Basic Search Tips & Boolean for COS210

The Boolean operators, **AND**, **OR**, and **NOT** helps you connect search terms. It is particularly useful when there are multiple search terms / concepts in a search statement. The circle / Venn diagrams illustrate the relationships between the group of records containing a word or concept (Sets). The **shading** represents the outcome of the Boolean operation.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Connector</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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| **AND**   | Lemon AND Lime | Retrieves records with **all** the terms in the article. Narrows your search. The more the number of terms combined, the fewer the results. | Embase & Scopus: and
Pubmed: **AND**
By default in most databases. |
| **OR**    | Lemon OR Lime  | Retrieves records with **either** of the terms. Expands your search. The more the concepts or keywords “OR” ed together, the more the number of results | Pubmed: **OR**
Embase & Scopus: **or** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUS Libraries</th>
<th>Medical Library</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOT / AND NOT</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lemon NOT Lime</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use with caution!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pubmed:</strong></td>
<td>NOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>( ) Parentheses</strong></td>
<td><strong>Require articles on Vitamin C content of Lemon and Lime</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nesting/ Mixing Boolean Operators</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vitamin C AND Lemon OR Lime</strong></td>
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| "quotes" | "risk taking behaviour" | Retrieves records with the exact phrase "risk taking behaviour" | Works for most databases  
Can use 'single quote' for Embase |
| *Truncation | Vaccin* | Retrives records with vaccine, vaccines, vaccination, vaccinated... | Embase, Pubmed & Scopus: * |
| Wildcard | Behavio*r | Retrives records will spelling variants  
**E.g.** behavio*r will retrieve behaviour OR behaviour.  
Tumo?r will retrieve tumour and tumor | Pubmed: NA  
Embase: *, ?  
Scopus: * |
| NEAR/n | NEXT/n | The terms will be close enough to each other & this will ensure that only relevant records are retrieved.  
Determinants Pre/2 health indicates that the word determinants must precede the word health, but the two terms must be within two words of each other.  
Retrives determinants of health  
brain W/3 health indicates that the word brain must appear within three words of injuries in any order. Retrives Brain injuries, Injuries of the brain | Pubmed- NA  
Embase-  
**NEAR/n** (in any order)  
**NEXT/n** (in same order)  
Scopus:  
**PRE/n:** Terms must appear within n words of each other with the first term must precede the second term by a specified number.  
**W/n:** Terms must appear within n words of each other in any order. |

**Combining Searches:** Use search history to combine searches from "Advanced search" in Pubmed, Results page in Embase and on basic search in Scopus. Search history appears in Scopus after running a search.