

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 Global Search 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.

Ahmed has carefully thought about his search strategy and entered this search: Europe AND (refugees or asylum seekers) AND (healthcare or medicine).

He used a carefully thought-out search strategy, so he got a pretty good list of results. However, there were so many! He felt a bit overwhelmed.

He wondered how to narrow down these results to find the best ones.

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 needed to make sure he was logged in to the CEU VPN service in order to get full access to articles. Luckily, he had already set up his AnyConnect VPN account, so he logged in.

Now let's talk about narrowing your search. Ahmed noticed that clicking on Filters, brought up many options. He checked on the box, "online full text," hit Apply Filters, and the number of results went down quite a bit.

You might wonder.... isn't everything full text? Not really. That's because some databases only contain citations to articles. So those results would not have full text, just a citation. Ahmed didn't want to wait to order articles from other libraries using interlibrary loan, so he focused on the ones that he could download immediately.

Next Ahmed noticed the date range filter. For his topic he was interested mainly in more recent articles, so he changed the range to "the past five years." He hit "apply filters" and the amount of results went down again. A much better set of results! But still too many to go through one-by-one.

Then he noticed the checkbox for peer-reviewed Journals. For this research paper, he didn't need to use newspapers or popular magazines, though you might want to for some other topics. So he checked the box and his results set went down to 616. Good.

Another useful feature is narrowing by Subject. Ahmed checked the boxes for "refugees" and "health services accessibility." With each checkbox, his results became more focused on the topics he wanted. You could try various options to get the results that are most useful to you. Ahmed found articles that were exactly what he was looking for.

There are many other useful ways to refine your results, such as Language, Geography, and more. You can experiment with these get the most relevant

results. You might even decide to change the focus of your topic based on results that you found.

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 to your topic.

Happy searching!