



Information resources for PhD

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UAB Universitat Autònoma
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Servei de
Biblioteques UAB

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Search strategy

4

SEARCH STRATEGY

Identify the search terms

Identify and define the information need



Construct the search

Analyse the relevance and range of the results

Identify and define the information you need

Specify the topic in one or more clear, concise sentences.

Include criteria of place, time, gender, age, etc.

- ✓ Checking whether the search result needs to be a specific data item or what has already been written about a topic, exhaustively or partially
- ✓ Identifying the key concept
- ✓ Reframing your idea into one or more questions



Establish the level and the scope of your search

- Restrict the **date range** to be covered by the search
- Limit the **geographical scope** of the search
- Try using **English to broaden** your **search** as this is the number one language of science.
- Select the **document type**: monograph, article, thesis, etc.



Identify the keywords

Success depends largely on choosing appropriate **search terms**



- Use **meaningful** terms that represent important concepts
- **Forget about prepositions, conjunctions, articles, pronouns, adjectives or adverbs**
- Look for **synonyms** and **related terms**
- Equivalents in English and other major languages

Example

Focus on the topic described in the paragraph below and **identify the key concepts**. These will be the search terms, to be used to find information on the Search Tool, database, etc.

*Analyse and describe **public expenditure policies** in Spain, **economic impact** and the main **economic reforms***

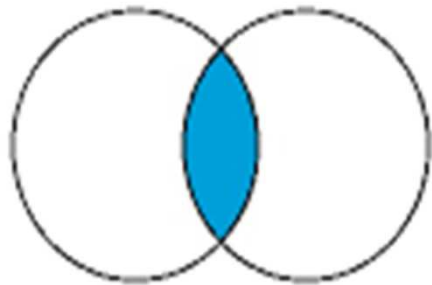
The highlighted terms will be the keywords but keep in mind that we want information on the present day, so you will have to filter the results by date

Now think of alternative forms of these keywords: synonyms and equivalents in other languages, words that are more specific or more general, to use in your search:

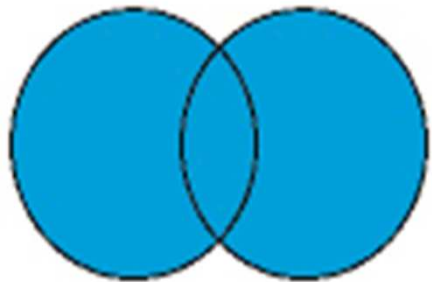
Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3
Budget policies	Economic effects	Economic measures

Boolean operators

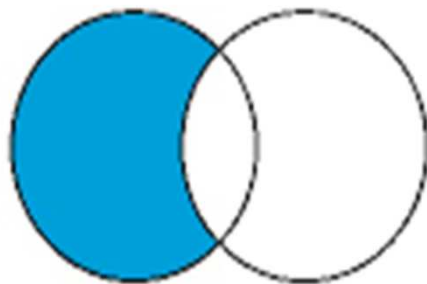
Boolean operators are used to search for information. They combine the search terms to refine the search and return exactly what you need.



AND +



OR |



NOT -

- **AND (i, y, &)**: returns documents that contain both terms.
- **OR (+, O)**: returns documents that contain any one of the terms.
- **NOT (- , AND NOT)**: returns documents that contain one term, but excludes all those that contain the other one.

Example

Our search topic is **Budgeting and public expenditure policies in Spain**

Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3
Budget policies	Economic effects	Economic measures

We combine synonyms with OR and different terms with AND. This gives:

(budget policies OR public expenditure policies) AND
(economic impact OR economic reform) AND (Spain)

Other operators: truncation

Use truncations and wildcards: signs that let you search by the word's root or replace letters in it.

- The keywords can have suffixes and retrieving all these variants can help in finding the documents we want
- Truncation retrieves the term exactly as written plus the term with its suffixes
- The most common are: * ! ? \$ #
- **Example:**
- **econ*** (retrieves all documents that contain the terms: **economia**, **econòmic**, **economies**, **economy** etc.)

Check how relevant and comprehensive your results are

Relevant

- Do the results fit your information needs? Are they useful for your project?

Comprehensive

- Have you retrieved all the results you need?

If not, you may need to tweak your strategy

Tips on tweaking the search strategy

If you get too many results

- Add more major concepts and combine them with AND
- Remove any truncations
- Use descriptors
- Search in narrower fields (for example, the title or the keywords)

If you get too few results

- Remove the less important concepts
- Add synonyms and combine them with OR
- Use truncations
- Widen the search to more general fields (for example, abstract) or to all the fields

Information sources

Information sources are the objects or subjects that generate, contain, provide or transfer information

✓ **Primary sources** give direct access to information. Examples: books, journals, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, etc.

✓ **Secondary sources do not provide new information** but give access to the primary sources. Examples: catalogues, databases, thematic portals, etc.



Search fields and search types

Search fields are the parts of the document records in which we look for the terms we have chosen. The most common search fields are *free text, title, author, keywords, topic, etc.* Most information sources offer two options: **basic search and advanced search.**

✓ A **basic search**, in general, only lets us search in a single field in the entry: by author, by title, etc.

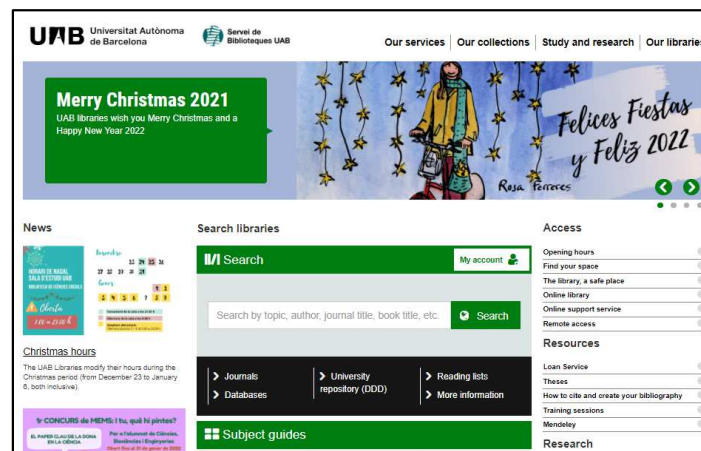
✓ An advanced search lets us combine various search fields, for example title and author, or title and topic, using the operators that we learned about in Module 2.1. This type of search yields more precise results.



Know the most important sources of information

Below is a suggestion for locating books, articles and other academic sources.

Basic sources	Specialist sources
✓ UAB Libraries Search Tool	✓ Databases
✓ University Union Catalogue of Catalonia (CCUC)	✓ Subject guides
	✓ Specialist search engines, repositories, etc.



UAB Libraries Search Tool (Cercador)

www.uab.cat/libraries

The screenshot shows the 'Search libraries' interface. At the top, there is a green header bar with the text 'Search libraries' on the left, 'Search' with a magnifying glass icon in the center, and 'My account' with a user icon on the right. Below the header is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search by topic, author, journal title, book title, etc.' and a green 'Search' button with a magnifying glass icon. At the bottom, there is a dark navigation bar with three columns of links: 'Journals', 'Databases', 'University repository (DDD)', 'Reading lists', and 'More information'.

Search libraries

Search My account

Search by topic, author, journal title, book title, etc. Search

> Journals
> Databases

> University repository (DDD)

> Reading lists
> More information

UAB Libraries Search Tool

A tool that lets you search in all the resources of the UAB Libraries.

The search is performed simultaneously in:

- the UAB Libraries catalogue
- the UAB digital library (digital resources provided by the UAB Libraries)
- the digital repositories DDD and Traces

It lets you to:

- restrict results according to various criteria
- access the full text (if it is available)
- reserve and borrow documents
- save lists of documents, send references and export them to Mendeley, the bibliographic reference manager

Search Results

On performing a search, the tool shows you all documents, whether in print or digital format. You can apply **filters** to limit the results.

Filter Availability:

- To see only physical documents: choose *Held by the library*
- To see only electronic documents: choose *Available online*

Filter by **other features**, such as Library, Resource Type, Collection, Creation date, Language, etc.

Results are sorted by **relevance**, but you can sort them either by **date** (newest to oldest or oldest to newest), **title**, or **author**.

Basic search

SCOPE

The screenshot displays the UTM Libraries search interface. At the top, a green navigation bar contains the logo and menu items: LIBRARY SEARCH, JOURNALS, DATABASES, CITATION LINKER, BROWSE SEARCH, and PURCHASE REQUEST. Below this is a search bar with the text "Latin American cinema" and a dropdown menu set to "Everything". A large blue arrow labeled "SCOPE" points to the search bar area.

Below the search bar, the results section shows "0 selected PAGE 1 39,617 Results" with options to "Save query" and "Personalize". On the left, a "Tweak your results" sidebar contains various filters: "Expand My Results", "Sort by Relevance", "New Records", "Availability", "Subject", "Author/Creator", "Library", "Resource Type", "Collection", "Creation Date", and "Journal Title". A large blue arrow labeled "SORT BY" points to the "Sort by" dropdown, and another large blue arrow labeled "FILTERS" points to the sidebar.

The main results area lists four books:

1. **Latin American cinema** / Stephen M. Hart. Hart, Stephen M., author. 2015. Available Online >
2. **Humor in Latin American Cinema** edited by Juan Poblete, Juana Suárez. Poblete, Juan. editor.; Suárez, Juana. editor. 2016. Available Online >
3. **The Child in Contemporary Latin American Cinema** by Deborah Martin. Martin, Deborah. author. 2019. Available Online >
4. **Domestic labor in twenty-first century Latin American cinema** / Elizabeth Osborne, Sofía Ruiz-Alfaro, editors. Osborne, Elizabeth. editor.; Ruiz-Alfaro, Sofía. editor. 2020. Available Online >

Each result includes a book cover, a "BOOK" label, the title, author/editor information, the year, and an "Available Online" link. A large blue arrow labeled "ACCESS TO FULL TEXT" points to the "Available Online" link in the fourth result.

FILTERS

ACCESS TO FULL TEXT

Advanced search

Search for: Everything Reading lists CCUC/PUC Ebsco databases

Search filters

Any field ▼ contains ▼ Enter a search term _____

AND ▼ Any field ▼ contains ▼ Enter a search term _____


+ ADD A NEW LINE

Material Type
All items ▼

Language
Any language ▼

Start Date:
Day ▼ Month ▼ Year _____

End Date:
Day ▼ Month ▼ Year _____

 SEARCH

How to find books and journals

In the Search Tool we will find **books and journals** in both print and electronic format.

ELECTRONIC

- Direct access to the full text (if bought/subscribed to by the UAB)

PRINT

- Number of copies/collections, availability and library where it is located

E-BOOK

2  BOOK
Birds of South-East Asia / Craig Robson ; illustrated by Richard Allen [and thirteen others].
Robson, Craig, author.; Allen, Richard, illustrator.
2015
[Available Online >](#)

PRINTED BOOK

5  BOOK
The East Asian miracle : economic growth and public policy
Banc Mundial.
1993
[Available at Ciències Socials C. Socials-Planta 0 \(E6\(59\) Eas\) and other locations >](#)

Other searches

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), October 12, 15

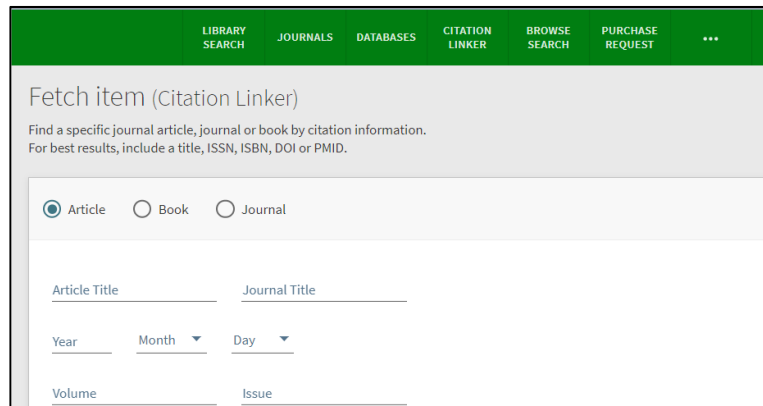
LIBRARY SEARCH Search in Libraries Collection	JOURNALS Search and browse by journal collections	DATABASES Database Search
CITATION LINKER Fetch Item by citation description	BROWSE SEARCH Browse Search	PURCHASE REQUEST Purchase request
NEWSPAPERS Newspapers	BOOKS ON TRIAL Books on trial	

Finding articles

In the Search Tool we can find journal articles (DDD, databases like Dialnet, Elsevier, Wiley, Proquest, or WOS)

- **To search for a particular article**, we can search it by its **title**. If we don't find it, we can search by the **title of the journal** it is published in.
- We can also use the **Citation linker**:

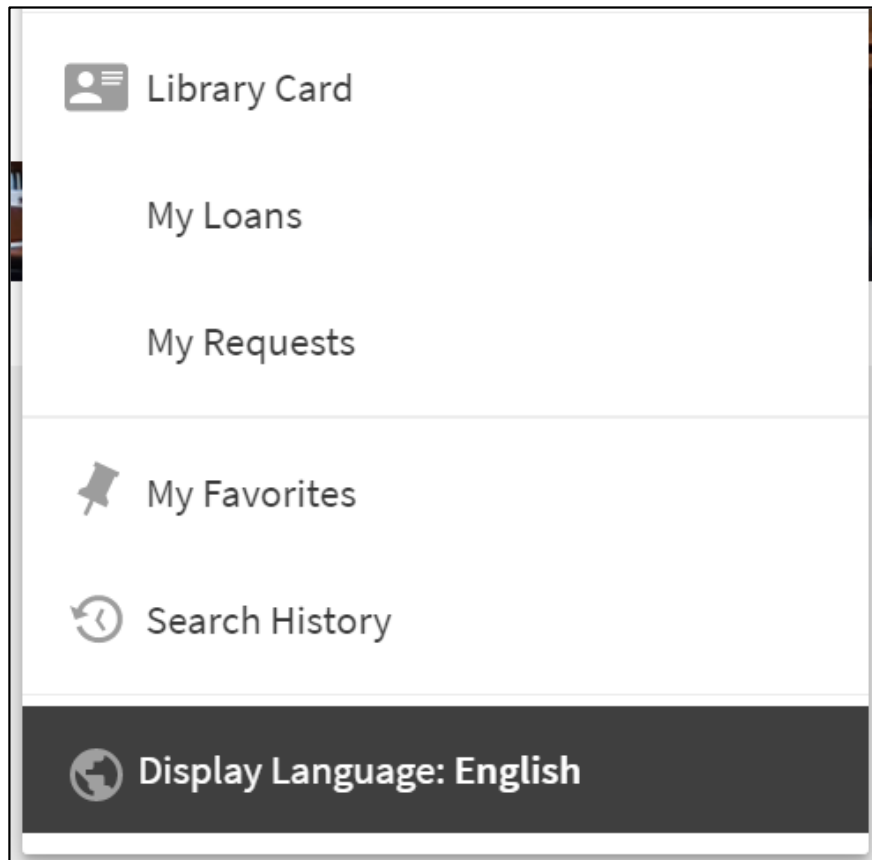
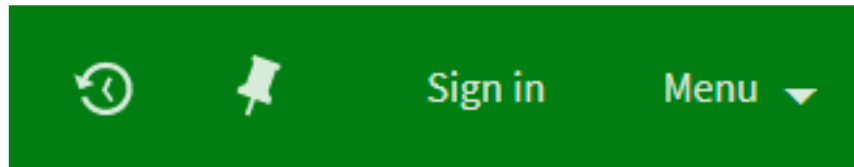
CITATION
LINKER



The screenshot shows the 'Fetch item (Citation Linker)' interface. It features a green navigation bar with options: LIBRARY SEARCH, JOURNALS, DATABASES, CITATION LINKER (selected), BROWSE SEARCH, and PURCHASE REQUEST. Below the navigation bar, the title 'Fetch item (Citation Linker)' is displayed, followed by the instruction: 'Find a specific journal article, journal or book by citation information. For best results, include a title, ISSN, ISBN, DOI or PMID.' There are three radio buttons for selection: 'Article' (selected), 'Book', and 'Journal'. Below these are input fields for 'Article Title' and 'Journal Title'. There are also dropdown menus for 'Year', 'Month', and 'Day', and input fields for 'Volume' and 'Issue'.

- **If we are looking for articles within a particular topic**, we can search by topic (for example, *Spanish economy*) and we can filter the results by “peer-reviewed journals” or by *Resource type*: “articles”, “reviews”, “newsletter articles”, etc.

Sign in



You have to sign in to:

- Get access to the electronic resources
- Carry out loan operations
- Save records and queries

Loan service for PhD students:

- Up to 20 items
- For 7 or 28 days
- Renewals: up to 42 or 168 days

Consortial Borrowing (PUC)



How to get it

Resource Sharing >

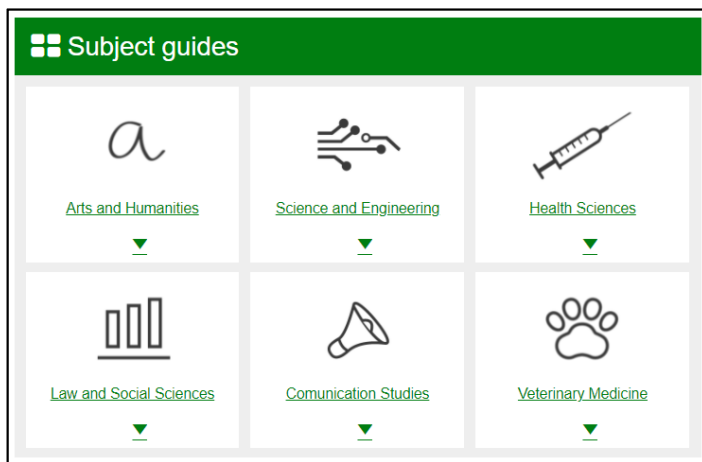
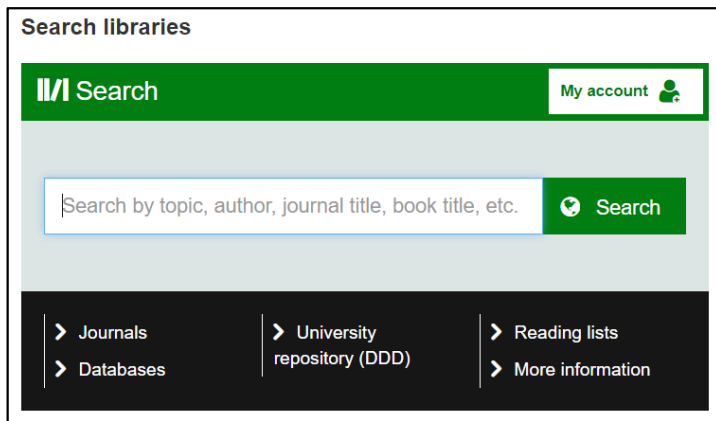
- Up to 10 items from other institutions
- For 21 days
- Renewals: up to 126 days

Where to look? Access to e-resources from outside the UAB

The screenshot displays a library website interface. On the left, under the heading "Search libraries", there is a green search bar with the text "birds" and a green "Search" button with a magnifying glass icon. Above the search bar is a green bar with the text "Search" and a "My account" link with a person icon. Below the search bar, there is a dark grey navigation bar with links: "> Journals", "> Databases", "> University repository (DDD)", "> Reading lists", and "> More information". On the right side, under the heading "Access", there is a list of links: "Opening hours", "Find your space", "The library, a safe place", "Online library", "Online support service", and "Remote access". The "Remote access" link is highlighted with a blue box. Below the "Access" section is a "Resources" section with links: "Loan Service", "Theses", "How to cite and create your bibliography", "Training sessions", and "Mendeley".

How to search on the internet

Not all information available on the internet is reliable!



- **Search engines:** search by **keywords** and show a list of automatically indexed web pages. Useful for finding documents and websites, they give access to **up-to-date information** and retrieve a large amount of information
- **Thematic portals:** websites that offer a **set of resources and services** around a specific topic, with information selected by experts in the field. Example: subject guides from the UAB Library Service

Internet search engines

- Databases of automatically indexed web pages
- Allow you to make queries based on one or more words that appear in the indexed documents
- Useful for finding documents and websites
- Give access to up-to-date information
- Retrieve a large amount of information

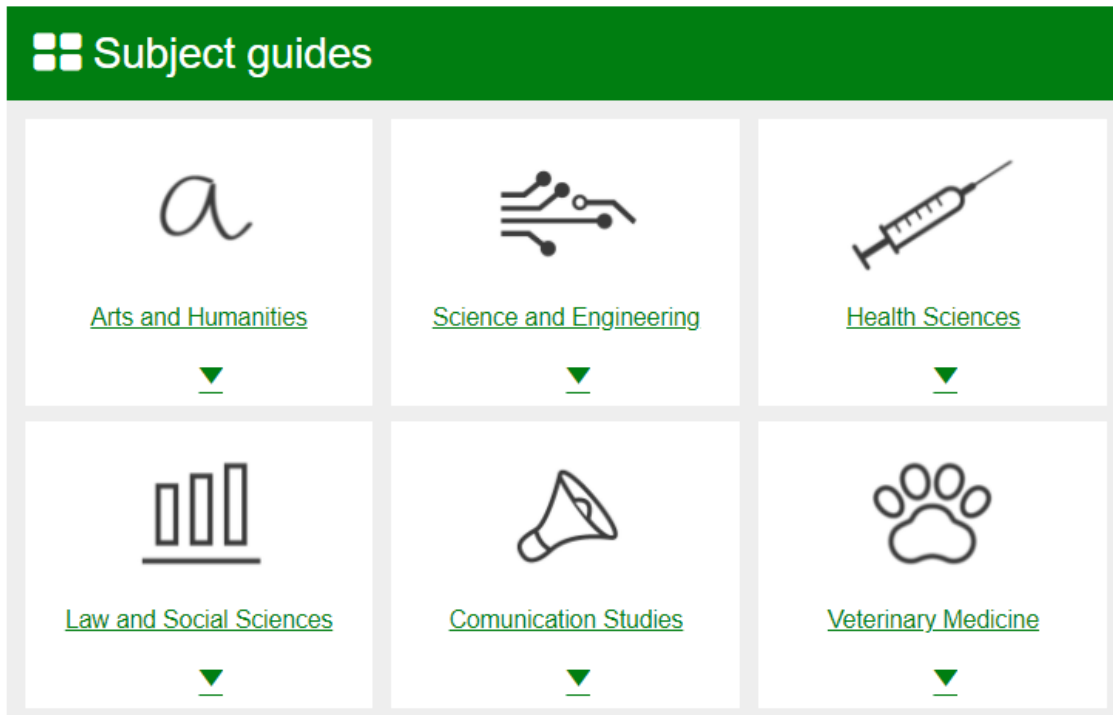


Danger of intoxication

Google Scholar: a good starting point that gives a general overview. Focuses on the world of research and academic study: specialising in academic journal articles, research projects, reports, theses, books, etc.

<https://scholar.google.es/>

Subject guides



- The UAB Libraries offer subject guides with all the information sources on a particular subject.
- Available at: www.uab.cat/libraries/ or at www.uab.cat/web/study-and-research/subject-guides-1345738248566.html

Online press

The portal **El Quiosc** offers you the **online press and press databases** subscribed to by the UAB, plus other useful resources: media directories, news search engines, etc.

<http://www.bib.uab.es/premsa/>

- El Quiosc
- Bases de dades de premsa
- Directori de diaris i revistes
- Notícies
- Recursos de premsa
- Contacte

Cercar diaris i revistes per àrea geogràfica



Cercar diaris i revistes per títol

 [\[Cerca avançada\]](#)

També podeu consultar [+diaris i revistes al directori](#)

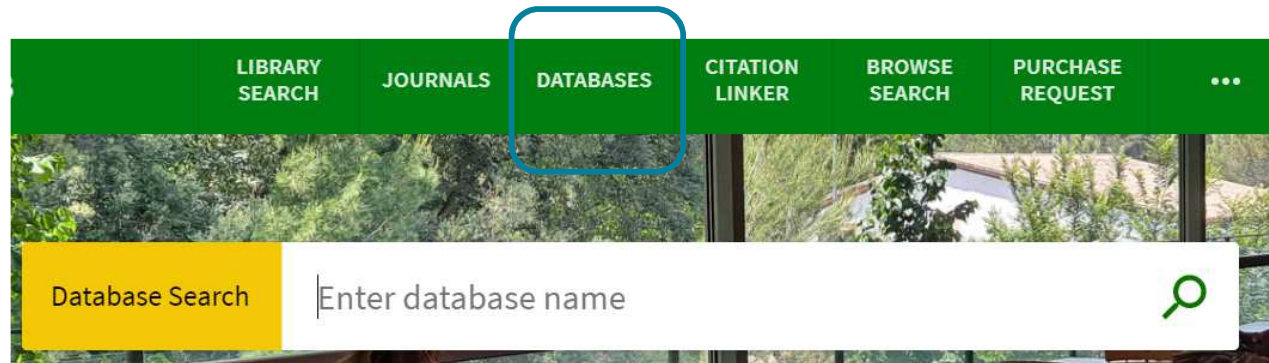


Diaris destacats a la UAB

- ABC
- Ara
- The Asahi Shimbun
- Cinco días
- Clarín
- Corriere della Sera
- The Guardian
- Le Monde
- El Mundo Deportivo
- El Mundo
- The New York Times
- El País
- El Periódico de Catalunya (cat)
- El Punt Avui
- La Reforma
- The Times of India
- The Times
- La Vanguardia
- The Wall Street Journal

Databases: Where can I find them?

- Look for them in the UAB Libraries Search Tool: Enter the database name either in the main search box or in the Database search box

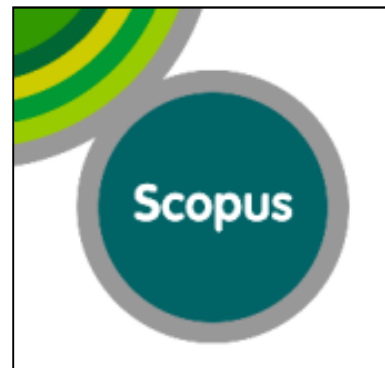


- Get a list at the webpage [Databases and other electronic resources](#)
- Explore the [subject guides](#): each of them has a section with databases on a particular subject

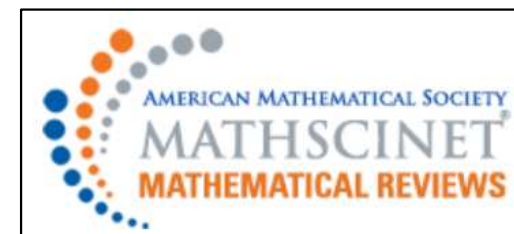
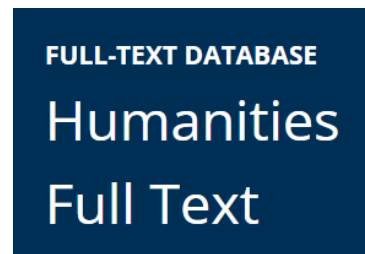
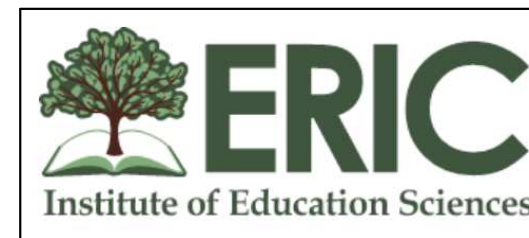
Databases (academic)

Databases are one of the main sources of information for finding scientific literature

Multidisciplinary databases



Subject databases

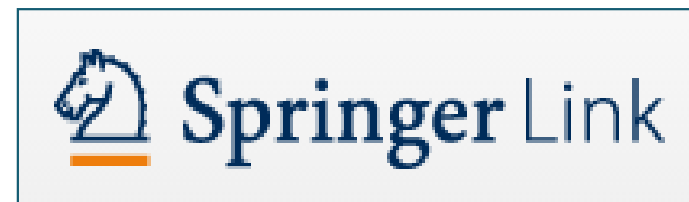


Databases (academic)

Academic journal websites:



Publishing websites:



Databases (by type of data)

- Statistics



- News



- Company data



- Laws and case laws

Aranzadi Instituciones. La base de datos perfecta para la Administración

Database search strategy

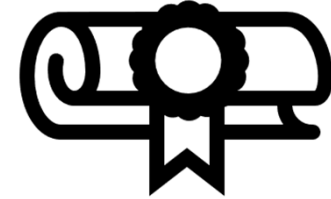
You can query a database using:

- **Fields:** TITLE, AUTHOR, SOURCE, etc.
- **Boolean operators:** AND, OR, NOT
- **Proximity operators:** WITH, ADJ, NEAR, “ ”
- To expand: **Truncations and wildcards:** * ! ? \$ #
- To limit: **Filters:** document type, language, year...
- **Thesaurus** of the database



Digital repositories and doctoral theses

[Selection of digital repositories](#)



Doctoral theses

- [How to find doctoral theses](#)
- [Recomendations for preparing doctoral theses](#)

[The Research communication lifecycle](#)

Contact us!



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www.youtube.com/c/BibliotequesUAB_videos



[Pregunta](#): Information service



[Online Support Service](#)



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WhatsApp information service



OPINA UAB

La vostra opinió ens ajuda a millorar els serveis i el funcionament de la UAB

[Opina](#): for suggestions, complaints and congratulatory messages

A large teal circular graphic containing stylized white book spines arranged in a circular pattern, resembling a globe or a stack of books.

**Thank you for
your attention!**

#bibliotequesJAB