

## Search strategy for library users

Your search strategy is your plan of action that takes you from thinking about the information you need to processing the information that you have found.

Regardless of the resources that you are using - a database, an index, or a www search engine - the searching strategy is essentially the same.

IDENTIFY KEYWORDS

SELECT RESOURCES

<http://dozer.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/SuRe/subject.php>

FIND RELEVANT INFORMATION

- *Build a search*
- *Use search operators*
- *Limit search to fields*
- *Use wildcards*

EVALUATE SOURCES

PROCESS INFORMATION

<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/>

## Subject Resources@Library

*Selected* research resources are listed for each subject (eg Finance, Criminology, Genetics, Musicology, etc.) as well as specialised areas (eg Images, Patents, Theses etc.)

They are called *Subject Resources@Library* and include academic materials (subject to editorial or peer-review) and other *reliable* sources.

Connect to *your* Subject Resources@Library

<http://dozer.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/SuRe/subject.php>

INFORMATION DIVISION

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## Library information contacts

[www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/contact.html](http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/contact.html)

- *ALL FACULTIES* 03-8344-0444

EXCEPT...

- *LAND & FOOD RESOURCES*

Burnley	03-9250-6851
Creswick	03-5321-4115
Dookie	03-5833-9224
Gilbert Chandler	03-9749-8012
Glenormiston	03-5557-8256
Longerenong	03-5362-2236
McMillan	03-5622-6003
Parkville	03-8344-5017

- *LAW* 03-8344-6177

- *VETERINARY SCIENCE*

Parkville	03-8344-7353
Werribee	03-9731-2331

## Key library websites

- *INQUIRY:* [www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/inquiry/](http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/inquiry/)  
*Includes FAQs*
- *LIBRARY HOME:* [www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/](http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/)
- *LIBRARY CATALOGUE:* [cat.lib.unimelb.edu.au/](http://cat.lib.unimelb.edu.au/)
- *CITATION STYLES:* [www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/](http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/)
- *RESOURCES@LIBRARY:*  
[dozer.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/SuRe/subject.php](http://dozer.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/SuRe/subject.php)
- *CONTACTS FOR RESEARCH HELP:*  
[www.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/telars/staff/lr.html](http://www.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/telars/staff/lr.html)



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Strategy for library users

Advanced search techniques can be used to search the library catalogue, journal article indexes, databases or www search engines.

Common advanced techniques include limiting a search to fields (subject, author, publication title, date etc.) and using wildcard symbols.

## 1 Limit your search by FIELDS

When you display your search results you will see records that are made up of a number of fields.

Fields are simply individual parts of the record which give you essential facts - for example

- author,*
- title,*
- summary/abstract,*

whether it is in a

- book,*
- journal,*
- magazine etc.*

and citation details.

To make your search more precise and focused, you can limit it to a particular field.

For example, the search *keynes limited to the author field* retrieves only material written by Keynes, and not material where Keynes is the subject of someone else's writing.

## Limit by Author

Limiting by author is useful when you know an author has published in a particular field and you want to find out what else they have written on the same topic.

For example which articles or books are central to your topic and who wrote them? Use these authors to find other material on your topic.

## Limit by Publication Date

Do you know any key journals in your subject area - it may be useful to browse articles from these titles.

Search the journal title field to find articles within a particular journal.

## Limit by Subject

Limiting a search to find words in the subject field is the most precise and efficient way to search for material on a particular topic.

However every index, database or catalogue has their own specialised thesaurus of subject words which may not be the same as the words you use to describe your topic.

See **Smart Searching 1**

## 2 Using WILDCARDS ?\*!

Wildcard symbols vary depending on the index, database or search engine you are using.

Usually the wildcard symbol is

- \* (an asterisk)  
*but it could be*
- ? (a question mark)  
*or*
- ! (an exclamation mark)

Substitute the wildcard symbol for one or more letters to find:

- plurals
- words with the same root but variant endings
- alternative spellings

Examples:

- restrict\** finds:  
*restrictions*  
*restricted*
- theor\** finds:  
*theories*  
*theory*  
*theorists*
- organ\*tion\** finds:  
*organization*  
*organisations*  
*organizational*

For more information about advanced search techniques ask a librarian.