PsycINFO® is an electronic bibliographic database that provides abstracts and citations for the scholarly literature in the field of psychology and behavioral sciences. It contains over 4 million references of peer-reviewed literature from the early 1800s to the present.

Access APA PsycNET through your library’s webpage. If you need assistance, contact your librarian.

This quick reference guide will demonstrate how to search PsycINFO on APA PsycNET platform in Advanced Search mode. Select the Advanced Search link to get started.

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Definitions of Select Fields

**Any Field:** automatically searches all fields, with the exception of cited references

**Keywords:** searches the Keywords field, which contains the natural language terms describing documents’ content, as well as the Index Terms and Title fields

**Abstract:** brief summary of the article

**Author Affiliation:** institutional affiliation of authors

**Index Terms:** controlled vocabulary from Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms®

**Publisher:** organization/company that publishes the journal or book

**Table of Contents:** book table of contents; go here to find chapter titles

**Tests & Measures:** lists the tests used in the methodology of a study

Search Basics

1. **Boolean Operators (AND, OR, and NOT):** Combine search terms to narrow (“AND”) or broaden (“OR”) results. Use “NOT” to exclude records from retrieval.

2. **Phrases (" “): Enclose phrases in quotation marks if you want to find results in that exact order.

   For example, searching “perceived stress scale” will not retrieve “stress scale,” “scale of perceived stress,” or any other variation. It will retrieve only “perceived stress scale.”

3. **Truncation (•):** The • replaces any number of characters.

   For example, therap• finds therapy, therapies, therapist, therapists, therapeutic, therapeutically, etc.

Title Search

Enter the title or the word(s) you want contained in the title in the search box. Select **Title** from the drop-down menu.

For example, typing “psychotherapy” will return results with psychotherapy in the titles. If you know the complete title, such as “Principles for facilitating agency in psychotherapy,” you may enter the complete title in the search box.

Journal Search

Enter the journal title or the word(s) you want contained in the title into the search box and select **Journal Title** from the drop-down menu.

For example, searching for “American Psychologist” will yield a list of all citations from the journal entitled American Psychologist.

Helpful Hint: If you are unsure which journal to select, click **Journals Lookup** for the complete Journal Index.
Index Terms

Index Terms are taken from the APA's Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms®. This is the controlled vocabulary for the database.

Type an index term into the search box and select Index Terms from the drop-down menu; for example, “obsessive compulsive disorder.”

Helpful Hint: If you are unsure if a term is an index term you can look it up in the online Thesaurus. Click on Term Finder in the main navigation bar.

You can access the Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms by clicking on the Term Finder link.

Keyword Search

Search three fields at once for broad concepts. Keywords searches the Title, Index Terms, and Keywords fields simultaneously.

Enter the term(s) into the search box and select Keywords from the drop-down menu. For example, search “seasonality.” This will retrieve records with “seasonality” as a keyword.

Only Show Content Where

Below are examples of options available to focus your search.

Age Group: limit your search to the age of participants in a research study (this applies to humans)

Classification Code: Classification Codes represent general areas of psychology which are used to classify each document, and can be found at http://www.apa.org/pubs/databases/training/class-codes.aspx

Document Type: limit your search to specific document types, such as bibliography, editorial, review, etc.

Methodology: limit your search to the methodology used in a research study, such as clinical case study, literature review, meta analysis, etc.

Population Group: limit your search to the group of participants in a research study (human, animal, female, male, etc.)

Supplemental Material: indicates material separate from the source document

Record Display

The record displays a wealth of bibliographic data, including the title, author(s), author contact information, abstract, publication source, publisher, ISSN, language, keywords, digital object identifier, and much more.
My List
Add any items you are interested in to your folder by checking the box to the left and then clicking on the “Add to My List” link.

Manage Searches
On the Search Results page, you can manage your search by setting up an email alert or an RSS feed, creating a Permalink, and editing or saving your search strategy.

My PsycNET
Click the My PsycNET tab to create a free personalized area. My PsycNET allows you to create and edit a user profile, save searches, and set up alerts. It also stores PsycNET purchases, including PsycNET Direct pay-per-view searches.

Recent Searches
Click the Recent Searches link to combine recent searches with AND, OR, or NOT Boolean operators.

Cited References
Cited Reference searching allows you to search the works cited list.

Training and Search Help
APA provides PsycINFO training, including search guides, webinar schedules, tutorials, and more at http://www.apa.org/pubs/databases/training/index.aspx

And, don’t miss the PsycINFO YouTube channel: http://www.youtube.com/user/PsycINFO

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