

## Search Characteristics of Selected Life Sciences Databases

	Boolean Operators	Truncation & Wild Cards	Field Searching	Limiting	Expanding/ Word Lists	Proximity (# = any no.)	Phrase Searching
Biosis and Zoological Record (Silver Platter)	explicit <b>and</b> , <b>or</b> , <b>not</b>	* multiple characters, internal or right; ? single character, internal or right	“in [field code]”	same as field search; use search builder for more control	select <b>index</b> button; pull-down menu to select field; thesaurus	near (same sentence); with (same field); near#, with#, adj	yes, implied
Cambridge Scientific Abstracts	explicit <b>and</b> , <b>or</b> , and <b>not</b> (or separate lines)	* right truncation or internal; ? single character	by pull-down menus	year	thesauri	within #	yes, implied
SciSearch	explicit <b>and</b> , <b>or</b> (or separate lines)	auto stemming (verb tenses and plurals) on stems of 4 chars. or explicit *; use ? for authors	by pull-down menus	language, time period, document type	cited author browse	<near/#>	“in quotes”
SciFinder Scholar (Chemical Abstracts)	na	na	by task menu	by refining references	na	na	na
FirstSearch (Web)	basic: explicit <b>and</b> or <b>or</b> (limit of 2 “or”s) adv: separate lines	+ simple plurals (“s” or “es”); * right truncation	by pull-down menus	varies; often language, time period, publ. type	yes	n#, w#	[word] w [word]
EBSCO Host Full-text Elite	explicit <b>and</b> , <b>or</b> , <b>not</b>	? internal, * right truncation	2-letter field codes or separate lines in advanced	yes: full-text, date range, etc.	No	n#, w#	implied
Lexis-Nexis	explicit	! right truncation * single character, internal or right truncation		date, publications		w/# (either order) w/p (same paragraph) w/s (same sentence)	implied

## Selected Electronic Databases for the Life Sciences

Name	Subject Coverage	Dates of Coverage	Types of Material Included	Best Features	Drawbacks
Biological Abstracts (Silver Platter)	Biology: ecology, cell and molecular, biochemistry, agriculture, biotechnology, botany, environment, microbiology, zoology	1969 - present	5000 journals and conference literature	90% include abstracts; supertaxa searching; most comprehensive biological index	Only 2 simultaneous users; many sources not available at UNM
Cambridge Scientific Abstracts	Environmental, water resources, geology, toxicology, and materials science	1967 - present (varies by database)	5064 journals/ environmental	Covers water and environmental topics most comprehensively; multi-file searching	British spellings; many items not available at CSEL.
SciSearch	Astronomy, biology, chemistry, computer science, environment, engineering, earth sciences, mathematics, physics	1977 - present	5600 journals	Ease of use; indicates if CSEL, HSCL, or NMT owns; cited reference searching	No conference papers; not all records have abstracts; not comprehensive
FirstSearch	53 databases covering many subject areas, especially: Basic Biosis, Biological & Agricultural Index, and Agricola (agriculture)	Books, A.D. 1000+ Journals, varies	Books, maps, theses, journal articles, encyclopedias, etc.	Breadth of coverage; unusual databases, such as addresses; all databases searched in same way	Truncation is limited; many documents not available at UNM
Medline (FirstSearch)	Biomedicine, health sciences, genetics, toxicology	1966 - present	9580 sources	Abstracts, MESH headings, CAS registry numbers, molecular sequence data searching, gene symbol searching	Truncation is limited; many documents not available at CSEL
SciFinder Scholar (Chemical Abstracts)	Biochemistry; organic, inorganic, physical, and analytical chemistry; applied chemistry and chemical engineering	1907 - present	8000 journals, patents, books, conf. procs., tech. reports, dissertations	Breadth of coverage and coverage of chemical patents. Structure, registry number, and reaction searching. Natural language searching.	Advanced targeted searches unavailable.
EBSCO Host	Social sciences, arts, humanities, general sciences, education, business	full-text 1990-present; indexing only 1984-present	3239 popular and scholarly journals	Full text of 1837 journals	Light on science coverage, especially in 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
Zoological Record (Silver Platter)	Behavior, ecology, evolution, genetics, habitat, parasitology, taxonomy, zoogeography	1978 - present	4500 journals plus monographs, conf. papers, and reports	Includes many regional publications; enhanced taxonomic searching capabilities; supertaxa searching	No abstracts; must be used at CSEL; many sources not at UNM