

# SEARCH TOOLS

Literature Search: a librarian's handout to introduce *tools, terms and techniques*

## SELECT the best tools:

### Abstract and citation database

provides short descriptions (abstracts) of and pointers to research material from a range of sources.

The full text of materials is **NOT included**, but abstracts help you determine whether to read the full text. You may be able to link through to the item in a full-text database or request the item via interlibrary loan.

Example:  
**Scopus**

**Full-text database** is a searchable collection of research literature that includes the entire text of an article or book, reproduced as a webpage and/or in PDF format, and other related resources.

These databases may be multidisciplinary (covering a range of subjects) or subject-specific (for one subject only).

Multidisciplinary example:  
**ScienceDirect**

**Search box on library homepage** often searches multiple databases and the library's catalog at once.

It can find a lot of research on a topic quickly, but it may bring back too many results from many different fields of study on a particular topic.

Certain databases may not be included, so it is still important to check the other databases.

**Library catalog** is an online tool in libraries usually used to find items housed physically in the library; it may also include electronic items.

You can find journal titles, but not articles by subject or article title in the catalog.

**Web search engine** returns high quantity of results from the full range of sources available on the web. Results are determined by some formula involving popularity and relevancy.

Though temptingly familiar, it is usually not recommended as the best place to start for scholarly research.



*At the library:  
Find research/subject  
guides online.*

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