Using Google Scholar more effectively

If you’re planning on using Google Scholar, be sure to add the ‘Lean Library’ plug-in to your browser so that you’ll get access to UON Library’s subscriptions and won’t be asked to pay for journal articles:
newcastle.edu.au/library/access/find-ejournals/lean-library

Google Scholar is the section of Google that searches for resources with an academic focus.
Unlike the Library catalogue, the filtering options are limited – use the tips below to receive better quality search results.

GENERAL SEARCH TIPS

- Think about the keywords that you’re typing in – Google may fix your spelling, but it won’t include synonyms, sub-topics, etc.
- Use a phrase search (“ ”) to improve the relevance in your results: e.g. “social media” will find these words together in this exact order, not just match the individual words
- Use OR (in capitals) between similar words to include both in your results: e.g. Aboriginal OR Indigenous
- Use intitle: to search for articles that include particular words in their titles: e.g. intitle:“social determinants”
- Use author: to find results by particular authors or researchers: author:Levett-Jones

After doing a basic search in Google Scholar, you’ll see the standard filtering menu on the left-hand side of your results.

You can use these options to:

- (A) Limit to a particular date range – check your assessment to see if you need recent articles;
- (B) Change the way that Google is sorting your search results – date is helpful to bring newer articles to the top of your results;
- (C) Remove the types of sources that you don’t want – usually unticking the two boxes here is a good idea if you’d only like to find journal articles.
To access the Advanced search in Google Scholar, click on the menu and choose Advanced search.

Advanced search provides better initial search options, including:

- adding an author;
- adding a source journal title;
- exact phrase searching without using double-quotes (" ");
- removal of unwanted words
- choice of where your keywords are searched within the article
- searching a particular date range

Note that, unlike the library catalogue, there is no option for peer reviewed journals, subject-focus, etc.

Looking at the information under your results:

- (A) Saves the article link to ‘My library’ in your Google account (you must be logged in);
- (B) Cites the article – note that these citations are often missing information. Always check your style guide: newcastle.edu.au/library/learn/referencing;
- (C) Links to other articles that have referenced the article;
- (D) Links to other articles that are about similar topics to the article;
- (E) Provides different access links to the article (if you’re using the Lean Library plug-in you most likely won’t need this);
- (F) Links to an indexing database that could provide more (or different) citing articles.

The options at C, D, and F can help you to easily locate other articles that are related to your topic / search.

Need more help? Ask the Library
newcastle.edu.au/library/help-and-information