Web Search vs Database Search Guidelines

Some Ways Web Search Differs from Searching Online Periodical Databases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web Search Engines</th>
<th>Online Periodical Databases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search for words</td>
<td>May search words and subjects (use thesaurus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No human intervention (Internet is too vast with rapid change)</td>
<td>Human intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe resources</td>
<td>May analyze content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use relevance ranking for listing results</td>
<td>May list chronologically</td>
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Web Search Engines Vary:

- **By what they search**
  - URL or
  - Title or
  - First lines of a document or
  - Whole document

- **By how they search**
  - Search engines do not search the entire web—it's too vast
  - They cover different areas of the web; therefore, results vary
  - Some comb the web daily, some weekly, some monthly.

- **By where they search**
  - Do they search the web?
  - Do they search Usenet Netnews?

- **By how results are displayed**
  - They display results differently. Find one that gives results in an understandable, meaningful way.
  - For example, can you tell if a site looks relevant before linking to it?

- **By how you can search**
  - Can you do a detailed search that brings relevant results?
  - What are the defaults? What are the options?

Some Pointers:

- Check the help screens.
- Is there an advanced search screen?
- Try using more than one search engine.
- Keep searches simple. Be creative.
- Some rules transfer to other search engines.
- Search rules change.