

## Library Quick Guide: **Develop a Keyword Search Strategy**

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**Keyword searching** is how we search Google, Yahoo!, Bing, most online search tools, and library databases such as the online catalog and article databases.

**Objective of keyword searching** is to locate a **set of records** that contain the **keywords** (in the correct context which will provide the information needed). For an online form that creates a keyword search based on your keywords and strategy, see the **\*\*NCSU Libraries Keyword Builder** noted **below**.

### **Use keywords/phrases**

Researching: The impact of global warming on Florida

- Use only keywords/phrases: "global warming" Florida

Researching: The current treatment for diabetes mellitus

- Use only keywords/phrases: treatment "diabetes mellitus"

**Put quotes around a phrase** (two or more words that *must* appear in that order)

- Use: "global warming"; "income tax"; "diabetes mellitus"; "environmental science"

**Eliminate unnecessary words** (articles, prepositions, conjunctions)

- Do **not** use: a, an, the, of, by, on, but, for, etc.

**To retrieve hits with ALL of the keywords** (most search systems search for all words/ phrases entered):

Enter word(s) and/or phrase(s) (in Advanced search options, use *all of the words* or similar language)

Watch spelling

Be aware of **synonyms**: treatment could be called therapy; (*see* To retrieve hits with ANY of the keywords)

The **more words** and/or phrases you enter, the **fewer the results**

Search systems are literal, so a search for Mercedes will result in hits for the car as well as the personal name

- Use: euthanasia ethics ; "global warming" policy ; euthanasia doctors ethics

**To retrieve hits with ANY of the keywords**

Use OR (Boolean Operator) between words/phrases (in Advanced search options, use *one or more of these words* or similar language)

The **more words** OR'd, the **larger the results**

- Use: cars OR automobiles; "global warming" OR "greenhouse effect"; doctors OR physicians
- Use: "diabetes mellitus" (treatment OR therapy); (attorneys OR lawyers) ethics

**To REMOVE words/phrases from retrieval**

Use NOT between words/phrases (in Advanced search options, use *none of these words* or similar language)

Some systems allow - (minus sign)

- Use: "global warming" diesel NOT trucks

**Advanced Search** options generally provide search guidance as well as more options.

*All search interfaces are different (even Google's is different than Yahoo!'s), so read the Help.*


**\*\*NCSU Libraries Keyword Builder:** <http://webdev.lib.ncsu.edu/lobo/keywordbuilder/>

For assistance, please call the Edward M. Chadbourne Library Reference Desk at 484-2006, or email

[libraryreference@pensacolastate.edu](mailto:libraryreference@pensacolastate.edu)

Fall/Spring Hours: Mon.-Wed. 7:30 AM – 8:30 PM, Thurs., Fri. 7:30-4:00, Closed Saturday, Sun. 1:00-5:00.

## Sample Keyword Search Strategy (using *Academic Search Complete* and *Google Advanced*):


 Searching: [Academic Search Complete](#) | [Choose Databases](#)  
  [?](#)  
[Search Options](#) | [Basic Search](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Search History](#)

**Search Options**

**Search Modes and Expanders**

Search modes [?](#)  
 Boolean/Phrase  
 Find all my search terms  
 Find any of my search terms  
 SmartText Searching [Hint](#)

Apply related words  
 Also search within the full text of the articles

**Limit your results**

Full Text Click to view entire text of article  
 Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals Click to view only scholarly/ peer reviewed  
 Publication

References Available  
 Published Date  
 Month:  Year:  - Month:  Year:   
 Publication Type

## Google Advanced Search example:

Find pages with...

To access Advanced Search in Google, **conduct a basic search**, then **click the Gear icon** on the far right to select Advanced

all these words:

this exact word or phrase:

any of these words:

none of these words:

numbers ranging from:  to

Then narrow your results by...

language:

region:

last update:

site or domain:

terms appearing:  Use dropdown menu to select where words must appear. **In title narrows** results