

## Search Strategy for Using Article Databases

Use this search planner to develop search terms before and during your research.

**Step 1:** State your topic. Write a brief statement or research question (from your prospectus)

**Step 2:** Identify the concepts in your topic. Write down the major concepts or main ideas using one or two words.

Step 2: Main concepts	Step 3: Keywords & Synonyms	Step 4: Subject terms

**Step 3:** For each concept, write down several keywords, synonyms and related terms.

**Step 4:** Do a search in the database [Academic Search Premier](#) using one or two keywords from your list. Choose an article that is on topic and scan it to find additional subject terms to add to your list.

**Step 5:** Refine your search using new terms or a different combinations of terms. Experiment with different keywords. Evaluate articles for relevance to your topic.

Keep in mind that the focus of your topic may evolve as you learn from your research.