# brainstorm keywords and search terms

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| **Instructions:**  List your topic below, and then pick out key or major concepts and list synonyms or alternate ways of phrasing each key concept.  **List your topic area or research problem here:**  *Circle the main concepts from your topic and then list them below.* |

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| **Key Concept(s)** | **Synonyms or Alternative Keywords** |
| *Example Concept: Burnout* | *Example: Burnout, burn out, role stress, job stress, attrition, retention* |
| Concept 1: |  |
| Concept 2: |  |
| Concept 3: |  |
| Concept 4: (if applicable) |  |

**Note:** If you are not completely familiar with research surrounding your topic, you may have difficulty coming up with broad and narrow terms. This initial frustration is a natural part of the research process.

Consider consulting background sources such CREDO Reference, which includes scholarly encyclopedias. You can use other secondary sources like the Ebrary e-book collection to help you develop an initial list of keywords. See the Library’s Databases A-Z page for both resources.

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| **Controversies, Common Themes and Questions** | **Keywords and Synonyms**  *These will help you find similar articles* |
| *In the below column, write down the controversies, themes and questions that arise from the articles you read.* | *Circle the key concepts that will help you find similar articles, and list them in this column.* |
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**Advanced Keyword Brainstorming**

Take the concepts from above and write down additional keywords from different lenses.

*Remember:* Each different set of keywords will get you different article results.

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| **Concepts (From Above)** | **Narrow Keywords** | **Broad Keywords** | **Similar Keywords** | **Related Keywords** | **Subject Terms** |
|  | Use specific language | Use more general language | What are the different ways this concept is described? | These are branches of the literature that are related. |  |
| **Concept 1:** |  |  |  |  | Subject:  Database: |
| **Concept 2:** |  |  |  |  | Subject:  Database |
| **Concept 3:** |  |  |  |  | Subject:  Database |