

Centennial Science and Engineering Library

Choosing and Using Databases: Choosing

Name	Subject Coverage	Dates of Coverage	Types of Material Included	Best Features	Drawbacks
Silver Platter	Biology: ecology, cell and molecular, biochemistry, agriculture, biotechnology, botany, environment, microbiology, zoology	1985 - present	5211 journals	90% include abstracts; supertaxa searching; most comprehensive biological index	Can only be used at CSEL; many sources not available at UNM
Cambridge Scientific Abstracts	Environmental, water resources, toxicology, and materials science	1981 - present	5064 journals/ environmental	Covers water and environmental topics most comprehensively; multi-file searching	British spellings; many items not available at CSEL.
EBSCO Host	Social sciences, arts, humanities, general sciences, education, business	full-text 1990-present; indexing only 1984-present	4140 popular and scholarly journals	Full text of 1260 journals	Light on science coverage, especially in full-text
FirstSearch	Over 50 databases covering many subject areas including general science, biology, agriculture, geology, and technology.	Books, A.D. 1000+ Journals, varies	Books, maps, theses, journal articles, encyclopedias, etc.	Breadth of coverage; unusual databases, such as directories and alternative press; all databases searched in same way	Truncation is limited; many documents not available at UNM
GeoRef (Cambridge)	Earth sciences, geology, mineralogy, paleontology.	1785-present (international begins 1933)	Journal articles, books, maps, reports, theses	Breadth of coverage; indicates if UNM General Library owns item; excellent coverage of U.S. Geological Survey publications; can eliminate items that are summary only	Only about 10% of records have abstracts.
Ingenta	Covers science and social science	Theoretically 1900-present; realistically about 1988-present.	About 27,000 publications; 6,000 are full-text	Most comprehensive coverage for document delivery	Need to register. Must pay for document delivery. Not all articles have full text.

Lexis-Nexis	Local, government, business, medicine	Last 10 years	About 10,000 sources	Good sources for regional information and newspaper articles; biographical info; some full text	Light on non-medical science
Medline (FirstSearch)	Biomedicine, health sciences, genetics, toxicology	1966 - present	About 4000 journals	Abstracts, MESH headings, CAS registry numbers, molecular sequence data searching, gene symbol searching	Truncation is limited; many documents not available at CSEL
Gale Group Infotrac	Social sciences, arts, humanities, general sciences, education, business	1980-present	About 4000 popular and scholarly journals and newspapers	Full text of 1000+ journals; online subject guide	Light on science coverage, not all abstracts have full text.
SciFinder Scholar (Chemical Abstracts)	Biochemistry; organic, inorganic, physical, and analytical chemistry; applied chemistry and chemical engineering	1967 - present	8000 journals, patents, books, conf. procs., tech. reports, dissertations	Breadth of coverage, includes chemical patents. Structure, registry number, and reaction searching. Natural language searching.	Must be a UNM affiliate to search.
SciSearch	Astronomy, biology, chemistry, computer science, environment, engineering, earth sciences, mathematics, physics	1977 - present	4000 journals	Great for checking citations. Wide coverage, multi-disciplinary, Ease of use; indicates if CSEL, HSCL, or NMT owns.	No conference papers; not all records have abstracts; not comprehensive
U.S. Patents	All United States patents from 1790 to present	1790 - present	over 6,000,000 patents	Includes images of all patents; links to supplementary material (Manual of Classification, Class Definitions, etc.)	Access before 1976 is by patent number and classification only.