Determining Scope

The next step in a successful research process involves identifying the preferred format (citations, abstracts, full text) of the search results. Since the information you are looking for will determine what resource you will use, you must consider the scope of your information and determine which tools encompass that scope.
There are four components of Scope:

• Type of materials indexed
• Type of information provided
• Subject coverage
• Time frame
Type of materials indexed: What types of materials are required?

• The Library catalog includes access to books, government documents, periodical titles, and multimedia material. Which of these material types are needed for your particular research topic? If you are writing a paper related to current discoveries in the area of stem cell research, periodical literature would provide you with the most up-to-date information. Research related to NASA would require extensive use of government documents.
The Library catalog is just one example. When using any information resource, consider whether or not that resource provides coverage of the variety of materials that you need.
Peer-Reviewed Periodicals

Periodical literature refers to publications that have a new edition at regular intervals such as one week, one month, etc. Newspapers, magazines, and journals are common examples of periodicals.
Periodical articles are an important type of material to use because:

• periodical articles tend to be very current.

• the subject of a periodical article is often narrowly focused.

• best of all, periodical articles are usually relatively short.
You are probably familiar with many popular periodicals such as *Time*, *National Geographic*, *Consumer Reports*, and *Wired*. University professors will expect you to use more scholarly periodicals that are specific to the subject discipline you are writing about. Those scholarly periodicals are generally called "peer-reviewed," "refereed," or sometimes "scholarly."
Peer-reviewed refers to the process by which articles are selected for publication in the journal. Peer-review, sometimes known as refereed, means that other experts in the field being studied, besides the author, have reviewed and accepted or approved the content of the article.
Most often such articles will begin with an abstract, or summary of the article, and an introduction. This will likely be followed by some or all of the followings sections:

• methods and materials (used in the study)
• results (from the study), which often includes tables, charts, and graphs of data
• a discussion of the results and their likely meaning
• conclusions that may be drawn from the results of the study
• future work that is planned or needs to be done
Learn more about peer-review in this [YouTube Video](https://www.youtube.com) created by Evans Library, or in an encyclopedia in the library.
Type of Information: What is the desired format of information?
When beginning your research, bibliographic citations or abstracts might be the desired format of information.
Citations contain the basic information about an item.

Abstracts provide you with the basic information and a short summary.

Another format option is full-text, which means the complete article or book is available to you word for word.
Example - Bibliographic Citation:

doi:10.3354/meps194179
Example - Abstract:

Abstract

The influence of hypoxia and anoxia on the oxygen consumption, survivorship and rate of metamorphosis of field-caught postlarvae (megalopae) and first-instar juveniles of the blue crab Callinectes sapidus was observed under laboratory conditions. Rates of oxygen uptake by megalopae were independent of P-O2 at oxygen tensions above 8.88 kPa. However, P-c for juvenile crabs was significantly higher than for megalopae (89.6 vs 43.2% saturation). Tolerance of blue crab megalopae of hypoxic conditions below 20% saturation (similar to 4.12 kPa) was greater than for newly metamorphosed juveniles. Juvenile crabs also succumbed to the effects of anoxia more rapidly than megalopae, but neither group survived exposure of >5 h. Megalopae and crabs that became immobile in anoxic water quickly recovered when returned to normoxic conditions. Metamorphosis of megalopae to the first-juvenile stage was delayed when they were exposed to Po, values of 8.21 and 12.32 kPa (40 and 60% saturation). Similarly, time to metamorphosis increased significantly when megalopae were temporarily exposed to hypoxic conditions (P-O2 = 4.12 kPa) for 4 h each day. However, there was no significant difference between the time to metamorphosis for megalopae exposed to hypoxic conditions for 2 h each day and those maintained in oxygen-saturated water. These results suggest that the presence of hypoxic and anoxic water in deep water layers and shallow near-shore habitats of estuaries during the summer months may influence the onshore migration, settlement and survival of blue crab megalopae and newly metamorphosed juvenile crabs.

Source

Web of Science
Subject coverage: What is your topic of interest?

Some resources are better than others for certain topics.

The Humanities Index is where you would look for articles related to art, literature, or philosophy.

Chemical Abstracts would need to be consulted for recent publications on Soybean Lipoxygenase.

When selecting an information resource, read the prefatory information or consult the Help section to find out if your topic is included.
Time frame: What is the required date range for your research?

If you need literary criticism on Shakespeare, then an index or database that contains only articles published within the last two weeks might not provide enough information. However, if you need information related to the recent developments in cell stem research, the most current index or database may fulfill your research need.
Remember!
You can only pull from an information resource what it has to offer.