Expanding Your Search

PO311F: Food Insecurity in Africa

In the last tutorial, we searched for peer-reviewed articles using three key concepts:

1. Urban farming
2. Africa
3. Food security

We also found a number of **geographic areas** and **countries** showing up in the results, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Equatorial Africa, Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and more.

Additionally, we saw there were some similar terms like **urban agriculture** showing up in article titles and descriptive information.

Let's add those to our search to expand it and find more relevant results.

At right (on the slide), we've added the term **"Urban agriculture"** to the first search box.

Placing the phrase in **double quotes** tells the search to use that exact phrase.

Typing an **OR** in between similar phrases links similar terms together.

The **OR** must be in CAPS.

We'll also add a related term, **"Food Insecurity"**.

We can use **OR** here to link similar terms as we've done in the first search box.

The search looks like this on the Advanced search window:

Any field contains "URBAN FARMING" OR "URBAN AGRICULTURE"

AND Any field contains AFRICA

AND Any field contains Food security

We retrieve 594 results.

We need to now filter to **Peer-reviewed Journals**, and **Articles** in the Filters section at the left side of the screen.

Once we do that, we are finding **409** peer-reviewed articles.

To continue searching for **only** peer-reviewed articles, click the **Remember all filters** button at the left side to lock this in as an active filter.

We need to add in one more concept: **climate change**.

Click **Add a New Row** below the search, and type in **"Climate change" OR "Global Warming"**

We now have **107** peer-reviewed articles.

Note they won't all be perfectly relevant to your question. Some may use a term only once within an article.

You'll need to scan articles individually to determine how appropriate they are.

We began with a very broad search, looking for our terms in "Any field" in the record.

If you are finding too many articles, **narrow the search** by switching Any field to **Title**.

This searches only the title of the article or book for your search term.

Results you find should be more relevant.

We've already used Boolean searching earlier, using **OR** between similar terms in a search box.

There are several operators you can use: AND, OR, and NOT. The table below describes how they work.

What is the operator	**What does the operator do?**	**Examples**
Boolean AND	Use **AND** to ensure that all terms appear in every search result.	Ghana **AND** "food security"
Boolean OR	Use **OR** to ensure that *at least one* term appears in every search result.	Benin **OR** Ghana **OR** Nigeria **OR** "South Africa"
Boolean NOT	Use not to ensure a term does *not* appear in every search result.	Africa **NOT** Asia

*NOTE: Use **NOT** carefully since it may remove relevant articles.

Additional techniques to expand searches and find more relevant results are:

- **Phrase searching:** Use "quotation marks" to find more than one term in a row: "Climate change"
- **Truncation:** Use an asterisk***** at the end of a term to include multiple endings: farm* = farm, farms, farmed, farming
- **Wildcard:** Use a question mark **?** within a term to search for variations of a single character: Wom?n = Woman, Women

So far we've only searched in Omni for articles.

One of the things this kind of searching allows - using boolean, phrase, and truncation combinations - is that we can **repeat the same search** across different databases.

If you are not finding enough high quality articles in Omni, try one of our other research databases such as ProQuest, EBSCO, or Web of Science.

You can replicate the previous search in **Omni**.

You can simply copy and paste the same searches in each search box to other databases because they use the same "database language."

This means you can replicate the same search from above in the **ProQuest** database and also in the **Web of Science** database.

Do I Use UPPERCASE or lowercase?

People often ask "Do I need to put all the search terms in CAPS in my searches?"

Answer: yes and no.

In OMNI: **YES**, if you are doing Boolean searching, as shown in previous slides, you need to put the AND, OR, or NOT in UPPERCASE (or CAPS locked) for the search to work. The other terms don't have to be in uppercase. Sometimes it's easier to have all terms in uppercase when you start searching.

In All Other Databases: **NO**, you don't need to use uppercase when using Boolean searching.

Please move to the next section, Build your collection of sources.