

How to...

Search Effectively

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UTA Libraries

<http://library.uta.edu/Main/howTo.uta>

Search Terms

The appropriate search terms will help you find your information.

Words and Phrases

Think of the most important words and/or phrases that can be used to describe your topic.

- Use words and/or phrases (war, drugs, death penalty, World War II).
- **DO NOT** use whole sentences or questions as your keywords (should marijuana be illegal) because all of the words in the sentence have to appear in the results (exception: some search systems like yahoo and google ignore certain common words like in, on, and, etc).

Combining Terms

You will usually need to tell the search system (UTA Libraries' Catalog, Academic Search Premier, Google) how you want it to combine your search terms. The possibilities are:

- use **AND** or **all of these---** when you want to find all of the words in the results. (some systems will assume and in between terms—like Google)
- use **OR** or **any of these----**when you want to find any of the words in the results.
- use **NOT** ---when you want to find none of the words that follow the operator NOT.
- use “ ” or **as a phrase** ---when you want to find the entire phrase (some systems will assume any group of words together are a phrase—like Academic Search Premier)

Popular Types of Searching

Title and Author Searching

Good to use when you know the title or author of the item you are looking for.

- Title Searching in a Library Catalog ----Give the exact title leaving off the initial article (a, an, the). Example: For The Grapes of Wrath, search grapes of wrath
- Author Searching in a Library Catalog----Give the author name, last name then first name. Example: Austen, Jane

Keyword Searching

Good to use when searching for items on a topic. When you search by keyword, the system you are searching in, looks for the exact matches to the words or phrases for which you are searching.

- Start with 2 or 3 keywords/ phrases to search first.
- If you find lots of results, add another keyword or a phrase.
- If you find no results, check spelling and then take away a keyword or phrase from the search.
- When you find a perfect item, look to see if there is a subject link that will link you to more items on this same subject.

Subject Searching

Good to use if you are finding nothing using the keyword search or if you know the appropriate subject term for the search system you are using. When you search by subject, the system you are searching in, looks for all matches that have been assigned for this particular subject.

Searching Examples (Keyword Searching)

UTA Libraries' Catalog at <http://pulse.uta.edu/>

Simple Search **Advanced Search** Course Reserves New Books

1. Search for: "test anxiety" Quick Limit (Optional):
(Use with Keywords, Title, or Journal Title searches only)
None

2. Find results in: **Keywords -- use quotes ("global warming" and pollution)**
Title -- omit beginning a, an, the
Journal/Magazine/Newspaper Title
Author -- last name, first name
Subject Heading -- (medical care Texas)
Call Number -- (Z699.A1 A65 2002)

50 records per page Search Reset Refine Your Search

- Enter words and/or phrases in the *1. Search for:* box
- Enclose phrases in quotes ""
- Use **and, or, not** between words/phrases
- Choose **Keywords** in the *2. Find results in:* box
- Click on Search

Google (search engine) at <http://www.google.com>

Web Images Groups Directory News

+ "test anxiety" + "college students"

Google Search I'm Feeling Lucky

- [Advanced Search](#)
- [Preferences](#)
- [Language Tools](#)

- Enter words and/or phrases (Enclose phrases in quotes “”)
- Putting “and” between terms is unnecessary. The search engine already assumes this
- The search engine automatically excludes common words, single letters and single numbers unless in a phrase
- Use + to indicate an essential term/phrase: +“college students”
- Click on Google Search

Academic Search Premier (ASP) at <http://library.uta.edu/Main/browseTitle.uta#a>

Find: in

and in

and in [Under has 0 items.](#)

- Enter words and/or phrases in the multiple boxes and choose AND, OR, NOT to combine the boxes.
- If you type multiple keywords into one box, use **and, or, not** between the words. Words next to each other not separated by **and, or, not** will be seen as phrases
- Choose Default Fields (looks everywhere in the record except in the full-text article for your keywords)
- Click on Search

Some Hints

- **Capitalization** does not matter in Goggle, the library catalog, or ASP
- **Misspelled words**--- Google will suggest other spellings while the library catalog and ASP will say nothing is found.
- **Truncation** will allow you to search for multiple endings of a word by using a character at the end of a root word. (In the library catalog, theat? finds theatre, theatres, theater, theatrical. In ASP, use theat*. Truncation does not work in Google.)