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Find reliable and relevant information more efficiently by searching smarter.

Learn the most important search operators and commands to search databases, Google (Scholar) and Library Catalogues.

**Assignment:** Go to Google and perform the searches in the table below.
Perform one of your searches **normal** and the other using the specified **operator**.
Compare your search results and write down what effect you think an operator has.
When do you think a specific operator would be of use in one of your searches?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| NORMAL | OPERATOR | EFFECT? |
| Rotterdam Marketing | **“**rotterdam marketing**”** | **………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………** |
| Inception  | inception **-**film **-**movie | **………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………** |
| Research | research **filetype:pdf** | **………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………** |
| Go to https://europa.eu look for information on: *artificial intelligence* | **site:**europa.eu artificial intelligence | **………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………** |
| **NORMAL** | **OPERATOR** | **EFFECT?** |
| Epidemic 1900 2016 | epidemic 1900**…**2016 | **………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………** |
| Reuters | **related:**reuters.comNote: The ‘related’ operator doesn’t always give results. | **………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………****………………………………………………………………………** |
| Do a Google image search; filter on **Usage Rights**.Note: You get less results…but no copyright infringement. Do a Google image search; filter on **color** **transparent** |

**Search Smarter in databases**

**Boolean operators**

Boolean operators AND, OR, NOT are logical operators that are widely used in databases, search engines and library catalogues. Type these operators yourself (in capitals) or use an Advanced Search option.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Boolean operators |  EFFECT |
| artists **AND** depression | **Both words occur in the text.** Thisnarrows down your search results. You only find search results including both words |
| depression **OR** anxiety | **One or both words occur in the text.** This expands your search results. Efficient for including synonyms, related terms and spelling differences. |
| depression **NOT** “great depression” | **Exclude a word.**This narrows down your search results. |

**Wildcards**

In many databases and catalogues you can replace one or more words of your search term with a wildcard or joker. These characters can differ per database. Want to know more? Check out the help file of a database.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Wildcard |  EFFECT |
| Wom**?**n | **Replaces 1 character with a joker.** Effect: You search for both wom**e**n and wom**a**n.Multiple wildcards can be used to represent multiple characters**.** |
| Operat**\*** | **Every word beginning with…** Effect: Your results include the words operating, operate, operation etc. |