



Research Rescue

Jump Start Your Research

Before you start your research, save time and avoid frustration by planning out a research strategy.

STEP 1 Select and Focus Your Topic

What is your research question? What topic would you like to explore? Be sure to develop a topic that is not too broad or too narrow. If the topic is too broad, you may be overwhelmed with resources or have difficulty adequately addressing the topic given time and length constraints. If the topic is too narrow, materials will be difficult or impossible to find.

STEP 2 Develop Keywords

Write down some keywords that describe your topic. Be sure to think of synonyms or different ways of describing your topic.

STEP 3 Establish the types of resources you're looking for

Do you need books and articles for your paper? Does your assignment require peer-reviewed/scholarly materials? Do you need an encyclopedia, dictionary or textbooks to get an overview of your topic before you proceed? Establish the types of resources you require so you can plan out your research strategy.

STEP 4 Find Books

Using the keywords you've developed, search Books & More from the Library's homepage (www.library.ubc.ca) to find **books** that look relevant for your assignment or paper. Be sure to jot down the following information so you can find the book you need!



Book Title:

Library location:

Call number:

Book Title:

Library location:

Call number:

STEP 5 Find a Subject Guide

UBC Library has subject guides on hundreds of topics that help identify key information resources in specific subject areas. There may be more than one subject guide appropriate for your topic. Accordingly, when you think about your topic, researchers in what academic discipline may be doing work in this area? Could research be happening in one academic field, or many? Identify the UBC Library Subject Guide(s) (www.library.ubc.ca/home/subjects-all.html) that may direct you to useful resources for your topic.

Subject Guide:

Subject Guide:

STEP 6 Find, review, and evaluate journal/magazine/newspaper articles

Choose a database/ article index listed on one of the subject guides you've chosen and find articles on your topic that you may consider using in your assignment or paper. Be sure to use different keyword combinations from the list you generated in STEP 2.



STEP 7 Conduct additional research as necessary

Once you've moved through each step and begin developing your paper outline, you may find that additional research is required. You may need to repeat steps 4-6 for a complete picture of your topic.

For help developing your outline or with the writing process, be sure to visit the **Writing Centre**: www.writingcentre.ubc.ca/tutoring

Research Tips

1. When you don't find what you want, try other **search terms**. Think of synonyms to describe your concepts. What other words might researchers use to describe this idea?
2. Keep track of your citations so you can prepare a **Works Cited/Bibliography** for your paper: www.library.ubc.ca/chapmanlearningcommons/citation.html
3. **Academic Integrity** is honest and responsible scholarship. Learn more in this Interactive Online Tutorial: www.library.ubc.ca/clc/airc.html
4. The **Assignment Calculator** can help you plan a timeline for your research assignment: assignmentcalculator.library.ubc.ca/
5. Don't get stuck – get help! Click on the **Ask Us** button on the Library's homepage: www.library.ubc.ca/home/ask.html