

II. Gather Background Information

Gathering background information on your subject will help you limit the scope of the subject and make an outline. Make note of differing concepts, issues in the field, and main ideas. Good sources for locating background information include encyclopedias, almanacs and yearbooks, and handbooks and bibliographies. In order to find information on the Civil Service, you need to look for background resources in Public Administration. You will locate these resources by

1. Searching the Library's online catalog under the subject heading Encyclopedias and Dictionaries. From the entries retrieved, you may choose the relevant ones.
2. Note the appropriate classification numbers for specific resources or resources in the subject area and locate them in the appropriate reference section. For example, if you find a good source under HJ2305 in the stacks, look under the same number in the reference section to find reference books on the subject.
3. You may enhance your search by using keyword searching and combining words in general areas such as Civil Service, bureaucracy, with such words as encyclopedia, dictionary, etc.

Resources that provide background information include

1. Encyclopedias –

General-

Britannica Online

<http://www.tnstate.edu/library/database/htm#B>

Encyclopedia Americana

Ref. AE 5 .E333

Subject-

Encyclopedia of Taxation and Tax Policy

Ref. HJ2305

2. Dictionaries-

General-

Random House Webster's Dictionary

Ref. PE 1628 .R294

3. Almanacs and Yearbooks-

Infoplease.com (electronic resource)

<http://www.infoplease.com/>

[FACTS](http://www.2facts.com/stories/mainmenu.asp) (electronic resource)

<http://www.2facts.com/stories/mainmenu.asp>

4. Handbooks and Bibliographies

Handbook of Public Administration JF 1351

Public Administration, Politics and the People JF 1321

International Handbook of the Ombudsman JF 1525

U.S. Government Manual JK 421