




SEARCHING FIRSTSEARCH

To do an Advanced search:

- Enter your search term in the dialog boxes (1). using one dialog box for each concept.
- Select the index (or field) you wish to search from the drop down menus on the right side of the screen (2).
- To search for an exact phrase:
 - Enclose the phrase in quotes or
 - Use the index browse function represented by the  icon (3) to verify the acceptable form of a phrase.
- Select the appropriate Boolean operator between the dialog boxes (4).
- Rank your results by relevance or date (5).
- Some FirstSearch databases also allow you to impose limits on your search by other categories like publication date, language, and document type (6).
- You can limit availability to full text or Wheaton College holdings (7).
- When entering terms, omit accent marks, apostrophes, diacritics and other punctuation marks. For example, enter "O'Hara" as "ohara".
- Truncation: Search for a term and its variations by entering only the root of the term followed by an asterisk (*).
- Wildcard: The pound sign (#) represents a single character and the question mark (?), alone or with a number, represents zero or more characters. Wildcards can only be used after the third character of a term.

The most general search that you can do is a "keyword" search which looks in the title, notes, abstract, summary, descriptor, and subject fields. Remember, the more information you enter, the narrower the range of your search results. Also, multiple word index categories (eg., "author phrase" rather than "author") will produce fewer results than single word categories. For example, searching for "Isaac Asimov" as an author will bring up any use of "Isaac" or "Asimov" in the author field. Searching for "Isaac Asimov" as an author phrase will bring up only those items that show "Isaac Asimov" as an exact phrase in the author field.

The screenshot shows the FirstSearch search interface with the following elements and annotations:

- Search in database:** A dropdown menu is set to "PerAbs" (Periodical abstracts from general and academic journals). An information icon (i) shows "(Updated: 2004-01-29)". A red "3" points to the index browse icon on the right.
- Search for:** Three search boxes are visible. The first box is empty, with a red "1" pointing to it. The second and third boxes contain the word "Keyword". A red "2" points to the dropdown menu of the second box.
- Boolean operators:** A dropdown menu is set to "and". A red "4" points to this menu.
- Limit to:** A dropdown menu is set to "and". A red "7" points to the "Full text" checkbox.
- Limit availability to:** A dropdown menu is set to "Subscriptions held by my library (ICW, WHEATON COLLEGE)". A red "5" points to the "Rank by:" dropdown menu below it.
- Article Type:** A dropdown menu is set to "All". A red "6" points to this menu.
- Rank by:** A dropdown menu is set to "No ranking". A red "5" points to this menu.

Buttons for "Search" and "Clear" are located at the top and bottom of the interface.