

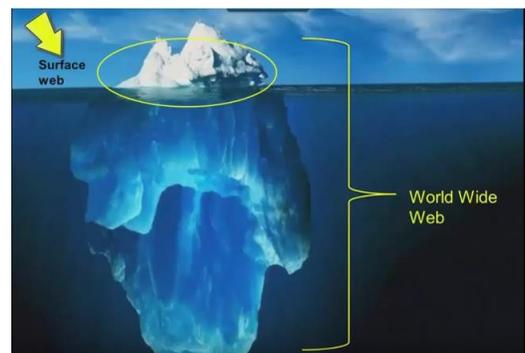
# SEARCH TIPS

- 1 [Search the Web VS Databases, what's the difference?](#)
- 2 [Using Boolean Operators to refine searches.](#)
- 3 [Too many or too few results? Try these tips to narrow or broaden your search.](#)
- 4 [Advanced search tips for databases](#)

# 1. Searching the Web VS Databases, what's the difference?

	WEB	DATABASES
<b>Credibility</b>	<b>Difficult to verify.</b> Lack of regulation and often published without evaluation.	Authority and content <b>credibility is guaranteed</b> by subject experts and publishers.
<b>Access</b>	<b>Free</b> (with internet subscription/free wifi)	<b>Paid for through tuition</b> and provincial taxes.
<b>Relevance</b>	Search may include <b>many irrelevant results</b> . Information may not have been updated in years.	Subject, medium and/or geographic <b>focus weeds out a lot of irrelevant information</b> . Updated regularly.
<b>Number of Hits</b>	Can be in the <b>100's and millions, duplicates included</b> .	<b>More manageable</b> number of results), duplicates can be filtered out.
<b>Search Features</b>	Mostly reliant on keywords (and some symbols) and <b>lacks filters to refine searching</b> . Using fuzzy logic, search engines in some ways, <b>could be considered "smarter" than database searches, often searching misspelt words or making suggestions for alternative keywords or phrases</b> . To make your search more accurate, use common Boolean operators (i.e. and, or, not).	Many <b>filters available to narrow and refine searches</b> including ability to limit by publication type, date, language, and scholarly/peer-reviewed status. <b>Generally searches only EXACTLY what is input. Ex. if your keyword is misspelt, your search will likely be unsuccessful</b> . When searching multiple keywords simultaneously, separate them with Boolean operators (i.e. and, or, not) to increase search accuracy.

Here's a short clip from the Monroe Community College Library Services on [Library Databases vs Google](#), discussing the difference between researching on the Internet and databases. [Return to Top Menu.](#)



## 2. Using Boolean Operators, truncation and wildcards to refine searches:

When searching the library catalogue and databases, try using specific [search terms](#) like boolean operators, truncation and [wildcards](#) to refine your keyword searches. These techniques can also be used when searching the Internet to increase search accuracy.

### SEARCH TERMS

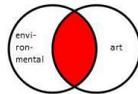
using Boolean Operators to improve your searches

Boolean Operators are related terms that either narrow or broaden your results.  
The most useful Boolean Operators are: **AND, OR** and **NOT**.

#### AND

Use **AND** to connect search terms and get results that include all of your search terms.  
This search will give you results that include both "environmental" **AND** "art".

environmental **AND** art

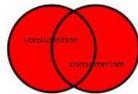


#### OR

Use **OR** to get results that include either one **OR** both of your search terms. Using **OR** can be useful when searching multiple synonyms simultaneously.

This search will include all results with either "consumption" **OR** "consumerism" **OR** both.

consumption **OR** consumerism

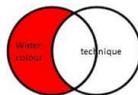


#### NOT

Use **NOT** to narrow your search. Search specifically for one term, but **NOT** another. Using **NOT** can be useful when a term has many applications or associations.

This search will include all results for "watercolour" but **NOT** those titles which also have "technique" as a searchable term.

watercolour **NOT** technique



### WILDCARD SEARCH

also known as truncation

use symbols at the end of root words **OR** to replace letters in order to search multiple forms and spellings simultaneously

The Luke Lindoe Library Online Catalogue uses \$ (dollar sign) as a wildcard to search for multiple forms or spellings.

modern\$	sustain\$	wom\$n	col\$r
Will bring up results for: modern modernity modernism	Will bring up results for: sustain sustainable sustainability	Will bring up results for: woman women womyn	Will bring up results for: color Colour collar

**NOTE:** wildcards **CANNOT** be used at the beginning of a search word  
ex. \$modern is **NOT** a valid search

**Different library catalogues and databases (Oxford Art Online, JSTOR, Artsource...) use different wildcard symbols.** Although the most common wildcards are \* (asterisk) and ? (question mark), always check the catalogue or database Help sections to determine what wildcards to use.

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# 3. Too many or too few results? Try these tips to narrow or broaden your search in the library catalogue:

## Narrow your search

Too many results? If your search retrieved too many titles, try to:

### 1. Narrow your search type.

In the Quick Search box, instead of hitting return (defaults to words or phrase) select the title button or subject button. Use quotation marks to search for an exact phrase, for example "sustainable design".



### 2. Use the Boolean Operators (and, not) to make your search more specific.

- sustainable (77) vs. sustainable and design (58)
- self portraits (85) vs. self portraits not painting (57)
- Indigenous and art (306) vs. Indigenous and art and performance (18)

### 3. Do an Advanced Search (instead of a Quick Search) and search a combination of terms, including item type and publication year range.

Ex. glass (subject search = 515) vs. glass and sculpture (subject search limited by item type and publication dates = 48)



### 4. Check the catalogue record

(click on the title to go to Item Details)  
The catalogue record lists terms which may help to refine your search or think of alternative search words.



## Broaden your search

Too few results? If your search didn't come up with much, try to:

### 1. Use "or" between similar search terms to broaden your search.

Ex. activism (29) vs activism or protest (49) vs activism or protest or social change (83)

### 2. Do a wildcard search.

Use the \$ as a wildcard to search for multiple forms or spellings. Ex. enviro\$ will retrieve: environment, environmental, environmentalism, environmentalist...

### 3. Check the catalogue record for other search terms.



### 4. Consider the historical and social context as well as broader movements or trends which may impact your topic.

Ex. Judith Scott (6) vs subject searches for: art, amateur (21), naive art (26), art brut (47), outsider art (69), women and sculpture (103),

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## 4. Advanced search tips for databases

Searching databases is very similar to searching the library catalogue. It's a good idea to use Boolean logic, truncation and wildcards as well as all the additional filters databases offers to refine searches.

Different databases use different symbols for wildcards (the AUArts Library uses \$ as a wildcard, but others may use the \* or the ! for example). Different databases may also interpret searches with some slight variation. For example, some databases search words typed next to each other as phrases, others automatically default to the Boolean AND between keywords.

Access databases through the Library [E-Resources](#) and take a look at **advanced search** tips in the Help sections for three of our most popular databases:

- **Oxford Art Online:** art reference which include works cited, useful for finding background and general information on artists, movements, art theory and historical context. Follow this link for a [guided tour](#).

Oxford Art Online also offers [Oxford Art Subject Guides](#) on a variety of topics (ex. Roman Art and Architecture, Dada and Surrealism, Asian Art, Women in Visual Arts). Each guide introduces the subject, links to key essays, biographies and external resources.

- **Artsource:** offers full-text articles, indexing and abstracts for a broad range of subjects from fine, decorative and commercial art to architecture and design. You can search for articles, limit your search to full-text results to read immediately online, organize articles into folders, email or print out copies and create journal alerts so that you are notified by email of new issues and their table of contents. Follow this link for an [Advanced Searching Tutorial for Artsource and other EBSCO databases](#).
- **JSTOR:** full-text articles in the humanities and social sciences, including art, art history, history, sociology and political science. Follow this link for a brief [video about advanced searching in JSTOR](#).

JSTOR also produces [JSTOR Daily](#), an online publication that provides scholarly context for current events.

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# SEARCH TERMS

## using Boolean Operators to improve your searches

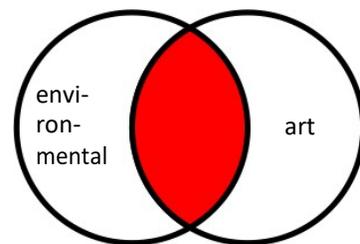
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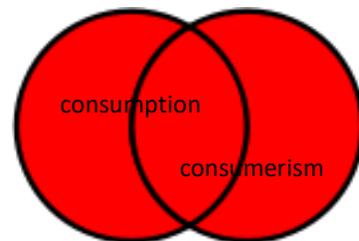


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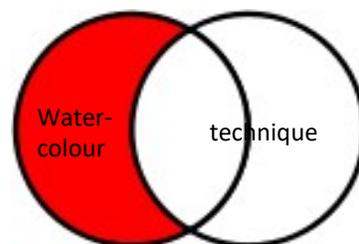


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watercolour **NOT** technique



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**modern\$**

Will bring up results for:

modern  
modernity  
modernism

**sustain\$**

Will bring up results for:

sustain  
sustainable  
sustainability

**wom\$n**

Will bring up results for:

woman  
women  
womyn

**col\$r**

Will bring up results for:

color  
Colour  
collar

**NOTE:** wildcards CANNOT be used at the beginning of a search word  
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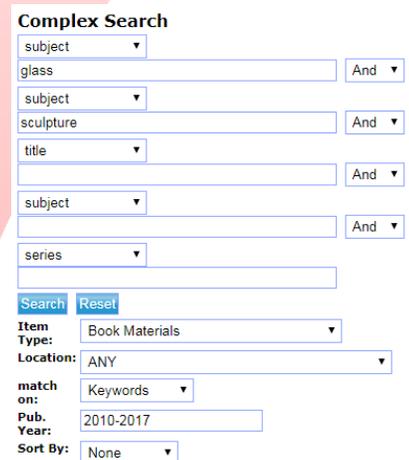


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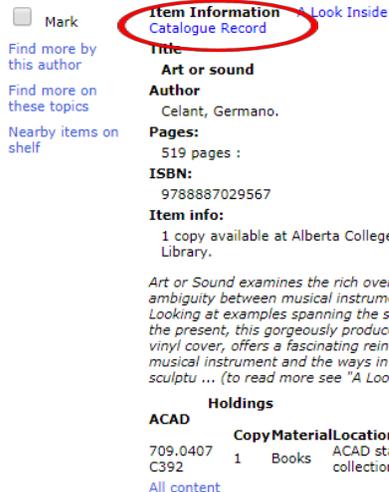


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(click on the title to go to Item Details)

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### Item Details



[Mark](#) [Look Inside](#)

**Item Information Catalogue Record**

**Title:**

**Art or sound**

**Author:** Celant, Germano.

**Pages:** 519 pages :

**ISBN:** 9788887029567

**Item info:** 1 copy available at Alberta College of Art and Design Library.

*Art or Sound examines the rich overlap and areas of ambiguity between musical instruments and works of art. Looking at examples spanning the seventeenth century to the present, this gorgeously produced book, with its thick vinyl cover, offers a fascinating reinterpretation of the musical instrument and the ways in which it can become a sculpture ... (to read more see "A Look Inside")*

**Holdings**

ACAD	Copy	Material	Location
709.0407 C392	1	Books	ACAD stacks (general collection) location

[All content](#)

**Subject term:** [Art and music--Exhibitions.](#)

**Subject term:** [Musical instruments in art--Exhibitions.](#)

**Subject term:** [Sound in art--Exhibitions.](#)

**Subject term:** [Sound installations \(Art\)--Exhibitions.](#)

**Subject term:** [Installations \(Art\)--Exhibitions.](#)

**Subject term:** [Multimedia \(Art\)--Exhibitions.](#)

**Subject term:** [Multimedia installatons \(Art\)--Exhibitions.](#)

**Subject term:** [Musical instruments--History.](#)

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**3. Check the catalogue record for other search terms.**

record 1 of 2 for search words+or+phrase "disability and design"

**Item Details**

Mark

Find more by this author  
Find more on these topics  
Nearby items on shelf

<b>Item Information</b>	<a href="#">A Look Inside</a>	<a href="#">Catalogue Record</a>
<b>Title</b>	Design meets disability	
<b>Author</b>	Pullin, Graham	
<b>Publisher:</b>	MIT Press,	
<b>Pub date:</b>	c2009.	
<b>Pages:</b>	xix, 341 p. :	
<b>ISBN:</b>	9780262162555	
<b>Item info:</b>	1 copy available at Alberta College of Art and Design Library.	

*Eyeglasses have been transformed from medical necessity to fashion accessory. This revolution has come about through embracing the design culture of the fashion industry. Why shouldn't design sensibilities also be applied to hearing aids, prosthetic limbs, and communication aids? In return, disability can provoke radical new directions in m ... (to read more see "A Look Inside")*

**Holdings**

ACAD	Copy	Material	Location
745.2 P982	1	Books	ACAD stacks (general collection) location

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**Item Details**

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Find more by this author  
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Nearby items on shelf

<b>Item Information</b>	<a href="#">A Look Inside</a>	<a href="#">Catalogue Record</a>
<b>Design meets disability</b>	Pullin, Graham	
<b>LCCN:</b>	2008031030	
<b>ISBN:</b>	9780262162555	
<b>Title:</b>	Design meets disability / Graham Pullin.	
<b>Publication info:</b>	Cambridge, MA : MIT Press, c2009.	
<b>Physical descrip:</b>	xix, 341 p. : col. ill. ; 21 cm.	
<b>Personal Author:</b>	Pullin, Graham	
<b>Subject term:</b>	Design--Human factors.	
<b>Subject term:</b>	Design, Industrial.	
<b>Subject term:</b>	Design.	
<b>Subject term:</b>	Engineering design.	
<b>Subject term:</b>	Self-help devices for people with disabilities.	

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