

Refugee Women's Resource Project

Case Research Guidance – Searching the internet and electronic databases

The Resources and Information Officer is available to Resource Room users for further guidance on searching the internet and locating country of origin information for case research.

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1. Tips on the internet searches

1.1 Google

www.google.com

Google allows for multiple keyword searching. Enter your key search words and it will return a 'hit list' of documents which may contain all or some of your key terms. The documents at the top of the list will always be rated as most relevant i.e. contain highest incidence of your keywords.

e.g. women rights

1.1.1 Advanced search

An Advanced search on google allows you to be more specific about how google uses your keywords in its search and should increase the accuracy of results.

You can ask google to find documents which contain **all** of your keywords, with **at least one** of the words, with the **exact phrase**, or **without** any of your keywords – click on 'Advanced search' on google main page for more information.

1.1.2 Advanced Operators

Google also has a system called 'advanced operators'.

+ search

Google ignores common words like 'the', 'where' and 'how'. If these words are essential to your search you need to put a '+' symbol and a space before the word.

e.g. + the

Alternatively this can be achieved with a phrase search, see pt 2.3 below.

- search

Sometimes a word can have more than one meaning, google uses the example of 'bass', which can refer to fishing or music. If you want to find information related to music only you would enter 'bass' followed by '-' symbol then fishing.

e.g. bass –fishing

Domain search

You may know the name of the site you want to search, but not know where the information you want is located. To search just one domain, enter the keyword followed by a space then type 'site' followed by a colon and then the domain name

e.g. women site:unhcr.ch

This search would find all areas of the UNHCR site which referred to women.

For more information click on 'Advanced search tips' on 'Advanced search' page

2. Tips on searching electronic databases

2.1 Boolean Retrieval

This system uses the terms AND OR and NOT in multiple keyword searching. They instruct the database to search differently, the same words either side.

e.g. Domestic AND Violence will retrieve any documents with both domestic and violence in the searchable fields.

Domestic OR Violence will retrieve any documents with both words, either in combination or separately.

Domestic NOT Violence only retrieves documents with domestic in.

2.2 Word Stemming/Truncation

This system uses the symbol '!' to replace a letter in a word

e.g. wom!n – which will find women and woman

The symbol can also be used after a root stem to find all of its variations

e.g. report!

This search will find reported, reporting and reports

2.3 Phrase searching

If you want to search for words which appear next to each other or words that may be contained in the same phrase, use " " to contain the search terms that you enter.

e.g. "Domestic Violence" will search for domestic violence as a phrase and will not return instances of the words appearing separately.

or

"risk on return"