Some Handy Search Techniques

Library Workshop

**Use these Boolean search techniques** when doing a *keyword* search in the library catalog, databases, Internet search engines, etc.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique, symbol</th>
<th>What it does</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td>both terms must be present in results; Decreases but focuses the results</td>
<td>smoking AND health violence AND television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
<td>either term may be present in results; Increases but broadens the results</td>
<td>smoking OR tobacco college OR university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOT</strong></td>
<td>eliminates particular words from results</td>
<td>cell* NOT cello smok* NOT “smoked salmon”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“quotation marks”

(groups 2 or more words as a *phrase* so the words are retrieved together, in that order. ONLY use with 2 or more words)

"second hand smoke" "Latin America"

**“*” or “?”**

*truncation* symbol

- Use * in library catalog
  - Retrieves all words that begin with the letters to the left of the symbol
- Use ? in other resources
  - Retrieves all words that begin with the

**OR**

nests *synonyms* or alternate words

Use OR in between the terms;

Use when you are also using AND

*MUST use the parentheses, not quotation marks!*


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Please ask for help at the Reference Desk (208-282-3152) or contact me. Thanks. ~Kristi N. Austin, Reference Librarian 208-282-4073 austkris@isu.edu 09/2014kna