

# Tips to Keep in Mind When Doing Research

## 1. Catalog vs. Databases

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The catalog can give you access to everything in the library and the ebook collections.

Books are great for gaining a basis in a subject.

The databases are organized by subject matter.

Databases give you access to articles that represent past and current research.

## 2. Boolean Operators

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AND narrows your search by connecting search terms (e.g. chocolate AND cake)

OR expands your search by pulling anything with either search term (e.g. chocolate OR cake)

NOT narrows your search by excluding one of the terms (e.g. chocolate NOT cake)

## 3. Keywords and Thesaurus

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Select only the most important words about your topic; leave out question words, etc.

A tool to help you identify the specific terms the database wants to hear.

Different databases call it by different names.

## 4. Limiters

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These narrow your search based on certain criteria.

The most commonly used limiters are Full Text and Scholarly/Peer-reviewed.

## 5. Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

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When the library does not have access to the full text of an article, you can borrow it through ILL.

Email the library with citation information for the article (title, author(s), dates, etc.). lbungo@villa.edu

Journal articles will be emailed to your Villa email as a PDF, and arrive within a week.

Physical items (e.g. books) will be available for pick up at the library, and take longer to arrive (7-10 days).

This isn't what you want to use the night before a paper is due.

## 6. Citation

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Guides and tutorials are available on the library's site under Research Resources.

Use the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) for specific guidelines, sample papers and examples.