

## Collections

Books and Encyclopedia

Magazines and Newspapers

Leisure Reading Collection

Electronic Books online

Journal Databases online

Downloadable Audiobooks

Encyclopedias and Reference online

DVDs and Videos

## Services

Virtual Library <http://umhelena.edu>

Book a Librarian

Interlibrary Loans

Course Reserves

Borrowing agreements with Carroll College and  
Lewis & Clark Library.

## Hours

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

## Staff

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## Finding Primary Research Articles

Library

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The University of  
Montana – Helena  
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

# Library

# Finding Primary Research Articles

AN  
EDUCATED  
DECISION

## How to Recognize a Primary Research Article

### What is a primary research article?

**A primary research article reports the findings of a study.** It is an article that contributes something new to what is known about a topic. These articles are published in scholarly journals, though a news brief of their findings may be reported in popular magazines, trade journals or magazines.

### What does a primary research article look like?

Primary research articles are usually 5-13 pages long, often have **multiple authors, seldom have color illustrations, and frequently contain charts or graphs.** Research articles are organized in a standard format. Look for these sections.

- Abstract or Summary
- Background or Introduction
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion or Conclusion
- References or Bibliography

### Are all articles in scholarly journals primary research articles?

**No.** Other types of articles are also published in scholarly journals including editorials, review articles, case reports, letters to the editor, and news briefs.

## Suggested Databases to Search

### Where can I find primary research articles in the UM-Helena Library?

**Articles from scholarly journals can be found in many of the online databases available on the college's website** <http://umhelena.edu> Follow the path *Current Students . . . Library . . . Online Databases.*

### Which database should I search?

**Select a database that covers the broad subject area you are researching,** such as science, business, history, or the social sciences. Any of the following databases would be a good place to start.

- [Academic Search Premier](#)
- [ScienceDirect](#)
- [SpringerLink](#)
- [Annual Reviews](#)
- [Taylor and Francis](#)
- [Wiley Interscience](#)
- [CINAHL Full Text](#)

### What if the full-text of the article I want is not available in the database I am using?

**Ask the Librarian for assistance.** The article may be available in another database and we can help you find it. Or we can borrow a copy of the article from another library.

## Steps for Searching

### Where do I start in searching a database?

**The more you understand about your topic, the more you will be able to spot relevant or interesting articles.** Read a brief encyclopedia article in [Britannica Online](#) or [AccessScience](#) for background information and terminology on your topic. Use this resource to help you select keywords to use in your search.

### How do I put this all together to find an article?

- Select an appropriate database
- Enter your keywords
- Add "AND study" to your search
- Limit your results to full text
- Limit your results to peer reviewed or refereed publications
- View the full article to see if it has the format of a primary research article (Abstract, Background, etc.)

### What if I am not getting the results I expected?

**Use technical terminology.** For example, don't search *blood pressure*, search *hypertension*.

**Use synonyms** in search strings, such as *genetics OR heredity OR inheritance*.

**Use "phrases"** to search for concepts that are multi-word, such as "multiple personality."