Searching with Google Scholar

A Keyll Darree Library Guide

What is Google Scholar?

Fantastic! It's basically Google, but just for academic resources. It searches for journal articles, academic books, and unpublished thesis (among other resources), and it's a brilliant jumping off point for beginning your research.

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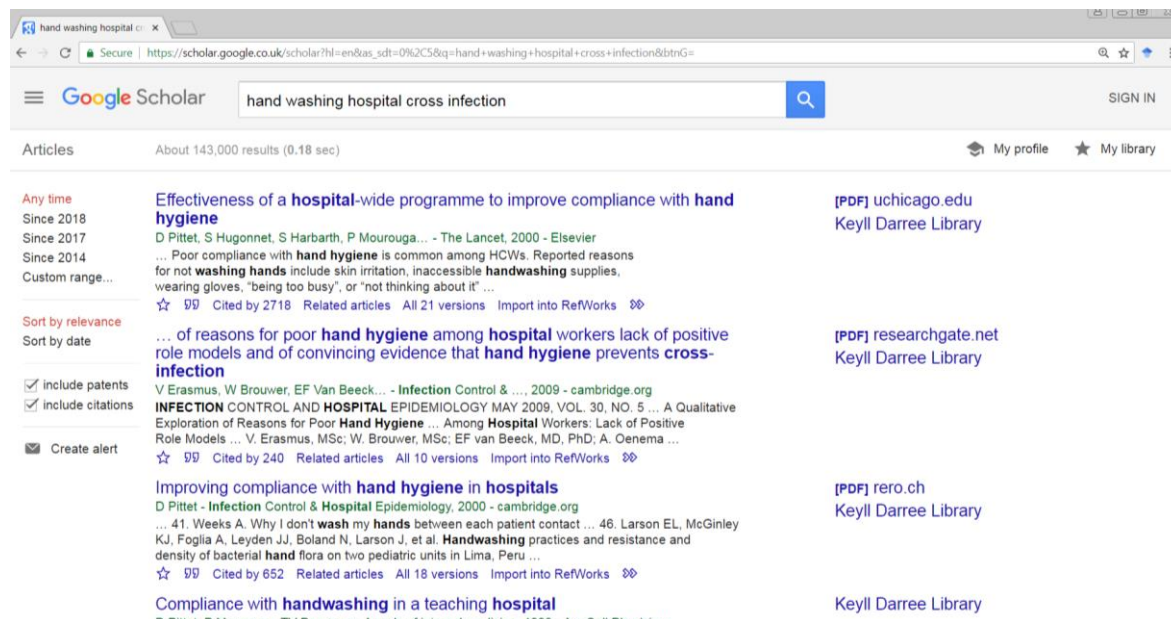
Basic Searches

Go to https://scholar.google.co.uk
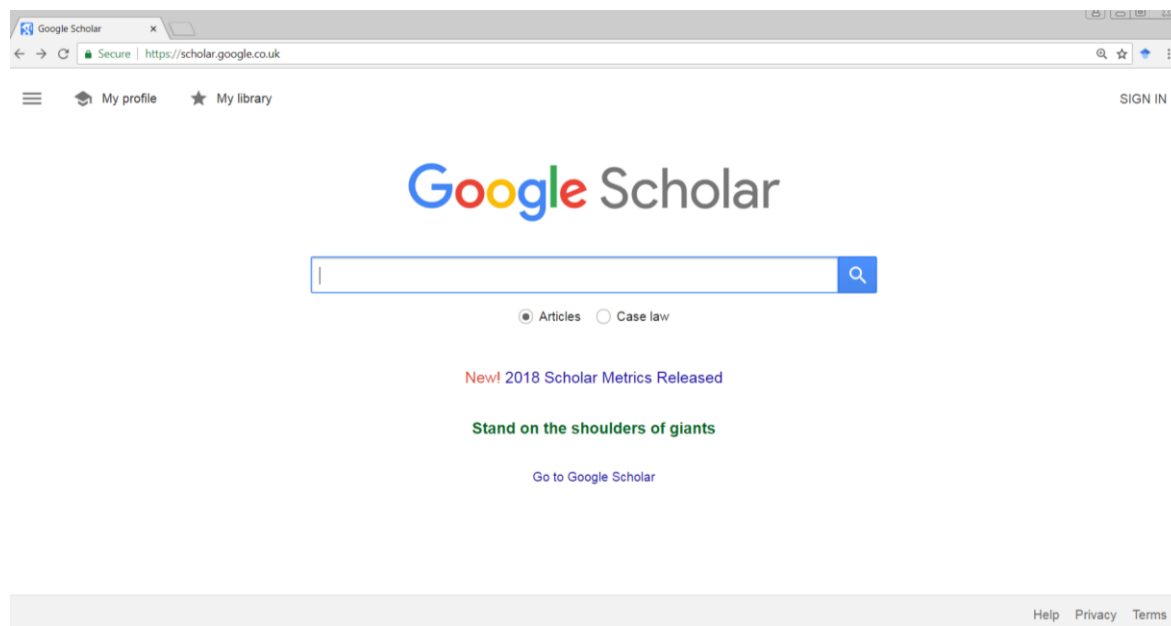
Enter your search terms.

Tip: natural language searching is fine, but you don't need to include connecting words – pick out the key bits of your query, don't paste in an entire question. (Try "hand washing hospital cross infection" instead of "does hand washing help to limit staff transmitted infections in the hospital?")

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When you run the search you'll be able to see how many results you've received.

Each result (unless it's a citation) will have a clickable title which will take you to the abstract so you can read more about the paper.

Tip: Don't rely on clicking the link to check your access! There's other, more efficient ways to check if you can get an article (such as using Athens via Scholar or NICE Evidence Journals and Databases)

Understanding your results
Along the bottom of each result are multiple options for different processes.

☆ - Add an item to your library. If you have a google account (gmail, youtube etc.) you can

🙿 - Get a citation for the item you're referencing, or add it to Refworks

Cited by - A list of the papers which have referenced the item.

Related articles - Always worth a click to see the other articles which have been classified as relevant.

All   versions - If the first link is broken then you can see the other places it lives on the web here.

Import into RefWorks - You can add this button in the advanced settings section (three bars on the left)

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If you have an Athens login (all employees of the Department of Health and Social Care are eligible for a Keyll Darree login) then you can use it in tandem with Google Scholar – **Library Shorts: Keyll Darree via Scholar** Scholar will check your results and see if your library/university has access to the resource.

Tip: You can add multiple access options – so add any university affiliations as well as Keyll Darree.

Narrowing down your search

To start limiting your results you can use the built in options on the left hand side to limit by date, and to remove patents/citations if needed.

Tip: Sort by relevancy, not date – there's often a lot of results, so something could be very recent, but not very relevant. If you want very current research, limit to the current year only.

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Boolean Logic (AND, OR, NOT)

To run the most efficient searches it's best to consider how you're searching. Boolean logic is the principle of AND, OR, and NOT and is automatically built in to most searches. This means that the word AND is included between each of the words in the search box. It's looking for:

Google Scholar   hand AND washing AND hospital AND cross AND infection

If you want to be more specific, you can use phrased searching.

Instead of AND-ing every word, you search for specific phrases instead by using speech marks.

> hand AND washing AND hospital AND cross AND infection

About 148,000 results (0.20 sec)

Becomes:

> "hand washing" hospital "cross infection"

About 4,770 results (0.15 sec)

It's now looking for the phrase hand washing AND hospital AND the phrase cross infection together. The results are reduced, but the articles it brings up should be more specific.

The OR function can also help you search more efficiently. Many words have multiple terms, and therefore it's quicker to search for both (or more) at once than run different searches for each.

> "hand washing" hospital "cross infection" OR "hospital acquired Infection"

About 7,440 results (0.19 sec)

In this case we can look for results which contain the term cross infection OR the term hospital acquired infection in one search.

Tip: You can also use this for alternative spellings – search tumour OR tumor, paediatrics OR pediatrics.

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The NOT function is also a helpful tool for limiting your searches. This is used by typing a – directly in front of the word or phrase you want to remove (do not leave a space)
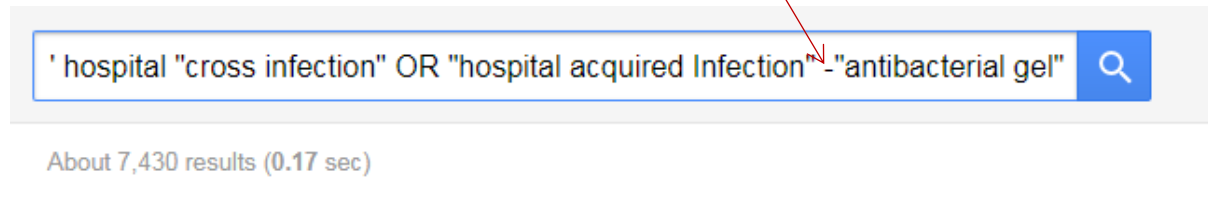
This will remove all results containing the word or phrase, so make sure you're very specific about what you want to remove – if you're too general this can overly limit your results!

What if I don't have Athens?

If you haven't got an Athens account you can still find full text information. Add "filetype:pdf" to the search and you will only get full text results.
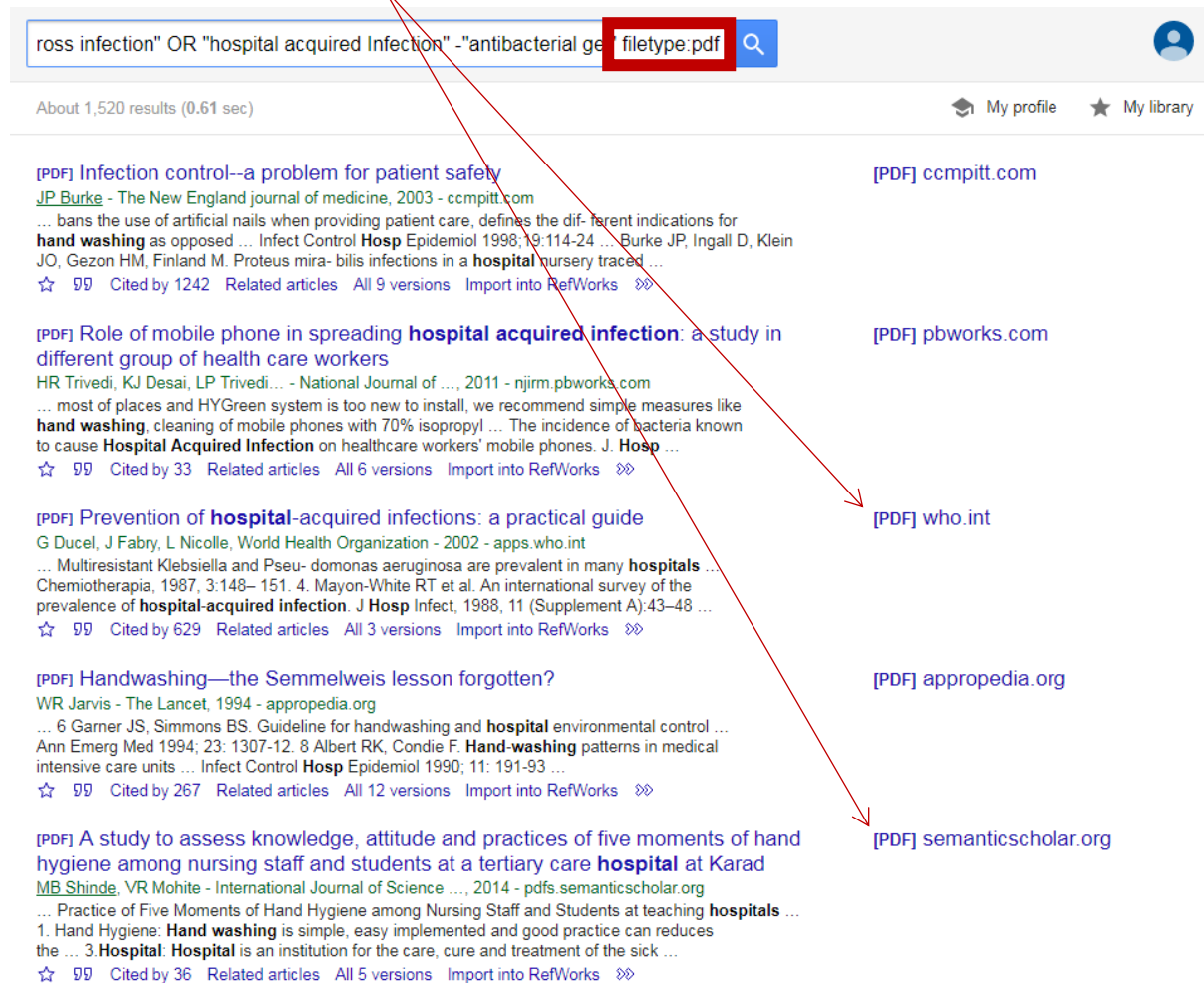
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Setting up Alerts

Once you've used all these tricks and have a brilliant search with loads of great results, you can set up alerts to make sure you don't miss anything new and relevant.

The create alert option will show you the search you'll be setting up as an alert, and you can add any email address that you'd like the results to go to.

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Thank you for taking the time to read this guide, and if you have any further questions then please get in touch with us at librarykeylldarree@gov.im or on 642993.

We'd also love your feedback on this training, please spare 2 minutes to fill out our Online Training Feedback Survey

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