How to Locate Periodical Articles

What is a periodical? A publication that comes out at regular intervals (weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.). It can be a magazine, journal, or newspaper.

The library has some print subscriptions; more likely you will access articles through the online databases found on the library home page. [www.mcckc.edu/library/maple-woods](http://www.mcckc.edu/library/maple-woods)

What is a citation? The information needed to find or cite an article: the author of the article, title of the article, title of the periodical, date, pages (and which database you searched, if applicable).

Most of the databases offer a citation tool; however, many of the citations provided include errors and the citation may not be in the most recent format. The reference side of the library has handout/guides to the APA, MLA, and Chicago citation styles.

What is an abstract? A short summary of an article.

What is the difference between the Online Databases and an Internet search?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online Databases</th>
<th>Web</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library pays for subscription</td>
<td>Freely available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contains articles and reference information</td>
<td>Contains all kinds of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information has been edited and fact-checked</td>
<td>Information may or may not be reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credible and authoritative</td>
<td>You must evaluate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citation tool included</td>
<td>You must construct citation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always provide a date</td>
<td>May or may not provide a date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updated regularly</td>
<td>May go years without an update</td>
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Searching the Databases

- Use only the key concepts/words as search terms. Connect these with the word “and” to make your search more specific.
- Use related words or synonyms to revise your search as needed.

Are you getting too many articles?

- Limit to “full text.”
- Many databases allow you to narrow by periodical type (magazine, newspaper, or journal) and/or publication date within your search results.
- Add search terms using “and”. (Example: single mothers and finance)
- Use “not” to narrow your search by excluding search terms. (Example: apple not computer)
- Use quotation marks around phrases, especially names, to narrow your search.
- Use narrower, more specific terms. (Example: Persian cats in place of cats)

Are you not getting enough articles?

- Try synonyms and related terms including those suggested by the databases.
- Use fewer search terms.
- Use “or” to broaden your search. (Example: movies or films or motion pictures)
- Check your spelling or use alternative spellings.
- Use broader search terms. (Example: student financial aid rather than student loans)
- Use truncation. (Example: comput* will bring up articles with the words compute, computers, computing, or any word that begins with that root.)
- Try a different database; ask a librarian for a recommendation.
Evaluating What You Find

- Read the abstract for a short summary of the article to determine if it is relevant.
- Is the author identified? Are credentials listed? (Look at end of article or bottom of first page.)
- Check the date for currency. Is this important for your topic?
- Look at the length of the article. Is it long enough to provide sufficient content?
- Who is the intended audience? (Determine the level of language: easy? general adult? scholarly?)
- Does the article contain a list of references at the end?
- What is the purpose of the article: to inform? persuade? entertain?
- What type of publication is it: scholarly? professional? general interest? news magazine?
- Does the publication that the article is in have a bias? Does it present different points of view?

These databases contain periodical articles:

- Academic Search Elite
- Biography Reference Bank
- Consumer Health Complete
- Criminal Justice Periodicals
- GreenFILE
- Health Reference Center Academic
- JSTOR
- Kansas City Business Journal
- MAS Ultra
- MasterFILE Premier
- Newspaper Source
- Nexis Uni
- Opposing Viewpoints in Context
- Professional Development Collection
- ProQuest Nursing & Allied Health Source
- ProQuest Research Library
- ProQuest Sociology
- Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection
- Science Reference Center