



SEARCH STRATEGY

Effective literature searching

Literature searching can be a stressful process. A systematic and comprehensive strategy, while keeping detailed records at the same time, however, can keep stress at bay. The following tips should be helpful.

Narrow down your topic

Formulate research question(s), problem statement, and objectives. Establish keywords or phrases to search for additional information. > Some preliminary reading will be necessary – is there just about enough literature on the subject or is there too much to review?

Develop a search strategy

Establish keywords or phrases > List related terms, alternative spellings, synonyms, acronyms.

Define limits

Define your search limits and stick to them. For example: only use English language or articles of a certain type, time period or category, from one particular country.

Use the Library website!

Be methodical and organised in your search, starting from a broad perspective of the subject area, gradually narrowing down to specific issues. Always start your search on www.buas.nl/library, and use the following resources.

Library catalogue

A register of all the items available to borrow from the library and it also offers access to E-books, BUAs theses & placement reports and other online sources.

Metasearch

With the metasearch engine on the library website, you can search simultaneously in several databases. Search results are compiled from these databases and can be diverse: (academic) articles, E-books, market reports, trade publications etc.

Tips And Tricks



There are four main strategies to broaden, narrow, or otherwise modify your search.

These include:

1 Boolean operators
Use AND to narrow your search, e.g: tourism AND cruise industry, and use OR to your search; e.g Bombay OR Mumbai

2 Truncation
Unless you have other platforms you prefer working on, the project will be conducted on Google Docs and Trello.

3 Wildcard symbol
To cover the variation between, for example American and English words, e.g: Organi?ation (search for spelling with s and z)

4 Searching with quotation marks
E.g.: “sustainable tourism” and find the exact phrase within a text .

Databases

Choose your research topic and use relevant databases. Check the text boxes to find out which database contains relevant information for you. Search every database by subject (or authors, titles, keywords, etc.). Also explore the advanced search options. Check the text on the first page for tips & tricks for search optimization.

Journals

The library collection also contains many electronic journals (see list on library website). If you can't find a specific article in one of the databases, maybe you will be more successful in one of the digital journal archives. Or enquire about back issues with our librarians.

Statistics

The library website features a variety of statistics databases. Check text box above.

Industry organizations

The library website also features a selection of websites of useful industry organizations.

The internet

A wealth of information, and often free literature. Make sure to check the reliability of the information!

Evaluate resources

Once you have found a resource, you need to establish its usefulness. Ask yourself:> Is it worth pursuing? > Does it meet the parameters of your literature search. Examine each item critically – is it reliable? Is it biased? When was it published? What is the author's background?

Citations and sources

Build up a list of references as you go along. This will save you time in the long run. References should be complete, including: author(s), title, publisher, dates, page numbers, editions, volume number, etc. Consider using an electronic card index system to keep track of your literature search process. Breda University of Applied Sciences uses EndNote for this purpose (check library website). Collect useful quotes and record the references, including page numbers.