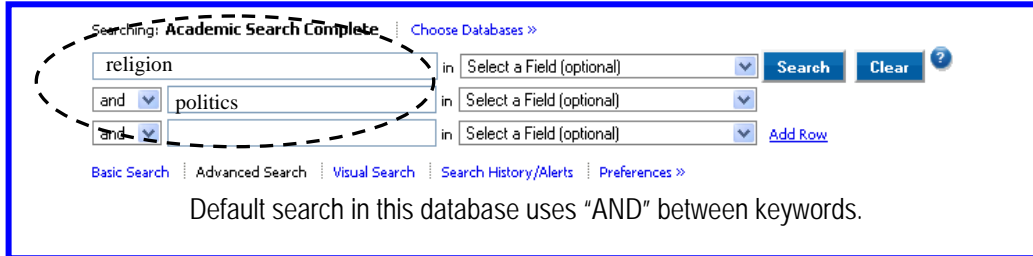


Using AND, OR and NOT in Searches: Boolean Searching

Using AND, OR, or NOT in your search will broaden or narrow searches to target the information you need.



Default search in this database uses "AND" between keywords.

AND is the best way to narrow and specify your search.

Example: religion and politics

The catalog and most databases will perform better with "and" between keywords. Otherwise, the database may search for the phrase "religion politics", looking for those words adjacent or near each other instead of both of the words individually!



A and B

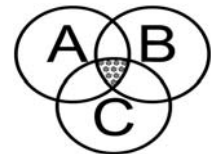
religion and politics

More Than Two Search Terms with AND

The connectors can also be used with multiple search terms in a string.

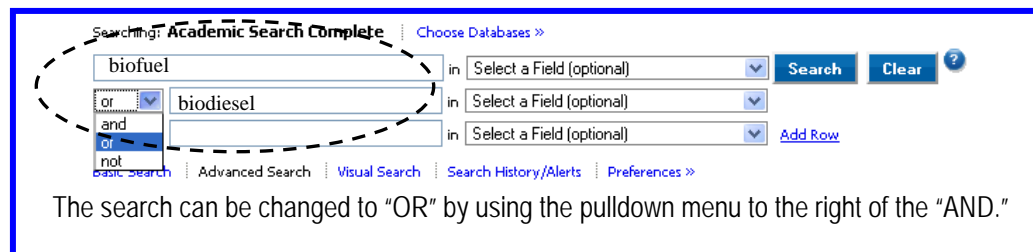
Example: agriculture and virginia and tobacco

Retrieves records which contain **all** three terms - connect as many terms as you need with AND.

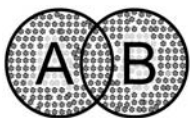


A and B and C

agriculture and virginia
and tobacco



The search can be changed to "OR" by using the pulldown menu to the right of the "AND."



A or B

biofuel or biodiesel

Use **OR** to search for articles which contain any of your search terms.

Example: biofuel or biodiesel

OR is often used to broaden a search by linking together a number of synonyms or similar concepts.

The search can be changed to "NOT" by using the pulldown menu to the right of the "AND."

Use **NOT** to search for articles which contain one word but not the other word.
 Example: **abuse not child**

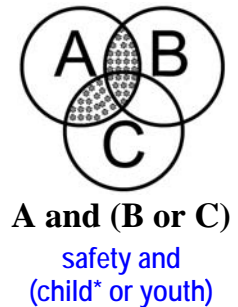


In this example, you would retrieve information on all types of abuse except for child abuse.

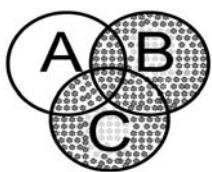
Combining search strategies brings the strongest results.

“Nest” Your ORs

In complex searches, use parentheses to nest similar search terms linked by OR.
 Example: **safety and (child or youth)**



Retrieves all entries which contain the words "safety" and "child" plus all entries which contain the words "safety" and "youth". This is like performing multiple AND searches at once - as if you tried "(safety and child) or (safety and youth)"
Note, too, the uses of truncation - * - for child* to bring up all variations including child AND children).



A and B or C
 safety and child
 or youth

What Happens Without A Nest?

If you don't nest, you will get stuck with a huge list of records that have nothing to do with your topic.

Example: **safety and child or youth**

Without the parentheses, this search retrieves all records which have both the words "safety" and "child," **in addition to** every single record about "youth." (*i.e. a lot of stuff that has nothing to do with "safety"!*)

Another way to think about nesting is to consider some basic arithmetic concepts:

$$10+3-10+8 = 11 \quad \text{versus} \quad (10+3)-(10+8) = -5$$

Without parentheses, equations are worked left to right. If you'll recall, actions within the parentheses are done first, even if they come later in the equation. Likewise, the parenthetical nest (A or B or C) keeps your synonymous search terms together in one bundle.