Essential tips for searching Google Scholar

In this video we’re going to sharing our top tips on searching Google Scholar.

You can use Google Scholar to search for academic sources of information such as books, journal articles and conference papers. Where Cardiff University has a subscription, you will also be able to access the full text of documents you find.

So, let’s get started. The easiest way to find Google Scholar is to search for it. Then you can bookmark the address scholar.google.com

Tip 1: Focus your search

For our first tip we’re going to suggest some ways to get more focussed search results. So, let’s start with a basic search for documents which discuss the impact of the congestion charge on emissions. [On screen the words **congestion charge emissions** are typed into the search bar]. We get a lot of results. A simple way to get more focused results is to enclose any phrases in double quotation marks. [One screen the words **“congestion charge”** are enclosed in double quotation marks].

If you are only looking for more recent sources, you can use the date filters [on the left of the screen] to further focus your results. Or you can choose to enter a date range [on screen **2018** is entered into the first **Custom Range** box and the second box is left blank. The **Search** button underneath the custom range options is clicked].

You could also try accessing the **Advanced Search** form from the Google Scholar menu. This offers further options to focus your search by author or journal and enables you to exclude search terms which might be cluttering up your results.

Tip 2: Access the full text

Our second tip covers how to access full text documents in Google Scholar.

If you are on-campus, you will see these Full Text @ Cardiff links next to results where we have a subscription. Just click the link and you will be directed to LibrarySearch. Sign in using your Cardiff University username and password… and then click the online link. And here we have our PDF.

If you are off-campus you won’t see the Full Text @ Cardiff links until you change your settings. Access **Settings** in the Google Scholar menu, then click on **Library Links**. Search for Cardiff and select the Full Text @ Cardiff option. Then click **Save**. As you can see, the Full Text @ Cardiff links now display.

Tip 3: Set up an email alert

Our next tip shows you how you can set up email alerts. If you are doing research over an extended period, this will save you repeatedly running the same searches to check for new information.

When you are happy with your search terms, just click the **Create alert** button. Then enter your email address, followed by **Create Alert**.

Tip 4: Use the “Cited by” links

Tip number 4. Under each search result you will see these **Cited by** links. If you click on them, you will see a list of other documents which have included this item in their bibliography or references list. This is a really useful way of identifying additional sources on your topic.

Tip 5: Set up your reference management software

And for our final tip, we’ll explain how to add references from your Google Scholar search results into a reference management tool such as EndNote, Mendeley or Zotero.

For Zotero you can do this via the Zotero web connector icon on your toolbar. For EndNote and Mendeley, you will need to change your settings in Google Scholar.

Choose settings from the Google Scholar menu and in the **Bibliography Manager** section, turn on the **citation import** links for your chosen software. If you are using Mendeley, select the ‘**RefMan**’ option.

You will now see these import into links under each search result. Click the link to add the reference to EndNote or Mendeley.

We hope you found these tips useful. If you’d like any more help, please just contact the Library or ask your Subject Librarian.