

WELCOME TO eLibrary® Elementary’s SEARCH TIPS. THE FOLLOWING TIPS WERE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SPECIAL HINTS AND INFORMATION TO OPTIMIZE YOUR SEARCHING EXPERIENCE ON eLibrary Elementary. USE THESE TIPS AS A GUIDELINE WHEN PERFORMING YOUR SEARCHES AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU WILL BECOME AN eLibrary Elementary EXPERT RESEARCHER. GOOD LUCK AND REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN!

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 the key issues surrounding the modernized Indian Act, consider using alternative terms such as First Nations People, Aboriginal People or Indigenous People and government or treaty. 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. For example, you will get better results from a search such as **Who is Harry Potter** rather than **Harry Potter**.

Tip 3: Alternate Spellings and Terms

Remember that English usage differs. If you are searching non-Canadian sources remember to include alternate spellings. For example:

British	Canadian	American
Colour	Colour	Color
Theatre	Theatre	Theater
Aluminium		Aluminum

Tip 4: Phrase Searching

Enclose phrases in quotes to indicate that the words need to appear next to each other. Be careful, though, as the system is very literal – to be found, a document must contain at least one occurrence of your phrase for example: the search phrase “**pepperoni pizza**” will not find documents which contain only “**pepperoni and cheese pizza**”. Use quotes for exact phrase searches only.

Tip 5: Automatic Plurals Searching

The database will automatically search for the plural or singular version of a word. Ex. If you enter doctor it will search for both doctor and doctors.



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 “New Search” or ensure all boxes are cleared or reset.
- 2. Misspelled words:** Did you type in temperture or temperature? sattelite or satellite? milenium or millennium?
- 3. The search is too specific:** Are you including too many terms in a Boolean search? Are you searching for “acquired immunodeficiency syndrome” instead of the more common term AIDS; UN instead of “United Nations”.

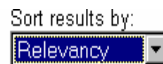
- 4. Too few source types:** Make sure that you have not limited your search to source types unnecessarily. A search in the TV & Radio Transcripts category will be a much more restricted search than one that includes newspapers and magazines as well.
- 5. Date restriction:** If you have used the date 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 to know what Bill Gates said in a television interview, you might want to try limiting your search to the TV & Radio Transcript source category.
- 3. Use the Title field:** This is an extremely effective way of improving your search results. Include search terms 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.



NOTE: If you are searching by *Author*, it is NOT necessary to include a search term in the main search box.

- 4. Boolean search:** Switch to a Boolean search and include additional search terms using 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 also create fairly complex logical relationships among the search terms. If you want to search for articles on discount travel agencies on the Internet, you probably want to include alternative terms for the Internet, such as WWW and Web. You can include parentheses within the search box to indicate the alternative words to use to express a single concept.
- 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.