Search Strategies to Improve Your Searching: Boolean Logic, Truncation & Phrase Searching

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Combine different concepts with AND. In the example above, articles that fall in the blue area must contain “accidental falls” AND “community living”. This will give us a smaller, more focused set of results.
Combine similar concepts with OR. In the above example, articles may contain “community living” OR “assisted living”, thereby giving us a larger set of results. These two terms are synonyms.
Use NOT when you want to exclude a certain set of results. In the above example, articles can contain “community living” but NOT “assisted living”. This removes a concept that you don’t want. Use NOT carefully because you may inadvertently eliminate results that you do want.
A truncation symbol is used on the stem of a word to generate different word endings.

- **interview*** could produce interview, interviews, interviewing, interviewed, etc.

- **cranberry*** could produce cranberry or cranberries (Note: since we have to remove the “y” to pluralize cranberry, we also have to remove the “y” before adding the truncation symbol)
Phrase searching

• When you want to search for a phrase, enclose the term in quotation marks. This will ensure that the words are searched together, rather than each word being searched individually.

• E.g.
  – “falls prevention”
  – “medication review”