Find Background Information

Specialized encyclopedias, dictionaries and other resources are useful for obtaining background information on a topic, in addition to helping you focus your topic and identify the main concepts, terms and keywords that describe your topic. Check Reference Resources in the course guide.

Finding Books and Journal Articles

1. Books

To find books on your topic in QCAT, think of the words that best describe your topic and then connect them with Boolean operators: AND, OR, NOT.

For a selection of books on the suffrage movement in Britain, try this:
   "suffrage movement" and Britain [within Keyword Boolean]

Select useful titles and look at the subject headings. Use them to provide more keyword ideas or as individual searches themselves.

   (suffrage or "women's rights") and (britain or england) and history

Search by Subject

Feminism--Great Britain--History--19th century
Women--Suffrage--Great Britain--History
Women--Legal status, laws, etc.--Great Britain--History
Suffragists--Great Britain--History
Social movements--Great Britain--History
World war, 1914 1918--Women--Great Britain

2. Articles

Use the following electronic journal databases to find scholarly articles:

   → Bibliography of British and Irish History
   → Historical Abstracts

To search indexes, click the tab Databases and enter the title of the database. For example, search Historical Abstracts for the topic: history of the women's vote in Britain.

Search: women and vote and Britain

Modify search: women AND (voting OR suffrage) and britain
Modify search: women's suffrage AND britain
To find out if Queen's subscribes to the journal, click **Get It! @ Queen's** if full text not readily available.

### 3. Summon

With Summon, you can search, discover and access information on any topic from the Queen's Library collections, which includes print and electronic books, single articles to entire e-journals, newspapers, theses and more.

Summon is a good starting point to find material for your research but if you are doing higher level research, you will want to search relevant subject specific databases.

### Search the Web

![Google](https://ssl.gstatic.com/p2 Images/2017/20170228/c250ac957b63805386e94b7d1259b83d/320x320)  
**Google Advanced Search**  
[www.google.ca/advanced_search](http://www.google.ca/advanced_search)  
**Google Scholar**  
[scholar.google.ca/](https://scholar.google.ca/)

Google Scholar searches the academic, scholarly Web for peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles.

By searching **Google Scholar** through the Queen's Library website, the "Get It! @ Queen's" citation linker is activated (which allows you to click through to the Library’s subscriptions).

### Evaluate Sources

Evaluating all of your sources is a crucial step of the research process. Go to the library guide, **Evaluating Sources** for criteria on how to judge information sources (especially for websites).

### Cite Sources

Click the link, **Help & Services → Citing Sources** for assistance in using citation styles.

![Chicago Manual of Style](https://www.chicagograndprix.com/assets/5.png)  
*Chicago is the preferred style of documentation in history. Check QCAT for print copies in the library system. It is also available online via the link, Databases.*

Elizabeth Gibson, Stauffer Library  
Fall 2017