



# Article Indexes & Databases search worksheet

<p><b>1. Define your question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your topic should be fairly specific.</li> </ul>	Search Topic:		
<p><b>2. Analyse your topic into concepts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually 2 or 3 concepts give the best results.</li> </ul>	Concept A	Concept B	Concept C
<p><b>3. Choose database(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look in the Article Indexes list under the Subject Guide for your discipline to find the most relevant databases.</li> </ul>	Databases choices:		
<p><b>4. Choose descriptors or subject headings applicable in this database.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combine synonyms <i>within</i> a concept group with <b>OR</b>. Combine different concepts with <b>AND</b>.</li> <li>Different databases may have different subject headings for the same concept</li> <li>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>.</li> <li>When using keywords, remember to search for synonyms, spelling variations (British vs. American), plurals, etc.</li> </ul>	Concept A	Concept B	Concept C
	<b>OR</b>	<b>AND</b>	<b>OR</b>
<p><b>5. Limit your retrieval</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you're getting too many hits, try using the limits to narrow your results.</li> <li>Some databases allow you to limit by date, by age group, by publication type, by language etc.</li> </ul>	Limit options:		

**Helpful Tips:**

- The *scope note* 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 *subheadings* and the *focus/major topic* feature to further narrow your subject headings.