Tips for Searching Online Databases

1. Begin with common terms for your search. Find a title in the results list that is in the area you are seeking. Look at its subject headings and use them as search words.

2. If you have too many hits in your results, narrow your search by adding more terms, for example, ‘penance AND history.’

3. If you have too few hits, try searching with a broader term, for example, ‘christian’ instead of ‘catholic.’ Do not use capitals or punctuation in your searches.

4. Use quotations to enclose search terms that are phrases, for example, “syllabus of errors.”

5. As you find records of interest, you can mark them by checking the little box next to each item. In the OHIOLink database, you need to click on the ‘Save marked records’ button on each page. (In the EBSCO databases, click the ‘Add to folder’ icon.) At the end of your session, you can pull together all the records you have checked and print them out.

6. Regardless of where you find a record that interests you, return to the Maly catalog to see if we have it. If not, you can request it through our OPAL or OhioLINK interlibrary loan services.

7. A list of periodicals owned by Maly Library is kept at the main computer workstation and in the stack area. The list is also online on the Research Databases web page with hot links to titles available online. You can also find out if we own a particular periodical by searching it by title in our catalog.

8. Many databases have overlapping coverage. Don’t settle for results from just one source.