

# Getting started with

# Online searching

## tips & tricks



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## What is truncation?

Truncation is a search method that allows you to find documents containing variations of your search term; truncation is often performed by putting a \* at the end of the shortened term (although some databases and search engines vary).

Examples of this are as follows:

- Aborigin\* - search will include Aborigines, Aboriginal, Aborigines
- Comput\* - search will include computers, computing
- Sport\* - search will include sport, sports, sporting

## What is a wild card?

A wild card is a character that may be used in a search term to represent one or more other characters and they are very useful when you are not sure what spelling to use.

Examples of this are as follows

- Orani?ation - search will include organization, organisation
- Colo?r – will select color, colour

## How do I use a phrase?

Results for a phrase search may differ in different databases. Try using quotation marks to specify a phrase

- child care or “child care”

## Why choose a specific field or tag?

When searching, selecting a field or tag (like author, title, subject, etc) can improve your search results as it creates a more focused search.



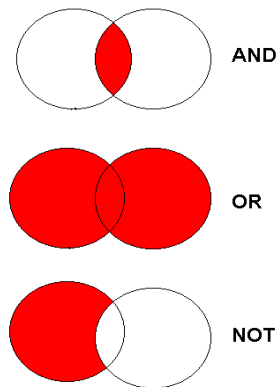
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## What is Boolean searching?

Boolean searching is a method that allows you to combine words and phrases using the words explained below to, widen, or define your search.

- AND combines your keywords.  
Your results will have both keywords.
- Indigenous AND health
- OR groups your keywords.
- Indigenous OR Aboriginal
- NOT excludes your keywords.
- Abuse NOT sexual



## How can I build a search strategy?

Before you can search for any information you must first develop a search strategy.

A search strategy is a plan that helps you look for the information you need.

### Search Strategy Tips

- Identify the key concepts.
- Determine alternative terms for these concepts, if needed (the search tips listed here can help with that)
- Refine your search to dates, subject etc.

Remember that learning search strategies can take time and that strategies and styles will differ according to personal choice and what you are studying.

|        |                         |
|--------|-------------------------|
| Check  | keywords against topic  |
| Note   | if results are relevant |
| Record | references as you go    |
| Save   | what you need           |
| Ask    | if you need help        |



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