

Your Research Paper

Obviously, there are two steps: 1) research and 2) writing. You can mix it up. Figure out what your topic is (narrow it down as much as possible), divide the topic into subsections, and research each subsection separately.



Research

The Library. It is a very confusing place, no doubt. Ask a research librarian (at the research desk). They're there to help. Here's a link to a research librarian:

<http://www.library.umass.edu/reference/ResearchHelp.html>

Here's a directory of the library:

<http://www.library.umass.edu/reference/directory/floor/>

1. **The reference section** (REF) contains non-circulating books like encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlases, and so on. It is organized according to the Library of Congress cataloging system—in DuBois basement. Literature is in the PA section, bibliography in the Z section, and so on. Medieval history begins at DA.
2. **The stacks.** These are the circulating books in the upper floors. They are *also* organized according to the Library of Congress cataloging system.
3. **Periodicals.** These are scholarly journals as well as newspapers and popular magazines. The most recent issues are usually in a Periodical Reading Room, but they have been moved into the stacks. (Amherst College, Smith, and MHC still have periodicals sections.)

Note that some (but not all) journals are on-line. There are [e-journals](#) and [databases](#)—databases include [JSTOR](#).



The Internet. Please assess your sources. Remember that 10 year-old Thurston Opinionoid is much better at putting up a webpage than 40 year-old Bumbly Scholarman. All that glitters is not gold.

Some good stops are:

- The Homepage of the class you are taking.
- What Every Medievalist Should Know. [LINK](#).
- The On-Line Reference Book of Medieval Studies. [LINK](#).
- My own list of reference works just for you. [LINK](#).
- An Old English Bibliography. [LINK](#).
- Thesaurus of Old English. [LINK](#).
- Internet Medieval Sourcebook. [LINK](#).

And for general searches:

- Google Books. [LINK](#).
- Google Scholar. [LINK](#).

You can also order articles through the library (they will scan them and send them electronically). Look for [Inter-Library Loan](#).

Writing.

Please be orderly, clear, and concise.