FINDING QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ARTICLES!

Identify your RESEARCH QUESTION or statement

Example #1: Find qualitative research articles about women who suffered traumatic childbirth

Example #2: Find quantitative research articles about women who suffered traumatic childbirth

What are the most important concepts or key concepts in your question?

BRAINSTORM Keywords or Key phrases

Keywords are the main ideas of your research question. Keywords are the exact words used by the author in the title or the abstract and may or may not be the focus of the article. Discover more terms by reading articles that you find! Look at the bibliography in each article to make sure you have the titles. Databases only search for the words you type.

Example: traumatic birth, traumatic childbirth, traumatic labor, birth trauma

Example: qualitative, phenomenology, meta-synthesis, patient experience, questionnaires, randomized controlled trials

BRAINSTORM Subject Headings

Most articles are indexed by subject experts who read the articles and assign specific terms (subject headings) to describe the content of the article. In PubMed the subject headings are called Medical Subject Headings or MeSH. When you use MeSH terms you retrieve all records on a subject regardless of the terms used by the author. This is also true with the CINAHL Subject Headings.

To view MeSH terms for a particular citation, click the title and scroll below the abstract and click

To find MeSH terms for your search, change drop down menu next to search box from PubMed to MeSH

Combine the BEST keywords and subject headings in your search for comprehensiveness

Not every article in PubMed has MeSH terms for various reasons (e.g., in process of being indexed, out of MEDLINE scope, or just released by the publisher) so you will need to use keywords/key phrases. Keep a list of search terms that you use for your methodology section. Fortunately, both PubMed and CINAHL have subject headings for qualitative and quantitative research.
Select the BEST Search Tools!

**Databases**

Click Research Databases from lib.uconn.edu and select one database at a time.

If PDF link is not available, click UCONN Full Text to link through to the item or to request item via Interlibrary Services.

Examples of pertinent databases for this project are on the EBSCO platform:

- **CINAHL Plus with Full Text** (Cumulative index to Nursing and Allied Health)
- **Academic Search Premier**
- **PsycINFO**
- **SocINDEX with Full Text**

Examples of other helpful databases that are not in EBSCO, but available through the library:

- **PubMed** (includes Medline)
- **Scopus**
- **Cochrane** (Systematic reviews and clinical trials; login is not necessary)
- **ProQuest Dissertation Abstracts**

**Full-text Databases**

Is a searchable collection of research literature that includes the entire text of an article or book, reproduced as a webpage and/or in PDF format, and other related resources.

These databases may be multidisciplinary (covering a range of subjects) or subject-specific (for one subject only), and are limited in scope!

Example: **PMC (PubMed Central), JSTOR**

**Reliable health related web sites**

Useful for background information, statistics and guidelines.

Example: **DynaMed Plus** (an EB tool), Micromedex Healthcare Series, MedlinePlus, Medscape Reference, AccessMedicine

Examples from U.S. health agencies: **AHRO, Patient Safety Network, U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendations** (USPSTF), **ERCI Institute** (replaces the National Guidelines Clearinghouse), CDC FastStats, CDC Features, CDC, Healthy People, National Institute of Nursing Research
Search box on Library webpage

Searches multiple databases and the library’s catalog at once. The library catalog is an online tool used to find items housed physically in the library and electronic items such as articles, eBooks and streaming media. Remember to SIGN IN to renew what you have checked out, to create and save lists, or to request items. WorldCat is another tool that searches our holdings and other research libraries.

You can find a lot of research on a topic quickly, but it may bring back too many results from many different fields of study on a topic.

Certain databases (e.g., CINAHL, PsycINFO, or Academic Search Premier) may not be included, so it is still important to check the other databases!

Advanced Search screen is more efficient and much easier to narrow results. Example: traumatic childbirth found in articles within the last 5 years.

Browse journals for information (not always efficient)!

Click Find on webpage; then click E-Journal Search; type the name of the journal. You can browse the Table of Contents for each issue of a journal OR search for your topic within a specific journal.

View journal Table of Contents via the BrowZine database; full text articles are available if we subscribe to the journal.

Web search engines

Returns high quantity of results from the full range of sources available on the web. Results are determined by a formula involving popularity and relevancy. May not be the best place to start for scholarly research. Useful for finding grey literature (e.g., conference proceedings, policies, reports).

Example: Google, Google Scholar
Types of Literature

Try to find peer reviewed RESEARCH ARTICLES from academic journals

**Journal** articles are written by a researcher or scholar for a specific field, some are reviewed by peer scholars before publication.

You may want to find a *review of the literature* for **background information**

For **Qualitative** articles ~ find qualitative studies (e.g. grounded theory, phenomenological, ethnographic, interviews, etc.)

For **Quantitative** articles ~ find studies that have structured questionnaires, surveys, clinical trials, randomized controlled trials, multicenter study, or meta-analysis. All quantitative articles adhere to a specific format that includes background, methods, results, conclusions, etc.

For **Mixed Methods** ~ both qualitative and quantitative research (e.g. Multimethod studies, mixed research, mixed methods, descriptive research)

You may want to exclude Letters, Editorials, Comments, Meeting Abstracts, and Book Reviews

**USE Boolean Operators** - Insert **AND**, **OR** and **NOT** into your search to broaden or narrow it.

**Example:** qualitative **OR** focus group* **OR** lived experience **OR** phenomenological **OR** narrative analysis will broaden your results

**Example:** nursing practice **AND** refugees will narrow your results (links different concepts that must be included)

**Example:** Puerto Ricans **NOT** Mexican Americans will exclude irrelevant terms, but use with **CAUTION**!

**MORE tips**

Use an **Asterisk** * to truncate a root word for more terms (e.g. mimic* will find mimic, mimics, mimicking)

Use double **Quotes** to search an **EXACT** phrase, use with caution.

Use a **search tag** to indicate term should be found in a specific place: beverage*[ti] **AND** "Portion Size"[Mesh]

Use **Parentheses** if you are using more than one Boolean

**Example:** (obese **OR** obesity **OR** overweight) **AND** (children **OR** childhood) **AND** motivat* **AND** (exercise **OR** physical activity)

Check **limits that pertain to your search:** **Age** **English Language** **Year of Publication** **Peer Reviewed Journal**
Let’s take our keywords (natural language) and search for Qualitative articles in CINAHL Plus with Full Text

EBSCO platform provides multiple search boxes. Use the Advanced Search screen and type one concept in each box.

**Type key term(s)** in search box (synonyms are combined with OR), and click **Search** button

![Search](image1)

Use the **pull-downs** in **Select a Field** if you want to look for words in a specific part of the citation (e.g. title, author, or abstract fields) – remember this may drop important articles!

![Search](image2)

**Narrow** topic by adding another concept with **AND** (e.g. journal name or author name, Beck CT)

![Search](image3)

Click **Search History**, located below search box, to manipulate or combine search sets.

**Create Alert** will notify you by email when new references are added to the database on your topic. Before creating an alert make sure that the majority of your results are relevant.

Click **Show More** under **Refine Results** on left to **filter results** in one step:

Select **Peer Reviewed**, **English**, **Research Article**, Publication Date
From the Publication Box select Review, Guidelines, **if needed**
Note: If you choose “Limit to Full Text” you will not get the UCONN Links!!

EXPAND your keywords

Find more precise terms - click article title to view the CINAHL Subjects (Major/Minor). The example below shows two CINAHL Headings to describe birth trauma, Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic AND Childbirth.

**Synthesis of Mixed Research on Posttraumatic Stress Related to Traumatic Birth.**

Authors: Beck, Cheryl Tabac; Casavant, Sharos


Publication Type: Article

Language: English

Major Subjects: Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic Childbirth – Psychological Factors Women’s Health

Minor Subjects: Human, Systematic Review, PubMed; PsychInfo; Multimethod Studies

Abstract: To synthesize mixed-research results (quantitative and qualitative) on posttraumatic stress in women who experienced traumatic births. Published, Scopus, and PsycINFO databases. Quantitative and qualitative studies were included if they were published in English from January 1, 2009, through December 31, 2014, and focused on posttraumatic stress in the postpartum period related to traumatic childbirth. The final sample consisted of 59 studies: 4 qualitative and 55 quantitative. Both authors independently appraised each study using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme. Quantitative studies were synthesized by narrative synthesis and vote counting, and qualitative studies were synthesized by content analysis. In the included studies, prevalence rates of elevated posttraumatic stress ranged from 0.9% to 26%. Significant predictors of posttraumatic stress that occurred before childbirth and those that were birth-related are identified. Reports of six intervention studies to decrease posttraumatic stress symptoms after traumatic births were reviewed.

To find a CINAHL subject heading, type a term in the search box and check Suggest Subject Terms box, click Search. CINAHL cannot interpret multiple subject headings at one time.
EXAMPLE: (e.g. traumatic childbirth), check Suggest Subject Terms box, click Search.

Another option is to use the CINAHL Subject Headings button on the top black bar.

Your results show that a specific term for this concept does not exist, so select the next best CINAHL Heading, Childbirth, check box next to term. Your term is added to the Search Term Builder box. The + sign next to the CINAHL Headings means that there are narrower terms under that broad topic. Exploding your selected term will OR (include) the more specific headings and will increase your results.

A middle column for Subheadings appears which allows you to zero in on a specific aspect of Childbirth, but we will not select a subheading for this exercise. Scope provides you with the definition and search hints.

Click SEARCH DATABASE to run search; a result list is displayed on the home page (MH “Childbirth+”)

Click Clear to clear screen and add another concept.

Repeat this process for the second concept, type Trauma and check Suggest Subject Terms box and Search
  o Select Trauma
  o Scroll down to bottom of page and click Browse Additional Terms
  o Enter a similar concept- Post traumatic stress
Select \textit{Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic}, the most appropriate subject heading

Click \textit{Search Database}; make sure the OR button is selected (to combine similar trauma terms); return to homepage & \textbf{Clear}

Repeat process for your \textbf{third concept}, type \textit{Qualitative}, check \textbf{Suggest Subject Terms} box and \textit{Search}

- Click the CINAHL Heading \textit{Qualitative Studies} to view narrower terms below it

\textbf{Qualitative Study} is a broad heading that has narrower terms below it. If you want to include the narrower terms or concepts, select the \textbf{Explode} box to the right. Exploding a term ORs the narrow concepts under the heading!

- Click \textit{Search Database} to return to the main page.

Test other CINAHL Subject Headings to add to your search: e.g., \textit{Psychological Trauma}; \textit{Pregnancy Complications, Psychiatric; Labor; Qualitative Validity, etc.} Combine search terms using \textbf{Boolean} operators, \textbf{AND}, or \textbf{OR} to make a final set of results on your topic.

Select the terms to combine by checking the boxes and click \textbf{Search with AND} or \textbf{Search with OR} buttons.

In this example, you can combine \textit{Set #3, Set #4, Set #5} and click \textbf{Search with AND}. You could also combine \textit{Set#1, Set #2} and click \textbf{Search with OR}. 
Read pertinent articles as a way of building up your search term list, and view the references in each article. If you discover an article title that you should have found, find out how that article is indexed.

Copy/paste an article title of interest in Scopus to find other articles that have cited that article.

Run same search in different EBSCO databases without retyping your strategy!

Step 1. Click Choose Databases to navigate to other EBSCO Databases

Step 2. Deselect the database you were in (e.g. CINAHL Plus with Full Text) - just remove check mark in box

Step 3. Select the box next to a new database (e.g. Academic Search Premier) – one database at a time

Step 4. Click OK button and your search will now run in Academic Search Premier
Step 5. Click **Search button** to run the search in the new database.

Step 6. Click **Select all** and then click **Refresh Search Results** button.

**NOTE:** Subject Headings are unique to each database, so CINAHL Subject Headings may have zero results in Academic Search Premier.

**Let's follow the same process to find Quantitative research (research using numerical data) on this topic**

Combine your topic with keywords that represent quantitative research:

- Questionnaires, specific research instruments, scales, etc.
- Measurable variables (e.g., anxiety, depression, etc.)
- Controlled trials, meta-analysis, statistics, randomized controlled trials, multi-center studies

Combine your concepts using **CINAHL Subject Headings (MH)**

- The screen shot below shows CINAHL Subject Headings (MH) were combined with **Search with AND**.
- The + sign next to the CINAHL Headings means that there are narrower terms under that broad topic that are ORd together.
- 
  (MH "Childbirth+" OR MH "Labor Complications+") AND (MH "Trauma+" OR MH "Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic+") AND  
  (MH "Quantitative Studies" OR MH "Models, Statistical" OR MH "Questionnaires+" OR MH "Scales")
Quantitative research articles follow a specific format: Background, Objective, Methodology, Results, Discussion, and Conclusions.

Another option is to search your topic broadly and then use filters for English language, Peer Reviewed Journal, Research Article. This citation was found by searching (traumatic childbirth or traumatic labor) and the filter Randomized Controlled Trials.

**Effectiveness of a counseling intervention after a traumatic childbirth: a randomized controlled trial.**
Gamble J; Creedy D; Moyle W; Webster J; McAllister M; Dickson P; Birth: Issues in Perinatal Care, Mar2005; 32(1): 11-19. 9p. (Journal Article - research, tables/charts, randomized controlled trial)

Let’s run the same search in PubMed. [NOTE - a new version of PubMed will occur in January 2020]

Click Search History in CINHAL and copy your best keyword strategy, then paste in PubMed search box, click Search. Your terms will be mapped to Medical Subject Headings if there is a match, as well as text words. Use parentheses to delineate each topic or group synonyms. **EXAMPLE:** (traumatic childbirth OR traumatic labor) AND (qualitative OR phenomenological)

PubMed retrieves many results! View Search Details on the results page to see the query translation and irrelevancy. [All Fields means your keyword or phrase will be found anywhere in the record (e.g. journal, author, abstract, author institution, etc.)]
Focus results by searching terms/phrase in specific fields – always use Caution!

- Use [ti] to find terms in the title; use [tiab] to find terms in the title or abstract
- "traumatic childbirth"[ti] will find the phrase in the title
- traumatic[ti] childbirth[ti] will find the words anywhere in the title

NOTE: The current PubMed allows you to view search results using a Best Match Sort Order. The New PubMed will automatically do a Best Match.
Use CAUTION, the Best Match is an algorithm and may not retrieve the same results as a keyword/Mesh search. You can toggle under Sort By and choose, Most Recent or Best Match. Do not filter your results to free full text because you will not see the UConn Link.

To view MeSH, click article title, scroll below the abstract, then click MeSH link, add MeSH terms to your search.

Click Advanced under search box to review search history.

To filter your results, click Show Additional Filters on left navigation column to view more options (e.g. languages, journal subsets).

Check the Languages box, click SHOW, then select English to activate.

Click Customize under Ages, select your filter (e.g. newborn: birth-1 month), click SHOW, activate your filters.

For more Article Types (e.g. Practice Guidelines, Systematic review, Meta-analysis, Randomized Controlled Trials), click Customize under Article Types, select article type to show, click Show, then activate your filters. Do not use the Full Text or Free Full Text filters!
Click title of article to find UCONN Full Text and the full text. This example shows a full text link from PMC & UCONN Full Text

Women's Experiences of Emotional Recovery from Childbirth-Related Perineal Trauma: A Qualitative Content Analysis.

Send your total results to the Clipboard icon to print results, email results, to save in your My NCBI Collections, or to export results to RefWorks.

Select citations by clicking the check box next to them. From the Send to menu, select Clipboard; then click the Add to Clipboard button. Click the Clipboard items link to view citations. Clipboard items will be stored for eight hours and then disappear!!

Advanced PubMed Tips:

Use PubMed Clinical Queries to find clinical research articles quickly. It is not as comprehensive as PubMed. Find link on the PubMed homepage.

Advanced search using MeSH Terms for precision (MeSH defines the content of the article.)

Many citations are indexed with MeSH Terms, just click MeSH Terms link below the abstract or PMID number to view

Use the drop-down search menu to access the Mesh database.

Step 1. Search for childbirth and click Search.
Step 2. Results bring up multiple Mesh terms, so click the desired term, Parturition. Click ADD to Search Builder button on the right side which will populate the PubMed Search Builder box. You can also select subheadings, if needed.
Step 3. Clear screen and type post-traumatic stress disorders; click Search.
Step 4. Select MeSH term Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic; click ADD to Search Builder using AND
Step 5. Click Search PubMed to return to PubMed and view your results.
PubMed has a special filter that allows you to limit a search to **systematic reviews** or to **meta-analysis** Systematic [sb] (12/18)

- Add systematic [sb] or meta-analysis[sb] to your Search set
- “Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic”[mesh] AND systematic[sb]
- You can also select these filters from the **Article Types** column on your results page

**Let's follow a similar process to find "Quantitative Research" in PubMed**

- Combine your topic with keywords for quantitative research:
  - Questionnaires, specific research instruments, scales
  - Measurable variables
  - Controlled trials, meta-analysis, statistics

- Limit your search results to **specific types** of research articles. Under **Article Types** select: Randomized Controlled Trials, Clinical Trial, Multicenter Study, Evaluation Studies, Multivariate Analysis
- Combine your topic using **MeSH terms** that will find Quantitative research:
  - Surveys and Questionnaires[Mesh]
  - Single Blind Method[Mesh]
  - The example below combined the following MeSH Terms:
Let’s try searching our topic in **Scopus**

**Author search:** Click **Authors**; type name (e.g. Beck Cheryl Tatano), click Search and select the author’s name from list. View articles and bibliography.

Find who has cited that **author** (citation analysis) and view their references.

**KeyWord search:** Combine keywords to find articles on **traumatic childbirth AND qualitative**

Search the **title of an article** and view the references in that article and see who has cited that article and view their references.

When you are searching a database and find an article of interest, copy/paste the **article title** in **Scopus**.

**Example:** 2011 citation by Dr. Beck was cited in 25 publications! Each publication may have unique search terms or references that may be helpful.

![Scopus search result example](image)

Let’s try searching our topic in **Dissertation Abstracts** (via ProQuest)

- Enter one concept per box and select where the concept should appear (i.e. Title)
  - If too specific you get fewer results; if too broad you get many results
  - Type **traumatic childbirth** and limit to **Document title-TI**
- Enter second concept **qualitative** in the second box and select location (anywhere)
- Combine your set with **AND**, click **Search**

- Click **Full text-PDF** to view the dissertation
- If dissertation is not full text, try requesting it through Interlibrary Services

- A dissertation will usually discuss the methodology, research tools/instruments, references, and search strategies used by the author.

**Use our RESEARCH GUIDES for more help**  Examples: [Health Subject Guide](#) or [Psychology Subject Guide](#) or [Citation Guides](#)

**ORGANIZE YOUR RESEARCH** -

Set up a **MY EBSCOhost** account to save your work in EBSCO databases:

- Select **Sign In** located on the top tool bar to create a new account
- Click blue icon located next to article title you want, once article is saved it turns yellow
- Once you save articles, click open folder to view you saved citations
- If you close your browser without saving your work to your my EBSCOhost account you will lose your temporary folder and the contents!

Set up a **My NCBI** account to save your work in PubMed

- Select **Sign in to NCBI** click [Register for an NCBI account](#) and create account
- Click the box next to the article title you want and send to **Clipboard**. When finished save to **Collections** or export to **RefWorks**
- Save your search, save your references, set up search alerts, turn on **highlighting** for ease of searching

**Use a Citation Manager/Reference Manager** -

An online tool or desktop software used to organize and store citations and full-text articles or other documents, create bibliographies, insert in-text citations into a paper, and share references with research partners.

**Examples:** [RefWorks](#), Mendeley, Zotero
RETRIEVING FULL TEXT ARTICLES -

To find all UConn full text articles when searching our databases, NEVER limit your retrieval to full text!

Look for:

- PDF symbol which will automatically give you the PDF article
- HTML symbol which will give you the article in HTML format

Click UCONN Full Text if the PDF icon is not available

UCONN Full Text may provide a link to the article, journal website (from there you can search for the article), or a link to order the article from Interlibrary Services. The scanned article will be sent you via your UConn email.

Keep Current - Set up Email Alerts or RSS feeds

• Becker’s Hospital Review https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/
• BMJ Evidence Centre (free monthly alerts)  http://clinicalevidence.bmj.com
• Evidence Alerts (from McMaster Plus & DynaMed Plus)  https://plus.mcmaster.ca/EvidenceAlerts/
• Health Affairs Blog:  https://www.healthaffairs.org/blog
• Health Care Business News  https://www.healthleadersmedia.com/
• Medical News Today  http://www.medicalnewstoday.com
• Medscape  http://www.medscape.com/medscapetoday
• Not Running a Hospital Blog:  http://runningahospital.blogspot.com/
• The Pennsylvania Patient Safety Authority:  http://patientsafetyauthority.org/Pages/Default.aspx

Click  Ask A Librarian located on the library website if you have a question.

You can also contact Valori Ann Banfi  valori.banfi@uconn.edu  or at 860-486-2824
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Some of the formatting ideas in this handout came from Kathy Kavanagh Webb, Research & Instructional Services Librarian kavanaghk@ecu.edu & Elsevier’s Library Connect.