabetical listings. To search for a database type any part of its name in the **Search by title** field and select **GO**.

![Search by title field](image)

A list of results is displayed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>LION: Literature Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Universal Digital Library (1 million book project)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TIP**: When you are searching for databases, it is important to remember that **individual journal titles are not listed** here. For example, if we were to search for the periodical called *The Economist* there would be no result. However, by using the catalogue, we can determine that *The Economist* is a journal that is stored by the databases **Factiva** and **ProQuest**.

Full text e-journals

Some journal subscriptions come directly to the Library in electronic format and are not amalgamated into a larger database. These titles are listed under **Full text e-journals**. The information contained here is full text, rather than citation and abstracts as in many of the databases. **Full-text e-journals** can be found in one of two ways which each have advantages and disadvantages, as we will explore on the following pages. Find e-journals through:

- options available under the ANU **Full text e-journals** link or
- a title search in the ANU library catalogue

**Title search**

Search e-journals from the Library homepage. If you know the title, type this straight into the search box below the **Full text e-journals** heading and select **GO**.

**OR**

1. Select the Full text e-journals tab on the homepage as shown below.
Search strategies and subject databases

2. Type a search term and select Go. The default search is by title.

Browse by title

Alternatively, browse e-journals by title by accessing the A-Z list of full text e-journals.

Select advanced e-journals search (A-Z) under the Full text e-journals heading on the library homepage. Then select the first letter of an e-journal’s title.

Browse e-journals by title

By searching or browsing using one of these methods you will find a list of e-journals matching your criteria.

On this list we can see details of e-journals including:

- its title
- the range of dates for which electronic access is available
- a link to the e-journal

Selecting these links will redirect you to the electronic journal where you can access the full text of articles that fall within the date ranges indicated.
Advantage and disadvantage of this approach

**Advantage:** Comprehensive listing of all full text e-journals, complete with date range availability.

**Disadvantage:** Gives no indication of whether the library subscribes to the journal in print format as well. In most cases only the more recent issues are available electronically, and you will need to go back to the catalogue to locate older issues in print format.

Catalogue search

1. On the Library homepage select the **Catalogue search** tab. Then, select **advanced catalogue search** as shown.

2. Then, choose the **Title** tab and, from the drop-down menu, select **ANU Journals**. Enter the journal title in the search field. In this example we will search for the journal titled **sustainable development**. Select **Search**.

3. We can choose to view the entire record for this item by selecting the first record, which is titled **Sustainable development**. This will give us both the print (called **Serials**) and online (called **Internet Res**) options for this journal.
Search strategies and subject databases

4. The catalogue record tells us that this particular journal title is available in print format as well as electronically. Select the first item in the results list, **Sustainable Development** with a Medium of **SERIALS**

![Sustainable Development table]

Print issues from 1993 to 1998 are available in the Chifley library.

5. Return to the previous screen – select the Back button on the browser

6. Select the second item in the results list, **Sustainable Development** with a Medium of **INTERNET RES**.

![Sustainable Development with a Medium of INTERNET RES]

The record also provides a link to access the electronic version of the publication. Click on the underlined link to access the database and view the journal.

We are now able to view each edition of this journal. Sometimes a database will only hold a journal for a certain timeframe. If the issue you require is not in the list, try the other databases listed in the catalogue, check the print copies, or you can request a particular item from the Document Supply service and ArticleReach.

**Search for a journal article**

Many students come unstuck trying to search the ANU Library catalogue for an individual journal article. Separate articles are generally not listed in the catalogue. You will need to look carefully at your reading list, and search instead for the **name of the journal** that the article appeared in. Then, when you find the journal, either in paper or electronic format, you can locate the individual article.

If you have any difficulties in finding journals or articles, please ask for assistance at the Information desk in any ANU library.
Search strategies and subject databases

ArticleReach

ArticleReach is a service providing access to journal articles not held in the ANU Library. It is freely available to staff and students of the ANU. The service is delivered by the University Library in partnership with other university libraries in Australia and overseas.

Using ArticleReach: ql.anu.edu.au/h6e8  
ArticleReach Union Catalogue: artir.iii.com/

- Before you start you will need:
- A current ANU library record with a Library Barcode (E123456F), as displayed on your student card
- Access to My Library Record at library.anu.edu.au/patroninfo

BONUS+

BONUS+ is a free service that enables ANU postgraduate students and staff to borrow selected library material from a consortium of participating Australian and New Zealand university libraries and pick it up from one of our branches.

Search the ANU Library catalogue. If the book is not held by the ANU Library or our copy is unavailable, the BONUS+ logo will display. Select the logo as shown below to search the BONUS+ catalogue and place your request. Use your UniID and password to access this service.

Further information is available at anulib.anu.edu.au/bonus.
Search strategies and subject databases

Topic analysis and search strategies

Spend some time thinking about your topic before you start searching. For help with effective searching for scholarly information, you can:

- enquire at the service desk of any ANU Library branch
- view the ANU Library Catalogue search tips (ql.anu.edu.au/417g) (bottom half of the page)
  OR
- refer to the ANU Library’s Topic Analysis guide (ql.anu.edu.au/analysis).

Topic analysis – an introduction

The following steps can help you formulate an effective search strategy:

**Step 1 Breakdown your topic into relevant keywords or phrases**

Brainstorm some keywords that are associated with the topic. Consult encyclopaedias and dictionaries to help identify these terms.

For example, if our research topic is *The effects of pollution on frog reproduction*, our keywords would be:

- Frog
- Pollution
- Reproduction

**Step 2 Are there related terms or synonyms?**

Think of synonyms for the keywords you’ve identified. If it helps, use a thesaurus or a subject dictionary.

For example,

- Frog or amphibian
- Pollution or poison or toxin
- Reproduction or breeding

**Step 3 Are there variant spellings of your keywords?**

If so, would it be useful to use the ‘wildcard’ symbol (?) or *) to ensure that multiple spellings are returned in your search results?

For example,

- Organiza?tion will retrieve records containing the words organization and organisation.
- Beha?viour Will retrieve records containing the words behaviour and behavior

**Step 4 Can you truncate your search terms?**

Truncation allows you to search for the first part of a word (its “root”), as well as all of its variant endings, saving you from having to do multiple searches.

For example,
Step 5 How do you want to combine your search terms?

The Boolean operators AND, OR and NOT are typically used to combine search terms, and will allow you to create more complex and comprehensive searches.

Frog OR amphibian AND pollution OR toxin AND breeding OR reproduction

And the search strategy is...

We have converted our research topic ‘The effects of pollution on frog reproduction’ into the following search strategy:

(Frog* OR amphibian*) AND (pollut* OR toxi*) AND (breeding OR reproducti*)

Search strategies

For the examples given below, we’ve included a number of possible searches which could be used to find information on the topics outlined.

“Examine Australia’s response to the Global Warming crisis, as experienced by Australia’s Pacific Island neighbours.”

“global warming” AND pacific AND Australia
"global warming" pacific "Australia's response"
("global warming" OR "climate change") AND pacific AND Australia
("global warming" OR "climate change") AND pacific AND Australia AND impact* AND response*
("global warming" OR "climate change") AND (“sea levels” OR “rising sea levels”) AND pacific

“Should euthanasia be legalised in Australia? Consider the moral, religious, philosophical, legal, and human rights implications in your response.”

"euthanasia in australia”
euthanasia AND australia AND legal*
euthanasia AND austral* AND legal*
euthanasia AND austral* AND (moral* OR relig* OR philosoph* OR legal OR “human rights”)

Optional exercise:

Try the University of Arizona Library’s mind map to find keywords and design a research question. There is an option to print your results at the end of the exercise (ql.anu.edu.au/v3yg).

Tip: Further examples of the use of Boolean operators, truncation, wildcards and phrase searching can be found on pages 27-28 of this manual.
Search strategies and subject databases

**Reference Encyclopaedias and Dictionaries**

Another strategy for refining your topic and selecting the most relevant keywords is to use reference sources such as encyclopaedias and dictionaries to explore the definitions and history of different subject areas. This can often help to limit your search and assist you define the topic.

1. On the Library home page, select **E-resources & databases**
2. Choose a Subject.
3. From the list select **Encyclopedias, dictionaries etc.**
4. Select **GO**

5. From the list of options, select **Oxford Reference Online**

**Oxford Reference Online**

**Oxford Reference Online** is a reference database to which the ANU Library subscribes. It provides access to more than 100 dictionary, language reference, and subject reference works published by Oxford University Press. Users can search or browse specific subject areas, specific works, or the entire database. Oxford Reference Online can be a great place to start your research, using tools such as dictionaries and thesauri.

From the Oxford Reference Online Homepage we can choose from a variety of ways to search or browse the collection.

In the example below, we will search for a dictionary definition of our search term: foreign aid.

Select the appropriate entry from the list of results, or filter (panel on the left) by **Reference type** or by **Subject**. Note also the various definitions of your search terms on the page.
Search strategies and subject databases

Search results list

Although settings will vary between databases, search results are typically displayed in a format like the one below.

Select records

Always remember to tick the record(s) you want to print, save or email. If you are using EndNote or another bibliographic management product, you will need to tick the record(s) you want to import into your EndNote Library.

Exercise: In the following example we are using the APAIS: Australian Public Affairs Information Service database to find information regarding native title in relation to the mining sector.

Using the search “native title” AND mining

Citations

Record layout will vary between databases. However, despite differences in format, citations will follow a fairly consistent style:

- **Title=** the name of the article, not the journal.
- **Source=** the name of the journal (serial, magazine, book etc.) and the item details. You will need to know these details if you want to locate the item in the library catalogue. The title of the journal in the example below is the Indigenous Law Bulletin. 2007= year of publication; 6= volume number; 26= issue number; 18-20= pagination.
- **Subject=** standardised subject headings; some databases call these ‘Descriptors’.
- **Identifiers=** informal subject headings, often taken from the title of the document itself, and often more specific than the subject heading(descriptor).
- **Abstract=** précis (summary) of the article. Note: not all databases provide abstracts. Identifiers and subjects/descriptors are a useful way of determining the subject of the article if an abstract is not included.
Search strategies and subject databases

Full-text

In the following example, access to the full text of the article is shown via Find it at ANU and the Library catalogue.

Find it at ANU

Select the Find it at ANU button for full text options. (See page 2 for more about this option.)

Library catalogue

1. Look for an item in the catalogue marked INTERNET RES (this stands for Internet Resource). Select the link to open the catalogue record.

2. Select the link Access via Australian Public Affairs Full Text to open the journal page. Some articles will have more than one link.
3. This link has directed us to the online journal page. Select the relevant **volume** and **issue** number from the list.

4. Click on the link to open the issue containing the article. Locate the article from the journal’s table of contents and open the full-text.
Search strategies and subject databases

SuperSearch

SuperSearch is a single facility that searches the majority of material the Library subscribes to. It accesses thousands of journals, newspaper articles, books, book chapters and reviews, dissertations and electronic resources such as websites and free online journals. It also links to full text articles.

Access the SuperSearch facility on the Library homepage at anulib.anu.edu.au.

Using the search "foreign aid" AND econom* growth

TIP: Remember to capitalise Boolean search operators (AND, OR, NOT)

On the list of search results, filter by Scholarly & Peer-Review for results aimed at an academic level. The column on the left-hand side contains options (facets) for refining your search further.

Preview the whole record and read the abstract by hovering with the mouse above the record title in the list of search results (or when using a mobile device select the arrow to the right of the title). Read Online, Email and Full Text Online options are available.
Search strategies and subject databases

Web of Science

Web of Science is part of the ISI Web of Knowledge portal and provides access to scholarly information in Science, Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities. It allows citation searching as well as general searching across subject areas. The database has bibliographic records with abstracts for about 70% of the Science citations and 60% of the Social Sciences citations. Also included is the article’s cited reference list.

On the Library home page, select the letter W underneath the E-resources & databases heading, then select the link to Web of Science.

Basic search

1. Run a basic search by entering keywords in the default fields provided. Select Add Another Field for additional search categories. Select the drop-down arrow to change default search options.

   In this search we have limited the Timespan of the search to the last 10 years

   Using the search economic growth AND africa*

2. The search results will be sorted by Publication date—newest to oldest. Use the Sort by menu to sort the results as required. Use the left-hand side Refine Results options to filter search results.

3. Select View Abstract to assess the relevance of the article, and Full Text, if available, to download it; if no full text, select Find it at ANU.
Search strategies and subject databases

The following three features are useful for understanding research impact. Use the Help function at the top right of screen for a more in-depth explanation of the calculations behind each feature.

- **Times Cited** displays the number of times an article was cited by other articles *from within Web of Science products*. This helps to link articles that have already been published to the future research.

- **Analyse results** can be used to find the most prevalent authors in a particular field of study or generate a list of institutions ranked by record count based on your search query.

- **Create Citation report** generates aggregate citation statistics for a set of search results. Perform a Cited Reference Search to include citations to items not indexed within Web of Science Core Collection

To print, email or save your results check the box next to the article and select the relevant option from the top of the result list.

### Advanced search

Use the Advanced Search option to limit your search terms to particular fields in a record.

A list of field tags for all available fields for advanced searching is provided in the Field Tags box.

1. To access articles with the words *export* and *coal* in the title you must place a title field tag (**ti**) before the keywords, for example, **ti=export** AND **ti=coal**

2. A Search History table is displayed at the bottom of the page. To view this results set, scroll down and select the number in the Results column.
Current Contents Connect

Current Contents Connect is part of the ISI Web of Knowledge portal. Current Contents provides access to the tables of contents and bibliographic data from current issues of the world’s leading scholarly research journals in the sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities. Cover-to-cover indexing of journal articles, reviews, meeting abstracts, editorials, etc., is provided for more than 7600 international journals covering all disciplines. Abstracts are available for about 85% of science articles.

On the Library home page, select the letter C underneath the E-resources & databases heading, then locate and select the link to Current Contents (via Web of Knowledge) in the alphabetical list of resources.

Search Options

Current Contents Connect has Basic Search and Advanced Search options, similar to Web of Science.

In addition, Current Contents Connect also has a Browse Journals option. This allows us to browse the Tables of Contents of journals by Title or by Edition and Discipline.

Select the search option you wish to use and then enter your search terms. In this search we have chosen a basic search and entered policy AND governance as our topic/subject.
Search strategies and subject databases

Refining a search

If the search retrieved too many records, you can further refine your search using options on the filter panel on the left of the results page.
Scopus

Scopus is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed research literature with more than 20,500 titles from more than 5,000 international publishers. Scopus offers researchers a quick, easy and comprehensive resource to support their research needs in the scientific, technical, medical and social sciences fields and arts and humanities.

On the Library home page, select the letter S underneath the E-resources & databases heading, then select the link to Scopus.

Search Options

From the main search page select your preferred search type or leave as the default, Document search. Use the Add Search Field option to add additional keywords to your search. Select Limit to display options to search by Date range or by Document type.

When the search terms are entered and you have chosen from the search options, select Search.

Sorting results

The search results will be sorted by Date–newest to oldest. Use the Sort on menu on the top-right hand side to sort the results by Relevance if a greater emphasis on the keywords is required. Use the left-hand side Refine options to filter search results.
Search strategies and subject databases

Check the number of results and refine as needed, using the left-hand side menu or by adding relevant keywords. Use **Find it at ANU** option to access full-text documents.

Scopus includes some additional useful features such as:

- **View secondary documents** – view documents from the reference lists of these articles

- **Analyse search results** – view charts and graphs using your results list to analyse:
  - Year- how many documents published per year;
  - Source – where the documents were published;
  - Author- helps to isolate key authors by frequently published author on the subject;
  - Affiliation- university or institutional affiliation;
  - Country; Document type and Subject Area

![Analyse search results](image_url)
Search strategies and subject databases

ProQuest

ProQuest includes an enormous amount of very recent material, but has less of a scholarly/academic focus than some of the other databases. It contains bibliographic descriptions, abstracts, and lots of full text articles on such topics as business, economics, education, health, industrial relations, management, public policy, religion, and statistics.

1. On the Library home page select the letter P underneath the E-resources & databases heading, then click on the link to ProQuest

2. Select Advanced Search to access the full range of search options.

3. Fill in the search terms and select Search.
4. In the list of results, note that some articles are available in full-text, while others have only an abstract or citation. These appear with the **Find a Copy** option; select this link for access via **360 Link**.

**TIP:** Some records may only have a citation or abstract. Note the citation details and then search the ANU Library catalogue for the journal title to see if the library holds the volume and issue you require.

**Ebrary e-books**

The ANU Library has subscribed to **ebrary e-books**. Select this tab for access to e-books related to your search. When peer reviewed is selected, ebrary tab may not appear; de-select **Peer reviewed** and refresh the search in order to view the tab.
Search strategies and subject databases

JSTOR

JSTOR is a reliable and comprehensive electronic archive of important scholarly journal literature, dating back to the first issues of the journals included. The JSTOR archive of digitised full text journal articles does not include current issues. Their agreements with publishers establish the lag period for each title which defines the point at which the JSTOR archive stops and "current" issues start. This period ranges from 3-7 years.

1. On the Library home page, select the letter J underneath the E-resources & databases heading, then click on the link to JSTOR.

2. Select Advanced Search to access the full range of search options, or to choose certain journals or subject areas to search within.

3. Construct your search by entering details into the fields at the top of the page.

Using the search Africa* AND “sustainable development” AND (government OR governance)

4. You may wish to narrow your search to certain fields, material types, languages, dates, disciplines, or specific journal titles. In the example below, the search has been limited to articles published in the last decade.

5. Select Search and browse your results.

Tip: Some articles are not available full-text in JSTOR. These are marked with (x) in the list of search results. Select the article title and look for <Find it at ANU> above the preview panel to view access options.
SAGE Research Methods can help you at every step of your research project. Sage Research Methods (SRM) contains over 700 full text SRM books; hundreds of research articles from Sage journals, and dozens of Sage reference works including handbooks, dictionaries and encyclopedias.

It has peer reviewed instructional information on a range of research approaches including basic and advanced statistics, quantitative and qualitative methods, literature review, research design and writing about research. SRM supports research and the teaching of research methods not only in the social sciences, but also in scientific and medical disciplines.

On the Library home page select the letter S underneath the E-resources & databases heading, then select the link to Sage Research Methods

There are a number of ways to find and access content in SRM. The four options corresponding to numbers 1-4 are briefly explained below.
1. **Browse** enables you to explore content by **Topic, Discipline** or **Content type**. This is a good way to undertake some topical or disciplinary background reading and to become familiar with the variety of materials available in SRM. Content types include SAGE’s classic Little Green (quantitative research) and Little Blue (qualitative research) books, videos, and research methods cases, (ql.anu.edu.au/zyts).

![Search strategies and subject databases](image)

**TIP:** Note the locked icon alongside Datasets. The ANU Library does not subscribe to this component of SRM, so access to the datasets is unavailable. However, abstracts can be viewed and basic metadata about datasets can be downloaded as a PDF. Contact your Library subject specialist (anulib.anu.edu.au/about/contacts-feedback) for assistance with identifying datasets in your field of research.

2. **Research tools** assist your discovery of information about research methods, definitions of key terms, lists of methods and statistics resources created by other users. Other tools available will guide you through planning for each stage of your research project and aid your selection of appropriate statistical methods.

![Research tools](image)
Search strategies and subject databases

One of these tools, the **Methods Map** is a unique visualisation of the taxonomy of 1400+ research methods related terms.

In this example, we have searched for the phrase **Research design**. The Methods Map:

- Provides a definition of Research design.
- Links to content about Research design (cases, videos, handbooks, journal articles etc) within SRM and indicates how many resources are available.
- Shows the broader, narrower and related terms associated with research design.
- Displays the number of resources available within SRM which explore each narrower term. Select the desired narrower term/s to view resources.
- Displays recent Methods Map search history.
3. Select **Advanced Search** to create structured, specific searches. Enter search terms or phrases into the fields at the top, and select content types (e.g. books, journal articles, videos), publishing information, publication date, and relevant disciplines, then select **Search**.

In this example, we wish to search for “discourse analysis” AND Australia to find results from Handbooks and Cases related to the disciplines of Anthropology and Education.
4. Use the **I want** option to dive straight into content and explanatory materials based on your current research methodology question eg. Learn about qualitative/quantitative methods, Watch methods come alive.

**TIP:** SAGE has produced an excellent range of [short videos](ql.anu.edu.au/4il0) about Sage Research Methods.
Current affairs and news sources

**Factiva**

Factiva is an electronic news article service that is available to all ANU staff and students. It has a limit of three simultaneous users.

On the Library home page select the letter F underneath the E-resources & databases heading, then select the link to Factiva

**TIP:** Only three users may access Factiva simultaneously. If unable to log in, try again later.

To find articles from newspapers, journals, magazines, and newswire services enter terms in the **Search Form** box. You can also use the **Free Text Search** to create a search using Boolean operators.

1. The **Indexing** box displays the **Intelligent Indexing** terms (Source, Author, Company, Subject, Industry, Region, or Language) to narrow down your search. The default is set to search all of these, with the exception of Language, which is set to English.

2. To change or add terms, select the intelligent indexing category and identify the terms (e.g., company, publication, subject country etc.) to be included in the search. Select a term to highlight and include it in the Indexing box to be added to the search. To remove or exclude a term, select that item. Searches can be limited by date range and by title, author etc.
Search strategies and subject databases

To find Company and Financial Information hover the mouse over <Companies/Markets> at the top of the page and select either:

- **Company**: locate companies using a range of search variables.
- **Industry**: locate industry specific data including news, reports, charts, analysis and financial data.
- **Quotes**: exchange rates, market indices, and stock, fund, and corporate bond prices. Results can be downloaded in comma-delimited format for spread sheets.
- **Market data Charts**: create charts to display and compare financial data.

Articles can be emailed, printed or saved; customised company reports can be printed or saved.

**PressDisplay**

Provides interactive access to 2,300 full-content, digital newspapers and magazines from over 100 countries in 60 languages. Newspapers display them in their original layout with pictures, photographs and comments. This collection is more useful for recent news as it does not have an archive.

Use the menu on the left-hand side to filter type of news or by country. The numbers on each story refer to the number of comments.
Alert Services

Alerts are a service provided to keep researchers aware of newly published material covering their research interests.

Alerts are generated when new records are added to a database and compared to your profile. Details of new records that match your profile are emailed to you. Alert profiles can be edited, added to, or deleted.

Alerts can keep you informed of:

1. Details of recently published material
2. New articles that match a profile. A profile may include
   - Articles by particular author(s)
   - Keywords that cover a topic

The type and level of information provided by an alert service varies from product to product. The information may be

1. Bibliographic citation.
2. Table of contents page
3. Link to full-text article

Some databases allow control of the level of information received in the alert such as citation, or citation and abstract, or full-text (if available).

The registration procedure for Alert services varies from product to product. However all require an email address to which alerts will be sent. Registration may also involve the setting up of an individual account that requires you to choose a User ID and Password.

Many products allow multiple Alerts to be established.

Some that offer this service are:

1. ANU Library catalogue
2. Web of Knowledge
3. Current Contents Connect
4. Web of Science
5. ProQuest
6. Oxford University Press Online Journals
7. Project Muse
8. JSTOR
9. Science Direct (Elsevier)
Search strategies and subject databases

Database searching techniques

While databases might look different, most follow the same search and retrieval principles and use similar searching techniques. These include Boolean operators.

**Boolean operators**

What are they and how do they work?

Boolean searching is used to define the relationship between words or groups of words. Boolean searching is the name given to a method of searching that combines keywords using one or more of three operators: **AND, OR, NOT**.

**AND**

Use **AND** to narrow your search and retrieve records containing **only** the words specified.

| Examples | Islam AND calligraphy  
diet AND pregnancy AND allergies  
rivers AND catchments |

**OR**

Use **OR** to broaden your search and retrieve records containing **any** of the words specified.

| Examples | frogs OR amphibians  
bushfires OR wildfires  
finance OR banking |

**For acronyms and abbreviations**: try using the **OR** operator when searching for these, but remember to include the term spelt in full as well as the abbreviation, e.g.: **spi** or **“soy protein isolate”**.

E.g. Nutrition AND (spi OR “soy protein isolate”)

**NOT (AND NOT)**

Use **NOT** (sometimes written as **AND NOT**) to narrow your search and retrieve records that do not contain the specified term.

| Examples | woodlands NOT forests  
operA NOT soap  
“conflict resolution” NOT international |

**( ) – Parentheses**

Use parentheses to group words or phrases together when combining the **OR** operator with an **AND** operator in the same search.

| Examples | “human rights” AND (Burma OR Myanmar)  
(mouse OR mice) AND (gene OR pseudogene)  
deregulation AND (finance OR banking) |

**No Boolean operator**

What happens if you don’t type a Boolean operator between keywords? Most databases will automatically search for these words as a phrase.

| Example | total quality management |

In this example the database will search for records that contain these three words immediately adjacent to one another and in the same order.
Search strategies and subject databases

Search symbols

There are several benefits to using the Advanced Search page. Many databases allow us to limit our results to peer-reviewed works only.

Most databases will also allow the searcher to set a date range for results and limit results to a particular language.

Special search symbols can expand the scope of your search. These include:

**Truncation**

Use the asterisk * to truncate a stem word and retrieve variant word endings and suffixes. This expands your search term to include all forms of a root word, e.g. `environment*` will retrieve records with the words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>truncated word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td>environment’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environments</td>
<td>environmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environmentalist</td>
<td>environmentalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example:** `environment* AND extinction AND bird*`

**Wildcard symbols**

Use the asterisk * or the question mark ? to find alternative spellings for the same word. The */? represents any single character in a given position of a specified word.

Use the wildcard symbol within a word as a substitute for a specific character, e.g. `labo*r AND liberali*ation` finds records containing the alternative word spellings of `labor / labour` AND `liberalisation / liberalization`.

**Phrase searching**

Place quotation marks “ ” around phrases or groups of words you want searched together. This includes titles as well as common idioms.

**Example:** “garden of earthly delights” AND allegory

**Advanced search**

Using Advanced Search options will provide a more efficient search as it provides the options above and more in an easily accessible form. Select the relevant options, enter the keywords and begin the search.

Typically, databases default to keyword searching. This means the database will search for records that contain the specified keyword(s) anywhere in the record. For example, a search containing the keywords `health` and `Australia` will return results containing these words in their title, subject, abstract or author fields.
Search strategies and subject databases

Other resources

Training notes
To access the Information Literacy Program’s training notes, visit the Research & learn webpage (anulib.anu.edu.au/research-learn) and select the skill area followed by the relevant course. You can also register for a workshop and find other information.

Research & learn how-to guides
Explore and learn with the ANU Library’s how to guides (ql.anu.edu.au/howto). Topics covered are:

- Citations & abstracts
- Data Management
- EndNote
- Finding books and more
- Finding journal articles and more
- Finding theses
- Increasing your research impact
- NVivo
- Topic analysis
- Using Google scholar from off-campus

Subject guides
Find subject-specific guides (ql.anu.edu.au/subjectguides) and resources on broad range of disciplines. Such as:

- History, indigenous studies, linguistics and philosophy
- Criminal, human rights and taxation law
- Biochemistry and molecular biology, neurosciences and psychology
- Asian Pacific, Southeast Asia and East Asian studies
- Engineering
- Astronomy and astrophysics, earth sciences, mathematical sciences and natural hazards

Online learning
Online learning is available through ANU Pulse (ql.anu.edu.au/pulse), which can be accessed from both on and off campus by all ANU staff and students.

IT skills development modules available in ANU Pulse

- Microsoft Office (Access, Excel, OneNote, Outlook, PowerPoint, Project, Visio, Word)
- Microsoft Office (Mac)
- Adobe suite (Illustrator, Photoshop)
- Other IT (Concepts of ICT, FrontPage, Internet Explorer, Type IT, Windows)

Training calendar
Select Events » near the bottom of the Library homepage and access our events calendar with upcoming training opportunities displayed day by day (ql.anu.edu.au/cal).

Feedback!
Please provide feedback about today’s workshop via an online feedback form (ql.anu.edu.au/survey)