

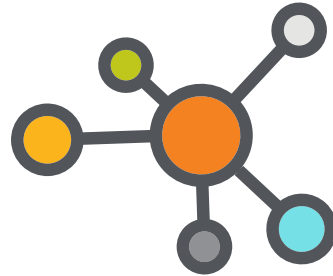
# KEYWORDS, OPERATORS & FILTERS

Literature Search: a librarian's handout to introduce *tools*, *terms* and *techniques*



## BRAINSTORM keywords

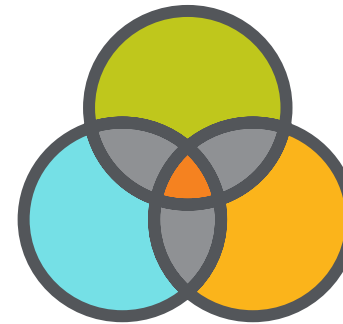
These are the main ideas of your research question/topic sentence.



## EXPAND your keywords

Look at the subject headings of the materials you find and use those terms as applicable.

Or look up your keywords in a subject-specific database thesaurus to find predefined terms (called “*controlled vocabulary*”).



## USE Boolean operators

Insert **AND**, **OR**, and **NOT** into your search to broaden or narrow it.

*For example:* PTSD OR Post Traumatic Stress Disorder AND soldiers NOT Navy.



## REFINE your search results

Filters in the database allow you to narrow a search by year, content type, etc.

**At the library:  
Consult a liaison librarian  
or subject specialist.**



# SEARCH TOOLS

## Literature Search: a librarian's handout to introduce *tools*, *terms* and *techniques*

### SELECT the best tools:

#### Abstract and citation database

provides short descriptions (abstracts) of and pointers to research material from a range of sources.

The full text of materials is **NOT included**, but abstracts help you determine whether to read the full text. You may be able to link through to the item in a full-text database or request the item via interlibrary loan.

Example:  
**Scopus**

**Full-text database** is a searchable collection of research literature that includes the entire text of an article or book, reproduced as a webpage and/or in PDF format, and other related resources.

These databases may be multidisciplinary (covering a range of subjects) or subject-specific (for one subject only).

Multidisciplinary example:  
**ScienceDirect**

**Search box on library homepage** often searches multiple databases and the library's catalog at once.

It can find a lot of research on a topic quickly, but it may bring back too many results from many different fields of study on a particular topic.

Certain databases may not be included, so it is still important to check the other databases.

**Library catalog** is an online tool in libraries usually used to find items housed physically in the library; it may also include electronic items.

You can find journal titles, but not articles by subject or article title in the catalog.

**Web search engine** returns high quantity of results from the full range of sources available on the web. Results are determined by some formula involving popularity and relevancy.

Though temptingly familiar, it is usually not recommended as the best place to start for scholarly research.



**At the library:  
Find research/subject  
guides online.**

## Library Connect

Partnering with the Library Community

<https://libraryconnect.elsevier.com>

Brought to you by **Katy Kavanagh Webb**, *Research and Instructional Services Librarian*  
kavanaghk@ecu.edu and Elsevier's Library Connect.

Join the conversation:  @library\_connect  libraryconnect  company/library-connect



# TYPES OF LITERATURE

Literature Search: a librarian's handout to introduce *tools*, *terms* and *techniques*

You should find:



## ARTICLES

### Journal

Written by a researcher or scholar for a specific field, reviewed by peer scholars before publication

### Magazine

Written by a journalist for a mass-market audience

### Newspaper

Written by a journalist to inform the public about happenings in the world



## BOOKS

### Monograph

A book on a specialized topic

### Ebook

Any book accessible in full text online

### Reference work

A collection of research, e.g., encyclopedia



## GREY LITERATURE a name for other research material such as:

### Conference proceeding

Panels, presentations and poster sessions at a conference

### Whitepaper

Document that often contains legislation, outlines future trends, or is a call for action on a topic

### Dissertation or thesis

Student research papers often culminating in a master's degree or PhD

### Patent

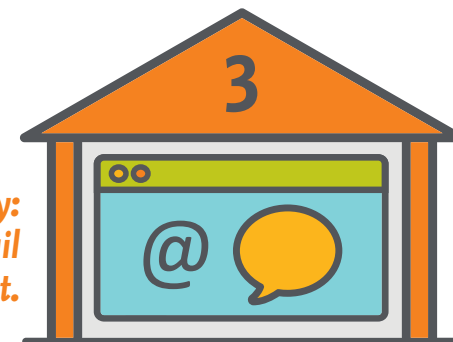
Rights to an invention granted by an official government agency

### Other publication

Document not published in scholarly channels, such as a government document

### Published report or dataset

*At the library:  
Get help via email  
and online chat.*



# EVALUATE INFORMATION

**Literature Search:** a librarian's handout to introduce *tools, terms and techniques*

To determine trustworthiness of the material, try the **CRAAP test** developed by the *Meriam Library* at California State University, Chico<sup>1</sup>

---

## CURRENCY

When was the information published and is that important to know?

---

## RELEVANCE

How important is the information to your needs?

---

## AUTHORITY

Who is the author and what are their credentials?

Do they work for a reputable institution?

Was the information published in a peer-reviewed journal?

---

## ACCURACY

How reliable is the information? Does it lack citations?

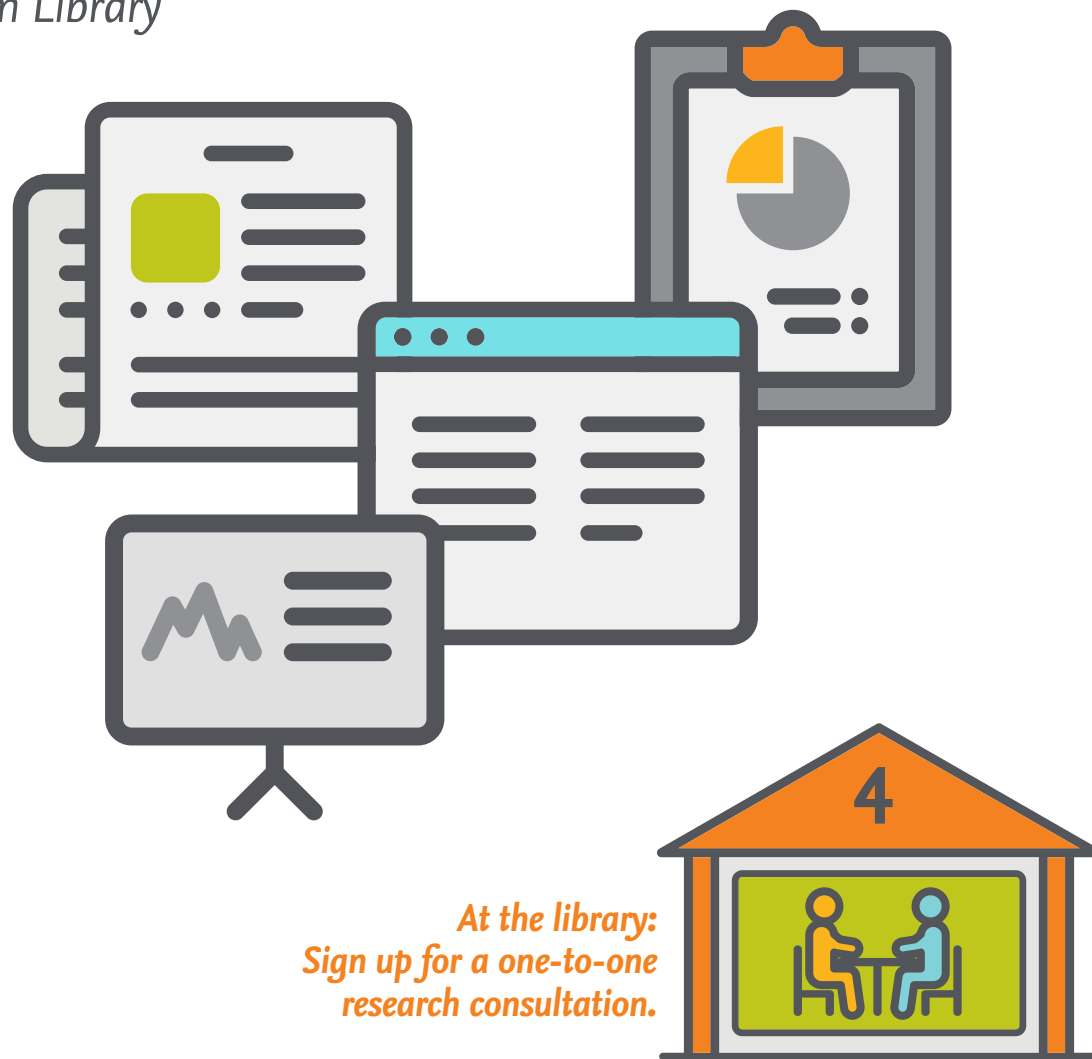
Are there spelling errors?

---

## PURPOSE

Is it a well-balanced independent piece of research, or intended to sell a product or idea?

1. [http://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval\\_websites.pdf](http://www.csuchico.edu/lins/handouts/eval_websites.pdf)



*At the library:  
Sign up for a one-to-one  
research consultation.*

## Library Connect

Partnering with the Library Community

<https://libraryconnect.elsevier.com>

Brought to you by **Katy Kavanagh Webb**, *Research and Instructional Services Librarian*  
kavanaghk@ecu.edu and Elsevier's Library Connect.

Join the conversation: @library\_connect libraryconnect company/library-connect



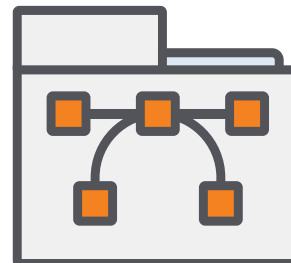
# ORGANIZE RESEARCH

**Literature Search:** a librarian's handout to introduce *tools*, *terms* and *techniques*

Save materials such as article PDFs into a document library and/or download the citation information.

## CITATION MANAGER / REFERENCE MANAGER / DOCUMENT LIBRARY

An online tool or desktop software used to organize and store citations and full-text articles or other documents, create bibliographies, insert in-text citations into a paper, and share references with research partners.

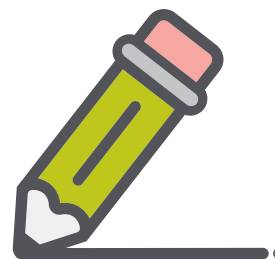


Example:



## CITATION

The act of explaining the source of the information found during the course of your research. Citation is a mandatory scholarly practice that gives credit and helps prevent plagiarism. Citations may be used in bibliographies, footnotes and within the body of your text. Common citation formats are APA, MLA and Chicago style.



Example:

Crystal Renfro, The Use of Visual Tools in the Academic Research Process: A Literature Review, *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, Volume 43, Issue 2, March 2017, Pages 95-99, ISSN 0099-1333, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2017.02.004>.



**At the library:  
Take an information  
skills workshop.**