Understand the key concepts

This page introduces key concepts that will help you to get up and running in NVivo.

Here is a list of some of the most common terms in NVivo.

NVivo term	Description	Also known as
Sources	The collective term for your research materials When you import data into NVivo, it becomes an *internal* source. An *external* source represents data outside of NVivo that cannot be imported (such as a book or archival footage).	Data Material Documents Survey Transcript Project items
Node	A virtual container that lets you collect content across sources to group related material together.	Code Theme Category Topic Concept
Case	A virtual container that represents your research subjects	Units of observation Units of analysis Objects of study
Coding	The action of assigning source content to a node or case.	Quotations Analysis Tagging
Classifications	A way to add descriptive information to your sources and cases. **Examples** Reference, Journal Article, Person, Organization, Location	Types Sorts Classes
Attributes	Aspects of a classification. **Examples** - A case classification of 'Person' might have attributes for age and gender. - A source classification of 'Journal Article' might have attributes for publication and author.	Variables Characteristics Tag Metadata Rating Descriptors Demographics Bibliographics
Annotations	Text linked to specific content in a source.	Comments Reminders Observations Footnote Scribbled notes in the margin