

Walden Library Video Transcript

Title: How to Search a Social Science Database

URL: http://youtu.be/Vlqc_FQwj2s

Begin Transcript

Visual: PsycINFO database search page

Narration: This video demonstrates a basic search in a library database. For this search we are using PsycINFO, one of the psychology databases.

Visual: Slide showing a research topic

Narration: In order to find articles in the databases you will need to break down your research topic into keywords so you can build a search the database will understand. First look at your topic and identify the major concepts. Here is a sample research question:

How effective is behavioral therapy in the treatment of addictions? The major concepts are: behavioral therapy, treatment, and addictions. Use these as your keywords to start a search. Effective keywords refer to specific, concrete ideas.

Visual: PsycINFO database search page

Narration: Type your keywords into the search boxes, one concept per box. Use phrases only when the words must be found next to each other. Add limits to your search if needed. This database automatically limits to full text, but you may also want to limit to scholarly, peer-reviewed journals or to a specific date range. Now click Search.

Visual: PsycINFO database results page

Narration: We found 182 results. You can explore your results for useful articles, or look at the words used in your results to improve your search. In the first result is an alternative term for one of my keywords: drug dependency, which can be another word for addiction. Group similar terms in the same search box, separating the terms with OR. This tells the database to find articles that mention either addiction OR chemical dependency.

Visual: PsycINFO database results page after new search

Narration: After clicking search again, there are more results. To learn more about an article, click its title to read the abstract, which is a short summary of the article. This can help you decide if the article matches what you need. To see the entire article, click a full text link. Results available in the library databases have a PDF or HTML Full Text link. Click the link to open the full text.