

# Plan your search

Before beginning your search, develop a search plan by following the steps below

**Step 1: Summarize your question or topic**

**Step 2: Identify the main concepts** Highlight, underline or circle the main words or ideas in the above summary

**Step 3: Insert the main concepts below**  
Two to three concepts is usually sufficient

**Step 4: Add synonyms** (alternate search words) for each concept  
Remember to consider truncation and phrase searching, variant spelling

Concept 1	OR	OR
AND		
Concept 2	OR	OR
AND		
Concept 3	OR	OR

**Step 5: Limit the search results with filters**

Date range: .....

Source Types: .....

Peer Reviewed: Yes / No

## Advanced search techniques:

Technique	Usage	Example
Synonyms	Search for words or phrases that have a same or similar meaning	<i>youth, teenager, adolescent</i>
Truncation	Search for spelling variations	<i>organi?ation</i> will search for variant spelling such as <i>organization</i> and <i>organisation</i>
	Search for different forms of a word	<i>research*</i> will search for <i>research</i> , <i>researchers</i> and <i>researching</i>
Phrase searching	Search for all terms in the exact order specified within quotation marks	<i>"corporate social responsibility"</i>
Boolean operators	<b>AND</b> will <u>narrow</u> a search by returning records only containing <u>both</u> terms	<i>accounting AND ethics</i> <i>"social media" AND marketing</i>
	<b>OR</b> will <u>broaden</u> a search by returning records with <u>one or both</u> terms	<i>cars OR automobiles</i> <i>youth OR teen* OR adoles*</i>
	<b>NOT</b> will <u>narrow</u> a search by returning records with the <u>first term</u> but <u>not both</u> terms	<i>Cars OR automobiles NOT Europe</i>
Acronyms	Avoid using acronyms	Use <i>Canadian Broadcasting Corporation</i> rather than <i>CBC</i>

## Notes

Use this area to make notes and record additional information relevant to your search plan, such as databases which are applicable to your topic.  
Business article databases: **ABI Inform (ABI)**, **Business Source Ultimate (BSU)**, **Canadian Business & Current Affairs (CBCA)**

Need help with your search? Chat online with library staff at Ask Us: <https://lib.unb.ca/help/ask-us>