Advanced Search Strategies

Advanced searching involves using more than one term to narrow or expand your results and combining the terms with Boolean operators (AND, OR, and NOT). Go to this site for an introduction: [http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorias/boolean.html](http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorias/boolean.html)

*Use Boolean searching when searching library databases and most search engines.*

**AND: Limits Your Search**

AND links two or more terms and narrows your search, returning only those references containing ALL of your terms.

**Try it!**

Type in one search term and write down the number of results. (e.g., television) _______

Now, add another search term to make your search more specific. Connect the terms with AND. (e.g., television AND violence). Write down the number of results. _____

Why is there a difference? _______________________________

**OR: Expands Your Search**

OR returns results that contain ANY of your search terms. Good for synonyms (child OR children) and related concepts (abuse OR violence).

**Try it!**

Type in one search term and write down the number of results (e.g. teenagers)._______

Now, type in OR and add another search term (e.g. teenagers OR adolescents) Write down the number of results._______

Why is there a difference?_______________________________
Advanced Search Strategies (continued)

**NOT: Excludes Terms from Your Search**

NOT narrows your search by removing all results that contain a particular word or phrase. For example, if you are searching for information about Medieval Viking culture, and keep getting articles about the Minnesota Vikings football team, try Vikings NOT football

**Try it!**

Type in one search term (e.g. abuse) Write down the number of results. ______

Add NOT and another search term (e.g. abuse NOT sexual). Write down the number of results. ____

Why is there a difference?

**EXACT PHRASE: Targets Your Search**

Put quotations around your phrase. That tells the system to search for results that contain your search term as a phrase.

**Try it!**

Type in a phrase (e.g. affordable care act). Write down the number of results. _____

Put the same phrase in quotations (e.g. “affordable care act”). Write down the number of results. _____

Why is there a difference?