

Identifying and using online research literature - a guide for academics, researchers and students

Academics, researchers and students in universities and research institutions in many countries across Africa, South Asia and Latin America now have access to many thousands of online journals and books, in full-text, **free at the point of use**. Access is managed by your library, which:

- Pays for access where relevant, often by joining INASP's in-country consortium partner
- Registers your institution for access, most often as automatically authenticated access through a campus network or in rare cases by username and password
- May offer off-campus access through a proxy server.

There are links to the resources available below. Should you experience any problems in accessing any of these resources, please **contact your librarian**.

What is available?

Your library website is the best starting point to see which resources you could use.

INASP

INASP has negotiated for deeply discounted, sometimes free, access to online research literature for eligible institutions in many countries. Use the "Country" box at www.inasp.info to select your country and chose the "view research literature" bar to see the list of resources available.

Access to these resources is via the respective publisher's platform. You will find links either from your library's website or from INASP's publisher pages linked from www.inasp.info/en/network/publishers

If you are unable to access a resource, please contact your librarian and ask him/her to register for access at: www.inasp.info/en/accounts/login using your institution's fixed, external IP address, which will allow **seamless access for researchers**. Should librarians need guidance on access, suggestions are available at www.inasp.info/resources/help-access

Research4Life (R4L)

Research4Life is the collective name for four initiatives, AGORA (agriculture), HINARI (medicine and health) OARE (environmental science) and ARDI (technology and innovation). These resources also include content in cross-cutting thematic areas, such as economics, public policy, anthropology, development etc. **You will need to ask your librarian for a username and password to access these resources.** www.research4life.org

HINARI - Access to Research in Health

HINARI, run by WHO provides a collection of over 11,400 journals, up to 18,500 e-books, and up to 70 other information resources in biomedical and health subjects. www.who.int/hinari

AGORA - Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture

AGORA, run by FAO provides a collection of more than 3,000 journals in the fields of food, agriculture, environmental science, and related social sciences. www.fao.org/agora

OARE - Online Access to Research in the Environment

OARE, run by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Yale University provides over 4,000 resources in environmental studies and related fields. web.unep.org/oare

ARDI - Access to Research for Development and Innovation

ARDI, run by WIPO provides nearly 10,000 journals, books, and reference works on science and technology. www.wipo.int/ardi

Open Access

Open Access (OA) means **unrestricted online access to scholarly research. No registration is needed.**

More information and lists of multi-disciplinary and subject collections can be found at www.inasp.info/resources/help-access

Some of the major lists are:

- **Directory of Open Access Journals** doaj.org which allows for a single access across all the content of the over 9,000 journals included.
- **The Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB)** www.doabooks.org contains over 1400 academic books from 35 publishers.
- **WorldWideScience** worldwidescience.org enables you to search across a number of national scientific databases and portals.
- **Bioline International** www.bioline.org.br is an aggregator of open access journals from across the world.

Many publishers publish OA articles within paid journals (called hybrids), so it is worth searching publisher sites for articles indicated by the OA symbol of an **orange open padlock**.

Repositories

Repositories are online spaces for collecting, preserving, and disseminating, in digital form, the intellectual output of an institution or larger entity.

www.opendoar.org/search.php searches across a number of repositories for freely available academic research information.

National and regional online journal platforms

A number of regions and countries have developed their own online journal platforms. Many of the journals on these platforms are Open Access; for others it is possible to obtain copies of the articles on payment of a token fee. These include:

African Journals Online (AJOL)	www.ajol.info
Bangladesh Journals Online (BanglaJOL)	www.banglajol.info
Central American Journals Online (CAMJOL)	www.camjol.info
Nepal Journals Online (NepJOL)	www.nepjol.info
Scielo (Brazil)	www.scielo.org
Sri Lanka Journals Online (SLJOL)	www.sljol.info
Vietnam Journals Online (VJOL)	www.vjol.info

Which journals or resources will be most useful?

There is no single way to identify and access the online research resources you may need for your work, but by combining a number of different routes, being creative, and developing your search skills, it should be possible to find most of what you need. We outline some of the approaches you could take below.

Get to know the key journals in your subject area

You may already know the key resources most relevant to your subject area, and which you want to check regularly. But if you're not sure, or want to extend your knowledge of journals in your field, there are a number of ways in which you can do this.

People to ask and places to look

- Your **research supervisor, academic colleagues** or **fellow students** in your department will be able to provide information about the key journals or other resources in your subject area. These may include databases, books, journals, theses etc.
- **Your librarian** will be able to help you find out what resources are available to you and how to access them.
- Your **library website** may have a list of online (electronic) resources in specific subject areas, or it may enable you to browse its collections by discipline.
- Many **publishers' databases and archives** let you **browse resources in specific subject** areas to enable an overview of what is available.
- The websites of **academic subject associations and networks**, or other professional associations may include details of key journals in the field – many will publish their own journal. You will still need to access this via the routes described below.
- When you read an article which is useful and relevant, **check the bibliography** and see which other journals are listed. These may be useful places to look.

If you have a specific journal or article in mind

First steps

If you know the name of a specific journal but don't know how to find it, check the name of the publisher (eg Cambridge University Press, Springer, Wiley Blackwell etc). You can find this easily by entering the name of the journal in Google. Many publishers provide access to their journals via a single database or website and this will help you to know where to start.

If you know the title of the article, find out the name of the journal where it was published.

Once you know who published a journal, **check if you have access via your library**.

It's useful to **check which year** the issue or article was published. Older issues of a journal are sometimes accessed by an archival route (such as JSTOR).

The library website may provide a list of publishers' databases, or there may be a full e-resource service enabling you to search or browse journals by title or by subject area.

Once you have found the correct database (eg Cambridge Journals Online) you can **search or browse** for the journal.

If you don't have a specific journal title in mind

Try searching **aggregated databases or bibliographic services**. These will show you articles or journals from a number of different publishers (this is often possible even if you do not have a subscription to the service, but you will not be able to download the full-text to all articles that you find). There are specialist bibliographic services for different disciplines.

For example **PubMed** (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed) and **African Index Medicus** (indexmedicus.afro.who.int) are both freely accessible abstracting services in medical-related fields. Other subscription services include Web of Science (all disciplines), the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS), CAB Abstracts (applied life sciences) and Scopus (all disciplines). Your librarian will be able to explain what is available.

Try searching within a few different **publishers' databases** – accessible via your university library website. However, remember that these will only show you articles or journals from a single publisher.

Google can also help, but many of the results it provides may not be of the academic quality you need. **Google Scholar** (scholar.google.co.uk) may be more useful here, as this is focused on scholarly and academic sources.

What if the article is not available online?

If the article you need does not seem to be available online, you may be able to get a copy via a **document delivery service** or as a **pre-print** from an **institutional repository**. Ask your librarian to find out if this is possible.

If you have any problems...

If it looks like you should be able to access an online article or journal but you are unable to, **contact your librarian**.