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

The first step for finding academic information online is to click on the link for your campus in the Access Online Collections box on the library’s home page. All the book and journal article resources listed on this handout can be found using the Access Online Collections page for your campus.

If you can’t access the databases, you may need to register with the library: go to [http://guides.library.uhh.hawaii.edu/distance](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.

### 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.

### 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 1700s!

In addition to these general databases, there are also databases that specialize in specific subject areas – remember to explore similar subjects (Biology and Marine Science, Business and Economics, etc.) using the **A-Z List of Databases** Subject dropdown menu.

### Research Guides
(available under Tools on library’s website)
Subject-specific guides covering books, encyclopedias, journal articles, online resources, and more.
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**: you will 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 freely on the open 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** *(available under Tools on library’s website)*

After you find some sources, you have to decide if they are acceptable for your needs. Try using the **ABCDE method**. You don’t need to answer every question for each source, but looking at the **Authority**, **Bias**, **Content**, and **Date** of a source to **Evaluate** it may help you notice that a book is a bit off topic, a journal article is quite old, or that a particular website is one-sided and biased compared to another. Evaluate and choose wisely!

**Citing Your Sources** *(available under Tools on library’s website)*

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** under Help on the library’s home page.