

WHAT IS JOURNAL CITATION REPORTS (JCR)?

**Journal Citation Reports (JCR)** provide systematic and objective means to critically evaluate and compare the performance of journals by showing the **most frequently cited, hottest and highest impact journals** in a discipline based on citation data.

The most well-known feature in JCR is the **Impact Factor**. According to JCR, journals with higher Impact Factor value perform better, i.e. more influential.

WHEN TO USE JCR?

- Researching a topic – JCR will help you to identify the key journals for reference in a particular discipline.
- Looking for a journal to publish your research paper – JCR will point you to the more influential journals in your discipline. Publishing in these journals will make your writings available to the more academically-active audiences.
- To find out how “good” a journal is – you can look up the Impact Factor of a specific journal; the higher the Impact Factor, the more authoritative it is.

HOW DO I ACCESS JCR?

Access from the UNSW Library home page [info.library.unsw.edu.au](http://info.library.unsw.edu.au) via

- Databases & e-journals (Sirius)
- Catalogue (LRD) or
- Subject Guides across many disciplines in the site.

SEARCH TIPS

1. READING JCR DATA IN CONTEXT

JCR data (i.e. Impact Factor, Immediacy Index etc) is meaningful only when read in comparison with journals belonging to a similar subject area.

And, JCR data focus in the performance of a journal as a whole, not individual articles’ performance.

2. SCIENCE VS SOCIAL SCIENCES EDITION

You can search either *Science* or *Social Sciences* edition at a time. For some disciplines, e.g. psychology, which fall into both editions, you need to search in both editions separately.

3. DEFAULT TO SEARCH FOR THE LATEST DATA

JCR is published annually, the latest data is 1-2 years behind the current date because it takes time after the release of an article to be circulated and cited.

However, you can choose to go back to an earlier edition, i.e. other than the latest, if needed.

4. LOCATE A SPECIFIC JOURNAL TITLE

To search for a particular journal, it is best to locate the journal title from the *View list of full journal titles* link. Then, copy and paste the full title into search box.

Note: avoid searching by JCR abbreviated titles unless you are familiar with it.

HOW TO READ THE DATA

Different Subject Categories have different citation cycles. Some subjects have a wider scope of influence whilst some are deeper and more focused. This means that it can take longer for an article to be cited in one category than another.

It is not very useful to compare JCR data from completely different subject areas. Therefore, only search and compare journals performances within one **Subject Category** or across a few **related** subject areas.

SEARCH EXAMPLE 1

SEARCH FOR THE MOST POPULAR JOURNALS IN A FIELD E.G. MEDICINE

- Login to *Journal Citation Reports*.
- Select (default) JCR Science Edition of the (default) latest year.
- Select *View a group of journals by Subject Category* and then click *Submit*.
- On the *Subject Category Selection* page, select **All Medicine** related categories, i.e. MEDICINE, GENERAL & INTERNAL; MEDICINE, LEGAL; and, MEDICINE, RESEARCH & EXPERIMENTAL.  
Note: To make **multiple selections**, use Ctrl-click for Windows or Command-click for Macintosh.
- Select *View Journal Data* – sort by **Impact Factor**. Then click *Submit*.
- The resulting “Journal Summary List” page will display a list of journals with the highest *Impact Factor* at the top.

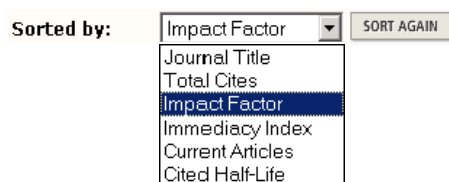
**Impact Factor** is a measure of the frequency with which the “average articles” in a journal have been cited in a particular year. The higher the Impact factor, the more popular the journal is.

Impact Factor will help you evaluate a journal’s relative importance, especially when you compare it to other journals (or the median Impact Factor) in the same category.

VIEWING SEARCH RESULTS

ON THE “JOURNAL SUMMARY LIST”

- The list can be re-sorted easily through the “sorted by:” dropdown menu at the top left corner, e.g. to display by Immediacy Index instead of Impact factor. (See Search Example 2)



- The list is displayed in **abbreviated title** which is not used widely. Click on a journal's abbreviated title link to access the Full Record, i.e. the detailed information of the journal including its full journal name.

ON THE “FULL RECORD” PAGE OF A JOURNAL

An **overview** of the journal’s citation data is at the top of the Full Record, it is followed by the **Journal Information** section.

- **Subject Category** under “Journal Information”: a journal can be indexed by more than 1 category. You can retrieve a list of related journals in the same category by

Select a JCR edition and year:	Select an option:
<input checked="" type="radio"/> JCR Science Edition [2006] <input type="radio"/> JCR Social Sciences Edition [2006]	<input checked="" type="radio"/> View a group of journals by [Subject Category] <input type="radio"/> Search for a specific journal <input type="radio"/> View all journals
<input type="button" value="SUBMIT"/>	

clicking on the  button in the category(ies) the journal belong.

- Other useful information on the Full Record includes Cited and Citing Journal Data, and the Impact Factor Trend of the journal.

## SEARCH EXAMPLE 2

### SEARCH FOR THE “HOTTEST” JOURNAL IN A CATEGORY E.G. GEOGRAPHY

- Return to the *Welcome* Page.
- Select *JCR Social Sciences* Edition of the *latest* year.
- Select *View a group of journals by Subject Category* and then click *Submit*.
- On the *Subject Category Selection* page, select **Geography**.
- Select *View Journal Data* – sort by “*Immediacy Index*”. Then click *Submit*.
- The Journal Summary List is now displaying the list with the highest Immediacy Index on top.
- Access the detailed information of each journal, i.e. the calculation of the index, by clicking on the journal (abbreviated) title.

**Immediacy Index** measures how frequently articles published in a journal are **cited within the same year** and this number is useful for comparing journals specialising in cutting-edge research.

If Journal X has the highest “Immediacy Index” in a Subject Category, it takes shorter time (in average) for an *article* in Journal X to be cited by another publication, when compared with other journals in the same Subject Category. Therefore, publish in journal X will bring your writings to the most **active** researchers/authors in the subject.

## SEARCH EXAMPLE 3

### SEARCH FOR THE IMPACT FACTOR OF A SPECIFIC JOURNAL E.G. JOURNAL OF CELL BIOLOGY

- Return to *Welcome* page.
- Select *JCR Sciences* Edition of the *latest* year.
- Select the **Search for a Specific Journal** option and click *Submit*.
- “Search by” **Full Journal Title**, but, instead of typing in the journal title, click on the link **View list of full journal titles** on top on the search box.

2) Type search term:

Enter words from journal title or ISSN ([view list of full journal titles](#))


  

- A new browser window pops up to display a list of full journal title in word-by-word alphabetical order.
- Highlight/Select the title “Journal of Cell Biology” from the list, then *copy* and *paste* it into the search box in the previous page. Then, click *Search*.
- Note: If a journal begins with “THE”, ignore it, e.g. look under “L” not “T” for “The Lancet”.
- The matching Journal, J CELL BIOL in this example, will appear on the result page with a link to the Full Record.
- Note: another effective way to search for a specific journal is searching by ISSN, if you know its ISSN.

## SEARCH EXAMPLE 4


### LOOK UP A SPECIFIC JOURNAL’S IMPACT FACTOR AND RANKING IN A CATEGORY IT BELONGS

Let us continue the search above and find out **J CELL BIOL**’s current ranking in the subject category it belongs.

- On the Journal Summary List, click on **J CELL BIOL** for the Full Record.
- You can only see its ranking when you read the Impact Factor against other journals in similar subject areas, i.e. the Subject Category(ies) a journal belongs. In this example, the **Cell Biology** Category.
- Click on the  in “Subject Categories” under the **Journal Information** section. You will retrieve the complete list of journals in the **Cell Biology** category.
- Select **Impact Factor** from the “*Sort by:*” drop down menu, then, click **Sort Again** to display the list ordered by Impact Factor with the highest on top.
- Find “Journal of Cell Biology” (i.e. J Cell Biol) on the list and note the *Rank* reading to its left. It is ranked number 15 in the category of Cell Biology.

## PRINTING, SAVING RECORDS

### TO PRINT THE OVERVIEW OF A LIST OF JOURNALS

- A “Marked List” button will appear at the top when you “ticked” the checkbox(es) on the Journal Summary List.
- Click on the  button to retrieve the “ticked” records displayed in a list.
- You can resort the records using “Sorted by:” if needed.
- Select **Format for Printing** and then **Print** from the browser menu for a list of selected titles’ overview.

### TO PRINT A DETAILED REPORT OF A JOURNAL

To print the detailed information of a journal, you need the Full Record view of a journal, i.e. click on the journal title from the “Journal Summary list”.

- When you are on the Full Record view, select **Print** from the browser menu.
- Select to print **all** pages.

## USE JCR WISELY

“You should not depend **solely** on [JCR’s] citation data in your journal evaluations. Citation data are not meant to replace informed peer review. Careful attention should be paid to the many conditions that can influence citation rates such as language, journal history and format, publication schedule, and subject specialty.” Read more at:

[http://admin.isiknowledge.com/JCR/help/h\\_using.htm](http://admin.isiknowledge.com/JCR/help/h_using.htm)

### IMPORTANT

There are about 8000 “high quality” journals indexed by JCR, which means, only selected titles (meeting JCR’s standards) will be found.

To view all journals in JCR in each edition, select the edition and check **View All Journals** on the *Welcome* page.

For detailed information about using databases, go to the Library’s Online Training page at:

<http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/skills/tutorials.html>