

## USING PSYCINFO

PsycINFO, the electronic counterpart of *Psychological Abstracts*, is a collection of more than 2 million references to psychological literature published between 1967 to the present. [NOTE: For information about searching the historical PsycINFO, 1806-1966, go to Historic PsycINFO's instruction page at <http://www.utoledo.edu/library/mulford/education/histpsyc.html>] Updated weekly with approximately 60,000 new references added annually, the PsycINFO database covers all types of publications that APA examines regularly to identify psychologically relevant material, including journal articles, dissertations, reports, English-language book chapters and books, and other scholarly documents. The database is enriched with literature from an array of disciplines related to psychology, such as education, business, medicine, nursing, law, and social work.

### General Information

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- The database can be accessed from the Library's Web page: <http://www.utoledo.edu/library/mulford>. Click on **Databases by Subject**, then scroll down to **Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work**. Off-campus access is available (<http://www.utoledo.edu/library/mulford/remote.html>).
- Online help is available by clicking on the **Tips, Help, and Chat** menu.
- If assistance is needed, ask a library staff member. From home or office, contact Mulford Reference Assistance by calling 419-383-4218, sending an e-mail to [MulfordReference@utoledo.edu](mailto:MulfordReference@utoledo.edu), or by using Instant Messaging to chat with a librarian (see <http://www.utoledo.edu/library/mulford/resources.html>).

### Topic Searches

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The best way to do a search for references on a particular topic is to enter the main component of the topic in the **Search for** field and search in **All Fields**. (If you have a complex topic, search for each component separately, then combine the individual sets. See page 3 for more information on combining sets.) Make certain that **Thesaurus** is selected. In topic searching, it is very important to use the thesaurus to pick subject headings with which to search. A subject heading pulls all articles on a concept together; there is no need to worry about synonyms, plurals, or variations in spelling. For example, when a phrase such as "manic depression" is checked in the thesaurus, it will be directed to "bipolar disorder," the subject heading used to represent references on "affective disorders." Subject headings also provide powerful search features such as limiting to article main topics and subheadings of subjects. (See below for explanations of these features.)

When presented with a list of terms from the thesaurus, always click on the **View Thesaurus** link for the desired term. This will display the thesaurus information for the term. (If PsycINFO cannot find the entered term in the thesaurus and if it cannot direct you to an appropriate term, it will present an option to **Get suggested terms from the thesaurus**. Click on this option.)

**Thesaurus.** The thesaurus results screen provides a list of terms from which to choose. Beside each term is a list of five options. Always start with **View Thesaurus**. It will help you do a better search by giving broader, narrower, and related terms to search. Select the one that best represents your topic.

**Search** – This option will retrieve records indexed with the heading.

**Focus** – This option will retrieve only those records that have the subject heading as a main topic. This will filter out those articles that do not have the topic as the focus of the article.

**Expand** – This is the equivalent of the "explode" feature in versions of MEDLINE. It will retrieve records indexed with the heading and those indexed with any narrower headings.

**Expand/Focus** – This option will expand the subject headings and restrict to focus. It retrieves records with the subject heading or narrower headings as the main point of the record.



**Browsing by Subject.** It is also possible to browse by subject, an option available from the **Browse** menu at the top of the page. This allows you to browse subject headings.

### **Keyword Searching.**

A keyword search searches the entire database, except for cited references. Use the **Search for** field with the **Keywords** button checked. Select the desired search option from the **Fields** drop-down menu; usually **All Fields** is appropriate. To do a keyword search in cited references, use the **Search for** field with the **Keywords plus cited references** button checked. **Keywords plus cited references** searching is best used when doing a field qualified search. For more information on field qualified searching, see the help options (<http://etextb.ohiolink.edu/help/psyz.html>).

The truncation symbol for PsycINFO is the dollar sign (\$). Searching for *inject\$* will retrieve records containing the words inject, injects, injected, injecting, injection, etc.

The database also provides automatic searching for plurals, including irregular plurals such as *mice*. Activate this feature on the bottom of the main search screen under **Show Limit Options**.

For best results, search with a unique word or phrase, one that only represents the concept of interest. For a topic search, use the **Search for** field and select **Subject** from the menu instead of **All Fields**, unless there is no appropriate subject heading.

**NOTE:** When searching by topic, search using the thesaurus first. If you cannot find an appropriate subject heading, then try a keyword search. Historic PsycINFO is best searched with text word searches.

### **Author and Journal Title Searching**

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To find references by a certain author or from a particular journal title, you can either search or browse.

**Search** Enter the author name or journal title and select **Author names** or **Journal titles** from the drop-down menu. Enter the author's last name first, followed by initials or first name, if known (*smith sp*). If one or more of the initials or first name is not known, the truncation symbol (\$) can be used (*smith s\$* or *smith \$*). For journals, do not use title abbreviations.

**Browse** Select **By Author** or **By Journal** from the **Browse** menu at the top of the page. Enter the author's last name and first initial or the journal title. For name variants (*smith s* and *smith sp*), do a separate search for each name then combine the resulting sets with the OR operator. (See **Combining** below).

### **Article Title Searching**

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Enter words from the article name and select **Article/book titles** from the drop-down menu. Click on **Submit Search**.

### **Combining Sets**

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#### **Combining Separate Sets**

Most searches in PsycINFO are complex searches that require two or more component searches that must be combined. The most powerful way to search is to search each component separately: search for the first component, then at the top of the results list (**Search in thesaurus** selected), search for the second component, and so on, until all component searches are completed. As each search is completed, it appears in the search history, which can be accessed by clicking on **Search History** or **Show Search History**. When viewing the search history, click in the boxes to the right of the search sets to combine. Select an operator (AND or OR), then click on the **Combine Sets** button. Using **AND** between components will narrow the search (*oppositional defiant disorder and family therapy*); using **OR** between synonymous terms will broaden it (*attention deficit disorder or attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity*).

To see a sample search that involves combining sets, consult the one-page **Step-by-Step Searching in PsycINFO** help sheet (<http://www.utoledo.edu/library/mulford/pdf/psycinfostep.pdf>).

### Searching within Results

A less powerful way of combining sets is to search within results. At the top of the results list page, there is a search box. Select **Search in current results**, then search for the next component. This will do a textword search within the results (which is generally a weaker search technique than using the thesaurus). Because the second search does not appear in the search history as a separate search, it is not available for combining with other sets.

### Restricting Retrieval by Limiting Search Results

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The recommended way to narrow your search is to select limits after you've retrieved your results. To do this, click the **All Limit Options** link (this will be below the **All Search Options** link) on the results list page. The following limits are available on the limit page. (To select more than one option in a list, hold down the Ctrl key while selecting.) After selecting the desired limits, click on the **Limit Results Now** button at the bottom of the screen.

<b>Language</b>	Limits to references published in one or more languages.
<b>Publication type</b>	Limits to certain publication types: JOURNAL ARTICLE, DISSERTATION, BOOK, ENCYCLOPEDIA, ELETRONIC COLLECTION.
<b>Year</b>	Limits to references published within a specified date range.
<b>Age Groups</b>	Limits to references on a specific age group or subgroup
<b>Intended audience</b>	Limits to books written for a particular audience(s)
<b>Methodology</b>	Limits to references containing a particular type of information, such as CLINICAL CASE STUDY, EMPIRICAL STUDY, LITERATURE REVIEW, META-ANALYSIS, QUALITATIVE STUDY and others.
<b>Classification codes</b>	Limits to references on a particular facet of the topic based on a four digit code (i.e. 2100 for General Psychology). More information on classification codes can be found at <a href="http://www.apa.org/databases/training/classcodes.html">http://www.apa.org/databases/training/classcodes.html</a>
<b>Population Group</b>	Limits to certain groups: HUMAN, ANIMAL, MALE, FEMALE, INPATIENT, OUTPATIENT

Quick limits at the bottom of the limits page include: PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL, HUMAN, DISORDERED POPULATIONS, NONDISORDERED POPULATIONS, TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS, TREATMENT AND PREVENTION, LATEST UPDATE.

### Viewing, Storing, Printing, Emailing, and Downloading Citations

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After searching, combining, or limiting, the system will display the record list. To store a citation from this list, click on the **Store** icon next to the citation. To “unstore” the citation, click on the **Added** icon.

To view the full record of a citation in this list, click on the article title. This will call up the record display for the citation. Any linked item on the full record can be searched (author name, journal title, subject heading) by clicking on it. To store a record, click on the **Store this record** icon. To return to the list of citations, click on **Results List**.

Use the **Stored Records** option at the top of the page to see what's been stored as well as to download, print, email, and export the stored records. The stored records page provides options for output: **Display Records** (using the browser's built-in function to print, save, or e-mail), **Download Records**, **Print Records**, **E-mail Records**, **Export Records** (EndNote, Procite, or Reference Manager), and **Pocket Records** (to PDA). It also allows you to include the search history and provides recommended formatting options on the page. Depending on the display option selected, there will be options from which to choose. Choose the desired options and click on the **View Now**, **Download Now**, **Print Now**, **Mail Now**, or **Export Now** button on the page when ready.

### Checking Availability of Print and Full Text Articles

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NOTE: With the wide range of online journal providers and the lack of publishing standards, it is very difficult to provide *simple* access to every online article available through the Mulford Library. You may need to attempt several options to obtain the full text of an article. Be assured that the Mulford Library and OhioLINK are doing everything

possible to provide easy access to these materials. Any questions about the availability of a journal article should be directed to Mulford Reference Assistance at 419-383-4218.

To determine if an article is available, click on **Find It!** to call up the OLinks window. OLinks will indicate if the article is available online from one of the major journal systems. If OLinks indicates that no online full text is found, look in the sub-window to determine if the Mulford Library has the journal.

If we have the journal, holdings information can be found at the top of the sub-window. "MULFORD Journal Stacks" indicates that we have the journal in print; "MULFORD Electronic" indicates that we have the journal online. Click on the link **View details in the University of Toledo Library catalog...** to confirm which issues are available from the Library and to reach the link for available full text.

## Other Features

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- Sorting Output** There are two ways to designate how the output will be sorted. The first method is prior to issuing the search. At the bottom of the main search page, click on **Show Limit Options**. The second method is after the search. Click on **All Limit Options**. There is an option for primary and secondary sort orders. (NOTE: A useful sort order is by Journal Title. All articles from the same journal title will then be together in the record list.)
- Saving Searches** To save a search strategy to run in another database or to run in the same database at a future time, run the desired search. Click on **Search History** or **Show Search History**. Click on **Save Search Strategy**. A temporary save is stored at OhioLINK for three hours; a permanent save is stored on the local computer. To rerun a search, click on **Run Saved Search** and enter either the code (for temporary saves) or the file name (for permanent saves).
- Change Database** To change from PsycINFO to another database, click **Exit**.