

# Library Research for Geography and Environmental Studies Students

## Tutorial 7: Managing your information

In this video, we'll look at the following topics:

Saving searches to a database.

Saving references to a database.

Saving references to a reference manager.

And managing your information with a reference manager.

In doing so, we'll address the issue that occurs with a lot of major research projects: how to manage the large volume of information you'll be dealing with as efficiently and effectively as possible.

### Saving searches to a database

Our first section looks at saving searches to a database.

Many database platforms let you save the searches you've done directly into the application itself.

Saving searches allows you to return to a database later, re-run the search, and modify it as necessary.

By saving your searches you can avoid timeout problems that occur if you leave a search unattended for a period of time.

Many databases time out after only 10 minutes.

This can cause you to lose your search results and any references you might have marked.

Let's use ProQuest for an example of how to save your searches.

To do this in ProQuest, you'll have to create a Research Account.

Once you do that, you'll be able to save searches, references, and create alerts when new articles are posted that meet your search parameters.

When you have a search you want to save, go to the drop-down menu at the right side of Pro Quest's search window and select save search.

Name the search and click save.

Your searches are saved under the "My research" area under the saved searches menu item.

You can then retrieve and modify the search any time you need it.

## Saving references to a database

Next, we'll look at saving references to a database.

Let's again use ProQuest as an example.

With your search results, select the items you'd like to save using the individual check boxes beside each reference, or save all the items on the page using the check box at the top of the list.

Next, click the "save to my research" button.

You'll see a pop-up window.

Here you can create a new folder in ProQuest to save the references in.

Once you name it, click save.

You can access these items in the My Research area at top right by selecting the drop-down menu item Saved Documents.

You'll see the folders you've created and items you've saved.

## Saving references to a reference manager.

Now we'll look at saving references to a reference manager.

We'll again use the ProQuest platform for demonstration.

You can save references from a search into a reference manager like Zotero by downloading them as a .ris file.

Most research databases provide this option.

In ProQuest, on your search results screen, look for the circle with 3 small dots and click it.

You'll see all the save and export options.

Under the Citation Export section, select the circle that says RIS.

You'll be prompted to save the file to a particular folder, usually downloads.

Next, we'll upload the file into a reference manager.

We'll use Zotero, a free, open-source software tool.

Select File, then Import.

Select the file you downloaded from your download location.

Import into a new folder collection.

Rename the collection into something more meaningful for you.

## Managing your information with a reference manager.

Lastly, we'll look at managing your information using a reference manager.

Reference managers like Zotero help to manage information you'll retrieve from your multi-database searches in the following ways:

You can copy references to multiple folders.

You can tag references with your own tags for easier access.

You can remove duplicate records from multi-database searches.

Use folders to manage references by adding them to multiple folders

### *Adding references to multiple folders*

Once you've imported records into Zotero, it's easy to add them into multiple folders.

Here we have references in our Main folder, and a new folder called 1-5 copies.

It has no records yet.

Simply select the references in one folder, drag and drop them into a different folder.

And now the references appear in both folders.

### *Tags*

When you first open Zotero, if you've already imported some records, you'll see keywords or tags from those records in the box at the bottom right of the screen.

You can also access tags from an individual record in the menu at the top right.

To add tags to a record, click the title of the record in the middle, then click the Tags button at top right.

Click Add.

Add tags that are meaningful for you.

For this example, I'll add a Chapter 1 tag as if I would be using this for Chapter 1 of my thesis.

I can then search for all the items I've tagged with this tag in the search window at bottom left.

### *Remove duplicates*

When you search and download items from multiple databases, you may run into duplicate records of the same article.

To remove duplicates, first click the Duplicate items filter on the left-side navigator in Zotero.

You'll see duplicates grouped together in the middle section.

Click one set, and you'll have the option to merge the 2 duplicate records into one at the far-right portion of the screen.

Choose the record that seems to have the fullest information in it.

Once you've selected it, click Merge 2 items.

Repeat that for any duplicates you want to merge.

### *Working with pdfs*

If you prefer to download articles individually as pdf files, you can still work with them in Zotero.

Simply drag the pdf files into a folder in Zotero.

The application will look for metadata and add it to the files.

If your articles are recent this should be no problem.

If they're older, you may have to add your own metadata to the records, such as author, title, journal title, and so on.

With the pdfs now imported to Zotero, you can highlight text and add notes to articles.

Note that Zotero has size restrictions of 300 MB for a free account.

You can purchase more memory from the Zotero website at [www.zotero.org](http://www.zotero.org).

Thanks for watching.

If you have any questions, contact me via email or use my booking link at the left of the course guide.