

Firstsearch provides online access to more than 25 multi-disciplinary databases. Areas of coverage include arts and humanities, business and economics, education, engineering, general sciences, public affairs, law, and social sciences. There are specialised databases in key subject areas such as GEOBASE for geology and geography. Teaching and Learning resources are available online. WorldCat (the OCLC Online Union Catalog) contains over 39 million records from 30,000 libraries worldwide. They are updated regularly. A practice version of the Worldcat database is available.

1 To Connect, go to the Library Web page on the Internet at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/>

- Click on **The Electronic Library**
- Select **A-Z Listing of Databases**
- Select **Firstsearch**
- Click on **Connect**
- Enter your library number and PIN
- **Contact the Information Desk for the user ID and password.**

2 To search

Type in your keyword (s), for example, **wildlife conservation in Australia** :

The screenshot shows the FirstSearch Home page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home' and 'Databases' tabs. Below this is a menu with 'List All Databases', 'List Databases by Topic', 'Suggest Best Databases', and 'Go to page'. There are also icons for 'Intro', 'News', and 'Help'. The main search area has a text input field containing 'wildlife conservation in Australia', a dropdown menu for 'In:' with the option '- Select a Topic or Database -', and 'Search' and 'Clear' buttons. At the bottom, there is a 'Jump to Advanced Search:' section with a dropdown menu for '- Select a Database to Search -'.

There are 3 options for **Searching**:

- **Basic** – searches the main indexes in a database, for beginners or quick results
- **Advanced** - more complex search statements including Boolean operators (AND,OR, and NOT) and more search limits
- **Expert** – for experienced searchers who prefer to enter logical search strings

Tip

- Click the **Help** button to browse the context-sensitive online help in a pop-up window and suggestions for how to maximize your search.
- Click **Limit** button and select from the list of database-specific limits to narrow your search

- **Truncate** for plurals and/or possessives by using +
- Click either the Fulltext button and of the fulltext format information to see the full text

3 To select a database

There are 3 options for selecting a database on the Databases tab:

- The **List Databases by Topic** groups databases by topic area
- **List all Databases** displays a merged list of databases
- **Suggest Best** scans databases for your key search term(s)

Tip

- To find information on content of each database click on the **Info** button on the right of relevant database.

- Alternatively you may select the **Suggest Best** option, type in your search terms and select the topic as **General** and allow FirstSearch to select the database/s most appropriate to your search.

4 To print, email or import into Endnote

Printing

Click the **Print** button to reformat a page of results for printing. Reformatting will temporarily remove the Navigation Menu and the Control Panel. Use your browser's print function to print the reformatted screen. Click the **Return** button to return to the original format.

E-mailing

Click the **E-mail** button to email records, library ownership or full-text copy. Type in your **email address** and click **Send**.

Endnote

Click the Export button to export data directly to Endnote. A maximum of 100 records can be exported at one time. Records may need to be cleaned up manually.

5 Tip

FirstSearch charges the Library US\$1.00 per search. The following actions are considered a search whether or not records are retrieved:

- Sending a search word(s)
- Each identical search in different databases counts as a search
- Adding a search word(s) to the previous search
- Resending the previous search with different search limits

Therefore, before searching online, you may want to do preliminary research to narrow your topic and prepare a list of words or phrases (subjects, titles, names, authors, etc.).