

Catalog and Database Search Tips

How do I start searching for information on my topic?

Use **keywords** – any words that represent your topic – and pay attention to the subjects that you encounter on your search. When you start a search, sometimes you’re not that familiar with the special vocabulary of that field. Think of as many words as you can that represent your topic and see where they take you. As you find books and articles, note which words people use to talk about your topic.

What's a keyword?

Any word associated with the book or article. It could be a word in the author’s name, in the title of the book, in the publisher’s name, or any word in the full-text of the article.

What's a subject?

What the article or book is actually *about*. Sometimes books or articles have titles that don’t actually describe their information content. Subjects (also known as descriptors or specialized vocabulary) are *assigned* to a book or article to represent the subject of that book or article. In other words, searching for the keyword PLAY might get you books where the author or publisher’s name includes the word PLAY. Maybe you’ll find books on professional sports with the word PLAY in the title. However, if you’re only interested in books on how young children use PLAY in mental development, try looking for PLAY as the subject of the book.

What do I do if I get too much?

Use **more keywords**. Often the problem is too much information, so be as specific as you can in describing your topic. Think about the field of study, the people and places, and the dates involved in your topic.

Try subject searching.

Use whatever subject searching is available – this will make your search much more targeted.

Using subject searching will make sure you only find books and articles that are really focused on your topic.

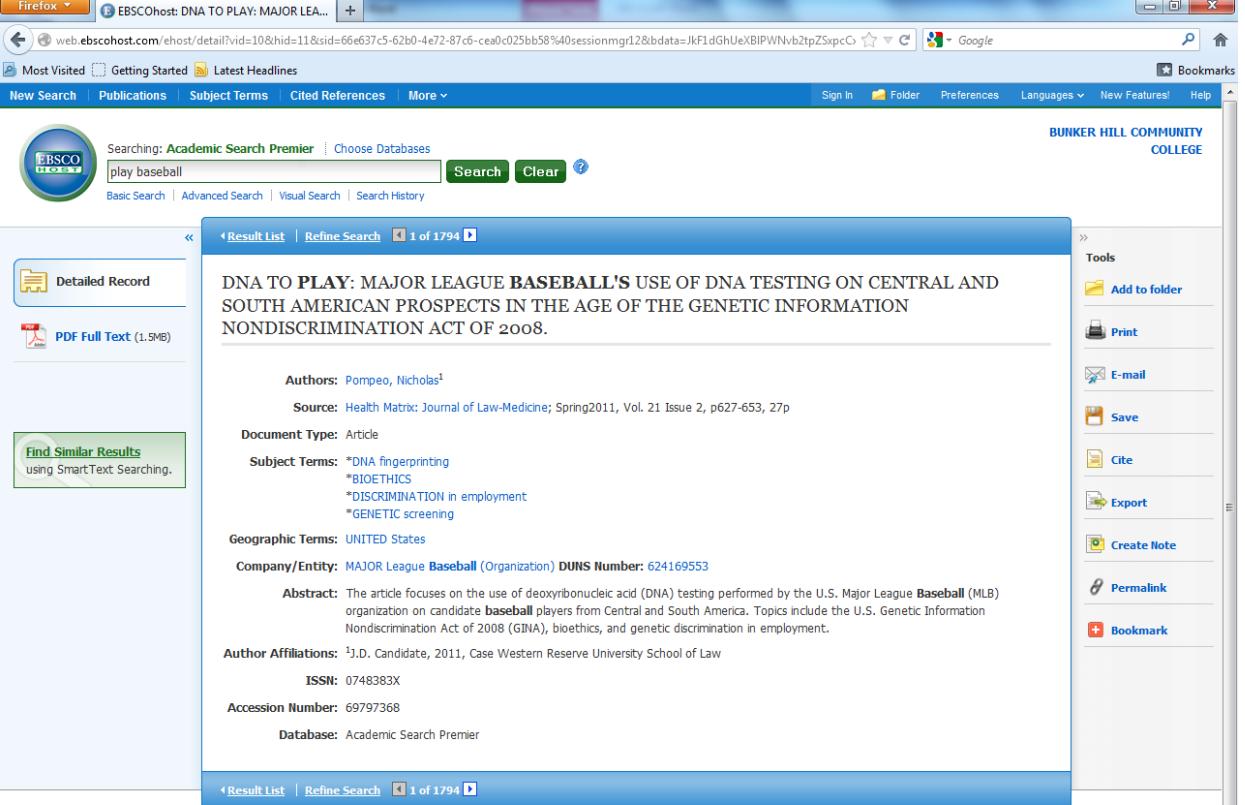
What do I do if I get too little?

Try **synonyms**. Maybe people use slightly different words to talk about your topic. If you can’t find anything using “experimenting on animals”, try words that have a similar meaning like “animal rights”, “lab animals”, or “animal testing.”

Try broader subjects. Especially when looking for books, try using words that describe the next larger topic. If you can't find a whole book on "ginseng", try looking for books on "alternative medicines" or "herbal remedies."

Why care about **keywords**?

If we do a search on the word "play", you will get a variety of results. This is a case where you would want to use multiple keywords. What types of "play"? What exactly are you looking for in terms of "play"? If you were looking for "play baseball", do a search for that term to narrow your results.



The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window displaying the EBSCOhost search results for the query "play baseball". The search results page is titled "Result List" and shows 1 of 1794 results. The main content of the first result is as follows:

DNA TO PLAY: MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL'S USE OF DNA TESTING ON CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICAN PROSPECTS IN THE AGE OF THE GENETIC INFORMATION NONDISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2008.

Authors: Pompeo, Nicholas¹

Source: Health Matrix: Journal of Law-Medicine; Spring2011, Vol. 21 Issue 2, p627-653, 27p

Document Type: Article

Subject Terms: *DNA fingerprinting
*BIOETHICS
*DISCRIMINATION in employment
*GENETIC screening

Geographic Terms: UNITED States

Company/Entity: MAJOR League Baseball (Organization) DUNS Number: 624169553

Abstract: The article focuses on the use of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) testing performed by the U.S. Major League Baseball (MLB) organization on candidate baseball players from Central and South America. Topics include the U.S. Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA), bioethics, and genetic discrimination in employment.

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