

**PSY 510 Step-by-Step Guide to Using the Shapiro Library  
Conducting Basic Psychological Research**

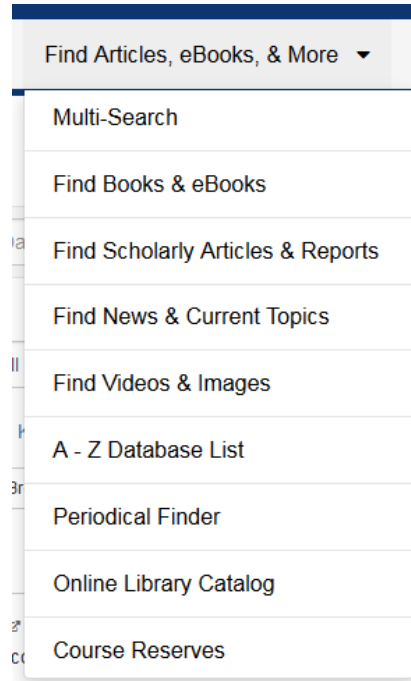
This document was prepared by Susan Staggs, PhD.

**Note:** Review the following resources before using this guide:

- [Getting Started With Research at Shapiro Library](#)  
Throughout the program, you will draw from scholarly sources, particularly peer-reviewed journal articles. This resource will help guide you through the SNHU library. It will also provide helpful tools for researching a variety of sources.
- Video: [Shapiro Library Orientation](#) (3:38)  
This video is a tutorial on finding databases in the Shapiro Library.
- [Psychology Resource Guide for Undergraduate and Graduate Students](#)  
Throughout this course and degree program, you will need to conduct research in your area of interest. This webpage provides links to a variety of psychology resources offered through the Shapiro Library.

**Note:** This guide presents one method out of a number of suitable methods for doing very basic research on psychological topics. Depending on your experience using the resources at the Shapiro Library, you may wish to use a more sophisticated method, but this is a great method for beginning researchers. It teaches you to get a review article and use that one review article as the source for all of your other articles. **To avoid getting overwhelmed and frustrated, beginning researchers need to read reviews of research to learn what is going on with their research topic before accessing empirical articles reporting results of a single study. So here is how you do that in 10 steps.** You can use this method for all research you do at the graduate level, although you are encouraged to get more sophisticated with your searches as you learn more about research databases and search engines.

1. Go to the Shapiro Library home page. Once on the page, select the **Find Articles, eBooks, & More** icon. When the drop-down menu appears, select the **A-Z Database List**.



2. **Do NOT use the Summon Multi-Search engine to do research for graduate courses.** It returns too many resources that are not suitable for graduate-level referencing. Instead, first search for peer-reviewed journal articles using the PsychINFO database. To get there, click **A-Z Database List**, then click **Psychology** from **All Subjects** drop-down list of choices. You will see this page:

## A-Z Databases: Psychology

Find the best library databases for your research.

A screenshot of a web interface for "A-Z Databases: Psychology". At the top, it says "198 DATABASES". Below this are three filter boxes: "Psychology", "All Database Types", and "All Vendors / Providers". A navigation bar shows "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 #". Below the filters, it says "15 Databases found" and "Clear Filters". Under the heading "Best Bets!", there are three database entries: "PsycARTICLES" (a definitive source of full-text, peer-reviewed scholarly and scientific articles in psychology), "PsycINFO 1887-Current" (contains citations and summaries of scholarly journal articles, book chapters, books, and dissertations, all in psychology and related disciplines), and "PsycTESTS" (Professionally indexed, the PsycTESTS® database is an extensive collection of psychological measures, scales, surveys, and other instruments essential to the research needs of professionals, students, and educators across the behavioral and social sciences).

3. Click **PsychINFO 1887-Current**. You will see this page:

The screenshot shows the EBSCOhost search interface. At the top, it says "Searching: PsycINFO | Choose Databases". Below that is a search box with the placeholder text "Enter any words to find books, journals and more" and a "Search" button. There are also links for "Search Options", "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", and "Search History".

The "Search Options" section is expanded, showing "Search Modes and Expanders" and "Limit your results".

**Search Modes and Expanders:**

- Search modes:
  - Boolean/Phrase
  - Find all my search terms
  - Find any of my search terms
  - SmartText Searching [Hint](#)
- Apply related words:
- Also search within the full text of the articles:
- Apply equivalent subjects:


**Limit your results:**

- Linked Full Text:
- References Available:
- Peer Reviewed:
- Publication Name:
- Publication Year:  -
- Published Date:
  - Month:  Year:
  - Month:  Year:

4. Do not change anything in the Search Mode and Expanders area. In the Limit Your Results area, click **Linked Full Text**, **References Available**, and **Peer-Reviewed**. In the **Publication Year** start-date field, type **2007**. This way you will only get results from the past 10 years. Research that is more than 10 years old in psychology is out of date. Do not change anything else in the *Limit Your Results* area. Now, go back to the Search box at the top of the screen and type your first search term. **Be as specific as you can.** Search terms like “child and adolescent development” or “forensic psychology” are too broad. Assume that you want to research treatments for autism among children, and you are especially interested in improving communication in kids with autism. **The first type of article you need is a review article. These articles review other studies and provide summaries and syntheses of existing research. Do NOT start looking at study articles until you have read at least one review article. Why? Because unless you are an expert on autism treatment, you need to learn more about the subject in general.** Also, for many papers, starting from a recent review article and using that article’s references to find more articles is a smart strategy. So for your search terms, in the Search box, type “treatment AND autism AND children AND review.” This is a good strategy that will return only articles with the main topics you are interested in. AND is a Boolean phrase, so the search will look for articles that contain all of these words. If you were to just enter those terms without AND in between them, your search would return only articles with the phrase “treatment autism children review,” so that is not what you want. Using the search above, your screen should look like this:

**Search Options**

**Search Modes and Expanders**

Search modes 

- Boolean/Phrase
- Find all my search terms
- Find any of my search terms
- SmartText Searching [Hint](#)

Apply related words

Also search within the full text of the articles

Apply equivalent subjects

**Limit your results**

Linked Full Text

Publication Name

Published Date

Month  Year:  - Month  Year:

References Available

Publication Year



2005 -

Peer Reviewed

5. Now, click the **Search** button. Next you must evaluate whether any of the returned articles are relevant to your research topic. You will see this screen:

**Search Results: 1 - 20 of 312**

Relevance

1. [The effectiveness of psychosocial interventions for anxiety in \*\*children\*\* and adolescents with \*\*autism\*\* spectrum disorder: A systematic \*\*review\*\* and meta-analysis.](#)  





Academic Journal

Kreslins, Ance; Robertson, Ashley E.; Melville, Craig; *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, Vol 9, Jun 20, 2015 ArtID: 22. Publisher: BioMed Central Limited; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** Anxiety; **Autism** Spectrum Disorders; Intervention; Psychosocial Rehabilitation; Childhood (birth-12 yrs); Adolescence (13-17 yrs)

[Cited References: \(54\)](#)

 [PDF Full Text](#)

2. [Efficacy of interventions to improve feeding difficulties in \*\*children\*\* with \*\*autism\*\* spectrum disorders: A systematic \*\*review\*\* and meta-analysis.](#)  



Academic Journal

Marshall, J.; Ware, R.; Ziviani, J.; Hill, R.J.; Dodrill, P.; *Child: Care, Health and Development*, Vol 41(2), Mar, 2015 pp. 278-302. Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd.; [Journal Article]



**Subjects:** Eating Behavior; Intervention; Mealtimes; Childhood (birth-12 yrs); Neonatal (birth-1 mo); Infancy (2-23 mo); Preschool Age (2-5 yrs); School Age (6-12 yrs); Male; Female

[Show all 19 images](#)



[Cited References: \(56\)](#)

 [PDF Full Text](#)

3. [Building capacity for rigorous controlled trials in \*\*autism\*\*: The importance of measuring \*\*treatment\*\* adherence.](#)  

6. First, note that the search only returned 312 articles, not the usual 2,000 that get returned when you do not limit your search. That is still a lot, but let's take a peek at the first few articles to see if they are relevant review articles that discuss treatments for autism in children. The first two are too specific because the first one discusses anxiety in kids with autism and the second one discusses feeding difficulties, and we are really interested in improving communication. The third one looks like a technical methodology article, so let's scroll down:

**Language** >

**Age** >

childhood (birth-12 yrs) (137)

adolescence (13-17 yrs) (53)

school age (6-12 yrs) (36)

adulthood (18 yrs & older) (35)

preschool age (2-5 yrs) (31)

infancy (2-23 mo) (13)

[Show More](#)

**Gender** >

**Classification** >

**Methodology** >

**Tests & Measures** >

**Population** >

4. **Effectiveness of work, activities of daily living, education, and sleep interventions for people with autism spectrum disorder: A systematic review.**

Weaver, Lindy L.; American Journal of Occupational Therapy, Vol 69(5), Sep-Oct, 2015 pp. p1-p11. Publisher: American Occupational Therapy Assn; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** Activities of Daily Living; **Autism** Spectrum Disorders; Developmental Disabilities; Intervention; Occupational Therapy

Academic Journal

**Cited References:** (41)

[PDF Full Text](#)

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5. **Utilization of school nurses during the evaluation and identification of children with Autism spectrum disorders.**

Mcintosh, Constance E.; Thomas, Cynthia M.; Psychology in the Schools, Vol 52(7), Aug, 2015 pp. 648-657. Publisher: John Wiley & Sons; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** **Autism** Spectrum Disorders; Collaborative Learning; School Nurses; School Psychologists; Adulthood (18 yrs & older); Male; Female

Academic Journal

**Cited References:** (22)

[Linked Full Text](#)

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6. **Systematic review of the properties of tools used to measure outcomes in anxiety intervention studies for children with autism spectrum disorders.**

Wigham, Sarah; McConachie, Helen; PLoS ONE, Vol 9(1), Jan 21, 2014 ArtID: e85268. Publisher: Public Library of Science; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** Anxiety; **Autism** Spectrum Disorders; Intervention; Measurement

Academic Journal

**Cited References:** (109)

[PDF Full Text](#)

7. The fourth article looks like it is for adults with autism because it talks about work, and kids do not work, so skip that one. The fifth is specific to school nurses, and the sixth looks like it is a methodology article because it talks about the properties of measurement tools. It might be time to narrow our search a bit more. We are interested in autism in children, and our search term included the word children, but we can further limit our search any time during the search process. In the Current Search column, under Subject: Major Headings, click **Age** and click the **Preschool Age** checkbox because we are really only interested in working with preschool-aged children. You will see the following revised search results:

Relevance ▾ Page Options ▾

**Search Results: 1 - 20 of 31**

1. **Efficacy of interventions to improve feeding difficulties in children with autism spectrum disorders: A systematic review and meta-analysis.**

Marshall, J.; Ware, R.; Ziviani, J.; Hill, R.J.; Dohill, P.; Child: Care, Health and Development, Vol 41(2), Mar, 2015 pp. 278-302. Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd.; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** Eating Behavior; Intervention; Mealtimes; Childhood (birth-12 yrs); Neonatal (birth-1 mo); Infancy (2-23 mo); **Preschool Age** (2-5 yrs); School Age (6-12 yrs); Male; Female

Academic Journal

[Show all 19 Images](#)

**Cited References:** (56)

[PDF Full Text](#)

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2. **Building capacity for rigorous controlled trials in autism: The importance of measuring treatment adherence.**


McConachie, H.; Fletcher-Watson, S.; Working Group 4, COST Action 'Enhancing the Scientific Study of Early Autism, Child: Care, Health and Development, Vol 41(2), Mar, 2015 pp. 169-177. Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd.; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** **Autism** Spectrum Disorders; Early Intervention; Parent Child Relations; Preschool Students; **Treatment** Compliance; Childhood (birth-12 yrs); **Preschool Age** (2-5 yrs)

Academic Journal

- Wow! That helped a lot. Now there are only 31 articles we need to look through. The fourth article in this search looks fantastic. It meets all our criteria: It is a review article of interventions to teach communication skills to autistic children.


3. **TEACCH-based group social skills training for children with high-functioning autism: A pilot randomized controlled trial.**  

 Academic Journal



Ichikawa, Kayoko; Takahashi, Yoshimitsu; Ando, Masahiko; Anme, Tokie; Ishizaki, Tatsuro; Yamaguchi, Hinako; Nakayama, Takeo; BioPsychoSocial Medicine, Vol 7, Oct 1, 2013 ArtID: 14. Publisher: BioMed Central Limited; [Journal Article]


**Subjects:** Autism Spectrum Disorders; Parent Child Communication; Social Skills Training; Treatment Outcomes; Group Intervention; Childhood (birth-12 yrs); Preschool Age (2-5 yrs); Adulthood (18 yrs & older); Male; Female

Cited References: (27)

 [PDF Full Text](#)

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4. **Use of computer-based interventions to teach communication skills to children with autism spectrum disorders: A systematic review.**  

 Academic Journal


Ramdoss, Sathiyaprakash; Lang, Russell; Mulloy, Austin; Franco, Jessica; O'Reilly, Mark; Didden, Robert; Lancioni, Giulio; Journal of Behavioral Education, Vol 20(1), Mar, 2011 Special Issue: Evaluating assistive technology in the education of persons with severe disabilities. pp. 55-76. Publisher: Springer; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** Autism Spectrum Disorders; Communication Skills Training; Computer Assisted Instruction; Treatment Outcomes; Childhood (birth-12 yrs); Preschool Age (2-5 yrs); School Age (6-12 yrs); Adolescence (13-17 yrs); Male; Female



Show all 7 images


   

Cited References: (74) Times Cited in this Database: (23)

 [PDF Full Text](#)

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5. **The experiences of parents during diagnosis and forward planning for children with autism spectrum disorder.**  

 Academic Journal

Keenan, Mickey; Dillenburger, Karola; Doherty, Alvin; Byrne, Tony; Gallagher, Stephen; Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities, Vol 23(4), Jul, 2010 pp. 390-397. Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd.; [Journal Article]

**Subjects:** Autism Spectrum Disorders; Diagnosis; Individual Education Programs; Parents; Treatment Planning; Childhood (birth-12 yrs)

- Click **PDF full text** for the fourth article. Download and read the article. The References section will contain references for many individual studies of communication skills in autism. If you need more references, or if you need an empirical article for your assignment rather than a review article, choose one of the references that looks relevant and follow Steps 1 through 4 of this process, **entering the article title in the Search box** instead of “treatment AND autism AND children AND review.”
- Continue to perform Step 9 until you get all the articles you need. If you use this method and do not find a good article, go back to Step 4 and enter different search terms.