

Simple Search Tips



Searching is more than just keywords.

<http://www.sxc.hu/browse.phtml?f=download&id=984625>

BOOLEAN OPERATORS:

AND

OR

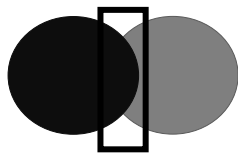
NOT

"—" -or-
(A & B)

* -or- ?

These tell the computer how you want it to look for information.

These tools work on GOOGLE as well.

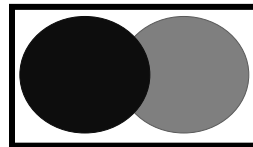


AND tells the computer you want *only* results with both terms: climate AND oceans [yes, capitalize it]

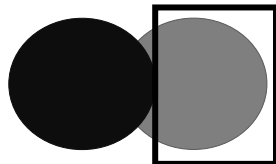
Gives **fewer**, but **more focused results**.

Some search engines use a plus sign (+) instead of AND

OR tells the computer you want *all* results with both terms: climate OR oceans [yes, capitalize it]



Give **more**, but **less focused results**.



NOT tells the computer to not search for a term: climate NOT oceans [yes, capitalize it]

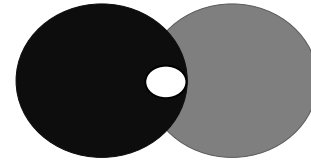
This is useful when the terms are closely related and often associated with one another, but you only need one of them.

Some search engines use a negative sign (-) instead of NOT.

Computers are not smart enough to decide what is best for you.

You need to tell them what you want/need.

"—" or (A B) tells the computer to search your terms in the *exact* order you enter: "global climate change" or (global climate change)



This is called *phrase searching* and is helpful when you want an exact phrase and can drastically narrow your search.

Search engines will usually require either quotation marks or parentheses, or may not allow phrase searching.

glob
globe
global
globally
globular
globalize
globularly
globalization

* or ? tells the computer to look for *forms* of a word that includes the letters you enter: glob*

This is called *truncation* and can be helpful if you know a possible form of the term, but it may not be the exact form you need, or if you know how the word begins but not ends.

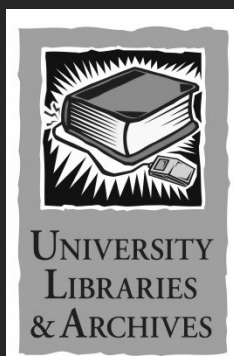
Sometimes search engines may not allow you to truncate search terms.

Boolean operators can be combined to create longer, more specific *search strings* for more precise searching: (climate change) AND (coral reef) AND (health OR (die off))

If you are unsure which operators you can use in a search engine or database, look it up in the Help section.

For more information see:

- **University of Nevada, Reno Library's Knowledge Center**
(<http://knowledgecenter.unr.edu/help/using/boottips.aspx>)
- **This tutorial from Regina University on Youtube**
(http://youtu.be/jMV7X3W_beg)



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