

Search school 1.
Basic principles

Good searching starts with the clear formulation of the problem.

When formulating your query, take the special features of the database or internet search engine into account.

You have to search in several databases or other sources.

Good searching requires time, patience and concentration (precision).

Let us get acquainted with the special features of the search engine we are going to use. **Let us read the help offered to searching.** There are interfaces offering the possibility to combine several terms and to apply various limits to our search. These may have different names: advanced search, expert search, etc. Anyway, they are worth using!

Searching takes place by **matching the search terms** with the terms in the database or document. There are relatively few systems which are capable of extending automatically your search to e.g. characters with or without accent marks, words with or without endings. However, none of the systems are capable of finding out what we want: i.e. a missing letter may lead to no results at all.

Different systems **order the hits** differently (according to relevance, time, alphabet, etc.)

Indexes, thesauri, subject heading lists enhance our search by aiding finding the proper search term, its correct spelling, focusing our search and giving us new ideas.

If your search is unsuccessful, **do not hesitate to try a completely new approach!**