

Quick tips for Quality Research

Search strategies and assessing resource quality

Search Engine

vs

Online Databases



- Anyone can post with little, if any, editorial review
- Contains content on almost any topic, so searches result in overwhelming numbers of webpages
- You can find up-to-the-minute information
- Much of the content on the internet is free
- Use for background information or information from the government or other specialty organizations



- Materials in library databases have been reviewed by editors or gone through the peer review process
- Often tailored toward a specific audience or subject
- Due to the review process, information is not up-to-the-minute
- Requires a subscription - access APS databases through Canvas
- Use for credible, scholarly articles

Search Strategies for Search Engines and Databases

Search Engines	Databases
Change word order: dog chow vs chow dog example.	Use quotations around words to keep them together. "materials that rot" example
Scan search results for different words to use in research: materials that rot/biodegradable example.	Use words like and or not to refine your search.
Use the minus sign or plus sign to narrow results: beetle -insect example, beetle +virginia example	Click on peer review for the most scholarly information.
Use quotations around words to keep them together. "materials that rot"	Search in multiple databases. Different databases search different resources. Use Gale Cengage Learning for the widest search.
Use NoodleTools to cite your sources. Other online citation tools may not create accurate citations. NoodleTools is integrated with the online databases.	Access databases from any Canvas course using the <i>APS Library Resources</i> link.
If you use different citation website, use Purdue University or The University of Maryland to confirm accuracy.	You know the website you are using is a database if your url contains words like: <i>ebscohost, gale, or britannica</i> .

High Quality Resources

- Online Databases
- Government sites
- EDU sites
- .org sites - check for bias
- Documents found in Google Scholar



**KEEP
CALM
AND
CHECK YOUR
SOURCES**

Medium to low quality - Use for background, but include other *high quality* resources.

- Blogs
- Hobbyist sites

Do Not Use

- Articles from Wikipedia
- Anonymous articles
- Sites like: Answer, Buzzfeed, Quora
- Social Media sites



Date

Relevance

Accuracy

Motivation

Authority