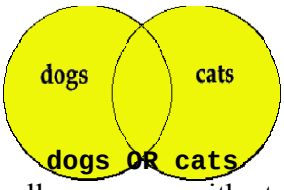
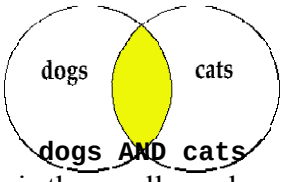
Basic Search Tips and Advanced Boolean Explained

BASIC SEARCHING	EXAMPLES
Quotation marks **" "**	• Requires words to searched as a phrase, in the exact order you type them **"working mothers"** **"affirmative action"** • Search **which versus that** Only **versus** is searched on. **Which** and **that** are ignored.
Common Words Usually Ignored **+** or **" "** to search them	• To require common words to be searched: **+which versus +that** **"which versus that"**
Excluding **-**word **-"**phrase in quotes**"**	**"acute pancreatitis" diet –cat –dog –"pancreatic cancer"**
OR allows more than one term **OR**  allows pages with at least one of the terms	• **OR** requires at least one of the terms joined by it to appear somewhere in the document, in any order. **"african americans" OR blacks** **ear OR nose OR throat** • The more words you enter connected by **OR**, the more documents you get. Broadens the search.. • USES: o The **OR** operator is generally used to join similar, equivalent, or synonymous concepts. **"global warming" OR "greenhouse effect"**
AND (default)  is the small overlap where both terms occur	• **AND** is the default and only needs to be typed if you are using other Boolean operators with ( ). **infopeople training** is logically the same as **infopeople and training** • The more words you enter connected by **AND**, the fewer documents you get. All your words will be searched on • USES: o The **AND** operator is generally used to join different kinds of concepts, different aspects of the question. o **"global warming" AND "sea level rise" AND california**

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Advanced Boolean Explained

OPERATOR	WHAT IT DOES & WHEN TO USE IT
AND NOT **dogs AND NOT cats** excludes pages that mention cats, even if they also mention dogs	• Excludes documents containing whatever follows it. • The **AND NOT** operator is generally used after you have performed a search, looked at the results, and determined that you do not want to see pages containing some word or phrase. • USES: o The **AND NOT** operator should be used with extreme caution, because it eliminates the entire page, and some pages may be of value to you for other information they contain. I almost never use **and not** for this reason. o **"global warming" AND "sea level rise" AND NOT california** - The first two terms must be somewhere and any page containing *california* will be thrown out.
NEAR **dogs NEAR cats** requires both terms, like **AND**, with the added requirement that they be within 16 words of each other Available in Exalead.com only	• Requires the term following it to occur within a certain proximity of the preceding word in the search. In Exalead.com, **NEAR** requires the terms to be *within 16 words* of each other in either direction. • Joining words by **NEAR** gives you fewer documents than **AND**, because it requires the words to be closer together. • USES: o The **NEAR** operator is used when you want to require that certain terms appear in the same sentence or paragraph of the document. o **"global warming" NEAR "sea level rise"** - Requires the two phrases to occur within 16 words of each other, in either direction.
( ) parentheses: "Nesting"	• Require the terms and operations that occur inside them to be searched first. This is called "nesting." • Parentheses MUST BE USED to group terms joined by **OR** when there is any other Boolean operator in the search. o **"global warming" AND "sea level rise" AND (california OR "pacific coast*")** - Requires first two terms somewhere in all documents, and either *california* or *pacific coast*. • Parentheses also MUST BE USED with **NEAR:** o **("global warming" NEAR "sea level rise") AND (california OR "pacific coast*")** - Requires *sea level rise* to be within 16 words of *global warming*; the rest can be anywhere in the pages. The parentheses guarantee that the effect of **near** stops with *sea level rise*.

You do not need or even want to get very complicated with Boolean searching in web searching. Searching the web is free, and several simpler searches take less time than a humongous search. Moreover, with complicated searches, you often don't know which parts of the search worked and which did not. Simpler searches can more easily be compared with one another, and you know what worked.

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