

# Keyword Searching with Boolean Operators

A very important aspect of crafting an effective search strategy is your choice of terms. Use this worksheet to brainstorm on main terms, synonyms, and related words.

Write down your research question here:

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Next, for each key concept in your topic, list one or more terms that may be useful in a search: (Be sure to try to think of synonyms and related terms)

(Key concept #1) \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_

**and**

(Key concept #2) \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_

**and**

(Key concept #3) \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_

(You may have more or less than 3 main concepts. Use “and” between concepts. . Use “or” between synonyms/related words.)

Note: When you notice a family of words developing within a concept row, you may truncate to the common root word to allow for ease of searching. For example: government or governmental → government\*

Turn over this sheet to see an example of how a search can be entered within a database (in this case, *Academic Search Complete*.)



Sample Research Question:

*What is the significance of the US governmental response to global warming?*

government\*

**and**

global warming

**and**

US **or** united states

## Example Search in Academic Search Complete:



You may select more than one EBSCO database here and search them simultaneously.

Keyword | Publications | Subject Terms | Cited References | More | Sign In to My EBSCOhost | Folder | New Feat

Searching: **Academic Search Complete** | [Choose Databases >](#)

government\* in Select a Field (optional) [v]

and [v] global warming in Select a Field (optional) [v]

and [v] us or united states in Select a Field (optional) [v] [Add Row](#)

Advanced Search | [Visual Search](#) | [Search History/Alerts](#) | [Preferences >](#)

Search Options

The drop boxes allow you to choose **and**, **or** or **not**. It defaults to **and**.

Note you can add rows to your search in EBSCO databases. Some databases will have fewer rows available. In the case of only one search box, put parentheses around your **or** phrases, ex:

(us or United States) and global warming