

# KEYWORD/BOOLEAN SEARCHING (K/B): an introduction

Keyword searching allows you to search for the appearance of **any term, anywhere** in an individual item **record** in **LUIS**. **Internet search engines** and many **online databases** such as journal indexes also use K/B searching to help you tailor your search. By using **Boolean operators** (discussed below) you may search for more than one term at a time, specify logical relationships between terms, and define their proximity to one another. The limits of traditional searching are removed (e.g., only being able to search by a specific subject heading; needing to know the first word of a title). This handout describes K/B searching in LUIS, the online catalog, but the concepts are the same for most electronic systems. LUIS offers both **Keyword** and **Boolean/Keyword** options. Different search techniques are used for each search option.

To search by keyword, select **Boolean Keyword Searching**. For example, in keyword/Boolean searching, you could search for any word appearing in a title. You could find *The Witches of Eastwick* by entering: **eastwick** or **witches**.

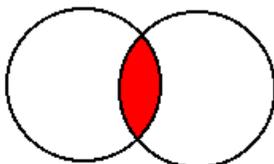
**Stopwords:** These are "short" words (*all, at, some, this, etc.*) which cannot be used as keyword search terms. Many databases have stopwords. Use of stopwords in a keyword search yields no search results. LUIS has no stopwords.

**Punctuation:** *Keyword* searches are usually punctuation sensitive; omit apostrophes, parentheses, hyphens, etc. For example, type *dont* instead of *don't*, *CD ROM* instead of *CD-ROM*.

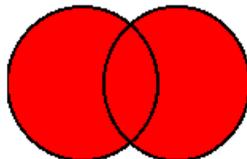
## BOOLEAN OPERATORS

**Logical Operators:** Boolean logical operators allow you to retrieve records which contain your search terms. The primary Boolean logical operators are:

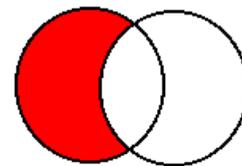
- AND** Each record must contain all search terms (**AND** tends to *narrow a search*); and  
**OR** Each record must contain at least one search term (**OR** tends to *broaden a search*)



China and Japan  
gets records with both terms



China or Japan gets  
records with either term



China NOT Japan  
gets the term China  
excludes Japan

Shaded area in above Venn diagrams represents search results.

### Examples of Logical Operators

*baseball AND olympics* <ENTER>  
*sports OR athletics* <ENTER>

Each record will contain *both* terms  
Each record will contain *one or both* terms

**Positional Operators:** Boolean positional operators allow you to retrieve only those records in which your search terms appear in a specific order in relation to each other. The primary Boolean positional operators are:

- Adj** Search terms must be *adjacent* (side by side), in the same order;  
**Same** Search terms must be *in the same bibliographic record field*, but may be in any order.  
**Near** Search terms must be *next to each other, but may be in any order*.

Some databases allow you to specify that words must be in the *same sentence, same paragraph*, within *x/words* of each other, etc. In LUIS **Keyword** searching, **'as a phrase'** equals *adjacent*. In LUIS' **Keyword/Boolean** search mode, enter phrases in quotes (e.g., **"world wide web"**). Also, in LUISs **Keyword/Boolean** search mode, you must enter the boolean operators in ALL CAPS (e.g., **"WORLD WIDE WEB" OR INTERNET**).

continued--

**ProQuest's Advanced Search Mode** offers these options:

- **Pre/N** [precede by]: Use PRE/N BY to find articles that contain the first specified word or phrase preceding a second by a specified number words. For example: *world PRE/3 web*
- **W/N** [within]: Use WITHIN to find articles that contain a specified word or phrase within a specified number of words of another word or phrase. For example: *computer W/3 careers*
- **W/DOC** [within document]: Use W/DOC to find articles that contain one or more specified words or phrases. For example: *internet W/DOC education*

**Default Operator:** When you type in a keyword search without specifying a logical or positional operator, the default operator of **AND** is automatically assumed by LUIS.

**TRUNCATION:** Use of the truncation symbol ? is the most efficient way to look for variant spellings of words, singular and plural, etc. You can use truncation with any other combination of Boolean operators, or by itself. Enter the truncation symbol at the end of whatever stem word you wish to search. Some databases and search engines use the asterisk (\*) or the exclamation mark (!) for their truncation symbol.

- ? Retrieves all terms beginning with the characters typed before the ? sign.
- ?3 Retrieves only terms beginning with the characters typed plus up to the number of additional characters specified.

Some databases allow for *embedded truncation*; e.g., **wom?n** would retrieve records containing the words *woman* or *women*

Examples of Truncation:	
<i>colo?</i> <ENTER>	Retrieves <i>color, colours, Colorado, colony, etc.</i>
<i>colo?2</i> <ENTER>	Retrieves <i>color, colors, colour, colon, etc.</i>

**NESTING:** As in basic algebra, by using parentheses you may specify the order in which operations take place (those inside parentheses are performed first). More complicated strategies then become possible. Examples:

*(athletes OR sports) AND drugs*                      *(airport? OR airplane?) AND terror?*

The first example will retrieve records in which the words *athletes AND drugs OR sports AND drugs* appear. The second is a broader search and will retrieve *airport, airports, airplane, airplanes* in records where the term(s) *terror, terrorist, terrorize, terrorists, or terrorism* appear in the same record.

Remember, when you are searching in different indexes, catalogs, or search engines, it is important to read the Help screens in order to search successfully in that particular database.

If you need help with keyword searching or other library resources, ask for assistance at the Information Desk (1st floor) or call 237-2580 or use **Electronic Reference** under **Mail Us** on the Library Home Page..