

## Advanced search techniques EBSCO

Guideline on advanced search techniques for: CINAHL Global Health, AMED and SportDiscus.

### Access

Get access to the EBSCO databases by <https://sdu-dk-en.libguides.com/databases>

This guide on advanced search techniques covers the bibliographic databases supplied by EBSCO.

If you want to do a thorough literature search, it may be appropriate to use the technical features available in the databases.

CINAHL, Global Health, SportDiscus and AMED is accessed through EBSCO, and the features demonstrated below is therefore the same for all databases.

The extended features (commands) available should be used as part of the free text search. The free text search should be combined with a search using subject terms (e.g., Cinahl headings).

### Truncation and masking

*Truncation and masking using the wild cards \* ? and #*

\* is used as a wild card when you truncate a word and thereby substitute one, or more or zero letters in a word.

Searching `educat*` will retrieve documents containing the words `educat`, for instance `education`, `educations`, `educating`, `educated` etc.

Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options
<input type="checkbox"/> S1	 <code>educat*</code>	<b>Expanders</b> - Apply equivalent subjects <b>Search modes</b> - Boolean/Phrase

? or # is used as wild card to substitute one or zero letters in a word, either within a word or in the end of a word.

Searching `p#ediatric` will retrieve documents containing the words `pediatric` *and* `paediatric`

Notice that you cannot use both truncation (\*) and wild card (?) in one word, thus searching for `p?ediatric*` is equal to searching `p*`.

Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options
<input type="checkbox"/> S1	 <code>p#ediatric</code>	<b>Expanders</b> - Apply equivalent subjects <b>Search modes</b> - Boolean/Phrase

## Proximity operators

You can use proximity operators between search terms if you want to specify that words should be within a distance of  $n$  words (regardless of the order of the words).

It is important to know that EBSCO, as default, accepts five words between words in a phrase (see below).

## Examples

1. *Patient education* will return documents, with the term patient education with up to five words between these two words. This is the default setting, when searching a phrase.

*Patient N1 education* will return documents, with the term's patient and education with one word between (but regardless of the order of the words).

*Patient N2 education* will return documents, with up to two words between the term's patient and education, e.g., patient and caregiver education.

In other words, it is important to remember, when using proximity operator  $n < 5$  (e.g., N1, N2, N3, N4), this will result in a more limited search, than just searching for the terms (e.g., patient education). It might be appropriate to use another proximity operator as the build in N5

S3	patient N2 education	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects	<a href="#">View Results</a> (88,129)
		Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	
S2	patient N1 education	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects	<a href="#">View Results</a> (84,778)
		Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	
S1	patient education	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects	<a href="#">View Results</a> (94,870)
		Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	

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2. If you want to investigate which phrases you retrieve using different proximity operators, e.g., what proximity operator X retrieves compared to X-1, you may use the Boolean operator NOT, as shown below.

### **N2 NOT N1:** (patient N2 education) NOT (patient N1 education)

S1	(patient N2 education) not (patient N1 education)	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects	<a href="#">View Results</a> (3,351)
		Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	

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You will find this title: *Improving Tracheostomy Care Delivery: Instituting Clinical Care Pathways and Nursing **Education** to Improve **Patient** Outcomes.*

### **N3 NOT N2:** (patient N3 education) NOT (patient N2 education)

S1	(patient N3 education) not (patient N2 education)	Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects	<a href="#">View Results</a> (2,313)
		Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	

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You will find this title: ***Patient safety and interprofessional education.***

**N4 NOT N3:** (patient N4 education) NOT (patient N3 education)

S1  (patient N4 education) not (patient N3 education)

Expanders - Apply equivalent subjects

[View Results](#) (2,290)

Search modes - Boolean/Phrase

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You will find this title: *Simultaneous Multiple **Patient** Simulation in Undergraduate Nursing **Education**: A Focused Literature Review*

## Know more on EBSCO?

EBSCO Help: [https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/EBSCO-Training?language=en\\_US](https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/EBSCO-Training?language=en_US)

Tutorial, Advanced Search: [https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/CINAHL-Databases-Advanced-Searching-Tutorial?language=en\\_US](https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/CINAHL-Databases-Advanced-Searching-Tutorial?language=en_US)

## Need any help to your search, contact us:

### The University Library of Southern Denmark

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E-mail: [infosal@bib.sdu.dk](mailto:infosal@bib.sdu.dk)

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### Access to E-resources

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