



Wichita State University Libraries

PSYCINFO (WebSPIRS)

PsycINFO is an online version of *Psychological Abstracts* which is published by the American Psychological Association. It is available in a Web version on the WSU Libraries' alphabetical and subject listings of databases at <http://library.wichita.edu/colldev/electrondatabase.htm>

PsycINFO provides records of citations and summaries for articles, books and book chapters, and dissertations. *PsycINFO* covers the world journal literature from 1967 to the present, and English-language books and book chapters from 1987 to the present. *PsycINFO* is not a full-text database although there are links to some full-text articles from e-journal packages subscribed to by the Libraries. The Web version of *PsycINFO* also provides links to the Libraries' online catalog holdings.

GETTING STARTED

From any workstation in the WSU Libraries:

- C Click on **Netscape** or **Internet Explorer** on the workstation desktop to access the WSU Libraries home page. Then click on **Electronic Databases**.
- C Select either the Alphabetical or Subject List of databases to link to the Web version of *PsycINFO*. The database is found under "Social Sciences" in the Subject List. From either list, click on *PsycINFO*.
- C At the **Search** screen, click on the drop-down menu labeled **View Databases Being Searched** to see a list of chronological segments available in *PsycINFO*. To remove or add *PsycINFO* chronological segments click on the **Change** button to the right. Select one or more of the chronological segments you wish to search.

From a workstation outside the WSU Libraries:

- C Remote access to *PsycINFO* is only available to WSU students, faculty, and staff.
- C Open your Internet browser and go to the WSU Libraries home page at <http://library.wichita.edu>. Click on **Electronic Databases** under **Electronic Resources** at <http://library.wichita.edu/colldev/electrondatabase.htm>
- C Select either the Alphabetical or Subject List of databases to link to the Web version of *PsycINFO*. The database is found under "Social Sciences" in the Subject List. From either list, click on *PsycINFO*. If you do not use Shocknet2, you will then be asked to enter your Shocker ID and PIN number. For information about off-campus access, see <http://library.wichita.edu/colldev/off-campus.html>
- C At the **Search** screen, click on the drop-down menu labeled **View Databases Being Searched** to see a list of chronological segments available in *PsycINFO*. To remove or add *PsycINFO* chronological segments click on the **Change** button to the right. Select one or more of the chronological segments you wish to search.

BASIC SEARCHING

Free text searching from the initial search screen allows any combination of terms or phrases as a search statement. In a free text search, it is possible to **truncate** a term, using an asterisk (*), to retrieve all variants of the root of the term being searched. For example, **teen*** retrieves teen, teens, teenage, teenaged, teenager, teenagers.

C In the Search box, enter the search term(s) or phrase(s) and click on **Search**.

Examples:

attitude*
eating disorder*

C In a free-text search, PsycINFO searches for a word or phrase anywhere in the record because in the drop-down menu: **Find Terms**, the default is **Words Anywhere**.

C To change where the terms are found, click on the drop-down menu under **Find Terms** and click on **Title**, **Author**, or **Subject** to find records with a word, phrase, or name in those fields. A **Subject** search checks all subject heading fields including Major and Minor Descriptors and Key Phrase.

C To broaden your search, combine search terms with the word "or": **teen* or adolescen***

C To narrow your search, combine search terms with the word "and": **attitud* and smoking
eating disorder* and
treatment**

SETTING SEARCH LIMITS

There are two ways to narrow your search results before you click on **Search**:

1) Limit your search to **Publication year greater than 1997** or to **Records with a URL field** from the initial search screen.

2) To set additional search limits, click on **Change** under **No search limits set** on the initial search screen. At the **Change Limits** screen, you have the option of limiting your search by a number of fields including Document Type, Publication Year, Language, Age Group, Publication Type, and Audience Type. (See pages 5-8 of this handout for a list of important fields in *PsycINFO*.)

Once limits are selected from one or more fields, click **OK** near the top of the screen. Back at the search screen, you will see the current limits displayed. Those set limits will apply to all searches until you modify them, clear all limits, or logoff.

DISPLAYING SEARCH RESULTS

The items or records retrieved by your search automatically display when the search is complete. The number of records your search retrieved are displayed in the middle of the screen. Each record in the search results has a record number that is displayed at the beginning of the record.

To display your search statement and current limits, click on the **Search History** tab.

The default display does not show all of the fields for a record although most of the critical fields such as abstract and subject descriptors are displayed. To view the entire record, click on **Complete Record** at the bottom of each record.

The default display does show some important links if available for that record, i.e. **Links to Library Holdings**, **Order this item** (for links to InterLibrary Loan form), and **Full Text** (for links to full-text article directly from PsycINFO).

On the upper middle right of the screen are the icons used to **PRINT**, **SAVE**, or **E-MAIL** the results. Across the middle left of the screen, from left to right, are the buttons used to **Change Display** and to **Go To** a particular record or to the next and previous pages of the records.

Records contain hyperlinks for author names, journal names, and descriptors. These links allow you to search for additional works by an author, to locate all of the records from a particular journal, and to search for additional records assigned a particular descriptor/subject heading.

MARKING, PRINTING, SAVING, OR E-MAILING SEARCH RESULTS

To mark records for printing, saving, or e-mailing, click in the box at the top left of each record. The marked records are saved in a set which is retained until you clear it or logoff *PsycINFO*.

To print records, click on the **PRINT** icon to the middle right of the screen. The next screen will ask about which records and fields you wish to print. Once you made these choices, click on **Print**. If you are at a Library workstation, you will get a screen that prompts you for a print job name. Printing at Library workstations costs 5 cents a page, requires the use of a ShockerCard, and is done from centralized printer stations. To e-mail records, click on the **E-MAIL** icon to the middle right of the screen. To save records to a disk, click on the **SAVE** icon in the same area of the screen.

CHANGING THE DEFAULT DISPLAY

The **Change Display** button allows you to control how your records display. You may change the display options at any time during your search. You may choose how many records to view at a time, whether to show complete (long) field names/labels or abbreviated (short) labels, or to select specific fields for display.

You may also choose in what order you want your record arranged. You may choose any field to sort on. If you select Descending order by PY (Publication Year), your results will be sorted with the most recent items at the top of the results list.

EXITING *PSYCINFO*

To exit, *PsycINFO*, click on **Logout** in the upper right hand corner of the search screen which provides a direct link to the alphabetical listing of databases at the WSU Libraries web site.

CHANGING DATABASE SEGMENTS

To remove or add *PsycINFO* chronological segments or to change databases completely, click on the **Change** button to the right of **View Databases Being Searched**.

HELPFUL SEARCH TOOLS

1) Advanced Search

The Advanced Search is one way to find terms in a specific field in the record. After clicking on the **Advanced** tab at the upper left on the initial search screen, type a word or phrase in the **Terms** box, and highlight the field you want to search. If you want to link two concepts together, click on one of the **AND**, **OR**, **NOT** buttons between the two search boxes. You may type multiple words in a search box.

2) Online Thesaurus

Five to six subject descriptors are assigned to each citation in *PsycINFO* based on the subject content of the article or book. Searching by descriptors is the most effective way of subject searching in *PsycINFO*. A list of subject descriptors is available online and is used to find a precise subject heading or related headings as well as to select multiple headings during one search.

The example below searches for records combining two concepts: how **television viewing** affects **reading skills**.

- C To select the first term, click on the **Thesaurus** tab at the top of the screen. Enter **television** in the **Term** box and click on **Go to Terms**.
- C At the list of subjects, check the box to select the term, **television viewing**. To display information about the term, click on the underlined term.
- C To search for records with this term, click on **Search Marked**. This displays all records with this term.
- C Click on **Thesaurus** again, enter the second term, **reading**, in the **Term** box, and click on **Go to Terms**.
- C Check off several terms: **reading skills**, **reading**, **reading comprehension**. Click on **Explode Marked**. Because several of these terms may be associated with narrower terms, the term is “exploded” during the search to select the term and all its narrower, more specific terms. This allows you to locate all the records that deal with all aspects of a subject in a single search. Again, your search results will be displayed.
- C Click on **Search History**. At the Search box, combine the resulting set for first concept, **television viewing**, with the set for the second concept, **reading**, by checking on the appropriate box for each set in the Search History and then clicking on **Combine and Search Using “AND”**.

3) Printed Thesaurus

A print version of the *PsycINFO* thesaurus --- *Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms* --- is kept in the Reference Area. Once a subject descriptor(s) is located in the thesaurus that fits the search topic, the term(s) may be entered in the Search box. When you type in a descriptor, be sure to type **in de** after the descriptor.

Examples: **adolescent-development in de** **stress- in de**

4) Index

Use the **Index** to display the list of searchable terms in the database. The General Index lists all terms. *PsycINFO* has separate indexes for each field in the database. Select the index you want; then type the term you want to search. Click on the **Go to Term** button to view the section of the index containing that term.

The term displays with the number of times that it occurs in the database. To search a single term, click on the hyperlinked term. Select multiple items by clicking on the checkbox next to each term. When you have selected all the terms you want to search, click on **Search Marked**.

SEARCH HISTORY

To display your search history, click on the **Search History** tab at the top of the screen. The **Search History** displays all previous search statements, allows you to combine or delete search statements, and lets you save or load search histories.

SOME IMPORTANT FIELDS IN *PSYCI*INFO

For a complete listing of *PsycINFO* fields as well as information about each field, click on **Database Guides** at the top of the screen, then **Guides**.

AB Abstract

All records include an abstract that describes the major points of the article and provides information on research methodology, results, and conclusions. This field can be used to locate particular tests, drugs, etc. that have been used but are not the focus of the article and for searching personal names as subjects. These fields are searched automatically (with title, key phrase, and descriptors) during a free text search. Use an * to **truncate** a term whenever appropriate.

human figures drawing test in ab
elkind in ab (for articles about Elkind)
yawn* in ab

AF First Author Affiliation

This field provides the name and usually the location of the institution with which the first author is associated at the time of publication of the article, book, or chapter. This field helps identify research at particular institutions.

cornell in af

AG Age Group

All records relating to human populations are assigned one or more age group designators depending on the content of the descriptors. There are three general age groups: **childhood**, **adolescence**, and **adulthood**, which are divided into more specific age groups. Most records before 1967 do not contain age groups. When searching, use only the name of the age group, not the age range. Use hyphens, as appropriate.

Examples: **childhood in ag**; **ag=school-age**

The following are valid age groups:

Childhood	(birth-12 years)	Adulthood	(18 yrs & older)
Neonatal	(birth-1 mo)	Young-Adulthood	(13-29 yrs)
Infancy	(2-23 mo)	Thirties	(30-39 yrs)
Preschool-Age	(2-5 yrs)	Middle Aged	(40-64 yrs)
School-Age	(6-12 yrs)	Aged	(65 yrs & older)
Adolescence	(13-17 yrs)	Very Old	(85 yrs & older)

AU Author(s)

The simplest way to search by author is to type in the author's name in the Search box: **hauser-stuart-t**. However, be aware that a particular author's name may appear in the database in more than one form. The best way to retrieve all versions of an author's name is to use the online **Index**. Click on the **Index** button on the right side of the screen. Type the last name of the author in the search box and click on **Go to Term**. Check off each version of the author's name: **hauser-stuart-t** and **hauser-stuart**. Click on **Search Checked Terms** to display records containing any of the checked off versions of the author's name.

CC Classification Code

Each citation in *PsycINFO* is typically assigned one 4-digit code that corresponds to a broad subject classification category. For example, **2220 in cc and self esteem** will retrieve citations on tests measuring self esteem. **2220** is the code for test construction and validation. The category search can also be entered as **cc=2220**. A list of the classification codes is found on the Internet at <http://www.apa.org/psycinfo/applic/classcod.html>.

DE Descriptors

Each citation is assigned multiple subject descriptors -- some major (**MJ**) and some minor (**MN**). Major descriptors are asterisked in *PsycINFO* citations. To locate appropriate descriptors for your search, use either the print or online thesaurus. When you type in a descriptor, be sure to type **in de** after the descriptor. **DE** is used to search both major and minor descriptors simultaneously. **SU** is used to search for major and minor descriptors as well as key phrases (**KP**) simultaneously.

adolescent-development in de	(searches for both major and minor descriptors)
health- in mj	(searches for only major descriptors)
anorexia-nervosa in mn	(searches for only minor descriptors)
phobias- in su	(searches for all descriptors and key phrases- KP)

DT Document Type

This field identifies the general type of document the record represents. Use this field to limit searches to records of a particular type of document, such as journal articles. Use hyphens, when appropriate.

Examples: **dt=journal-article; journal-article in dt**

The following are valid document types:

authored-book	edited-book
book	journal-article
chapter	report
dissertation-abstract	secondary-publication

JN Journal Title

This field provides the journal title as a phrase. The title must be searched as a hyphenated phrase. It is not necessary to end the search with **in jn**. The **index** can also be used to select journal names.

Examples: **journal-of-applied-psychology; child-development**

KP Key Phrase

This field contains a brief, concise, and relevant description of the contents of a document. Search the key phrase field with the title field when no descriptors are available, for ambiguous terms, or for possible acronyms.

Examples: **midlife crisis in kp; job training in kp**

LA Language

This field can be used to locate articles, books or chapters in a particular language or languages. A list of languages that are searchable in *PsycINFO* is available in the online **Help -- Guides**.

Examples: **english in la; la=german**

LO Population Location

This field indicates the country in which the group that is the subject of the document is located.

Examples: **haiti in lo; lo=usa**

PO Population

This field indicates the classification of population the record concerns. Up to six population groups may be assigned: **human, animal, female, male, inpatient, outpatient**. Records have consistent population terms beginning in 1998.

Examples: **po=human; male in po**

PT Publication Type

This field identifies the specific form or function of the document, describing what the document is as opposed to what it is about. Examples: **pt=bibliography; classroom material in pt**

Values for this field include:

autobiography/personal account
bibliography
case law
comment
comment appended
conference proceedings/symposia
editorial
empirical study
 case study
 clinical case report
 experimental replication
 followup study
 longitudinal study
 treatment outcome study
errata/retractions
fiction/creative work
interview
letter
literature review/research review
meta analysis
obituary
oral history
panel discussion

professional policies/standards
program evaluation
reprint
translation
sponsor
classroom material
 textbook
 introductory textbook
 undergraduate textbook
 graduate textbook
 study/curriculum/resource guide
 workbook
collected works
handbook/manual/guide
self-help guide
reference material
 dictionary/glossary
 directory
encyclopedia
 taxonomy
 thesaurus
selected readings

PY Publication Year

This field gives the year in which the document was published. One can search a single year or a span of years.

Examples: **1994 in py** **py<1990** **py>=1998**
py=1994 **py=1990-1998** **py<=1996**

SO Source

This is a free-text field that includes the journal title, publication date, volume, issue number, and pagination. Any element of the source field may be searched.

Examples: **american journal in so; child development and may and 1996**

TC Table of Contents

This field provides the full table of contents for many edited books. In the contents, the chapters selected for separate records are marked by a link so that the user can go directly to that chapter record from the table of contents.

Examples: **air pollution in tc; author index in tc**

TI Title

Titles are entered in the title field exactly as they are written in articles, books, or chapters. Use the title field when you are looking for the citation for a specific article, book, or chapter or in combination with the key phrase when a descriptor is not available.

Examples:

alcoholism in ti

familial contexts of adolescent in ti

Prepared by Cathy Moore-Jansen, WSU Libraries, Revised January 2003.