## Boolean Logic – plus some useful proximity options

### Embase
(On the Elsevier platform)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logical operators</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Proximity options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong> – to limit your search by combining terms</td>
<td>e.g. diabetes <strong>AND</strong> therapy <strong>(ALL terms must be present in the record)</strong></td>
<td><strong>NEAR/n</strong>&lt;br&gt;This will find terms which are within a specified number of words of each other, <strong>in either direction</strong>.&lt;br&gt;e.g. cardiac <strong>NEAR/5</strong> catheter would find the two words within five (5) words of each other, <strong>in either direction</strong>.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Note</strong>: If you want to add a field name to your proximity searches make sure you enclose the search terms in parentheses.&lt;br&gt;(cardiac <strong>NEAR/5</strong> catheter):ti,ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong> – to broaden your search with alternative terms</td>
<td>e.g. treatment <strong>OR</strong> therapy <strong>OR</strong> medication <strong>(ANY of the terms can be present in the record)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOT</strong> – to limit your search by excluding terms</td>
<td>e.g. cancer patients <strong>NOT</strong> children <strong>(EXCLUDES any records in which &quot;children&quot; appears)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Use <strong>NOT</strong> with great caution, as you may unwittingly exclude relevant articles.&lt;br&gt;This search would remove records which included both adults and children.</td>
<td><strong>NEXT/n</strong>&lt;br&gt;This will find terms which are within a specified number of words of each other, <strong>in the order you entered them</strong>.&lt;br&gt;e.g. hip <strong>NEXT/3</strong> prosthesis would find the two words within three (3) words of each other, <strong>in the order you enter them</strong>.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Note</strong>: If you want to add a field name to your proximity searches make sure you enclose the search terms in parentheses.&lt;br&gt;(hip <strong>NEXT/3</strong> prosthesis):ti,ab</td>
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### PsycINFO
(On the Ovid platform)

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<td><strong>AND</strong> – to limit your search by combining terms</td>
<td>e.g. anxiety <strong>AND</strong> therapy <strong>(ALL terms must be present in the record)</strong></td>
<td><strong>ADJ</strong>&lt;br&gt;This will find records that contain search terms within a specified number of words from each other, <strong>in either direction</strong>.&lt;br&gt;e.g. therapist <strong>adj3</strong> relationship finds records that contain the two words within three (3) words of each other, <strong>in either direction</strong>.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Note</strong>: If you want to add a field name to your proximity searches make sure you enclose the search terms in parentheses.&lt;br&gt;(therapist <strong>adj3</strong> relationship).ti,ab</td>
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<td><strong>OR</strong> – to broaden your search with alternative terms</td>
<td>e.g. psychotherapy <strong>OR</strong> mindfulness <strong>OR</strong> counselling <strong>(ANY of the terms can be present in the record)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>NOT</strong> – to limit your search by excluding terms</td>
<td>e.g. depression <strong>NOT</strong> children <strong>(EXCLUDES any records in which &quot;children&quot; appears)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Use <strong>NOT</strong> with great caution, as you may unwittingly exclude relevant articles.&lt;br&gt;This search would remove records which included both adults and children.</td>
<td><strong>/FREQ=</strong>&lt;br&gt;The frequency operator (<strong>FREQ=</strong>) lets you specify a minimum number of times a term must occur in a record retrieved from your search. Records containing your search term are retrieved only if the term occurs at least the specified number of times. <strong>The frequency operator is particularly useful when searching a text field, such as Abstract or Full Text, for a common word or phrase</strong>.&lt;br&gt;e.g. diet. <strong>/freq=5</strong> would find articles where the word diet occurred <strong>at least 5 times</strong> in the abstract.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Database</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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| **PubMed** | AND – to limit your search by combining terms | e.g. *nausea AND cancer patients*  
  (ALL terms must be present in the record) | Proximity searching is not available in PubMed |
|           | OR – to broaden your search with alternative terms | e.g. *cancer OR neoplasms OR tumours OR tumors*  
  (ANY of the terms can be present in the record) |                                        |
|           | NOT – to limit your search by excluding terms | e.g. *cancer patients NOT children*  
  (EXCLUDES any records in which “children” appears) |                                        |
|           |                                        | Use **NOT** with great caution, as you may unwittingly exclude relevant articles.  
  This search would remove records which included both adults and children. |                                        |
| **Scopus** | AND – to limit your search by combining terms | e.g. *diet AND obesity*  
  (ALL terms must be present in the record) | **PRE/n**  
  “precedes by” This will find terms which are within a specified number of words of each other, **in the order you entered them.**  
  e.g. *cardiac pre/3 catheter* would find the words separated by three (3) or fewer words but cardiac would always have to come first |
|           | OR – to broaden your search with alternative terms | e.g. *obesity OR overweight OR obesogenic*  
  (ANY of the terms can be present in the record) |                                        |
|           | AND NOT – to limit your search by excluding terms | e.g. *obesity AND NOT children*  
  (EXCLUDES any records in which “children” appears) |                                        |
|           |                                        | Use **AND NOT** with great caution, as you may unwittingly exclude relevant articles.  
  This search would remove records which included both adults and children. |                                        |
|           |                                        | **W/n**  
  “within” This will find records that contain search terms within a specified number of words from each other, **in either direction.**  
  e.g. *eating w/5 diet* would find the two words no more than five (5) words apart. |                                        |
|           |                                        | **Scopus guidelines when choosing a number.**  
  To find terms in the **same phrase**, use 3, 4, or 5.  
  To find terms in the **same sentence**, use 15.  
  To find terms in the **same paragraph**, use 50. |                                        |