WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A LIBRARY DATABASE:

The Content
Look for these 5 features in a LIBRARY database – What’s available?:

**Content:**
What topics, publication formats are found in the database?

**Controlled Vocabulary:**
Subject Guide Search; Subject terms with search results?

**Basic Searching:**
Browse Lists; 1 Search Box?

**Advanced Searching:**
> 1 Search Box (combine words); Limits; Search History?

**Special Features:**
Citation tool; Downloading capabilities, etc.?
Database Content:

Look for a database list, with descriptions, on the library website home page. At http://library.an.edu, click on the Databases link and login using your Blackboard password:
Database Content:
Read the description for one of the databases (ex: Academic OneFile) and click on its link:
Database Content:
What kind of content can you find in the database?

Look for:

• A description of topics covered:
  one major subject area: business, medical, IT, etc.? or many different subject areas?

• Availability of different types of publication formats*:
  e-books (online dictionaries, encyclopedias)
  e-periodicals (online academic journals, magazines, newspapers)
  other e-resources (streaming videos, maps, etc.)

* Also known as ‘content types.’
Database Content:
What kind of publication formats (i.e., content types) are available?

The Gale databases contain a variety of different types of publication formats.

Tip: Your instructor may want you to research your topic using a variety of these resources.

Tip: Explore the **Content Types** bar on your search results screen to see what is available.

**E-books** are included in some, but not all of the databases. Many of these are reference-type books and include *dictionaries, encyclopedias* and *handbooks*. These can be particularly useful when you do not know much about your topic and need to start your research with definitions and/or overview/review articles on a particular subject.

**E-periodicals** are online resources that are published periodically and include *academic journals, magazines* and *newspapers*. These resources are particularly useful when you need more detailed and/or more current information about a topic.

**Other e-resources** such as online audio-visual materials are also available, including streaming video clips, newscasts, visual images and more. These types of resources, which may be overlooked, can contain a lot of valuable information.
Database Content:

What’s different about the content in these two examples?
Database Content:

What kind of content can you find in the database?
How does what you find match with what you need?

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