EBSCO HOST Research Databases

Basic Search Help Sheet

Creating a Basic Search

1. On the Basic Search Screen, enter your search terms in the **Find** field.

2. Use **Limiters** to narrow your search:
   - **Full Text** – limits search results to full text articles.
   - **Publication** – limits search results to articles from a specific title.

   Use **Expanders** to broaden your search:
   - **Also search within the full text of the articles** – expands search results by finding your term(s) within the full text of the articles.
   - **Automatically "And" search terms** – expands results by applying the **AND** operator between terms, e.g., enter **space shuttle** to retrieve results for **space** and **shuttle.**
   - **Also search for related words** – expands results to include synonyms and plurals.

3. Click the **Search** button.

Searching Techniques

Boolean operators allow you to create a very broad or very narrow search.

- The **AND** operator combines search terms so that *each* result contains *all* of the terms. For example, type **electronic and resources** to find articles that contain both words.
- The **OR** operator combines terms so that *each* result contains *at least one* of the terms. For example, type **college or university** to find articles that contain either word.
- The **NOT** operator excludes search terms so that each result does *not* contain the terms that follow it. For example, type **computers not apple** to find articles that contain **computers**, but not **apple**.

Wildcard (?) and Truncation (*) allow you to create searches using terms that have unknown characters, multiple spellings or various endings.

- A **wildcard** search (represented by a **?**) will find all instances of your term(s) by automatically replacing the **?** with a letter. Enter your term(s) and replace each unknown character with a **?**. For example, type **ne?t** to find results containing **neat, nest** or **next**. EBSCO*host* does not find **net** because the wildcard replaces a single character.
- A **truncation** search (represented by an asterisk *) will find all forms of your term(s). Enter the root of a word and replace the ending with an *. For example, type **comput*** to find articles that contain the words **computer** and **computing**.

Proximity searching allows you to create searches for two or more terms that appear within a specified number of words apart in the article(s). The proximity operator *must* contain a **letter (N or W)** indicating the order of the words in the article *and* a **numeric** value, specifying the maximum number of words that appear between your terms. Place the operator *between* search terms.

- **Near Operator (N):** Inserting **N5** will produce results if the search terms are within five words of one another, *regardless* of the order in which they appear. For example, type **tax N5 reform** to find results that would match **tax reform** as well as **reform of the tax code**.
- **Within Operator (W):** Inserting **W8** will produce results if the search terms are within eight words of one another *and* in the order in which you entered them. For example, type **tax W8 reform** to find results that match **tax reform** or **tax without the ability to reform,** but do not match **reform of the tax code**.