



Research Strategies

This orientation will show you how to find the best information in the shortest amount of time. You will be able to use it as a framework for most of the research that you will do in college. Remember that the librarian is your partner in research; she can guide you from beginning to end during your research project.

Reference Books are useful for overviews of a topic. The information is current, concise, and often highlights specific aspects of a subject. Reference books must be used in the library; plan to take notes or photocopy the information. Start your research after consulting books such as the following:

Encyclopedia of Modern American Social Issues

Ref HN 57 .K73 1997

Encyclopedia of Bioethics

Ref QH 332 .E52 2004 v.1-5

Encyclopedia of Terrorism

Ref HV 6431 .K883 2003

Circulating books can be checked out. They are found in the library's bookstacks. Books develop a topic in detail. You search the [library catalog](#) to find books on your subject. Try some of these words and phrases in the subject search box:

Homelessness

School violence

Global warming

Poverty

Interracial dating

Children's rights

Euthanasia

Gangs

Education, bilingual

Abortion

Human rights

Gun control

Magazine, Newspaper and Journal Articles can provide current information on your topic. They can be found through the library's databases. The following are just a few that the library subscribes to. You can also search the databases from home.

Issues and Controversies

This database specializes in current and controversial issues. It gives overviews of topics, as well as statistics, tables and graphs, history, pro/con arguments and more.

Expanded Academic ASAP

Magazines and academic journals can be found here. A Subject Browse Search will find many articles on a subject. An Advanced Search will find articles on a specific aspect of a topic. For example, combine search words such as *homeless* and *mentally ill*, or *terrorism* and *California*.

LexisNexis

For current news events, whether local or distant, try this database. It contains full-text articles from U.S. and international newspapers. It is especially useful for finding articles from **The New York Times**, **the San Francisco Chronicle**, and **the San Jose Mercury News**.

Web Sites

Beware of the Web. If you're not an expert on your topic, don't just search using Google or Yahoo. Try one of the search engines linked from the library's Home Page. Click [Research Aids](#) on the left-hand margin of the library Home Page. Then, select [Best Websites](#), and search using one of the search engines listed, such as IPL2 (Internet Public Library). You'll get fewer, but better quality sites.

[IPL2](#) (internet Public Library)
Subject index to Internet resources.

[INFOMINE](#)
Sources suitable for academic research; selected by UC scholars.

Google

Google is loaded with information – some excellent, some fraudulent. Just remember that you must evaluate what you find here. Rather than doing a general search, try some of Google's more sophisticated search possibilities, such as the following:

[Google Advanced Search](#)

Find a Powerpoint presentation on your topic. Click on "file format" and select "Microsoft Powerpoint".

[Google Videos](#)

Find a video on your topic.

[Google Scholar](#)

Scholarly articles are sometimes available here in full-text, but often only an abstract is found.

Always remember to ask a Librarian if you need help:

- In developing a search strategy appropriate to your assignment and thesis.
- To evaluate your sources and to suggest additional research options.
- For assistance with the [Works Cited](#) format.