The **PsycINFO** database contains more than 2.3 million references to psychological literature from 1887 to the present. It covers journal articles from over 2,000 periodicals, books (4%), book chapters (7%), and dissertations (11%). While focusing on the discipline of psychology, it also includes psychological aspects of law, medicine, physiology, sociology etc.

The American Psychological Association (APA) produces the database. Langara Library makes it available to the Langara community on the Web using EBSCOHost search software.

Abstracts are provided in most records. PsycINFO records contain full text, while some article records provide full text by linking you to another database. The Library pays for your access to PsycINFO and to any full text material.

### Connecting

1. Either from Langara campus (any computer station with internet access) or from home, go to the Langara Library home page: [http://www.langara.bc.ca/library/](http://www.langara.bc.ca/library/)
2. Click on **Articles in Journals**
3. Look for **PsycINFO** in the group of resources under Quick Starts: Humanities & Social Sciences

#### On Campus
a) Click on PsycINFO to connect.
b) The EBSCOHost search screen will appear.

#### Off Campus
a) Click PsycINFO to connect.
b) A screen entitled ‘User Authentication’ will appear.
c) Enter your Langara College student number in the first box.
d) In the second box enter the PIN you use with your student number.
e) Click on **Authenticate me!**
f) The EBSCOHost search screen will appear.

### Search Strategy

1. State the question you would like to explore. For example: “What factors are involved in the **attention** that **babies** give to **faces**.”
2. Identify the separate concepts.
3. Do an **AND** search including some or all of the concepts.
4. Zero in on one or two records in the search results that seem relevant.
5. In these records or in the Thesaurus, identify descriptors to stand for the concepts.
6. Use these descriptors to do a separate search on each concept (e.g., get one set of results using the descriptor **face perception**; get another set using the descriptor **attention**).
7. Use **AND** to combine the sets representing the concepts.
8. Add the most relevant records to a folder for printing, saving or emailing.
1. Searching For a Concept

The default search mode is **Advanced Search**. It presents you with 3 search boxes.

- In the **Find** boxes, set up this 3-concept search request: **attention AND babies AND faces**.
- Click **Search**.
- The software will be looking for these words in the default fields (including title, author, keywords, abstract, subjects).
- Note how many records were found.
- Click on the title, **Do surprised faces affect infants’ attention toward novel objects?** to see the record describing this one article.
- Scroll down to the **Subjects** field to see the descriptors (controlled vocabulary) chosen to describe this article. An asterisked descriptor (e.g., *Attention*) represents a major focus of the article.
- In the **Subjects** field, click on ***Visual Attention** to retrieve all the records in the database that have this descriptor in their **Subjects** field.
- Compare the number of records that were found to the first search.

2. Using the Thesaurus for a Concept

Another way to find controlled vocabulary is to go directly to the list of descriptors used by the **PsycINFO** indexers. Besides being online in PsycINFO, the thesaurus is one of the books in the Psychology Lab (**Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms**, BF 1 P652 2001).

This thesaurus is a highly structured list of descriptors that reflects the discipline of psychology. It can be used to find broader, narrower, and related terms.

- Choose **Thesaurus** from the toolbar.
- In the **Browse for** box type the word **face**.
- Click **Browse**.
  You will get a list of descriptors with the word **face** in them or in their scope notes.
- Click on **Face Perception** to display details about this descriptor. There are some interesting-looking related terms to include in the search.
- Click in the boxes next to all of these descriptors:
  - **Face Perception**
  - **Facial Expressions**
  - **Facial Features**
- Click **Add**.
- The three descriptors with the word **or** between them should now be showing in the **Find** box.
- Click **Search**. This search request will retrieve a very large number of records.
Limiting Results

It’s a good idea to familiarize yourself with the kinds of limit options PsycINFO offers. Knowing that these options exist will help you plan your searches.

These are some **Limits** you can include in a search request:

- **Full Text** (to find only records that are full text articles)
- **Publication Name** (e.g., name of journal)
- **Peer review** (only scholarly or academic results)
- **Publication Year from**
- **Publication Type** (all journals, all books, dissertation, etc.)
- **Age Groups**
- **Population Group** (human, animal, male, female,)
- **Methodology** (clinical case study, empirical study, literature review, etc.)

- **Click on the Refine Search button on the left sidebar.**
- **Let’s assume you are looking for journal articles reporting the findings of experiments (empirical studies) involving a particular age group.**
- **Scroll down to the Publication Type box.**
  In this box, click on All Journals to select it.
- **In the Age Groups box, select Infancy (2-23 mo).**
- **In the Methodology box, select Empirical Study.**
- **Scroll back up to the top of the page.**
- **Be sure that the Find box still contains the search request combining your two set numbers.**
- **Click Search.**

Choosing Records and Storing Them in Your Own Folder

Perhaps you’ll find one or two interesting records in your first search. You won’t want to lose track of them, but you’ll want to try other combinations of search words and see what you get.

As you select records from different search results lists, the EBSCOhost software lets you store them in your very own folder for as long as you want. Here’s how:

- To create your folder, click on Sign In in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
- Click on Create a new Account and follow the instructions.
- To store a record in your folder, once you have a record open, click on “Add to Folder”
- To retrieve your items, look in the Toolbar for the icon that says “Folder”. *(Note: If you are not signed into My EBSCOhost, your folder items will disappear when the session is ended. If you are signed in, you may keep the items in your folder for as long as you are registered as a student.)*
Citing or Printing a Record

To print or cite a single record:
- Bring up the full record on your screen.
- Click the Print icon or the Cite icon in the right panel.
- The citation icon will provide you with a full citation, in APA style or, you can choose the drop-down menu and change to any other style.
- You could also print a record by emailing it to yourself or saving it to a memory key.

Emailing, Printing or Saving a Full Text Article

PsycINFO records usually contain full text, but sometimes they can provide a link to another database or service that has the full text. You get a full text link because Langara Library has paid for your access to this other database or service.

If you see one of these, the article is available:

- HTML Full Text
- PDF Full Text
- Linked Full Text

To email, print, or save a full text article, click on one of the buttons above the full record for the article (Print E-mail Save) and follow the instructions that appear on the screen.

To investigate ways to get an article that isn’t available in full text, use the Where can I get this? link.
- If you’re viewing a results list, Where can I get this? is easy to see in the left panel.
The **Where can I get this?** results (example below) may provide options for getting the article

- from another database or online source
- from a journal issue on the 1st floor of Langara Library
- by visiting another B.C. academic library
- through the Library’s interlibrary loan service (see below)

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**Interlibrary Loan**

You can use our interlibrary loan service to request an article. We will try to get the article for you from another B.C. library. Allow up to 5 days for it to arrive. There’s no cost to you.

Use the request form called **Request an Interlibrary Loan** in the “Where can I get this?” box. A paper form is also available at the Information desk. There is a limit of 5 requests per course assignment.

If you need assistance with interlibrary loans, ask a librarian at the Info. desk, or at libref@langara.bc.ca 604-323-5388.

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**Need Help?**

- For help with the EBSCOhost software, click on **Help** in the upper right-hand corner of any EBSCOhost screen.

- The librarian responsible for Psychology is Susan Weber, 604 323-5533, sweber@langara.bc.ca. If she is unavailable, please feel free to ask any librarian at the Info. desk for help (libref@langara.bc.ca 604-323-5388 or text 604 363-0743).