

PSYX 120 Research Methods I: Research Resources and Strategies

Feel free to contact me! Kate Zoellner, Education, Human Sciences, and Psychology Librarian, 243.4421, kate.zoellner@umontana.edu, AIM/Meebo: katezlib, Office Hours: Wednesday 1-3pm and by appointment.

Feel free also to stop by the library's information center desk, call 243-6866, chat on the library home page, email, or text 686.6683 (68-MONTE) for assistance.

Psychology research guide: <http://libguides.lib.umn.edu/psychology>

I. WHERE TO GO: Locating different types of information and sources.

To find... [information need]	use... [types of sources]	search... [recommended resources available]
general overview of your topic, a sub-field of Psychology, and or a psychological term	books and encyclopedias	ML Catalog. Covers books, media, maps, archival materials, and more. Oxford Reference Online. Full-text reference titles that cover facts, figures, definitions, and more from over 175 Oxford titles. This electronic resource covers all subject areas and includes such titles as <i>A Dictionary of Psychology</i> , <i>The Dictionary of the Social Sciences</i> , and <i>The Oxford Companion to the Mind</i> . PsycBOOKS. Full-text books and book chapters published by APA, and classic books from other publishers. As of July 2009, there are 2,078 books and 26,387 chapters, including 8 volumes of the APA/Oxford University Press <i>Encyclopedia of Psychology</i> . Coverage is from 1806- present; there are approximately 8,700 records with publication dates prior to 1953. Internet Search Engines. Web encyclopedias.
multidisciplinary information and articles	popular and scholarly journal articles	Academic Search Complete. Full-text multidisciplinary database that includes articles from 7,900 journals; both popular and peer-reviewed articles are included. Coverage dates vary by journal title. Other multidisciplinary databases are Infotrac and OmniFile Full Text .
deep coverage of a psychology topic; psychology research articles	peer-reviewed journal articles	PsycArticles. Full-text articles from the over 70 journals published by APA, the APA Educational Publishing Foundation, the Canadian Psychological Association, and Hogrefe & Huber. Most journals are covered from the initial volume and issue of publication of the journal. See http://libguides.lib.umn.edu/psychology for other useful databases (e.g., Science Direct , Taylor & Francis). You can also use Academic Search Complete and try the "Search Everything" tab from the library homepage. [Two indexes key to extensive research in Psychology (i.e., literature reviews) are PsycINFO and the Social Sciences Citation Index in the Web of Science .]
a specific journal	journals!	Journals. Use the "Journals" tab from the library homepage to find out if the library subscribes to a specific journal, and if so, where to find it.
research experiments and survey data	data sets	Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. "World's largest archive of social science data for research and instruction. Datasets may be downloaded for analysis and uploaded for archiving and sharing."

II. WHAT TO DO: Strategies for searching the library's resources.

Research is a **recursive process**. You will need to do more than one search, and to adjust the search terms you use based on your initial results. You will need to focus your research question/topic until it is a manageable size, too. If you're not sure of a topic, your textbook, magazines, the newspaper, and your professor can give you ideas. As a **student scholar**, you are building on what has been published in the Psychology literature with the aim of **contributing your perspective and new knowledge** to the field.

1st, write down your research question. **2nd**, break down the question into its key components.

3rd, develop a list of terms and synonyms to represent each component. **4th**, try your search. **5th**, look at the results. **6th**, revise your search based on the results. An example of the 3rd step:

facet 1 & synonyms	facet 2 & synonyms	facet 3 & synonyms
television, TV	violence, assault	teens, teenagers, adolescents, young adults, youth

What can you do if you search and...

find no or few sources?	find too many sources?

III. EVALUATE WHAT YOU FIND: Questions to consider.

While peer-review does provide a critical evaluation process, you still need to **determine if a given article meets your needs and the needs of your assignment**. You should **consider the author's authority, timeliness of the publication, scope of the article, and objectivity and documentation in the presentation of the study results**. Just as you should ask yourself who sponsors a web site and their potential bias, you should ask yourself who sponsored a research study and who published the article you are reading. One website to help you in evaluating materials is "Critical Evaluation of Resources" from The University of California Berkeley Library, at <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/evaluation.html>

IV. CITE YOUR SOURCES: Why and how.

Principles: 1. Intellectual property, 2. Access, 3. Economy, 4. Standardization, 5. Transparency.

From: Neville, C. (2007). *The complete guide to referencing and avoiding plagiarism*. New York: Open University Press.

"Plagiarism. Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due (APA Ethics Code Standard 8.11, Plagiarism)."

From: VandenBos, G. R. (Ed.). (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Check out the "APA Formatting and Style Guide" from OWL (The Purdue Online Writing Lab) at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> for APA guidance.