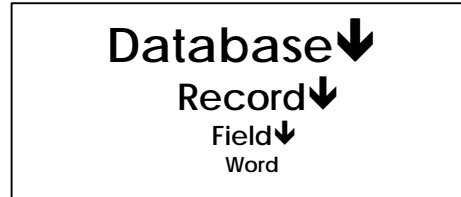


## Typical Electronic Database Structure



### NINE GENERAL RULES OF THUMB

1. All databases have limitations
2. Three assumptions about database records
3. Almost all databases have HELP information
4. Know when to search by **keyword** and when to search by **controlled vocabulary**
5. Make Boolean Commands Work for You
  - AND \* Narrows
  - OR + Broadens
  - NOT Excludes
6. Limit Your Search When Necessary
7. Make Use of Truncation or Wildcard Features
  - CAR\* CAR CARS CARRY CARRYING
  - CAR? CARS CART CARR
8. Always Examine Your Results for Accuracy and Relevancy; Reformulate Search As Needed
9. Always Remember the Eight Things To Do When You Are Stuck
  - Read the Screen! and the onscreen instructions
  - Check your spelling & double check your search terms, concepts, terminology and use of search terms with alternate meanings
  - Revise your search strategy
  - Try Boolean Commands
  - Use Help screens, tutorials and informational brochures
  - Try a different database
  - Explain your search strategy to someone else
  - Ask for help

### Basic Research Maxim

The first step when undertaking any type of information search is choosing a database with the appropriate subject coverage for your topic. If you are searching in the wrong database, no matter what you do, you will NOT find what you're looking for.