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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Ethics AND globalisation" /></td>
<td>Use AND to search for articles that contain both your terms. <em>Using AND narrows your search</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sustainable OR renewable" /></td>
<td>Use OR to look for articles that contain one or both of the search terms. <em>Using OR broadens your search</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Environment NOT politics" /></td>
<td>Use NOT to search for records which contain the first term and do not contain the second. <em>Note: in some databases the operator is AND NOT</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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. If you need further help with searching databases, please contact:

- Library Help Desk, main entrance of the Library.
- Ask a Librarian – by email (response within 24 hours)
- Live Chat (10am to 4pm Monday to Friday)
- Liaison Librarian –
  Scott Venning
  Phone: +64 9 921 9999 x6326
  Email: scott.venning@aut.ac.nz