

# PsycINFO: Limiting Your Search Results

PsycINFO indexes journal articles and book chapters in great detail. Keyword searching checks the information in the title, abstract, and subject heading fields. With the **Limit** feature, you can find articles dealing with a particular population, search different kinds of research, or search for broad classification codes.

## Limits on the Main Search Page

- Some of the most popular limits are available on the main search page. You can limit to articles dealing with humans, articles in English, and articles which have abstracts with the checkboxes under the keyword field.
- Below those checkboxes, you can limit your search by date. The first pull-down menu sets the beginning year of the range, and the last menu sets the end of the range. If you only enter one date, you will only find articles published in that year.
  - For example, to search for articles from the last 10 years, choose **1990** from the first menu and **2000** in the second.
  - For articles published in or before 1980, choose **1980** in the first menu and choose a beginning year (back as far as **1872**) in the second.
  - If you are specifically looking for an article from **1995**, you can choose that in either menu.

---

## The Limit Screen



- You must do at least one search before you can reach the Limit Screen.
- Click the **Limit** button at the top of the page to go to the Limit Screen.
- You can limit any of the searches you have done. Ovid defaults to limiting your **most recent** search. To choose an earlier set of results, select the button to its left.
- Some of the most popular limits have been listed in checkboxes at the top.
- If you use multiple menus, you will only find records which match **all** of your categories.
- However, when using a particular menu, you can use the **CONTROL** key on your keyboard to select multiple categories. This will find articles which match **any** of your selections in that menu.
- Information about the specific options on the Limit Screen is on the back of this page.



## Kind of Publication

Five menus give information about the publication itself.

- **Form/Content Types** “identify what a document is as opposed to what it is about.” For example, you can use this to limit your search to empirical studies, research reviews, or bibliographies.
- **Publication Types** allow you to limit your search by the format of the document. For example, you could choose to search only book chapters or journal articles.
- **Languages** restrict your search by the language the document was published in. PsycINFO includes documents in more than 24 languages, although the majority are in English.
- **Special Features** allow you to search documents with particular features, such as an index or assessment instrument.
- **Intended Audience** allows you to specify the level of the material.

## Classification Codes

The PsycINFO Classification Codes cover the broad subject categories in PsycINFO, the way the beginning of a call number covers the general subject of a book in the library.



- Using classification codes can be an effective way to look for a particular theoretical approach, a particular experimental interest, or a general topic within psychology.
- However, since each article is only assigned one or two codes, searching by classification code can make very broad cuts in your results. If you feel that you are not retrieving enough material, you may want to revise your keyword search instead of using classification codes.

## Groups Studied

Three of the menus refer to the group studied.

- **Age Groups** restrict your search to articles dealing with particular developmental periods.
- **Empirical Human Populations** search for “articles in which humans were specifically cited as the subject of a study or experiment.” Your choices here are more broad.
- **Population Groups** allow you to look for articles about humans or animals, males or females, and inpatients or outpatients (or a combination of these).

## More Help

- More help is available in PsycINFO through the Help button. 
- The “i” (for information) button gives more help about the various options on the Limit Screen. 
- The APA has information about PsycINFO available on the Web at <http://www.apa.org/psycinfo/training/ovid-windows.pdf>
- Contact Reference & Instructional Services at (202) 319-5070, or come to the first floor of Mullen Library.