

Guide to Using EBSCOhost

What is EBSCOhost? EBSCOhost is a database system that offers indexing/abstracting and selected full text retrieval of periodical (magazine and journal) articles in approximately fifty databases. These databases have full-text articles for over 5,000 periodicals and indexing and abstracting for over 8,000 journals, magazines, and newspapers. Many databases also offer access to monographs, theses, book chapters, and numerous other document types. EBSCOhost 2.0, released in July 2008, updated the databases with a new interface.

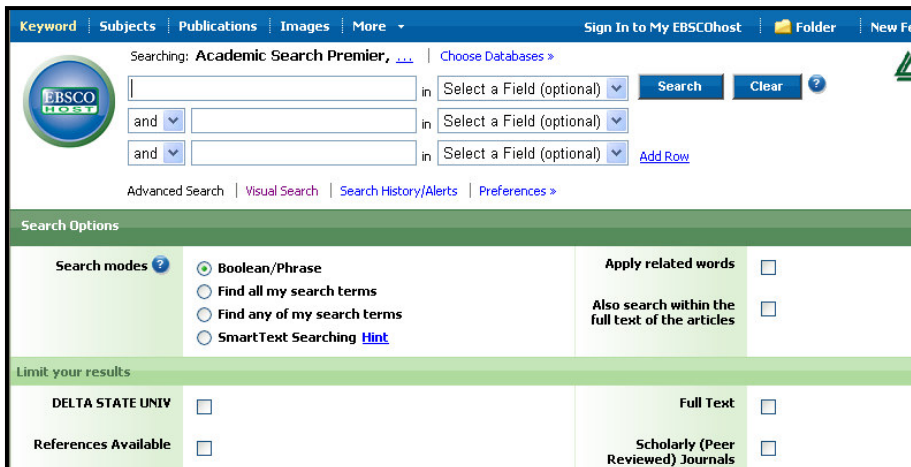
How do you access EBSCOhost? To begin, first go to the DSU's Electronic Database's page at <http://www.deltastate.edu/pages/676.asp>. You can choose an EBSCO database by locating it through the subject directory, or click on **EBSCOhost** located at the bottom left of the screen. At the login screen, click on "All EBSCO databases" to see a complete list, or choose one of the subject groups. If you are off campus, please consult the "Guide to Accessing Databases Off-Campus" at <http://www.deltastate.edu/docs/library/offcampus.pdf> as well as this guide.



How do you choose a database? If you choose a database from the subject directory, you will go straight to that database. If you clicked on the EBSCOhost box, however, you will be prompted to choose a database(s). To search one database, click on the name of the database. To search more than one database, click on the box to the left of each database, then click the **CONTINUE** button. Once you have selected a database(s), you are ready to begin searching.

Figure 1 – Database Selection Screen

Searching in EBSCOhost: By default, EBSCOhost takes you to the *Advanced Search* screen.



Advanced searching allows the user the most flexibility in performing searches. It provides three keyword search boxes (or more, if desired) to separate unique terms or phrases as well as capabilities to search within specific parts of each record. (Note: Each record consists of the citation information, abstract, and possible full-text.) By clicking on the *Subjects* button on the blue toolbar, you may browse a complete listing of all subject headings available in the current database.

Figure 2 – Advanced Search Screen

A basic search consists of either phrases or words combined together with Boolean operators (and, or, not). Boolean operators allow the user to create an exact search. To find out more about the uses of Boolean operators, click on the Online Help Button at the top right corner of the screen.

Search example: **educational technology AND classroom** will retrieve articles that have the phrase *educational technology* and the word *classroom* somewhere in the record. If you enter a phrase without any Boolean operators, EBSCO will search for the words together in the order you entered them.

In an *Advanced Search*, the user has the capability of limiting the search to a specific field such as the subject, title, or author field. (To see all of the searchable fields, simply click on the drop down box located next to the search box.) Naturally, using the field limiters is more specific and more appropriate for those users who know exactly what they need. Figure 3 is an example of the advanced search screen with drop-down menu shown.

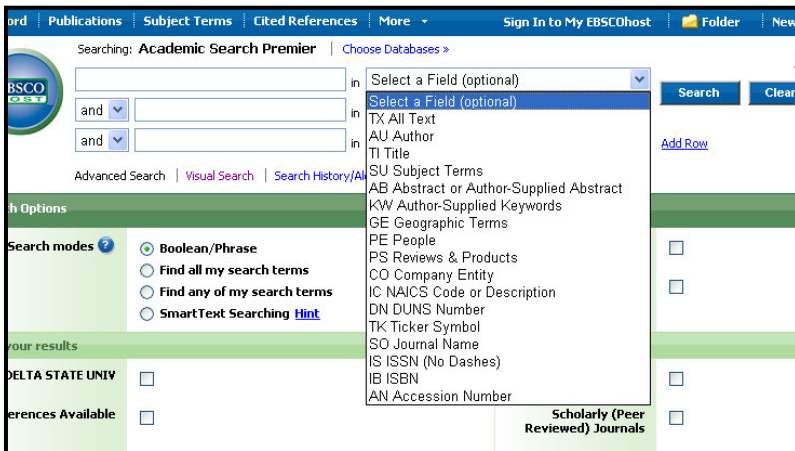


Figure 3 – Drop-down Menu

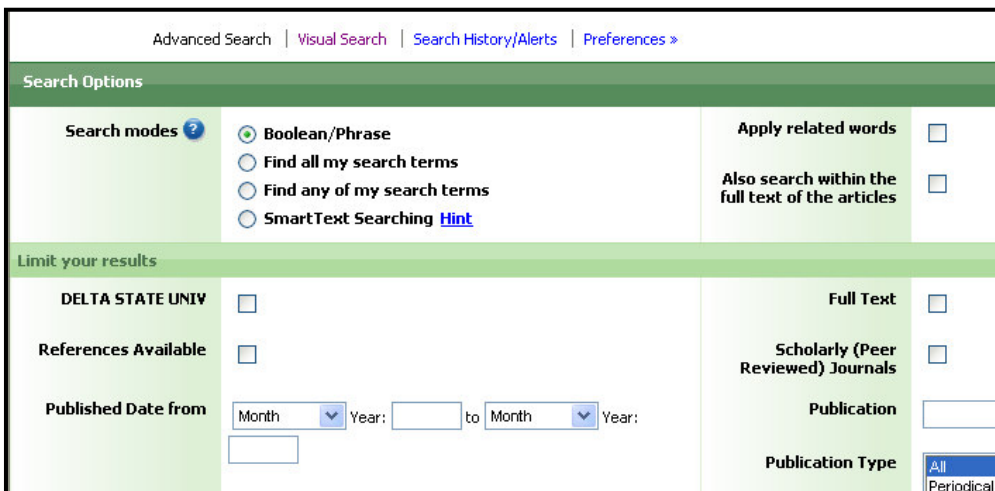


Figure 4 – Search Options

On the home search screen, you also have access to additional specific limiters and search options. For instance, if a researcher knew he needed to find a cover story, find articles of a certain length, or particular publication types, the special limiters would be most useful. Be advised that each EBSCOhost database has its own distinct limiters.

The *Search History/Alerts* link provides a complete history of all searches.

Understanding the Search Results: When viewing search results, citations are typically in chronological order, with the most recent articles first. Some databases, however, may default to a relevancy ranking. Regardless of the database default, results may be sorted in various ways.

Click on the title (underlined and in blue) to see the complete citation which includes complete citation information, subject headings and other keywords, and an abstract. Full text is indicated by either “HTML Full Text,” “PDF Full Text,” or “Linked Full Text.”

If full-text is not available: 1.) The SFX button links to full-text outside of EBSCOhost. If the full-text is not available elsewhere, SFX provides a link to an interlibrary loan request. 2.) A separate link takes you to the library’s catalog to check print holdings.

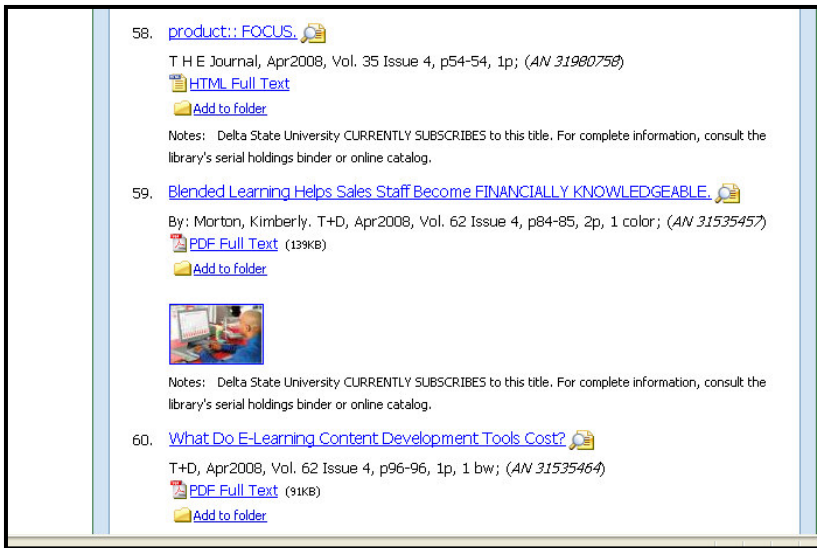


Figure 5 – Search Result Screen

For convenience, you can add any result to a folder by clicking on “Add to folder.”

Also, if you are interested in accessing the full-text, but no full-text link is available, please view the Notes section which indicates whether DSU subscribes to the journal or magazine in print.

Searching Tips: On occasion, you may not get the desired results, which can both be a frustrating and overwhelming experience. The following tips will allow you to expand or narrow your search as desired.

- **Too many Results?**
 - Try adding more search terms. It is crucial when searching any database to be as specific as possible. If you enter only one word, search results will abound, and more than likely the results will not have anything to do with what you are researching. Remember to use the Boolean operators and provide terms that completely reflect your search interest.
 - Search within a specific field. Remember that a keyword search will look throughout the whole record. If you want results that reflect the essence of your topic, limit your search to one of the fields provided in the *Advanced Search* module.
 - Use the limiters at the bottom of the search screen. These limiters are designed to exclude any undesirable results.
- **Not Enough Results?**
 - Use synonyms or related terms. Think of other ways to describe your topic.
 - Truncate your term using the “*” which will search for the stem of your word and any ending it may have. For example, by typing educat*, you will get educate, educates, educational, educating, etc. This is particularly helpful for those terms that do have multiple variations.
- **No Results?**
 - Check for any misspellings or typos.
 - Use the “Subjects” box to find a correct subject term.
 - Do not enter long phrases in a keyword or advanced search. Stop words such as *for, as, to, the, of,* etc. are hardly ever indexed and therefore are inconsequential when doing keyword searching. If these words are entered, the results will be skewed.
- **Additional Tips**
 - If you find an article or document you like, you can find related articles by clicking on the appropriate descriptor(s).
 - Constructing an effective search is both a creative and scientific process. Search results are not random. They rely solely on the terms entered and the manner in which they were entered. Please be patient and explore all avenues.

Printing/Emailing/Saving Records:



Figure 6 – Record with Print, Email, and Save Links at the Top : To print, email, or save an individual record, simply click on the appropriate link at the top of each record.

To print, email, or save several records, use the *Add to Folder* button included in each record as seen in Figure 5. You can also add an item to your folder while viewing the individual record rather than the search results page. Once you have added all the necessary records, click on your folder, which should now contain one or more items. Once you go to your folder, you will then be directed to a Print, Email, or Save Manager.

- *Print Manager* – Select either the Citation/Abstract or Full Text (when available) option, then click on the blue **Print** button.
- *Email Manager* – Enter in your email address and subject then choose whether you want the citation(s) and abstract(s) only or full text if available. Click on the blue **Send** button to email.
- *Save Manager* – Once you have clicked on the blue **Save** button, your items will appear on the screen. To save to a disk, click on **File** and then **Save as** from your browser's toolbar. Be sure to save the document as a plain text file (.txt) or an HTML file (.html).

Have a Question? Ask a Librarian!