

Search Syntax — At-a-Glance

| <i>Use this:</i> | <i>To Run a Search:</i> |
|------------------|---|
| * | <p>Truncation: Stands in for any number of characters, including 0, at the end of a word.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for comput* will find articles that contain "computer," "computerized," or "computers."</p> |
| ? | <p>Wildcard: Stands in for one character in or at the end of a word.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for educat?? will find articles that contain "educated" and "educator." But it won't find "education," which contains more than two letters following "educat."</p> |
| "..." | <p>Quotation Marks: Search words must appear exactly as typed.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for "business process" will find business process articles, but not about the process of starting a business.</p> |
| (..) | <p>Parentheses: Whatever is inside the parentheses is searched first, then those results are searched with the words outside the parentheses.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for Federal Reserve OR (U.S. AND economic policy) finds articles dealing with either the Federal Reserve or articles containing both the words "U.S." and "economic policy."</p> |
| AND | <p>AND: Both the search words before and after AND must appear in the article. AND narrows your search.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for EI Nino AND Atlantic Ocean will only find articles that mention both El Nino and Atlantic Ocean.</p> |
| OR | <p>OR: Either the words before or after OR can appear in the article. OR broadens your search.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for EI Nino OR Atlantic Ocean will find articles that mention either El Nino or Atlantic Ocean.</p> |
| AND NOT | <p>AND NOT: The search words before AND NOT must appear in the article, but the words after must not.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for EI Nino AND NOT Atlantic Ocean gives you articles on El Nino, excluding those which also mention Atlantic Ocean.</p> |
| W/n | <p>Within: Search words must appear within <i>n</i> of words to match.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for U.S. W/15 economic policy finds articles where U.S. appears within 15 words of economic policy. This finds articles on American economic policy, but doesn't restrict the search to use the exact phrase "U.S. economic policy."</p> |
| NOT W/n | <p>Not Within: Search words must be separated by at least <i>n</i> words to match.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for U.S. NOT W/50 economic policy finds articles where U.S. doesn't appear within 50 words of economic policy. This finds articles on worldwide economic policy, very few would include information about U.S. economic policy.</p> |
| PRE/n | <p>Precede By: The first search word must precede the second by <i>n</i> words to match. This is useful for phrase searching.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Searching for U.S. PRE/5 economic policy finds articles on many types of American economic policy, such as U.S. foreign aid economic policy, or U.S. wartime economic policy.</p> |

Tips for Defining Your Search Word or Phrase

Follow these tips for searching ProQuest.

Handling Spelling Variations

If you have **Spelling Variants** turned on (you can access this from the Advanced Search page), ProQuest will automatically search for British and American English spellings of words, as well as looking for the singular, plural, singular possessive and plural possessive forms of all search words. Use the truncation (?) symbol to find other endings.

When You Need More Articles

Try broadening your search by switching from **Search in: Citation and Abstract** to **Search in: Article Text** in Basic or Advanced Search Methods. In the Guided Search Method try changing **All Basic Search Fields** to **Article Text**.

Uppercase or Lowercase Letters?

Search statements are not case sensitive. A search for **Federal Reserve Board** will find the same articles as **federal reserve board** in Basic, Guided, Advanced and Publication Search Methods. In the Natural Language Search Method, you should capitalize proper nouns.

Searching Two-Word Phrases

Two-word searches are treated as an exact phrase. A search for **Federal Reserve** will find articles in which the word **Federal** immediately precedes the word **Reserve**.

About Longer Phrases

Three or more contiguous words are searched in proximity. A search for **Federal Reserve system** will find articles in which the terms **Federal**, and **Reserve** and **system** appear within a 250-word block.

Searching Exact Phrases

Use quotation marks to search exact phrases that are three or more words in length, e.g. "**Federal Reserve system**". Quotation marks also let you include **Stop Words** in your search.

A search for **fire and brimstone** will be interpreted as asking ProQuest to find articles containing both the word fire and the word brimstone within a 250-word block. The search "**fire and brimstone**" will be interpreted as a command to find that exact phrase.

A complete list of Stop Words can be found in the **Search Guide** or in the **Advanced Search Method**.

Searching Citations and Abstracts

When you select **Search in: Citation and Abstract** in the Basic or Advanced Search Methods, the system actually searches in several areas:

- Author
- Abstract
- Article Title
- Company Name
- Geographical Name
- Personal Name
- Product Name
- Subject Terms
- Publication Name (Source)

Selecting **Search in: Article Text** searches the article title and abstract as well as the article text.