### Search Operators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find word variants</td>
<td>*</td>
<td><code>child*</code></td>
<td>Results contain words beginning with the stem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><code>will retrieve child, children, childhood, and more</code></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find words in the exact order</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>&quot;habitat loss&quot;</td>
<td>Results have words in the same order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add new ideas</td>
<td>AND</td>
<td>migration AND barriers</td>
<td>Results must have both terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add synonyms and related concepts</td>
<td>( OR )</td>
<td><code>(rules OR regulations OR laws)</code></td>
<td>Results have at least one of several words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Always enclose OR terms in parentheses ( ).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclude terms</td>
<td>NOT</td>
<td>grouse NOT sage</td>
<td>Excludes results with the specified word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In Google Scholar, use a hyphen: grouse -sage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find terms near each other</td>
<td>NEAR/n</td>
<td><code>free NEAR/3 clinic symptom NEXT/3 headache</code></td>
<td>Results have no more than n-1 terms between the words. With NEAR/n, either word may appear first; with NEXT/n, the first word must appear before the second. Works in some, not all, databases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEXT/n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control search order</td>
<td>()</td>
<td><code>((tobacco OR alcohol) AND cancer) NOT (lung OR liver)</code></td>
<td>Nest search statements. Terms within parentheses () are searched first.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combine operators for complex search statements.

`(aged OR elderly OR geriatric) AND (depression OR insomnia) NOT (hypertension OR “high blood pressure”)`
## Search Tips

### Too many results?
Narrow your search.

1. **Add more search words.**  
   **POOR:** cancer  
   **BETTER:** cancer AND liver AND children

2. **Replace search words with more specific concepts.**  
   Replace California with San Francisco

3. **Exclude words with the NOT operator.**  
   cancer NOT lung

4. **Filter results for conditions.**  
   For example, filter by age group, article type, or publication date.

5. **Try a different database.**  
   Web of Science, Scopus ... More options at [http://ucblib.link/AtoZ](http://ucblib.link/AtoZ).

### Too few results?
Broaden your search.

1. **Remove search words.**  
   hepatitis AND treatment AND “clinic locations”

2. **Replace search words with broader concepts.**  
   Replace San Francisco with California

3. **Add synonyms and related concepts using the OR operator.**  
   (“cellular phones” OR “mobile phones” OR smartphones)

4. **Search for word variants with truncation searching (*).**  
   prevent* will retrieve prevent, prevention, preventative, and more

5. **Deactivate search filters in use.**

6. **Try a different database.**  
   See options at [http://ucblib.link/AtoZ](http://ucblib.link/AtoZ).

7. **Conduct a cited reference search for a relevant article.**  
   Try Web of Science, Scopus, or Google Scholar.

8. **Look for link to "Similar Articles/Records/Results"**

**Reminder:** Good literature searching is not linear; it's a process.