SEARCH TECHNIQUES

Most of the Library’s databases have a useful online help facility. Look for the Help link on the search screen. Here are some techniques to make your searches more effective and efficient.

**Boolean operators:** use AND, OR and NOT to connect your search terms

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<th>Operator</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| AND      | ethics AND globalisation | Use AND to search for articles that contain both your terms.  
*Using AND narrows your search* |
| OR       | toxin OR poison | Use OR to look for articles that contain one or both of the search terms.  
*Using OR broadens your search* |
| NOT      | environment NOT business | Use NOT to search for records which contain the first term and do not contain the second.  
*Note: in some databases the operator is AND NOT* |

**Truncation:** use a truncation symbol to look for word variants. In many databases the truncation symbol is an asterisk * but you should check the database help screen if unsure or ask a Liaison Librarian.

For example: child* will find child, children, childhood, childish, etc

**Wildcard:** this symbol can be used to replace a character in the middle of a word and is useful when searching for alternative spellings. In many databases the wildcard symbol is a question mark ? but you should check the database help screen if unsure or ask a Liaison Librarian.

For example: organi?ation will find organisation or organization

Alternatively, you should include both spelling variations in your search strategy.

**Phrases:** use double quotation marks to keep words together (not searched separately).

For example: “internet of things”

If you need further help with searching databases, please contact your Liaison Librarian.