

This guide will help get your research started with a list of basic information needs and some of the research tools available for your use. If you need assistance or directions, please ask a Reference Librarian (trained professionals who are there to assist you with your research needs).

### Background Information

- For a summary of a topic use an encyclopedia (e.g. *Encyclopedia Britannica*)
- If the topic is within a specific discipline, use a **subject encyclopedia** (e.g. *Encyclopedia of Human Biology*)
- Search engines and meta-search engines are great resources when brainstorming (e.g. [google.com](http://google.com) or [dogpile.com](http://dogpile.com))

### Articles (from newspapers, magazines, and journals)

To find articles, online-research databases are available. They can be searched by **name** of database or **subject**.

- For current news use a newspaper database (e.g. *America's Newspapers* or *Lexis Nexis Academic*)
- To search for articles in magazines and journals use a magazine/journal database (e.g. *Academic Search Complete*)
- For scholarly or research articles use a discipline-specific database (e.g. *Biological Abstracts*)

### Books

- For books on a certain topic use a **Subject search** or **Keyword** search in the library catalog
- For books by a certain author use the **Author search** in the library catalog (last name first name: e.g. Woolf Virginia or Shakespeare, William)
- For books not owned by Carlson Library use **OhioLINK** (Ohio Library Information Network) or **ILL** (Interlibrary Loan)

### Other Types of Information

- For general facts and statistics use almanacs, yearbooks, and statistical sources (e.g. *Information Please Almanac*, or *Statistical Abstract of the United States*)
- For maps use atlases (e.g. *National Geographic Atlas of the World*)
- For definitions of words use dictionaries and thesauri (e.g. *Oxford Dictionary of Slang*, *American Dictionaries of the English Language Before 1861*, *A Dictionary of Business and Management* (electronic resource))
- For information on people use biographies (e.g. *Notable Hispanic American Women*, *Notable American Philanthropists: Biographies of Giving and Volunteering*)

### More assistance

For additional assistance with any research question, please contact a reference librarian.

- The Reference Desk is on the first floor of Carlson Library and the phone number is 530-2324.
- You can submit an email form with a brief question. Go to <http://utoledo.edu/library/help/ask.html> or email to [Askit@utnet.utoledo.edu](mailto:Askit@utnet.utoledo.edu).
- Go to <http://utoledo.edu/library/help/ask.html> and chat with a librarian through instant messaging.
- You can make an appointment with a librarian to discuss your topic in-depth. You can pick up a form at the Reference Desk, or call 530-4479 to schedule a meeting
- The Mulford Health Science Library service desk is on the fourth floor of the Mulford Library. The reference phone number is 419-383-4218.