

# Lovejoy Library

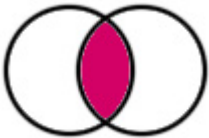


**LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES - SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE**  
 Edwardsville, IL 62026 URL: <http://www.siue.edu/lovejoylibrary> Phone: 618-650-2603 Fax: 618-650-2717

## Boolean Operators

Broaden or narrow your search by combining words or phrases using the Boolean operators **AND**, **OR**, and **NOT**.

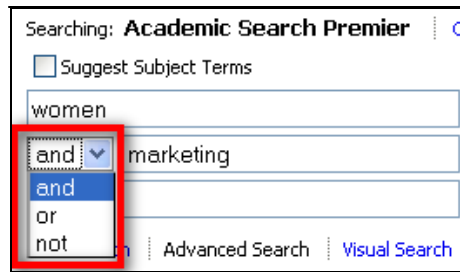
Boolean operators allow you to search for combinations of words or phrases. Boolean operators are used to broaden or narrow the search by combining words or phrases. Boolean searching can be used when searching research databases, the library's catalog or the internet; however, it is important to take notice of the specific database requirements since they may have their own Boolean template.

The results of performing Boolean searches are illustrated by the diagrams below (called Venn diagrams). The diagrams show graphically how using the **AND** operator narrows a search, using **OR** broadens a search and using **NOT** excludes material from a search.

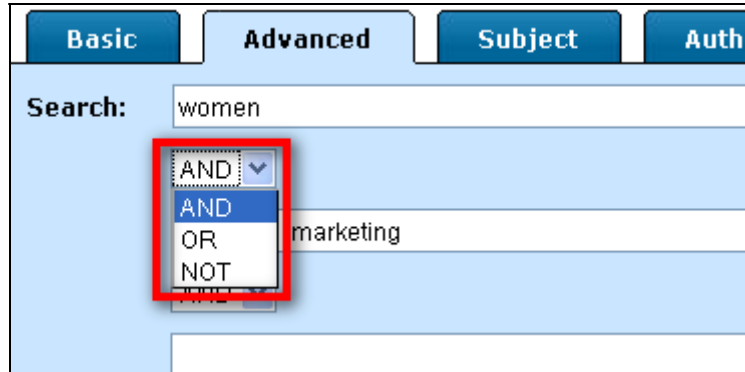
Operator	Example search	The search will find...	Venn diagram
<b>AND</b>	women <b>AND</b> marketing	items containing "women" and "marketing." <b>AND</b> narrows a search, resulting in fewer hits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use <b>AND</b> to combine two ideas when both are important to our search.</li> </ul>	
<b>OR</b>	global warming <b>OR</b> greenhouse effect	items containing either "global warming" or "greenhouse effect" or both. <b>OR</b> broadens a search, resulting in more hits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use to include synonyms or alternate terms in your search.</li> </ul>	
<b>NOT</b>	Caribbean <b>NOT</b> Cuba	items containing "Mexico" but <b>NOT</b> "New Mexico." <i>Caution!</i> It's easy to exclude relevant items. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excludes records containing the second term.</li> </ul>	

Many online catalogs, databases and search engines have an Advanced Search interface that allows for Boolean searching using a built-in template. This takes the place of the operators **AND**, **OR**, **NOT**.

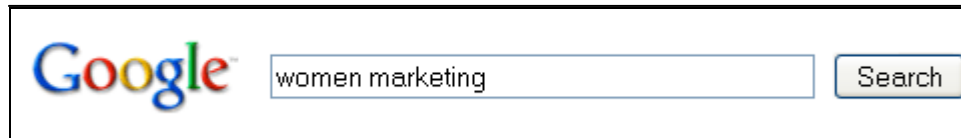
The Academic Search Premier database using built-in Boolean operators:



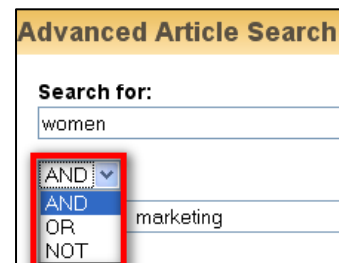
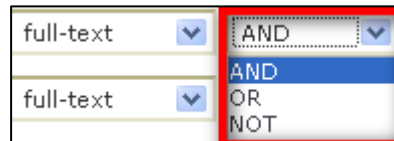
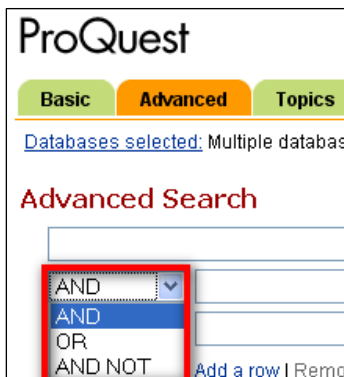
The SIUE library catalog using built-in Boolean operators under the Advanced Search screen:



Google automatically uses **AND** between two words placed in a search box. This search will produce results containing “women” **AND** “marketing.” Google’s Advanced Search Tips explain their search functionality using similar Boolean functions.



Many databases and search engines have an Advanced Search interface that allows for Boolean searching.



For additional assistance contact Lydia Jackson, Instruction Librarian ([ljackson@siue.edu](mailto:ljackson@siue.edu) or 618-650-2604) or Beth Russell, Instruction Specialist ([erussel@siue.edu](mailto:erussel@siue.edu) or 618-650-5529)