



## Articles: Finding an article about your research topic

Use one of the library's databases to help you find an article about your research topic; these databases are designed to help you find articles quickly and easily.

### 1. Where to start:

From the library's home page, use **OneSearch**. Search in the "**Articles**" scope for more focused results.

You can also choose an article database from our list of **Databases by Subject**, also called **Choose a Database**

### 2. Doing a database search:

1. Think of some **keywords** (important words describing your topic)
2. Type your best keyword(s) into the search box. You need a keyword for each aspect of your topic.
3. By default, OneSearch will look for all the words you type.

*For example:* **death penalty racism**  
**drinking college students grades**

→ Do you need articles from scholarly or peer-reviewed journals only? After you have some search results, look to the left of the list for an option to display only scholarly or peer-reviewed results

### 3. Evaluating your results:

- Be choosy. An article can contain all your keywords but still not be useful!
- Look closely at the title of the article for clues to what it is about. You can view the abstract (a short summary) by clicking on the title.

If you get no results or too few results:

- Check your spelling.
- Don't type long phrases or questions. Use only the most important words.
- Try different keywords for your search. Think of related terms or synonyms.

*For example*, if your search was: **death penalty racism**

Try one of these instead: **capital punishment racism**  
**death penalty discrimination**

### 4. Getting a copy of the actual article:

Library databases often include online copies of the articles themselves, or **full text**. On your results list, look for a link or an icon indicating that full text is available online.

If you don't see any full text, click the "**Search for Full Text**" button. If the article is available anywhere online, you will be given a link to it. If it is not available, you may request a copy through Interlibrary Loan.

If you have any trouble finding a copy of an article, ask at the Research Assistance Desk for help.

There's an expanded version of this guide on the web at <https://libguides.csusb.edu/findarticle>

**If you have any questions, please consult a reference librarian or call (909) 537-5091.**