Make a Search Strategy

Thesis Statement/Research Question

Does social media affect people’s mental health?

Broad Search Keywords

“Social media” AND “Mental Health”

Both “social media” and “mental health” are too broad (i.e. there are many types of both of these). Look through your search results or look under Subjects in the menu bar to find ideas to narrow your search. In this case, one subject heading is cyberbullying; let’s look into this.

Narrow Search Keywords

“Social Media” AND Cyberbullying

During our research, we discover that cyberbullying is most commonly seen among adolescents. Let’s conduct a new search for adolescents and cyberbullying. Now our search is narrow enough to research well and write a focused paper.

Refine Search

Adolescents AND cyberbullying

What we learned from our research is that cyberbullying is one example of how social media can affect people’s mental health.
Your Turn!

Thesis Statement/Research Question

Broad Search Keywords

Look through your search results or use the subjects provided by the database to find ideas to narrow your search.

Narrow Search Keywords

During your research, you discover a common theme or an aspect of your topic to focus on. Add those new keywords to your search, or search again using those new keywords with your original idea.

Refine Search