

Citation Mining

Citation mining, also called citation chaining or citation pulling, refers to using sources you've already found to quickly find more sources about your research topic. In this short tutorial, you will learn how to use this strategy to expand your search results.

So how does citation mining work? First, you get a journal article you've already found about your research topic and locate the reference list. Scan the reference list and there is a good chance more articles relevant to your topic will be included. Once you find some articles that look relevant to your topic, return to the library website and use LibrarySearch to see full text of these articles.

Note several popular library databases have features that can help you with citation mining. For example, here's an article found in PsycInfo, a psychology database. You can select "References" to find and review sources from this article's reference list. Select the "Cited by" to find articles that have come out in the years since your current source was published and that cited your source. Since these articles quoted your article, they may also be relevant to your topic. Finally, review the "Related items" list to look for more sources on your research topic.

Please note these features are available in a number of different databases, though features in other databases may use slightly different language or appear in different spots on the screen. Contact the library if you have any questions about this.

Google Scholar even has features to support citation mining. Notice the "Cited by" and "Related articles" buttons below the article. Here's a quick note about Google Scholar versus PsycInfo: you may also have noticed that Google Scholar captures twice as many "Cited by" articles as PsycInfo. This looks great, but Google Scholar's criteria for inclusion aren't necessarily as strict as PsycInfo's. If you choose to use Google Scholar, make sure you evaluate any articles you select carefully to ensure they are appropriate for your assignment before including them in your work.

In conclusion, using citation mining is a strategy that can help you quickly and efficiently expand your search to find more sources on your topic. Try this strategy next time you have a research assignment and see what you can find.

If you have any questions about citation mining, ask a librarian.