Many academic libraries these days have a global search tool. This tool is similar to Google Scholar, but it's specifically designed to access library resources. It conveniently searches across dozens of research databases and the library catalog all at once.

Using Libsearch can be a little tricky because it's a rather complex system. But there are some useful tips you can learn - to search effectively. Let's take a look.

Here's a student, Ahmed, doing some library research.

One of the first things to know is that most library databases are paid for by CEU Library and not open to the world. So Ahmed needs to make sure he's logged in to the CEU VPN service in order to get full access to articles. Luckily, he's already set up his AnyConnect VPN account, so he logs in.

He's carefully thought about his search strategy and enters this search: Europe AND (refugees or asylum seekers) AND (healthcare or medicine).

He's getting a pretty good list of results. However, there are so many! He feels a bit overwhelmed.

He wonders how to narrow down these results to find the best ones. He notices some filters available on the right side of the screen. He decides to use the Creation Date filter. For his topic he's interested mainly in more recent articles, so he changes the range to 2019 up to the current year. He clicks on the "from" date, changes it to 2019, then clicks "Refine". A much better set of results! But still too many to go through one-by-one.

Then he notices the filter for "Peer-reviewed Journals". For this research paper, he doesn't need to use newspapers or popular magazines, though he might want to for some other topics. So he checks the box and his results set goes down even more. He's getting closer but there are still too many results.

Another useful feature is narrowing by Subject. Ahmed checks the boxes for "refugees" and "health services." With each checkbox, his results are becoming more focused on the topics he wants. You could try various options to get the results that are most useful to you. Ahmed finds articles that were exactly what he's looking for.

There are many other useful ways to refine your results, such as Language or Resource Type. You can experiment with these to get the most relevant results. You might even decide to change the focus of your topic based on results that you found.

It sometimes happens that you get too few results. If that happens Ahmed can try checking the box "search in full text." This finds more results where the search terms weren't in the title or description, but were in the full text.

Another option is to click on "Expand My Results." This will also show publications that the CEU Library doesn't have. If some of those look useful for his topic, Ahmed can use CEU Library's Interlibrary Loan service or ILL Express to request the items from another library.

So remember, in addition to using a well-thought-out search strategy, these methods can help you narrow your results to articles that are relevant and useful for your topic.

 Happy searching!