

Clarkson University Libraries:

Advanced Searching

Keywords vs. Subjects

- Keywords: “natural language” search
 - Searches the author, title, subjects, and other descriptors of an article
 - Possibly also the content of the article
- Subjects: also called subject terms or subject headings; selected by librarians for indexing resources related to a topic
 - Subjects may show additional terms you want to include in your research, either as keywords or for subject searches

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Search' page of the Clarkson University Libraries. A red circle highlights the 'Search Index' dropdown menu, which is open and showing a list of search options. The 'Keyword' option is highlighted with a red box, and the 'Subject' option is also highlighted with a red box. The 'Keyword plus full text' option is highlighted in blue. The 'Search Term' input field is visible to the right of the dropdown menu. The 'Operator' dropdown menu is set to 'AND'. The 'Add row' button is visible at the bottom right of the search area. The 'Clear' and 'Search' buttons are at the bottom right of the page.

- Can also search Keyword plus full text to include any matches for the keyword in the article text



Phrase Searching

Use quotation marks around search terms to find an exact phrase in results

higher education

Results:

- Any articles with the words “higher” and “education” anywhere
- Ex: higher income and education, higher priority and education, etc.

vs.

“higher education”

Results:

- Any articles with the exact phrase “higher education”



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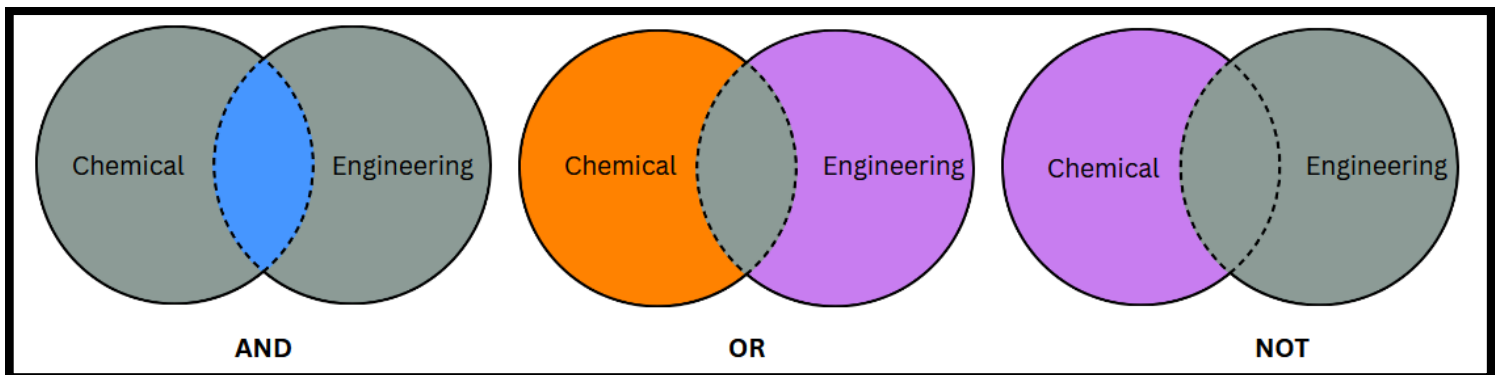
Discovery Search vs. Database

- Discovery search: library catalog search
 - Pros:
 - Results are not limited by discipline
 - Federated search (searches multiple sources, not just one)
 - Includes multiple formats (books, eBooks, articles, etc.)
 - Cons:
 - Results might include material that can only be obtained through InterLibrary Loan
 - Fewer limiters available for narrowing down search
- Database search: searches a collection of journals specific to disciplines
 - Pros:
 - More control over results through use of advanced limiters
 - Configured to access material Clarkson has subscriptions to
 - Cons:
 - Might miss other results from different sources
 - Publications included depends on the database vendor



Boolean Operators

- Connectors between concepts - AND, OR, and NOT
 - Used to build complex searches



AND

Results will include::

- “chemical engineering”
- “chemical reactions” and “engineering”

OR

Results will include::

- Articles with the word “chemical”
- Articles with the word “engineering”

NOT

Results will include::

- Articles with the word “chemical”
- Filters out articles with the word “engineering”



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Wildcards and Truncation

- Wildcard: used when there are multiple spellings of a word
 - In most databases, uses a ? where the spelling variations exist
- Truncation: allows for searches to include multiple word endings
 - Use * at the end of the word

p?diatrician	pediatric*
Results include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• pediatrician• paediatrician	Results include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• pediatric• pediatrics• pediatrician(s)



Database-specific

- Look at any search options available through specific databases to see if they have additional search options; some common ones you might see are:
 - Nesting: Including parentheses around terms to group to specify order of operations; these are considered before Boolean operators
 - Proximity: finding words or terms within a specific range of each other using Near or Within
 - There are several ways of writing this:
 - n/[number] - experimental n/5 ethics would find all results where the words 'experimental' and 'ethics' are within 5 words of each other
 - NEAR/[number]
 - Thesaurus - displays the preferred terms used within a field to return more precise search results
 - Included in ProQuest Central, APA PsycNet, and more



Synonyms

- Look for synonyms of keywords
- Can use synonyms as OR terms when building complex search strings (see Boolean operators above)



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Citation Chaining

- Creating a web of related articles
- Seed article: a useful article related to your topic
- Backward-chaining: looking through the works cited listed in the seed article to find older research that might be relevant to your topic
 - The research is older than the seed article and might not be as relevant
 - May not have access to the full-text version of articles
- Forward-chaining: seeing what other, newer articles have referenced the seed article
 - Possible through a limited number of databases: Scopus, PsychNET, and Google Scholar
 - May not have access to the full-text version on articles



Limiters

- Further narrow your search results by using available limiters, which often include:
 - Peer-reviewed articles
 - Full-text articles available only
 - Publication dates
 - Formats (books, articles, etc.)
 - Hiding duplicates
- Returned results will be more targeted to your interests

