5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR SEARCH RESULTS
Need help narrowing your searches? Database filters can help.

You can typically find the filtering options to the left or right side of your search results.
Each database has its own filtering options, but many filtering options are common across databases like the **date**, **source type**, and **subject**.
#1 Database filters

Two quick ways to help narrow your searches in any database are to narrow by the **date** and **source type**.

You can easily change the date in most databases to look for results from the last few years or to look at more historical results.

If you’re researching a topic that changes quickly, like health or technology information, you’ll want to focus on just the past few years of information.

You can also limit the source type, generally by checking a box.

If you’re required to use academic journals or peer reviewed sources most databases have filtering options so you’ll only see those types of publications.
Instead of searching in the whole text of the document, try searching for your keywords in the title or abstract to retrieve more relevant search results.
Some databases will automatically sort results with the newest documents first—you can choose to sort by relevance instead to get the closest matches to your search terms at the top of the list.
#3 Using subject terms

You can also use relevant search results to lead you to additional sources.

14. Projected temperature-related deaths in ten large U.S. metropolitan areas under different climate change scenarios.


Subjects: METROPOLITAN areas -- United States; PHYSIOLOGICAL effects of temperature; CLIMATE change; DEATH rate; GREENHOUSE gases & the environment

If you see a relevant document in your search results, look for the Subject terms listed below it. These are terms that describe the topic or focus of the article.
You can copy and paste one or more subject terms into the search boxes at the top of the page and choose **Subject Terms** from the drop down menu options.

When you re-run your search using subject terms, it should help you find more resources on topics similar to the one you already found.
You can also click into and look at the reference list of relevant sources you’ve found.

There’s a good chance that the sources they’ve used to write their paper will be on related topics.
To search for any of the sources from a reference list, just copy and paste the title (inside quotation marks) into Scholar OneSearch on the library website and run your search.
To get more specialized filtering options, choose a database specific to your subject area.

A psychology database will let you filter by the type of psychological test or population studied.

A business database might let you filter by company or industry.

A health sciences database might let you filter based on the age, gender, or location of patients.
To find a list of specialized databases in your subject area, search or browse the list of Research Subject Guides available on the library homepage and select one that matches your subject area.

Each guide contains a list of recommended databases you can use to find more specialized, subject-specific resources.
ASK A LIBRARIAN

library.northeastern.edu/ask