

Criminal Justice Research Guide

[Find Books](#)

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[Suggested Websites](#)

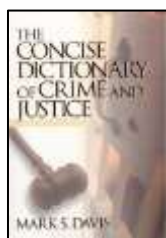
[Research Process Guide](#)

I. Find Books

A) Reference Materials: Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, etc.

Reference materials offer background information and broad overviews of subjects. This information is often helpful in narrowing your topic and in selecting a specific area to explore further. Reference materials such as almanacs and yearbooks also provide quick access to statistical data.

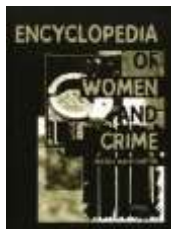
1) Suggested Titles:



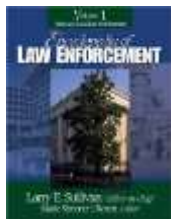
[The Concise Dictionary of Crime and Justice](#). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2002. (REF HV6017 .D38 2002) Each term contains a complete, current definition, a discussion of common misconceptions or controversies surrounding the term, and a cross-reference to other entries in the dictionary.



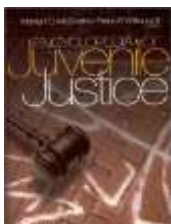
[The Encyclopedia of Crime & Justice](#). New York: Macmillan Reference USA, Nova 2002. (REF HV6017 .E52 2002). With entries ranging widely from abortion to rape and from family violence to wiretapping, this resource covers issues dominating today's headlines.



[The Encyclopedia of Women and Crime](#). Phoenix, Ariz.: Oryx Press, 2000. (REF HV6046 .E56 2000). More than 200 authoritative contributors examine the subject from the perspectives of offenders, offenses, and theories on offending, victims and victimology, the criminal justice system, punishment and treatment.



[Encyclopedia of Law Enforcement](#). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2005. (REF HV7901 .E53 2005) This three-volume set provides a comprehensive, critical and descriptive examination of all facets of law enforcement on the state and local, federal and national, and international stages.



[Encyclopedia of Juvenile Justice](#). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2003. (REF HV9104 .E58 2003) This resource provides more than 200 entries covering a broad range of topics such as boot camps, truancy, drug use, and historical and contemporary theories and practices of juvenile justice in the United States.

B) [Library Catalog](#): **Find Books**

Students can search the library's online catalog for print and e-books available within the VC library system.

E-Books:

The library's e-books can be checked-out and downloaded to an iPad, PC, or other personal device. To download e-books, install an e-reader such as Adobe Digital Editions, select a book from the library catalog, and then check-out and download the book to your device.

View [instructions](#) for downloading e-books.

E-books are loaned for a period of 1 to 7 days. At the end of the check-out period, the book is no longer accessible and automatically returned for use by other patrons. If a book you are wanting is in use, you can place a hold on the book and receive an email notification when the book is available.

C) [Browse the Collection](#)

Physically browse the criminal justice titles shelved by call number in the following Library of Congress Classification ranges:

HV6001 – 9960: Criminology, Criminal Justice Administration

KF8700 – 9827: Courts, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure

II. Find Articles

A) Article Databases: Databases provide 24/7 access to articles from any internet connection. They are available both on and off campus.

1. [Gale Academic OneFile](#) is the library's multidisciplinary database that offers full-text journal coverage in almost all subject areas including social sciences, political science, technology, health sciences, literature, and more. Students can enter their search term to search hundreds of journals at once for articles on their topic. Features also include the ability to:
 - Automatically generate a citation in the formatting style of your choice.
 - Highlight text and insert notes.
 - Download your markups into your Google Drive or One Drive.
 - Filter your results by publication date, document type, and more.
2. [Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center](#): Offers viewpoint essays and articles on a variety of criminal justice issues, such as gun control and capital punishment.
3. [LearningExpress Library](#): Practice tests for various criminal justice careers as a police, corrections, or border patrol officer. After opening the database, select the **Career Center Plus** to access practice tests.

III. Suggested Websites

[United States Department of Justice](#): Contains current justice news stories, the Department of Justice Blog, resources such as forms and publications, and featured resources including Firearm Statistics, a link to the FBI Financial Crimes report, and a link to the National Sex Offender Registry.

[National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#): Contains A-Z criminal justice topics; searchable questions and answers; funding information; and information about upcoming justice events.

[American Bar Association: Criminal Justice](#): Features current Criminal Law news, job openings, past and forthcoming events, and highlights Criminal Justice periodicals and publications.

[Texas Department of Criminal Justice](#): Website provides quick links, job information, news, announcements, and images for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

[National Center for State Courts](#): Visitors to the site can browse by category, by state, or by specific topics A-Z.

The Research Process

- 1) Select a topic that you find interesting and appropriate for the assignment.
- 2) Review reference sources such as subject encyclopedias for background information to help focus or narrow the search.

For example, students interested in **juvenile justice** may consult the *Encyclopedia of Juvenile Justice* for ideas in narrowing the focus to a particular area of interest such as **gangs, teen drug addiction, or school violence**.

- 3) Restate the topic as a question. Inquiry is at the heart of the research process, a quest to locate information which answers questions and leads researchers to a greater understanding of the topic.

Restating the topic as a question will help in:

- Locating information that is useful and relevant to the primary focus or thesis of your research.
- Identifying the keywords or phrases to use in the search statement.

Example: Has **early intervention** been effective in preventing **juvenile crime**?

- 4) Develop a search statement by combining keywords or concepts from the research question. For example, “**early intervention**” and “**juvenile crime**” were identified as keywords in the question above. By connecting both terms with the Boolean operator “**and**”, the researcher will retrieve only those articles that discuss *both* concepts, thus improving the relevancy of the search.

Enter in search field: **intervention and juvenile crime**

- 5) Develop alternate search statements to improve the search results. Authors may use various terms to describe the same concept.

For example, **juvenile crime** is often used in the same context as **youth violence**.

By identifying and connecting alternate terms, researchers may expand the search results. As indicated below, consider brainstorming and listing synonyms or word variations to identify alternate keywords.

Concept 1		Concept 2
early intervention	AND	juvenile crime
diversion programs	AND	youth violence
services to high-risk youth	AND	juvenile delinquency
mental-health awareness	AND	juvenile courts

- 6) Evaluate information for objectivity and reliability.
- 7) Cite the information borrowed from other authors or informational sources. Careful documentation will ensure that credit is given with no intention to plagiarize or claim ownership of information belonging to other researchers. For explanations and examples, visit the [Duke University Library’s Citation page](#).

Questions?

Email: librarian@vernoncollege.edu

Chat: Select the chat icon on the Library homepage.

Phone: 940-552-6291 ext: 2222