Database Search Operators: Quick Reference Guide

Database: (links to guide)	EBSCO	Engineering Village: Compendex	Factiva	JSTOR	LexisLibrary	Westlaw
Stop words: words that are filtered out	EBSCO **stop list**	Engineering Village **stop list**	Factiva does not use **stop words**	n/a	LexisLibrary **stop list**	Thomas Reuters **stop list**
Phrase searching: a string of words in the exact order	" "	" " or {}	" "	" "	" "	# or " "
Truncation: variations on a root word	*	*	*	~	! or *	!

Wildcard: single character	? for zero or one characters # for one character	?	?	?	?	*
Wildcard: multiple characters	*	*	$x (Where x represents a number)	*	? for each character	*
Proximity or adjacency: (Where x represents a number)	Nx for near, Wx for within a set number of words	NEAR/x for maximum number of words between the two words in the query	Factiva has **multiple different proximity operators**	NEARx ~x ^x	LexisLibrary has **multiple different proximity operators**	/x or +x Westlaw also uses **'grammatical connectors'**

Database (links to guide):	OVID (Medline, PsycINFO, Embase, Cochrane, etc., full list)	ProQuest	Web of Science	Scopus	PubMed
Stop words: words that are filtered out	OVID stop list	ProQuest does not use stop words	Web of Science stop list	Scopus stop list	PubMed stop list
Phrase searching: a string of words in the exact order	Search terms are searched as phrases automatically, only use " " for phrases with stop words or special characters	" " or "{ }"	" " (WoS also has an exact search function)	" " for loose phrases, {} for exact phrases	" " PubMed also uses a phrase index
Truncation: variations on a root word	*	*	*	*	*

Wildcard: single character	? for zero or one characters # for one character	?	$ for zero or one characters ? for one character	n/a	*
Wildcard: multiple characters	*x	[*x] (Where x represents a number)	*	N/A	*
Proximity or adjacency: (Where x represents a number)	ADJx	Near/x, Pre/x, or Exact()	Near/x, or Same	W/x or Pre/x	"search terms"[field:~x]

For more information on searching these databases and others, see **'Getting results: Guides to searching databases'** and **'A-Z list of databases'.**

If you are looking for information on MeSH (Medical Subject Headings), see **'Making use of MeSH and Suggested Subject Terms'**