Strategies for doing historiographical research

Find reference works containing bibliographies of key sources
Use the suggested sources on this handout, search OBIS for an encyclopedia on your topic.

Find a printed bibliography or annotated bibliography
Search OBIS for the term bibliography and your subject keywords, or use the bibliography of a major world history text.

Find “review” articles or “historiography” articles on the topic
These are articles that summarize important developments and key researchers on a particular subject. Search Historical Abstracts and America: History & Life for topic with keyword “historiography” “review” “literature review” “meta-analysis” “bibliography” “annotated bibliography” or “state of the field”.

Find book reviews
JSTOR - advanced search and check the box “Reviews”
Academic Search Complete - Advanced Search, limit to Document Type “Book Review”
Summon – Search for the title and author of the book.

Find works that have been cited frequently
Use Google Scholar’s “Times Cited” feature to get a sense of how much attention the work has gotten from other scholars.

Use your authors’ historiographies
Find a key book on the subject and scan the preface, introduction and appendices.

Look at who is cited in bibliographies of books and articles
You will find patterns, certain works or authors may be frequently cited, find which authors and works are identified in the introduction or preface.

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Use OBIS to search for books, or databases to find articles by authors that seem to be important in your research topic area.

Find recent scholarship
Use the bibliography of a recent article to identify relevant sources; the author may have already collected the best scholarship on a topic and you can take advantage of that.
Reference resources

Oxford Reference Online
Includes Online access to Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World, 2008

A global encyclopedia of historical writing / New York : Garland Pub., 1998

The Oxford history of historical writing / Daniel Woolf, editor /Oxford University Press, 2011-

History and historians in the twentieth century / Peter Burke, Ed. / Oxford University Press, 2002
Main Library D16.8 .H62427 2002

Cambridge Histories Online

http://histories.cambridge.org
PDFs of every essay in the highly regarded Cambridge Histories book series, which covers all time periods, had broad geographical and thematic coverage.

Finding books and other materials

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Large multidisciplinary database with lots of full-text.

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Database of journal articles, covering primarily the history of US and Canada

**Google Scholar**
Google’s database of books and articles use the “cited by” feature to find out how frequently, and by whom, a work has been cited.

**Historical Abstracts**
Database of journal articles, covering world history 1450-present (excluding US and Canada)

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