

Using search tools and techniques

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Search strategies

- The principles of Boolean Logic enable you to relate concepts to one another in sets. Consisting of the 3 logical operators or connectors, AND, OR, NOT, Boolean operators allow you to more efficiently link 2 or more terms, thereby retrieving more precise results.
- AND narrows a search; OR broadens it, while NOT excludes references, containing specified search terms, from your results. These operators will always need to be entered in upper case.

Truncation

- Using a truncation character allows you to broaden your search by retrieving varying endings of your search term. For example, in the database *Web of Science*, a search for *Child** will retrieve documents that mention *Child*, *Children*, *Childcare*, *Children's*, *Childhood*. When using a phrase truncation search, only the final word in the phrase can be truncated. It should also be noted that you may retrieve some irrelevant material.

Wildcards

- Related to truncation are Wildcards which help you search for internal variations of spelling within your search term.
- An example in Web of Science is wom?n which will retrieve articles that mention women and woman.
- Wildcards are also useful in dealing with American spelling variations. For example computeri?ation finds computerization and computerization

Proximity

- Proximity searching is a way of narrowing your search using different operators. It allows you to search for documents
- where:
- Your search terms must be either in the same sentence or paragraph.
- The operator **SAME** will only locate articles where your terms are in the same sentence of an
- article e.g. breast **SAME** cancer
- While the operator **PARAGRAPH** will locate those within the same paragraph e.g. breast
- **PARAGRAPH** cancer

Thank you



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