eLIBRARY® SCIENCE SEARCH TIPS

Welcome to eLibrary® Science's Search Tips guide. The following tips were designed to provide you with special hints and information, to optimize your searching experience on eLibrary Science. Use these tips as a guideline when performing your searches and before you know it, you will become an eLibrary Science expert researcher.

Tip 1: Use Multiple Search Words

When constructing a search, think of the most important concepts and terms for your search. For example, if you want to find information on the key issues surrounding genetically modified food, consider using alternative terms such as food science, plant biotechnology or agricultural biotechnology, and biomedical or food safety. For help with synonyms use the Reference Desk feature.

Tip 2: Ask a Question

Phrase your search just as you would ask a person. The system analyzes the search and weights the terms accordingly. It may be easier for you to come up with a question, than trying to analyze what keywords you are searching for.

- *How is slope calculated?*
- *What is a Venn diagram?*

Tip 3: Alternate Spellings and Terms

Remember that English usage differs. Remember to include alternate spellings if necessary.

- *Aluminium*
- *Aluminum*

Tip 4: Phrase Searching

Enclose phrases in quotes to indicate that the words need to appear next to each other. To be found, a document must contain at least one occurrence of your phrase. Use quotes for exact phrase searches only.

- *"low carbohydrate diet"*
- *"inner ear infection"*

Tip 5: Automatic Plurals Searching

The database will automatically search for the plural or singular version of a word.

- *electron*
- *electrons*

TOO FEW DOCUMENTS FOUND?

Sometimes your search comes up with unexpected results – either no documents or just a few. If you are expecting to find more information than you retrieved, try some of these tips for improving your search:

1. **Search restrictions might be left over from previous searches:** This is the most common problem. Before beginning a new search, click on the "Search" tab or ensure all boxes are cleared or reset.

2. **Misspelled words:** If you have misspelled a word, the system will offer you alternative spellings. It will ask you "*Did you mean…?*" Click on the appropriate link provided, to retrieve those documents.

3. **The search is too specific:** Are you including too many terms in a Boolean search?
   - *DNA and chromosomes not genetics or human cloning*

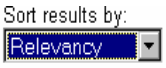
4. **Too few source types:** Make sure that you have not limited your search to source types unnecessarily. A search in the TV & Radio Transcripts category will be a much more restricted search than one that includes magazines and books as well.

5. **Date restriction:** If you have used the date restriction, make sure you entered the dates in the correct format – MM/DD/YYYY.

TOO MANY DOCUMENTS FOUND?

The system offers several tools to help narrow down and focus a search:

1. **Relevancy:** Be sure that your search results are being sorted by Relevance, rather than by date, title, author, etc. This ensures that, even with many retrieved items, the most relevant ones will be listed first. Focus on the items that have a higher relevancy score.



2. **Choose specific sources:** Limit your search to the most likely source category. If you want find the latest information about the exploration of Mars, you might want to try limiting your search to only magazines.

3. **Use the Title field:** This is an extremely effective way of improving your search results. Include search terms or an exact title in the title field. This is a more restrictive search, but is a useful technique for finding a few good items on a subject.

NOTE: If you are searching by ***title or by publication***, it is a good idea to include at least one search term in the main search box as well. Both of these fields also operate as stand alone search fields and will accept Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT in the Title field and OR, NOT in the Publication field).

4. **Boolean search:** Switch to a Boolean search and include additional search terms such as the "AND" operator to narrow the search. Unlike Natural Language searching, a Boolean search will find a document only if *all* the terms are present (or not) as specified. You can create fairly complex logical relationships among the search terms.

5. **Find additional search terms:** Review the most relevant items from your search and see what additional search terms you can use to focus your search. Is there a particular acronym or phrase that often appears in relevant articles? For example, articles about flu viruses often mention the word 'immunization' as well.

6. **More Documents Like This and Topic Searching:** In eLibrary Science you will find additional lateral searching options at the bottom of each document. Scroll to the bottom of the document and click on the link of the search that you would like to run. This is a nice way of limiting the focus of your search without having to return to the initial search screen to start again.

CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS

Photos are always a great addition to any project!

Look for:	Put the following in publication field	Some examples to try:
Animals	Earth Life Forms - Animals	Crocodile, Frog, Eagle, Elephant
Space Exploration	Astronomy, Science News, Earth Explorer	Mars, Saturn, Spirit and Opportunity, Cassini

Audio / Video Sources

Animations and Videos allow you to see a quick demonstration of a particular topic or event. They can be used in projects (such as PowerPoint presentations) or as source material for visual learners. You may have to install Windows Media Player or QuickTime to access this material.

Look for:	Put the following in publication field:	Some examples to try:
Animations or Videos	3D Animation	Vaccines, Human Anatomy, Oncology, Neurology, Acid Rain, Wildfires, Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Hiccups, Gene Sequence

Basic and Advanced Searching

Topic Area:	Sample Searches:
Earth Sciences	Wind Power Vortex AND Tornado (Boolean Search) Funnel Cloud The Cenozoic era is the age of mammals, what else could it be known for?
Featured Scientists	What is the significance of Louis Pasteur's discovery? How did his work contribute to the development of the world's first vaccines? What was his experimental method? What theory is credited to Charles Darwin? Controversy surrounds the theory of Natural Selection, why? Who is Sir Frederick Grant Banting? What did he discover? How has this improved the lives of diabetes patients?
Health Sciences	What is the medical significance of genetic cloning? Is organic produce really better for your health? What advances are being made in the field of oncology? "Forensic Science"
Life Sciences	What are the regulations and policies for Biotechnology What is aquaculture? What is the significance of aquaculture to the seafood market? Genetics AND "plant growth" (Boolean Search)
Science in the World	What is the modern relationship of science and religion? What are the ethical ramifications of the Human Genome Project? What are the scientific results from the Galileo Project? What is the impact of air pollution on human health? Greenhouse Effect AND Global Warming (Boolean Search)
Technology	What is a wind farm? Are cell phones harmful to children? How does wireless technology work? Ergonomics have become a standard design consideration in the last decade, why? How does a roller coaster work?