Always begin at the library’s home page: http://guides.library.uhh.hawaii.edu/home

The first step for finding information online is to click on the “Databases, Journals, and Research Guides (Books, too!)” link for your campus on the library’s home page. If you can’t access the databases, you may need to register with the library: go to http://guides.library.uhh.hawaii.edu/distance for information.

Basic Search Tips
– Databases use keywords (nutrition, health, weight) instead of complete sentences.
– Does the database allow Boolean, truncation, phrase searching?
– Try the Advanced Search: look for a Tips or Hints screen for instructions.
– Look at the subject descriptors and abstracts for other keywords.
– When you find a good book or article, check its bibliography for other sources.

Encyclopedias and other Reference Books are a good place to start – get an overview of the topic and find some keywords and subject terms to use for searches in book and journal databases.

Print Books
In the Voyager Catalog, you can search just the UH Hilo collections, or search all UH libraries and request a loan.

Searching one of our Online Books databases will allow you to search within the text of books.

Research Guides
Subject-specific guides covering books, encyclopedias, journal articles, online resources, and more.

Journal Articles
Start with our largest database: Academic Search Complete – you’re almost certain to find articles on any subject.

Another good database for almost any subject is ScienceDirect (don’t let the name fool you – it has lots more than science).

If you are looking for information on current events, try Lexis-Nexis – it has newspaper articles from all over the world.

If you are looking at an historical topic, use JSTOR – it has really old articles, some from the 1800s!

There are also databases that specialize in specific subject areas – see the Databases by Subject Area page – and remember to explore similar subjects.

Mookini MegaSearch
This resource lets you search for books and journal articles at the same time, but beware – it doesn’t search everything the library has access to.
Some Things You MUST Accept About Academic Research

1. **Academic Research takes TIME** - much more than you think. Finding *any* information is easy, thanks to Google. But finding *GOOD* information requires some effort.

2. **Academic Research is a trial-and-error process**: when you search, see what you get, look for other keywords, subject headings, and alternative terms that you hadn't thought of... and then use those to search again.

3. **Academic Research requires looking in more than one place.** The really important stuff isn't available on the Internet and isn't collected conveniently together - you'll have to search several databases.

4. **You will read much more than you will use.** You may only need 5 sources, but you will probably review 2-3 times that many to find the 5 that are best for your particular need.

5. **Ready for some good news?** Most academic sources have a list of references - just like the one you need to create - so one source can lead you to others.

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**Evaluating Your Sources**
After you find some sources, you have to decide if they are acceptable. Try using the CRAAP method (yes, that’s really what it’s called). You don’t need to answer every CRAAP question for each source, but looking at the Currency, Relevance, Accuracy, Authority, and Purpose of a source may help you notice that a book is actually quite old or that a particular website is one-sided and biased compared to another.

**Citing Your Sources**
When writing research papers, documenting your sources is an important step - crediting others whose work you have based your research upon is an integral part of scholarship. Citing your sources in the proper or accepted format helps the reader to identify these sources.

There are many different citation styles: when writing for a journal or other publication, which style to use is listed in an "information for authors" area. **For school, your instructor will usually tell you which citation style to use** - if not, you should ask.

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**Research Rule #1 – there is no shame in asking for help!**
We won’t do your research for you, but we are happy to help.

Information Desk 932-7296 mookini@hawaii.edu

You can also make an appointment for individualized help with a subject librarian: **Book-a-Librarian** on the library’s home page.