

# Database Search Strategies

## Use Boolean Operators

AND – narrows search by including all terms in the resulting records

psychology AND psychiatry

OR – broadens search results by including two or more similar concepts

psychology OR psychiatry

NOT – narrows search results by excluding terms

psychology NOT psychiatry

## Use the limiters

Limiters allow users to narrow their search by including certain criteria. Common limiters include the following:

Date – recent dates are often more relevant

Peer-reviewed (Scholarly)

Full text

Primary source documents

## Use quotation marks to search an exact phrase

“climate change”

## Use an asterisk to search all possible endings of a root word

manage\* for manages, management, managers, managerial

<b>Too many results?</b>	<b>Too few results?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use AND to add more terms to your search</li><li>• Do not use OR</li><li>• Use the limiters</li><li>• Find more specific terms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try a different database</li><li>• Use fewer search terms</li><li>• Brainstorm related terms and broader terms</li><li>• Break your topic into different parts and search each part individually</li></ul>