



Choosing a Topic

Choose a topic that interests you, something you'd like to know more about. But whatever you choose, remember to keep it manageable! Get curious about choosing a topic!

Where to Get Topic Ideas

- Assigned class readings and textbooks can give you ideas.
- Use reference books like general encyclopedias, subject-specific encyclopedias or dictionaries to delve a little deeper.
- If your topic is related to current events, look through some recent issues of magazines or browse the internet
- Find one book in the library that looks good and then browse the shelves. Books at UM are shelved together by topic; once you have identified the call number of one book, you can browse the shelves for related books.

You could start with a very broad topic, for example, marketing. But you would find way too much information on this subject — enough to write several books! The topic is too broad. **FOR STARTERS . . .**

get ideas for a topic

narrow or broaden a topic

identify keywords for a topic

develop a research question

Narrowing Your Topic

Instead, think of some aspect of the general subject of marketing that interests you, for example:

Internet marketing

Green marketing

Marketing to special groups

Let's say that you are interested in marketing to special groups. You could narrow the topic of marketing even more by adding a sub-topic.

Marketing



an age group marketing to **adolescents**

a location marketing in **Japan**

an additional topic marketing in **magazines**

a population marketing to **minorities or women**

It is helpful to write out your topic as a sentence or a question. Let's say the question that most interests you is: How do advertisers market their products to women?

To Develop a Research Question, ask . . . *What am I trying to find out? What will my research prove?*

Brainstorm Some Keyword Terms

No matter where you're searching, you will need to pick out the most important keywords.

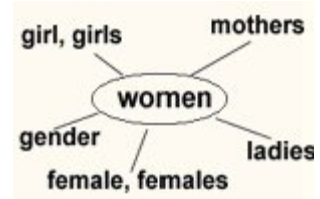
How do advertisers market their products to women?

Other related words for products and women might be:



Example of a keyword search:

Cigarettes and women and marketing



Broadening Your Topic

If your topic is too narrow, try searching under the broader subject.

Topic

X-box
Nike

Broader Subject

Electronic games
Shoes