

# How to Find & Identify Research Articles

## Where Can You Find Research Articles?

1. **GHSO Print Journal Collection** — We have a number of journals that focus on research. Many of the other journals have a research section per issue\*. Some journals to look at are:

Applied Nursing Research, Clinical Nursing Research, Journal of Nursing Scholarship, Journal of Professional Nursing, Nursing Outlook, Nursing Research, Nutrition in Clinical Practice\*, Perspectives in Psychiatric Care\*, Psychiatric Services\*, Simulation in Healthcare.

2. **Research Databases Available to GHSO**

AHRQ — Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality  
<http://www.ahrq.gov/>

National Clearinghouse Guidelines  
<http://www.guideline.gov/>

CINAHL — Cumulated Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature  
<http://search.ebscohost.com>

PUBMED  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>

3. **Google Scholar** is another place to search for research and scholarly articles: [www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)

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## How to Search CINAHL Plus with Full Text

	Go to CINAHL Plus at GHSON. (External use: User name: grahamnursing / Password: ghson)
	At Sign In, Create Your Own Account.
	Under Search Options, check English, add Publication Date limiters, check Human and under Age Groups, click All Adults, if appropriate. Then click Search. (S1: Search 1)
	Click on CINAHL Headings (MESH) on the upper tool bar. Type a keyword into the box and click Browse.
	Select applicable subject heading, then click Explode and Search Database (S2: Search 2)
	Clear any search terms and click CINAHL Headings. Add a second keyword and click Browse.
	Select applicable subject heading, then click Explode and Search Database (S3: Search 3)
	Add additional keyword searches as necessary.
	Select subjects (any except the limiter search) and Search with AND.
	Scroll down to view results (If there are still too many, Search with AND, including the limiters. Additional limiters can be added if there are still too many, but choose carefully). A Full Text limiter can be used if the article is needed immediately. Also, subheadings can be used to limit searches.
	Print, read, copy/paste or email the full text articles.
	Any articles you would like to read that are not available in full text, click Save to Folder. Make a copy of the Saved articles before you sign out.
	Print, Email, Save or Export the Folder articles to Lynette AND yourself.
	When emailing, at Standard Field Format-Choose Brief or Brief and Abstract. At Citation Format-Choose APA. The APA format is sometimes inaccurate, so double check.
	CLICK: Request this article.
	Keep a copy of your Search History, otherwise when you sign out you will lose it
	By setting up a personal account, you can create your own set of preferences.

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	Select subjects (any except the limiter search) and Search with AND.
	Scroll down to view results (If there are still too many, Search with AND, including the limiters. Additional limiters can be added if there are still too many, but choose carefully). A Full Text limiter can be used if the article is needed immediately. Also, subheadings can be used to limit searches.
	Print, read, copy/paste or email the full text articles.
	Any articles you would like to read that are not available in full text, click Save to Folder. Make a copy of the Saved articles before you sign out.
	Print, Email, Save or Export the Folder articles to Lynette AND yourself.
	When emailing, at Standard Field Format-Choose Brief or Brief and Abstract. At Citation Format-Choose APA. The APA format is sometimes inaccurate, so double check.
	CLICK: Request this article.
	Keep a copy of your Search History, otherwise when you sign out you will lose it
	By setting up a personal account, you can create your own set of preferences.

## You Found an Article, But Is It Research?

There are a number of core components that are consistently found in research articles. They are generally easily identifiable because they are often headings within the titles.

<b>Abstract</b>	The abstract is at the beginning of the article. It summarizes the entire article and usually provides the purpose of the study, a description of the subjects, data collection and data analysis, and a summary of important findings.
<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the literature</li> <li>• Statement of the purpose</li> </ul>	The literature review discusses relevant studies that have been conducted in the area of this study. A statement of the specific goals or purpose of the study often follows the review.
<b>Method</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subjects</li> <li>• Design</li> <li>• Data collection</li> <li>• Data analysis</li> </ul>	The methods section provides in detail how the study was conducted, including who and how many subjects, what research design was used, what data were collected and how, and types of analysis done. There should be enough information so that the study could be replicated (repeated).
<b>Results</b>	The results (findings) are often presented both in words and in charts, tables, or graphs. It is important to understand what the results were and if they are meaningful.
<b>Discussion (Conclusion)</b>	The discussion section reports what the results mean in regard to the purpose of the study and the literature review. It may also include suggestions for further research and application to nursing education or practice, as appropriate.
<b>References</b>	The references are at the end of the article and include a list of articles and books used by the researcher.

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## What to Look For:

- Look for the word “research” in the keywords, subjects or tags of the citation.
- If you need the article NOW look for a Full Text icon or PDF.
- If you see the word “review” in the text or citation, make sure it is a systematic review (an extensive review of the literature), not a brief review of an article.
- Check the number of pages of the article in the citation. If it is just a page or two, it probably is not real research. Most research articles are several pages long.
- Check the date of the article and make sure it’s been published in the last five years unless otherwise allowed by your instructor. Are the research and the references current?
- Are the results presented clearly with tables, graphs or other clear graphics?

## It’s Research, But Will It Work for My Assignment?

Let’s be honest, often times research articles are very detailed and lengthy. Is this article worth reading? There are some steps you can take to see if the article will answer the question posed.

- First, read through the title, abstract and then skip to the discussion. Is it what you’re looking for?
- Does it include the core components of a research article listed previously?
- Look at the problem/purpose and then skip to the conclusion.
- If the article does not meet your needs, do not take the time to read it. You can better spend your time searching for another.
- If it still looks good, read the entire article.
- Ask yourself: 1) is it usable? 2) is it complete? 3) is it consistent?
- There are scales available to determine the scientific merit of the research by evaluating the level of the quality of evidence.

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## Checklist for Reading/Critiquing a Research Article

- Critiquing the research article
  - Title describes the article
  - Abstract summarizes the article
  - Introduction makes the purpose clear
  - Problem is properly introduced
  - Purpose of the study is explained
  - Research question(s) are clearly presented
  - Theoretical framework informs the research
  - Literature review is relevant, comprehensive & includes recent research
  - Methods section details how the research questions were addressed or hypotheses were tested
  - Analysis is consistent with the study questions and research design
  - Results are clearly presented and statistics clearly explained
  - Discussion explains the results in relation to the theoretical framework, research questions, and significance to nursing
  - Limitations are presented and their implications discussed
  - Conclusion includes recommendations for nursing practice, future research, and policymakers
- Determine the level and quality of the evidence using a scale (several can be found in ANA's Research Toolkit <http://www.nursingworld.org/Research-Toolkit/Appraising-the-Evidence>).
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**Read your assignment carefully. Follow the directions.**

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