

Effective Search Strategies

How can you improve your database searches?

Search Options

Basic Search
Advanced Search
Search History/Alerts

Search modes

Boolean/Phrase

SmartText
Searching

Find ALL related

Limiting results

Full Text
Scholarly Journals
Published Date

The First Step

- Do a little “brainstorming”.
- Write down terms related to your topic.
- Are there terms you want to combine?
- Are there terms you want to eliminate?
- Do you want to search a particular database or do a multi-database search?

Practice Search

- Do a few practice searches with your terms.
- Did you get too many results or too few results?
- Are the results relevant?

When you get too many results...

Results List Navigation

Results: 1-10 of **167355** Page: 1 2 3 4 5 Next

...it is time to limit your search.

Let's do a search!

Our topic is offshore oil drilling

The screenshot shows the EBSCO Academic Search Complete interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'New Search', 'Publications', 'Subject Terms', 'Cited References', and 'More'. On the right, there are links for 'Sign In', 'Folder', 'New Features!', 'Ask a Librarian', and 'Help'. The search bar contains the text 'oil' and has a 'Search' button and a 'Clear' button. Below the search bar, there are three rows for adding more search criteria, each with a dropdown menu for 'AND' and a field for 'in Select a Field (optional)'. There is also an 'Add Row' link.

On the left side, there is a 'Narrow Results by' section with a 'Source Types' dropdown menu. The 'All Results' section is expanded, showing a list of source types: 'Academic Journals', 'Magazines', 'Newspapers', 'Books/Monographs', and 'Book Reviews'. There is a 'More >' link below this list. Below the source types, there is a 'Subject: Thesaurus Term' dropdown menu, followed by 'Subject', 'NAICS/Industry', 'Publication', and 'Geography'.

The main search results area shows 'Results: 1-10 of 167355' and 'Page: 1 2 3 4 5 Next'. The results are sorted by 'Date Descending' and there is an 'Add (1-10)' link. The search results are for 'oil' and the search mode is 'Boolean/Phrase'. There are three results listed:

- Osmotic adjustment, drought tolerance and yield in castor (*Ricinus communis* L.) hybrids.**
By: Babita, M.; Maheswari, M.; Rao, L.M.; Shanker, Arun K.; Rao, D. Gangadhar. Environmental & Experimental Botany, Dec2010, Vol. 69 Issue 3, p243-249, 7p; DOI: 10.1016/j.envexpbot.2010.05.006; (AN 51845241)
Subjects: PLANTS -- Osmotic potential; PLANTS -- Drought tolerance; CROP yields; CASTOR *oil* plant; OILSEEDS; ARID regions; SUGARS; PLANT hybridization; GENOTYPE-environment interaction; Other Oilseed Processing; Oilseed and Grain Combination Farming; Oilseed (except Soybean) Farming
Database: Academic Search Complete
[Add to folder](#)
Find Text? [Click for expanded options.](#)
- New polyphenolic compounds in commercial deodistillate and rapeseed oils.**
By: Harbaum-Playda, Britta; Oehlke, Kathleen; Sönnichsen, Frank D.; Zacchi, Pablo; Eggers, Rudolf; Schwarz, Karin. Food Chemistry, Dec2010, Vol. 123 Issue 3, p607-615, 9p; DOI: 10.1016/j.foodchem.2010.04.078; (AN 52307204)
Database: Academic Search Complete
[Add to folder](#)
Find Text? [Click for expanded options.](#)
- Effects of α -tocopherol, β -carotene and ascorbyl palmitate on oxidative stability of butter *oil*/triacylglycerols.**
By: Karabulut, Ihsan. Food Chemistry, Dec2010, Vol. 123 Issue 3, p622-627, 6p; DOI: 10.1016/j.foodchem.2010.04.080; (AN 52307206)
Database: Academic Search Complete
[Add to folder](#)

On the right side, there is a 'Limit your results' section with checkboxes for 'Full Text', 'References Available', and 'Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals'. Below this is a 'Filter by Publication Date' section with a range from 1865 to 2010 and an 'Update Results' button. There is also a 'Search Options' link. Below that is a 'Related Information' section with a 'Related Images' dropdown menu. The 'Related Images' section shows four small images related to the search results. There is a 'Find More' link below the images. At the bottom, there is a 'WebNews' section with a 'More' link.

We can limit our search in several ways...

Limit your results

Full Text

References Available

Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

Filter by Publication Date:

1892 2010

1892 2010

[« Search Options](#)
✓ Options set

Let's limit to Full-Text

New Search | Publications | Subject Terms | Cited References | More ▾ Sign In | Folder | New Features! | Ask a Librarian | Help

Searching: **Academic Search Complete** | Choose Databases »

oil in Select a Field (optional) Search Clear ?

AND in Select a Field (optional)

AND in Select a Field (optional) Add Row

Basic Search | Advanced Search | Search History/Alerts | Preferences »

Narrow Results by

- Source Types
 - All Results
 - Academic Journals
 - Magazines
 - Newspapers
 - Books/Monographs
 - Book Reviews
 - More »
- Subject: Thesaurus Term
- Subject
- NAICS/Industry
- Publication
- Company
- Publication Type
- Geography

Results: 1-10 of 62981 Page: 1 2 3 4 5 Next Sort by: Date Descending Add (1-10)

Full Text your results

Full Text
 References Available
 Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

Filter by Publication Date:
1892 2010
1892 2010
Update Results

« Search Options
✓ Options set

Related Information
Related Images

Results for: oil [Alert / Save / Share »](#)
✓ Options set

- Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase


1. [Pressure wave propagation induced by short circuits inside power transformers: Development of a simulation tool, comparisons with experiments and applications.](#)

By: Muller, Sébastien; Petrovan-Boiarciuc, Margareta; Périgaud, Guillaume. International Journal of Multiphysics, Dec2010, Vol. 4 Issue 4, p361-386, 26p, 2 Color Photographs, 6 Diagrams, 3 Charts, 9 Graphs; (AN 51861608)

Subjects: ELECTRIC transformers; EXPLOSIONS; PETROLEUM products; PRESSURE; TWO-phase flow; TECHNOLOGY; Power, Distribution, and Specialty Transformer Manufacturing; Electronic Coil, Transformer, and Other Inductor Manufacturing; All Other Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing; Pipeline Transportation of Refined Petroleum Products

Database: Academic Search Complete

[Show all 20 images](#)



Add to folder

[PDF Full Text](#) (1.9MB)

62,981 is still too many results!
How else can we limit the search?

The image shows a search filter interface titled "Limit your results". It contains several options: "Full Text" (checked), "References Available" (unchecked), and "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals" (unchecked). Below these is a date filter section titled "Filter by Publication Date:" with a range from 1892 to 2010. A red oval highlights the date filter section, and a yellow oval highlights the "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals" option. At the bottom, there is a "Update Results" button and a link to "Search Options" with a confirmation message "Options set".

Limit your results

- Full Text
- References Available
- Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

Filter by Publication Date:

1892 2010

1892 2010

Update Results

[Search Options](#)
✓ Options set

Now let's see what we get...

The screenshot shows the EBSCO Academic Search Complete interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'New Search', 'Publications', 'Subject Terms', 'Cited References', and 'More'. On the right side of the top bar are links for 'Sign In', 'Folder', 'New Features!', 'Ask a Librarian', and 'Help'. A 'Return to LINCSS' button is also present.

The search bar contains the text 'Searching: Academic Search Complete' and the search term 'oil'. Below the search bar are two 'AND' dropdown menus for adding more search terms. A yellow box highlights the search results summary: 'Results: 1-10 of 24254 Page: 1 2 3 4 5 Next'. Below this, there are links for 'Basic Search', 'Advanced Search', and 'Visual Search'.

On the left side, there is a 'Narrow Results by' sidebar with various filters: Source Types (All Results, Academic Journals, Book Reviews, Images), Subject: Thesaurus Term, Subject, NAICS/Industry, Publication, Company, Publication Type, and Geography.

The main results area shows 'Results: 1-10 of 24254 Page: 1 2 3 4 5 Next' and 'Sort by: Date Descending' with an 'Add (1-10)' button. The first result is for 'oil' with 'Options set'. The search mode is 'Boolean/Phrase'. The first result is: '1. Pressure wave propagation induced by short circuits inside power transformers: Development of a simulation tool, comparisons with experiments and applications.' The author is 'Muller, Sébastien; Petrovan-Boiarciuc, Margareta; Périgaud, Guillaume'. The journal is 'International Journal of Multiphysics', Dec 2010, Vol. 4 Issue 4, pp 361-386. The database is 'Academic Search Complete'. There is a link to 'Show all 20 images' and a row of four image thumbnails.

On the right side, there is a 'Limit your results' sidebar with filters: 'Full Text' (checked), 'References Available' (unchecked), and 'Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals' (checked). There is a 'Filter by Publication Date' section with a range from 1892 to 2010 and a slider. Below this are input boxes for '1980' and '2010' and an 'Update Results' button. At the bottom of the sidebar, there is a 'Related Information' section with a link for 'Related Images'.

24,254 is still too many results...

- Let's add terms!

Using quotes allows for phrase searching.

New Search | Publications | Subject Terms | Cited References | More ▾

Searching: **Academic Search Complete** | Choose Databases »

oil in Select a Field (optional) ▾ Search Clear ?

AND ▾ "offshore drilling" in Select a Field (optional) ▾

AND ▾ in Select a Field (optional) ▾ [Add Row](#)

[Basic Search](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Visual Search](#) | [Search History/Alerts](#) | [Preferences](#) »

Using the Boolean operator "AND" limits your search because it only allows for results that have both terms.

How about this result?

New Search | Publications | Subject Terms | Cited References | More ▾ Sign In | Folder | New Features | Ask a Librarian | Help

EBSCOhost

Searching: **Academic Search Complete** | [Choose Databases >](#)

oil in Select a Field (optional) Search Clear ?

AND "offshore drilling" in Select a Field (optional)

AND in Select a Field (optional) [Add Row](#)

Basic Search | Advanced Search | Visual Search | Search History/Alerts | Preferences >

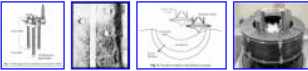
Narrow Results by

- Source Types
 - All Results
 - Academic Journals
 - Book Reviews
 - Images
- Subject: Thesaurus Term
- Subject
- NAICS/Industry
- Publication
- Publication Type
- Geography

Results: 1-10 of 22 Page: 1 2 3 [Next](#) Sort by: Date Descending [Add \(1-10\)](#)

Results for: oil and "offshore drilling" [Alert / Save / Share >](#)
Options set

Search Mode: Boolean/Phrase

- [Experimental Investigation of the Reinstallation of Spudcan Footings Close to Existing Footprints.](#)**
By: Cassidy, Mark J.; Quah, Chin Kau; Foo, Kok Seng. Journal of Geotechnical & Geoenvironmental Engineering, Apr2009, Vol. 135 Issue 4, p474-486, 13p, 3 Color Photographs, 1 Black and White Photograph, 5 Diagrams, 7 Charts, 13 Graphs; DOI: 10.1061/(ASCE)1090-0241(2009)135:4(474); (AN 36943748)
Subjects: OFFSHORE structures; OFFSHORE oil well drilling; CONCRETE footings; ENGINEERING geology; ENGINEERING models; JACKUP rigs; STRUCTURAL engineering; UNDERGROUND construction; Poured Concrete Foundation and Structure Contractors
Database: Academic Search Complete
[Show all 29 images](#)

[Add to folder](#)
[PDF Full Text](#) (879KB)
[Find Text?](#) [Click for expanded options.](#)
- [The Environmental Impacts of Offshore Oil Drilling.](#)**
By: Rose, Mary Annette. Technology Teacher, Feb2009, Vol. 68 Issue 5, p27-32, 6p; (AN 36445175)
Subjects: DRILLING platforms; ENVIRONMENTAL aspects; ENVIRONMENTAL protection; ENVIRONMENTAL impact analysis; HYDRAULICS; MARINE biology; POLLUTION -- Environmental aspects
Database: Academic Search Complete
[Add to folder](#)
[HTML Full Text](#) [PDF Full Text](#) (384KB)
[Find Text?](#) [Click for expanded options.](#)
- [Offshore Oil Drilling: Buying Energy Independence or Buying Time?](#)**
By: Baird, Stephen L.. Technology Teacher, Nov2008, Vol. 68 Issue 3, p13-17, 5p; (AN 35066590)

Limit your results

- Full Text
- References Available
- Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals





Filter by Publication Date: 1989 2009

1989 2009

[Update Results](#)

[Search Options](#)
Options set

Related Information

- Related Images
 - 
 - 
 - 
 - [Find More](#)
- WebNews
- Blogs