

NSC LIBRARY CATALOG – SEARCH HINTS & TIPS

To ensure a successful online search, it is important to understand effective search techniques. Before you begin, take a moment to read the following Hints & Tips, which give various search options and time saving practices.

You can search a single field or multiple fields. Also you can input more than one search term in a field by using Boolean connectors. The connectors used in searching this catalog are unique:

- To find all the search terms in a field, use **& (ampersand) as the connector** (this signifies **AND**)
- To find any of the search terms in a field, use **/ (forward slash) as the connector** (this signifies **OR**)
- To exclude a search term in a field, use **! (exclamation mark) as the connector** (this signifies **NOT**)

Search by Title: Type a few prominent words from the title, and connect each of the words with the **&** connector.

Search by Author: Type the last name followed by the first and/or second initial of the first name. If you don't know the second initial, use an asterisk * as the truncation symbol.

EXAMPLES

- Smith J
- Smith JA
- Smith J*

Search by Year: To limit results use the year field in your search strategy.

EXAMPLES

- Documents published after 1995, use **>1995**
- Documents published before 1995, use **<1995**
- Documents published in the year range of 1995 to 1999, use **1995:1999**
- Documents published in 1995, use that single year **1995**

Please note that retrieved citations with an "N.D." signify "no date given."

Search by Keywords: All citations in the online catalog are indexed using keywords. Keywords can reflect words in a title or concepts in the text of a document. Enter a word that is relevant to your search needs; if results appear, then you know this is a valid keyword. Understand that sometimes "natural language" may not represent a keyword (e.g., drunk driving – the keyword we use is "alcohol drivers"). You can create a multiple keyword search strategy using the **&**, **/**, **!** connectors between each word.

► **DO NOT** use the word "safety" as a search term. Since this catalog reflects documents dealing with safety, it is an understood term.

EXAMPLES

- To search for "confined spaces and hazards," use **confined spaces & hazards**
- To search for "driving and (distractions or cellular phones)," use **driving & (distractions /cellular phones)**

If you have trouble finding a valid keyword, try entering the word in the title field. If results appear, review the keywords listed in the first few citations to determine the appropriate keyword. If this doesn't work, contact us for help.

When reviewing the keywords in any citation, you will note that a numerical value is given after each word. This "quality number" indicates the strength of the keyword in the document. The numbering system we use is as follows:

- 1 – strong content
- 2 – moderate content
- 3 – passing reference
- 6 – strong statistics given
- 7 – moderate statistics given
- 8 – weak statistics given

Search by Any Word: This method offers very flexible searching, but can be the least accurate. Enter a word into the field, and any retrieved results will show the word in any field. It is strongly recommended that the truncation symbol be used for search words entered into this field.

EXAMPLE

- To search for "sleeping or sleepiness," use **sleep***

Contact Information

Your results will be a list of citations that are relevant to your search strategy. Please note that a citation's accession number signifies the following:

- B = book
- C = factual document
- S = research study

Some citations include a URL field, allowing access to a document that is free on the Internet. For other citations you can contact us for help in obtaining the documents. This can be done by listing the accession numbers in the Request Library Assistance form in the frame on the left-hand side of the search screen. Or you can "cut and paste" the citations into an e-mail. Finally, you can contact the Library Reference Desk by telephone or fax and tell us what documents you are interested in.

If you have any questions with searching the Library catalog, feel free to contact us. Difficult questions may require the assistance of a librarian; or you may just want us to do the catalog search for you. The Library and its services are a member benefit; we are here to help you with your information needs.

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