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 showing intersection of cats and dogs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To exclude a word from a search</td>
<td>dogs NOT cats</td>
<td>![Venn diagram showing exclusion of cats from dogs]</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>

- 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.

- 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*

**Start narrow**

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

**If you have too many results, further narrow your search**