



Keywords	vs.	Subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> natural language words describing your topic - good to start with 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pre-defined "controlled vocabulary" words used to describe the content of each item (book, journal article) in a database
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more flexible to search by - can combine together in many ways 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> less flexible to search by - need to know the exact controlled vocabulary term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> database looks for keywords anywhere in the record - not necessarily connected together 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> database looks for subjects only in the subject heading or descriptor field, where the most relevant words appear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may yield too many or too few results 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if too many results - also uses subheadings to focus on one aspect of the broader subject
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may yield many irrelevant results 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> results usually very relevant to the topic

Where to find subject headings:

- Start with a keyword search, using words/phrases that describe your topic.
- Browse the results; choose 2 or 3 that are relevant.
- Look at the Subject or Descriptor field and note the terms used (write them down).
- Redo your search using those terms.
- Your results will be more precise than your initial keyword search.