



Finding Information Using General Reference Center

What is General Reference Center?

General Reference Center is a general interest database of magazines, newspapers and reference sources. It is useful for information on current events, popular culture, the arts, sciences and sports.

Getting Started

Go to the Babson Library home page and click on “**Databases A-Z**” in the “**Finding What You Need**” menu. Scroll down the page to “**General Reference Center.**”

If you are off-campus, you will be prompted for your SC ID# and your last name. Type in the first nine digits of your ID, including zeroes (ex. 000123456). Leave off any number after the dash.

Searching for Articles

There are four types of search you can use:

- **Basic Search:** Use for very simple searches.
- **Subject Guide Search:** Search subject headings.
- **Publication Search:** Search individual journal titles.
- **Advanced Search:** Use to create more complicated searches. **Recommended.**

Choose “**Advanced Search.**” You will see a search box with three search bars (numbered sections are explained below):

Select index(es) and enter search term(s) **1.**

	Keyword(ke)	
And	Keyword(ke)	
And	Keyword(ke)	

2. **3.** **Search**

1. **What to Search For:** Enter search terms here.
 - If you want to search for an exact phrase, put quotes around it.
 - If you have more than one search term, separate them by line or use connecting words.
2. **Connecting Words:** Use this pull-down to add connecting words to your search. Linking keywords with connecting words tells the database to search in a specific way. The most commonly used connecting words are AND and OR:

- **AND:** The database searches for *both* words. Ex.: *sleep AND children* finds articles that have both words in the specified fields.
 - **OR:** The database searches for *any* of the words. Ex. *Children OR teenagers OR kids* will return articles that have any of those three words in the specified fields.
 - Use either the drop-down menu or type connecting words in yourself.
3. **Where to Search:** This is a pull-down menu that lets you choose where you want the database to search.
- You can choose to search keywords, article titles, authors, subjects, abstracts, the full text of the article, etc., from the drop-down menu.
 - A keyword is a significant term that appears in the author, title, introductory text, and subject fields of an article. This is the default setting.

Limiting Your Search

You may find that you are retrieving more results than you wanted. Here are a few ways to use the database's search options to narrow your results:

- **Peer Reviewed Publications:** Check this box if you want academic articles instead of articles from popular magazines and newspapers.
- **Documents With Images:** If you are looking for images within articles, check this box.
- **Publication Date:** You can choose a specific date or a range of dates here.

Other ways to limit your search include:

- **Adding Keywords:** Connect more keywords to your search using AND.
- **Narrowing the Focus:** Selecting a narrower field (i.e., "Title" instead of "Keyword") will make your search more precise.
- **Changing Connecting Words:** Use AND instead of OR as a connecting word.

Expanding Your Search









You may also find that the database returned too few articles, or none at all. Here are a few ways to expand your search:

- **Check Spelling!!!** The database can't tell if something is spelled incorrectly.
- **Removing Keywords:** Take a keyword or two out of your search. This will make your search more general.
- **Changing Connecting Words:** Changing AND to OR will get you more results, although they may not all be as useful.
- **Expand the Focus:** Select a broader field (i.e., "Full Text" instead of "Keyword") to expand the scope of the search.
- **Use Wildcards:** Place an asterisk (*) at the end of a word to search for words with different endings (ex. *employ** will find *employed, employment, employee, etc.*). A question mark (?) fills in for a single letter (ex. *s?ng* finds *sing, sang, song and sung*).

Your Results List


Use the tabs at the top of your results list to switch between **magazines and journals**, **reference sources**, **news sources** and **multimedia**. There will be different items in each list.

Click on the article title to see the full record, or choose one of the following options:

- Choose  to view the abstract or  to view the citation (not always available).
- Choose  to see information about the journal the article was published in.
- Choose  to generate and download a citation.
- Choose  (.pdf file),  (HTML file) or  (HTML w/ images) to view the full text.
- Choose  to search for this journal in your library catalog (not always available).

The Record

The records for General Reference Center are very simple.

- **Citation:** At the top of the record you will see a lengthy citation which includes the specific website. This is the citation of the article in MLA format. You can view the citation in APA format by clicking on “How to Cite” and choosing “APA (American Psychological Association).”
- **Options:** Use the icons to view the full text, search for the journal or generate a citation. The icons and their functions are described above under “Your Results List.”
- **Abstract:** If an abstract exists, it will be below the citation. Abstracts are short summaries of articles.
- **Full Text:** HTML full text will appear below the abstract. Click on the  icon above the abstract to view .pdf full text.
- **Subjects:** Click on subject terms to view records classified under these subjects.

Tracking Down Full Text

If no full text is available, use the **track it down!** button to search other databases for this article.



Clicking the button will open a new window:

- If the full text of the article exists in another database that we subscribe to, a link will appear to the article in that database in the new window.
- If not, it will inform you that the article is not available online. You will have the option of checking the Voyager catalog for that journal, looking at other library catalogs or ordering the article through Interlibrary Loan.

If Track it Down! does not appear and the full text is not available, you can still look for the article by looking in the **Journal Titles A-Z** list.

For more assistance:

Contact us! (413) 748-3315 or toll-free at 1-800-730-LBRY
IM/Yahoo username: *BabsonLibrarian* MSN: babsonlibrarian@hotmail.com
Ask the Library form: <http://www.spfldcol.edu/library/library2.nsf/askthelibrary>