

EBSCOhost Search Tips: Constructing Searches

search.ebscohost.com

Boolean Search Operators AND, OR and NOT

Explanations:

The “and” search operator combines search terms so that each search result contains all the terms.

The “or” operator combines search terms so that each search result contains at least one of the terms. The “or” operator applies to two or more terms separated by “or.”

The “not” operator excludes terms from a search.

Examples:

drug **and** abuse

space **or** astronaut

irony **not** humor

Wild Card (?)

Explanations:

Use the wild card to search for words with unknown characters, variant spellings or different endings.

EBSCOhost will find the words “Read,” “Reid” or “Reed.” EBSCOhost does not find “red” because the wildcard replaces a single character.

Examples:

Re?d

Truncation (*)

Explanations:

Enter a word stem followed by an asterisk (*) to search for words beginning with the word stem.

EBSCOhost will find the words “walk,” “walked,” “walking” or “walkway.”

Examples:

walk*

Phrases

Explanations:

For words to be searched as a phrase, they must be enclosed in double quotes (“”).

EBSCOhost uses double quotes to find the exact phrase “sink or swim.” If you enter the phrase without double quotes, EBSCOhost finds results with the word sink or the word swim.

Examples:

“sink or swim”

Phrases With Punctuation

Explanations:

If you enter phrases in the Search screen that contain punctuation marks, EBSCOhost searches for phrases with and without any punctuation mark.

EBSCOhost will find the words “television talk-show” and “television talk show.”

Examples:

television: talk show

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List of searchable journals available in
EBSCOhost databases: www.ebscohost.com/titlelists.php

Phrases With Stopwords

Explanations:

Stopwords are commonly used words such as articles, pronouns and prepositions. These words are not indexed for searching in the database. "The," "for," "of" and "after" are sample stopwords.

When you search for a phrase that contains a stopword, EBSCOhost ignores the stopword, finding any single word in its place.

EBSCOhost will find the phrases "company of america," "company in america" or "company for america." EBSCOhost does not find "company of the america."

Examples:

"company of america"

Hyphen

Explanations:

If you use a hyphenated word as a search term, EBSCOhost automatically searches for the word in its hyphenated form and as a two-word phrase.

EBSCOhost will find the words "Coca Cola" or "Coca-Cola."

Examples:

coca-cola

Field Codes

Explanations:

To search field codes, you can type in a two-letter code to limit a search to specific information such as title or author. The following table lists some common field codes. Field codes are database specific.

Field

<u>Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Result</u>
AU	Author	AU Eliot	Results that are authored by "Eliot."
TI	Article title	TI Lost in the Victorian Countryside	Results that contain the title "Lost in the Victorian Countryside."
SU	Subject	SU Poetry	Results that contain the subject "Poetry."
SO or JN	Journal name	SO American Literature	Results that have the journal name "American Literature."
DT	Date	DT 9507	Results with the date "July 1995" (can't use day).

Examples:

Range Options

Explanations:

To search using a specified range, you must type a hyphen (-) in front of (to indicate less than or equal to) or at the end (to indicate greater than or equal to) for either numeric or date fields.

EBSCOhost will find results that contain the word "simpson" in articles that are less than or equal to four pages long.

EBSCOhost will find results with a publication date between July and December of 1995.

The symbols < (less than) and > (greater than) can be used as range operators to search for "less than" or "greater than."

Examples:

simpson and pg -4

dt 9507-9512