Basic Searching Techniques

- Breaking down your topic (slide 2)
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Breaking down your Topic

- Imagine the title of the ideal book or magazine article
  - The virtual economies of video games
- Identify key concepts
  - Economies / Video Games
- Think of synonyms or alternate search words
Identifying Search Terms

Economies
- Economies
- Currency
- Capital
- Commodities

Video Games
- Video games
- Digital games
- Virtual worlds
- Synthetic worlds

Basic Searching Techniques

- Boolean Operators
- Truncation
- Phrase Searching
- Field Searching
- Setting Limits
Boolean Operators

Boolean operators link concepts within a search

- **AND** (to include all terms / concepts)
- **OR** (to include at least one term / concept)
- **NOT** (to exclude terms / concepts)
Truncation or Wildcards

• Expands a term to include all forms of the root word:

\[ econom^* \] finds economics, economy, economies, economical

Phrase Searching

• Phrase searching forces the database to look for two or more words together

Instead of:
   video games
Try:
   “video games” or (video games)
Field Searching

- Title
- Author
- Subject
- Descriptor
- Anywhere

Setting Limits

- Language
- Date
- Type of Publication
Putting It All Together

(video game* OR digital game* OR synthetic world* OR virtual world*)

AND

(econom* OR currenc* OR capital OR commodit*)

Refining Your Search

• To find FEWER results,
  – Search in specific fields (title, abstract, subjects etc.)
  – Add or change search limits (date, language, etc.)
  – Add more search terms (using AND)
  – Use phrase searching instead of AND
Refining Your Search

• To find **MORE** results,
  – Use truncation or wildcard characters (* or ?)
  – Include more synonyms (use OR)
  – Search “anywhere” rather than in specific fields
  – Remove search limits (e.g. date, language, etc.)
  – Use **AND** instead of phrase searching

Refining Your Search

• To find more **RELEVANT** results,
  – Use **NOT** to exclude unwanted terms
  – Search specific fields (title, abstract, subject(descriptor), etc.)
  – Use **AND** instead of OR