What is a database?
A database is a collection of information accessible in a digital format, such as records for books, encyclopedias, e-books, or journal, magazine, and newspaper articles. Each record consists of fields such as the author field, the title field, and the subject field. Sometimes, the full text of those books or articles is included in the record.

A few examples of research databases include:
- Academic Onefile (InfoTrac)
- General OneFile (InfoTrac)
- Omnifile Full Text Select

The library’s book catalog is a type of database. The strategies you use to search in the periodical databases will also work in the book catalog. The same strategies also work for searching the web with a search engine like Google.

How is searching a database different than searching the web?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research databases</th>
<th>Websites</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contain information written by professionals and experts</td>
<td>Can be written by anyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contain published works which have been</td>
<td>Are not necessarily checked by an expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be limited by subject, so you get exactly the articles you need and no more</td>
<td>Make you sort through thousands of hits</td>
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Where do I find the research databases?
From the library’s webpage, guides.baker.edu, click on Find Articles & Databases. You’ll see a list of categories of databases offered by Baker. Click on the category that relates to your topic, then click on one of the database links to begin searching.

Combine terms with AND, OR, NOT. Don’t search for a sentence or question. Use quotation marks " " for a two or more work phrase.

Limit Your Search:
- **Full Text**— This means you can view and print the entire article, instead of just the citation or abstract.
- **Scholarly articles**— This means the articles are from an educational journal. Other words/phrases for this are “Peer reviewed”, “Academic”, and “Refereed”.
How do I search in a database?

You can do a keyword search, using the words you would naturally use to describe your topic or a subject search, using standardized terms that databases use to describe various topics. A keyword search looks for the exact words you search for in all fields. This type of search will miss the articles on your topic that use a synonym to refer to the topic. Don’t include words like “effect”, “cause”, “relationship”, “of”, “at”, “to”, or “in” because these will limit your search results so that you miss relevant articles on your topic.

Using a subject search lets you find articles about the concept you are searching on regardless of which word the article uses for the concept. A subject search also narrows your topic because it searches only in the subject field of the record. Many articles may include one of your keywords, but have an entirely different primary subject.

Boolean Operators

Use AND, OR, and NOT whenever you are searching for more than one term.

Use OR to broaden your search for more results.

Use AND or NOT to narrow your search to fewer results.

Use parentheses to control the order of your commands.

Example: (Greek OR Roman) AND Mythology

Exact Phrases

To search for a phrase all together in a certain order, use quotation marks.

For Example: “no child left behind”

Truncation

An asterisk (*) is often used as a wildcard. It allows you to search for all possible endings for a word. For example, teen * will search for teens, teens, teenage, teenager, and teenagers. If you don’t use a wildcard, you will have to do five different searches for each of these words.