Hi! My name is Jon, I'm a librarian at Gorgas Library.

In this video, I'll demonstrate some of the advanced search functions in Scout.

This is the second part of our Scout tutorials, check the description or card at the top for a link to part one.

You can get to the Advanced Search from the libraries home page, lib.ua.edu, or by clicking on Scout first and then selecting Advanced Search.

I'm going to demonstrate a couple of example searches in this video to showcase some of the ways you can use Scout to find and discover resources for your research.

First I'll cover the search fields, boolean operators to combine search terms, and using controlled vocabulary to get the best results.

The search fields at the top allow you to enter one or more terms to search for.

By default, Scout will search for keywords, but you can change each search box to look in more specific places. For example, if you're looking for works by a particular author and enter her name, you’ll get works by her and works about her work. If you search for her name under AU Author, you'll filter out the items about her and only see results by her.

You can define their relationships between search terms with the AND, OR, NOT drop-down menu.

These are called Boolean operators.

Use AND if you want to search for items relevant to both terms, use OR if you have two terms and want results for either of them, use NOT if you want results for one term but want to filter out results for another term. See the link in the description or card at the top for more on Boolean operators.

For example, if I'm looking for articles about health effects of vaping nicotine, I’d enter vaping AND health. The results are a lot of articles about cannabis vaping, so I can add NOT cannabis to the search to refine these results.

Let's look at the long record of this result.

In many long records, you’ll see a list of subject terms. These are specific, controlled words and phrases that are used to classify and organize topics and fields of research. These are often helpful in learning what terms to search for when looking up a topic. For example, I might want to add the term Electronic Cigarettes to my search as this is a term used by researchers. You can also click on many of these subject fields to find more items with the same classifications.

Let's go back and look at the search modes options. By default, Scout is set to look for all search terms in a field. You can change this to look for any terms in a field, or to look for an exact Boolean phrase.

You can also use SmartText searching. This allows you to paste in long text passages and it will try to extract key terms to search for. It can be useful if you want to find items similar to what you have pasted in if you don't know where else to start.
Below the search options are limiters. These are ways to filter and refine results before you run a search.

For example, if you only want scholarly articles, you can click here. Publication date and language are also popular ways to limit your results.

To the right are search fields for searching in specific academic journals. This can be useful if you want to limit your search to a specific publication, or to works by a specific author.

Further search options are available from the results page and work to refine an existing search. For example, you can limit by source type, subject, publication, and where the item is located, among many other things.

Limiters stay active in your searches until you select “clear” from the search menu, so be aware of your settings if you are trying multiple searches in one session.

Speaking of which, if you are running numerous searches, it can be easy to forget what you’ve done. You can browse your search history by clicking here to return to a previous search as long as your session is still active or you logged in to your free Scout user account.

These are some of the ways to use Scout to search UA Libraries’ collection and most of our databases. For some resources, you’ll need to use other search tools or specific databases, but most of the concepts we’ve covered here today will also apply to those tools.

That’s all for now, thanks for watching. As always, if you have any questions, contact us or visit ask.lib.ua.edu to Ask-A-Librarian.