COMMON SEARCH STRATEGIES FOR KU LIBRARY DATABASES

Many databases use these common commands as the required method for inputting keywords. However, always check the “help” screen within the database in case of variations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search Intention</th>
<th>Search Strategies</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To look for two or more words in your results</td>
<td>cats AND dogs</td>
<td>![Venn Diagram: cats and dogs overlap]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To exclude a word from a search</td>
<td>dogs NOT cats</td>
<td>![Venn Diagram: cats and dogs with excluded overlap]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To search for a phrase (use quotations marks)</td>
<td>“global warming”</td>
<td>Results will include those quoted words in that order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To retrieve variations of a word (truncation)</td>
<td>cultur*</td>
<td>Will find: culture, cultures, and cultural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To look for two or more words in your results
- cats AND dogs

To exclude a word from a search
- dogs NOT cats

To search for a phrase (use quotations marks)
- “global warming”

To retrieve variations of a word (truncation)
- cultur*

---

**Start narrow**

Use 2 search terms with AND in between.
- Ex: education AND “United States”

**If you don’t find anything, broaden your search**
- Identify alternative keywords and search again
  - If nothing shows up for jobs, try employment
- Make correct use of search strategies (review chart above).
- Repeat your searches in other appropriate databases and ask for help at the reference desk.

**If you have too many results, further narrow your search**
- Try setting a search limit to restrict the results:
  - Peer-reviewed, scholarly, refereed, etc.
  - Full-text
  - Years of publication (date range)
- Try narrowing by including another search term:
  - Ex: instead of just “global warming”, try “global warming” AND China