

What is a database?

A database is a huge online library of journal articles. Databases can be subject specific (e.g. provide articles only from religious journals or music journals etc) or they can be more general.

Some journal databases also include conference papers, book chapters, reports, books, dissertations and other types of information.

How do databases differ to Primo?

Primo is a good place to start as it searches through everything the library holds PLUS the articles from most databases. But it doesn't search all the databases. To do a thorough search you may need to go to a specific database.

You will find a list of all the databases on the library webpage here:

<http://www.avondale.edu.au/library/findinginformation/databases/>

Some of the biggest databases are:

Academic OneFile	
Australia/NZ Reference Centre	Ovid Nursing Full Text Plus
ATLA with ATLAS Serials – Religion	Oxford Music Online
CINAHL – Nursing	Oxford Reference
Credo Reference	Proquest Central
eBook Central (Proquest)	SAGE Journals Online
EduTV	Science Direct
Informit	SpringerLink
Nursing Reference Center	Taylor and Francis

How to search a database

1. Choose your keywords

List the keyword(s) or phrases that describe the major concept(s), including words or phrases that mean the same thing (synonyms) and alternative spellings. For example, if you have been asked to write about ***the relationship between obesity and diabetes (Type 2)***. Then you would use the keywords **obesity diabetes Type 2.**

2. Choose a suitable database

Go to the Avondale Library website and select **Databases**. Go to **Browse by Subject** and select your course. Here you will find databases relevant to your topic. (e.g. Cinahl for Nursing or ATLA for Theology). You may wish to start with a general database such as Proquest Central. Don't forget, the more specific the database, the more you will need to consider appropriate keywords and filters.

3. Perform your search

Combine words with AND to find articles with both words. Using AND gives you *less results* (e.g. hospitals AND Australia)

Use OR to combine synonyms (e.g. television OR TV). Using OR gives you *more results*

Use truncation to expand your search. (e.g. Austral* will include Australia, Australasian, Australian, etc)

4. Analyse your results

If you got too many results you may need to narrow your search by adding more keywords to be more specific. You may also limit to full text articles, limit by date, limit to peer reviewed etc

If you have too few results take out some keywords or try a different set of keywords. When you find an article that is just right, note the subject headings, look at their reference list or look through the article for ideas on other words you can use to help you search further

Finding nothing? You may have selected the wrong keyword(s) or database. Try using more general terms to broaden your search or try another database.

5. Save the article

Print the article, save it onto your computer or export it to EndNote. Exporting the reference to EndNote automatically saves a link to the article.