

Bibliographical databases are the best tools for locating journal articles, book reviews, collections of essays and conference proceedings even if you don't know the authors or article title. The EBSCO service hosts a number of key bibliographic databases in the Humanities including:

- America: History & Life
- Art Full Text (including Art Abstracts)
- ATLA with ATLASerials
- Historical Abstracts
- Old Testament Abstracts
- New Testament Abstracts
- Philosopher's Index
- RILM Abstracts of Music Literature

### Connecting to EBSCO and choosing database(s)

1. Go to SOLO (<http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk> ) and search for one of the databases above (e.g. ATLA). Once you have found the online version click **Online access** to connect.

Alternatively, go to Databases A-Z

(<https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php>) and search for one of the databases above (e.g. ATLA). Follow the link to connect.

2. Note, if you want to search more than one database at once (e.g. ATLA plus Philosophers index) you can add the extra database after

you have connected to EBSCO by clicking “choose databases” (above the search box).

## Searching EBSCO

3. Look at the search terms that you came up with in the “Building a search” exercise earlier and work out how to use the terms you identified in EBSCO. Here is an example on the topic of the ordination of women priests in the Catholic church.

women	SU Subjects	
AND	ordination OR priest*	SU Subjects
AND	catholic*	SU Subjects

- What key concepts did you identify in the “Building a search exercise”?  
In EBSCO it is easiest to put each distinct concept on a separate line in the search form, e.g. in the example above the key concepts are women, ordination and catholic.
- If you identified synonyms or alternative words for your search terms enter these on the same line in the search form and add OR in between them, e.g. ordination OR priest.
- To find alternative word endings use \* e.g. Catholic\* finds Catholic, Catholics, Catholicism.
- To search for an exact phrase use “quotation marks”. This is suitable for words which have a particular meaning when they are used together e.g. “old testament”, “immaculate conception”, “poor law”, “world war II”, “logical truth” etc.

- In EBSCO it is worth considering using the **Select a Field** drop down menus to limit your search to **SU Subject**. This will search for articles where your keywords are included as part of the subject description. These articles are likely to be relevant to your topic. If you do not choose a field, EBSCO will search all the information that it has about each article (including in some cases the full text). This will return more articles, but they are less likely to be relevant to your topic.
- Use the options in the bottom half of the screen to limit your search as appropriate e.g. to peer reviewed journals or by publication date. Some EBSCO databases also have special options for particular subjects e.g. limit by historical period in Historical Abstracts.

## Look through your search results

If you have too many results:

- try adding more keywords to make your search more specific.
- limit your search to a particular publication period or to peer reviewed articles only using the options in the bottom half of the screen.

If you have too few results:

- try removing some of your search terms or search for a broader topic.
- Instead of choosing **subjects** from **the select a field** drop down menu, leave this option blank (i.e. so it reads **Select a Field**). This will instruct EBSCO to search all the information it has for each article and may return some extra items.

Please feel free to ask one of the staff for help with searching.

## Working with your results

Once you have found an article that interests you:

4. Click on the title to see more information including an abstract (where available) and subjects. It's worth looking at the subjects as this can help you to identify more keywords to include in your search next time. For example, after viewing the results below we might decide to modify the search to include the word 'deacon' (e.g. ordination OR priest OR deacon). You can also click on the subjects to see all items on the topic in the database. However, it's often more effective to note down the subject terms and then add them to your own keywords.



The screenshot shows a database record for the article "Women in the diaconate". The record includes the following information:

- Authors:** [Vagagini, Cipriano](#); [Zagano, Phyllis](#) (Author of introduction, etc., Translator); [Leonforte-Plimack, Carm](#)
- Source:** [Worship](#), 88 no 1 Jan 2014, p 72-77
- ISSN:** 0043-941X
- Publication Year:** 2014
- Language:** English
- Subjects:** [Catholic Church -- Deacons](#); [Women \(Theology\)](#); [Women, Catholic](#); [Deacons -- History](#); [Ordination of women](#)

A yellow callout box points to the subject section with the text: "The 'subject' section can help you identify more terms to include in your search".

5. **Email** the article to yourself or **Export** it to a reference management package such as Endnote or RefWorks using the options on the right. Note, to email or export several items at once: for each item click the blue folder icon in the results screen to add them to a folder. Then choose 'Folder' at the top of the screen.
6. Connect to the full text of the article. In some cases, you can do this by clicking 'PDF full text' or 'Linked full text'. However, in many cases you will need to look for a full text copy by clicking 'Find it @ Oxford'. When you click 'Find it @ Oxford', you will see a pop up window (illustrated below) listing:

- 'Full text available': provides links to databases which have the full text of the article.
- 'Check SOLO': allows you to search for a printed copy of the article in Oxford Libraries.

The screenshot shows a library interface with two main sections. The 'Full Text' section contains two links: 'Full text available via Wiley Online Library 2009 Full Collection' and 'Full text available via Wiley Online Library 2012 Full Collection'. A yellow callout box points to these links with the text 'Connect to databases holding the full text of the article.' The 'Print holdings' section contains a link 'Check SOLO'. A yellow callout box points to this link with the text 'Check SOLO for printed copies in Oxford'.

## Using the Thesaurus

7. Many EBSCO databases also include a Thesaurus. Using the Thesaurus is similar to using the 'Browse' option in SOLO and can be a useful way of finding items (in particular, surfacing items which haven't used the keywords you expected). Click on **Thesaurus** (top of screen) and enter one of your search concepts into the search box in order to start browsing.
8. Once you have found a useful subject in the thesaurus, tick the check box next to the term and click 'Add'. This will add it to the search box at the top of the page. Click 'Search' at the top of the page to search the database on that topic. Alternatively, to combine more than one subject heading in the thesaurus, tick a subject and then choose an option from the **OR/AND/NOT** drop down. Then select another subject and click **Search** at the top of the screen. Note, if you want items which include both of the selected subjects use AND, but if you want items which include one or other of the subjects (or both) click OR.

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Searching: ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials | Choose Databases

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Basic Search Advanced Search Search History

Browsing: ATLA -- Subject Thesaurus

ordination of women

Term Begins With  Term Contains  Relevant

Page: [Previous](#) | [Next](#)

Select term, then add to search using: OR ▾

(Click term to display details.)

[Ordination of women](#)


[...](#)

Enter a subject to start browsing

Tick the check box next to a term and click 'Add'.  
Click **Search** at the top.

## Finding more databases for your subject

Find the recommendations for your subject on Databases A-Z by visiting <https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php> and choosing your subject area from the subject drop down menu.

 **OXFORD LibGuides** Subject guides • Workshops • Research skills

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## Databases A-Z

Find the best library databases for your research.

All [A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#) <#>