

# Finding Qualitative Research Articles

Qualitative research is defined as research that derives data from observation, interviews, or verbal interactions and focuses on the meanings and interpretations of the participants. (Holloway and Wheeler, 1995)

## Strategies for Finding Qualitative Research Articles

### General:

All research studies have a section called “Method” or “Methods”. Try adding “Method\*” to your search. You should also limit to Research Articles and/or Peer-Reviewed Journals. At some point you will have to simply scan the abstracts to determine the study type, but the following strategies will make that process less labor-intensive.

### Strategy 1: Use thesaurus terms

Databases use controlled keywords (known as thesaurus terms or subject headings) to categorize each record stored. The thesaurus terms vary for each database according to their indexing system. Terms to try include Qualitative, Methodology, Phenomenological Research, and Grounded Theory.

### Strategy 2: Use Text Words

This strategy uses Text Word terms that might specifically identify qualitative research and searches the titles, abstracts and keywords of records held in the databases. Some Text Words (or keywords) include: qualitative, ethnograph\*, phenomenol\*, ethnonsurs\*, grounded theor\*, purposive sample, hermeneutic\*, heuristic\*, semiotics, lived experience\*, narrative\*, life experiences, cluster sample, action research, observational method, content analysis, thematic analysis, constant comparative method, field stud\*, theoretical sample, discourse analysis, focus group\*, ethnological research, ethnomethodolog\*, interview\*.

### Strategy 3: Use Qualitative Research Filters

Qualitative Research Filters are pre-formulated search strategies that have been constructed by librarians to help you retrieve articles in databases that deal with qualitative research. You can use the filter and then combine the results with your subject. There are links to two:

<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/intertasc/qualitat.htm>

<http://guides.mclibrary.duke.edu/content.php?pid=97401&sid=729955>

More information/source: <http://healthlinks.washington.edu/howto/qualitative/>