

Review of *Scopus* Search Tips

1- Define your research topic and identify the main concepts.

e.g., *How can we improve public transportation for wheelchair users?*

Beware of formulating research topics that are too broad or narrow.

- Broad, e.g., I want articles about *public transportation*. In this example, you would need to specify what aspect of public transportation is of interest to you.
- Narrow, e.g., I want articles that discuss *how Montreal can improve public transportation for wheelchair users*. In this case, you would need to remove Montreal, or expand your search to other cities, to increase the number of your search results.

2- Think of synonyms for each concept or brainstorm different ways of expressing each concept, and use the * symbol to account for variant word endings.

e.g., *public transit, public transport*, subway*, bus, buses*

3- Combine your words using the OR and AND search commands.

First, use OR to combine your synonyms for an individual concept. If a synonym, or the concept itself, consists of more than one word:

- use quotes around the words when you want all the words to appear next to each other in a sentence, e.g., *"public transit" OR "public transport*"*.
- use parentheses and the AND command when you want each word to appear anywhere in the title or abstract of the article, but they do not have to necessarily appear together in a sentence, e.g., *(walking AND disabilit*) OR wheelchair**.

Second, use AND to combine your different concepts.

The screenshot shows the Scopus search interface. At the top, there are links for "Scopus", "SciVal", and "Register". Below this is a navigation bar with "Search", "Alerts", and "My list". A notification banner at the bottom of the navigation bar reads "Chrome 45 cease support of Scopus Document Down...". A dashed box highlights a tip: "In *Scopus*, type one concept per search box. Click on the 'Add search field' link to obtain additional search boxes." Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for "Document search", "Author search", "Affiliation search", and "Advanced search", along with links for "Browse Sources" and "Compare jour...". The search area contains two search boxes. The first box contains the query: "public transit" OR "public transport*" OR subwa. The second box contains: (walking AND disabilit*) OR whee. Below the search boxes, there is a dropdown menu set to "AND", a link to "Add search field" (circled in red), and a "Reset form" link.

4- Use your concepts and synonyms to search one or more databases, e.g., *Scopus*. Visit your library subject/course guide for a list of possible databases.

If searching a database or search engine with only one search box, add parentheses around each concept. The parentheses act like a separate search box.

e.g., (“public transit” OR “public transport*” OR subway* OR bus OR buses OR tram*) AND (wheelchair* OR (walking AND disability*))

Note: Google Scholar does not recognize the * symbol. You need to write the complete words when searching Google Scholar. Enclose parentheses around each concept and omit AND.

5- a) Too many search results? Consider adding another concept to your search (e.g., **securement** of wheelchairs on public transportation) or applying limits (e.g., **English language articles published from 2009-2015**).

b) Too few search results? Consider adding more synonyms for each of the concepts in your search strategy or search another database.

Click on the title of an article in *Scopus* to view its abstract and keywords, which may give you ideas of words you can use to revise your search strategy. Clicking on the article title and scrolling down the page will also allow you to see the article’s bibliography, which may lead you to other relevant articles. Clicking on the number of times that an article was cited will show you the papers that have cited that article, which can also point you to additional references on your topic.

In *Scopus*, click on the title of an article to view its abstract, keywords, and bibliography. Click on the number under the “Cited by” column to see the papers that have cited a specific article. Limit search results by year using the options on the left of the results list.

Refine	Search results	Year	Article Title	Authors	Year	Journal	Cited by
<input type="checkbox"/> 2015 (8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban built environments and trajectories of mobility disability: Findings from a national sample of community-dwelling American adults (1986-2001)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2014 (20)		Clarke, P., Alshire, J.A., Lintz, P.	2009	Social Science and Medicine	40
<input type="checkbox"/> 2013 (8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Prosthesis and wheelchair use in veterans with lower-limb amputation	<input type="checkbox"/> 2012 (12)		Karmarkar, A.M., Collins, D.M., Wichman, T., (...), Pasquina, P.F., Cooper, R.A.	2009	Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development	25
<input type="checkbox"/> 2012 (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Are features of the neighborhood environment associated with disability in older adults?	<input type="checkbox"/> 2011 (14)		White, D.K., Jette, A.M., Felson, D.T., (...), Nevitt, M.C., Keyser, J.J.	2010	Disability and Rehabilitation	23
<input type="checkbox"/> 2011 (14)		<input type="checkbox"/> 2010 (13)					

6- Click on the “Full Full Text” button to access the complete text of an article. If a journal article or book is not available electronically or in print at the McGill Library, click on the “Request Item through interlibrary loan” option.

Enter your McGill username and password to login to Colombo (our interlibrary loan system), verify that the title of the article automatically inserted in the form is correct, choose a “Pickup Location” at the bottom of the form, and click on the “Request” button. You will receive an email when the article you requested has arrived. If requesting a journal article or book chapter, the email will contain a link to download a PDF copy of the item.

7- Export your search results into EndNote. See EndNote handout for details.

8- Questions? Contact your librarian.