

Lexis/Nexis Workshop

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Workshop today

- Review of search basics and special features
- Practice
- Create trial logins

- To create your trial account go to:

<https://www.lexisnexis.com/trialid>

- Once you have your login and password confirmed by email, sign in at:

<http://www.lexis.com>

Lexis/Nexis

Lexis (Legal)	Nexis (News)
Court cases	Newspapers *
Legislation	Broadcast transcripts *
Briefs, motions, pleadings	Magazines *
Law reports, digests	Trade publications *
Secondary legal	Business information

Where & When can you use it?

- Vanier and Webster Libraries
- Reference Desk Hours Only
- Course related projects only
- Commercial use strictly prohibited

Not one database, but many!

- You cannot search all sources at once
- You must choose which sources to search

Sources are organized into files

- Individual files
 - New York Times, Washington Post, CBS News transcripts.
- Combined files
 - News, Most recent two years
 - Iraq war news
 - European news sources

When you begin...

- Identify key words that describe the major concepts for your topic
- Use the most specific terms
- Think of what terms would be in the most ideal article you could find.

For example.....

Language legislation in Quebec

Language **and** legislation **and** Quebec

Boolean operators/connectors

- AND

Both terms must appear

- OR

Either term must appear

- AND NOT

Term must not appear

Keywords for each concept

language	legislation Law Laws Legislate Legislated	Quebec Quebecois Quebecs
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Search tips: truncation

- Truncation is used to find all variations of a word stem
- In Lexis/Nexis truncation is an exclamation point : !


For example:

Legislat!

Same as doing:

(legislation or legislate or legislated or legislating)

Search tips: wildcard

- a wildcard replaces a single character
- wildcard symbol is an asterix: 

For example:

wom*n finds (women or woman)

Keywords for each concept

Language!	Legislat! Law Laws	Quebec!
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Combine your keywords....

quebec! and language! and (legislat! or law or laws)

Use parentheses around your synonyms.

Searching through the full-text

- Usually the default
- Broadest way to search
- Many false hits
- Not recommended in full-text databases unless **any reference** to your keywords might be useful.

Problems with “AND”

- Only requires that both terms appear anywhere in the same article
- Relationship between the terms may not be relevant, especially in full-text files
- “AND” sometimes delivers results that are too broad

Proximity Operators

- **Establish a relationship between your terms**
- Particularly useful in a full-text database
- $w/\#$ words must be within $\#$ words of each other, any order
- Examples:
 - language w/ 5 law
 - language w/ 10 law
 - language w/ 3 law

Proximity Operators

- w/s = words must be within the same sentence

e.g. frequent flyer w/s mile

- w/p = words must be within the same paragraph

e.g. retire! W/p benefit

Proximity Operators

- You can combine w/#, w/s, w/p with boolean operators and parenthesis

language w/5 (law or laws or legisla!) and quebec

language w/s (law or laws or legisla!)

language w/p (law or laws or legisla!)

Order of operations

First: or

w/#

pre/#

w/s

w/p

w/seg

Last: and

Parenthesis give you control over the order of operations.

For example.....

mary w/2 **smith or ted** W/2 **jones or brian** w/2 matthews

Vs

(mary w/2 smith) or (ted w/2 jones) or (brian w/2 matthews)

Frequency searching

- atleast n (keyword)

e.g. atleast10(canadian) and television

Segments / Fields

- Every document is divided into segments or fields (eg. title, lead, subject, company name etc.)
- You can restrict your search to specific sections
- Segments or fields vary with source.

Segment/Field searching

- Limits the results to those records with terms in specific segments/fields.
- More specific, relevant results
- Greater control over your results

Segment/Field Searching

Lexis/Nexis:

- ▶ hlead(family leave)
- ▶ company(dupont)
- ▶ hlead(family leave) and company(dupont)

Use available menus

Singular or plural?

In Lexis/Nexis:

- ▶ Plural forms are automatically searched
- ▶ civil liberty will find “civil liberties”

But.....

- ▶ woman will not find women
- ▶ child will not find children

NB: Factiva does not do automatic plurals.

In Lexis you must specify....

- singular (aid) will only find the singular
- plural (aids) will only find the plural

e.g. plural(aids) and treatment

Punctuation

- Punctuation is treated as a space
- take-over will only find take over
- Search both with: takeover or take over
- to find words which include punctuation or operators use quotes, e.g. “at&t”
“not for profit”

Lexis/Nexis capitalization

All variations of capitalization are searched, unless you request otherwise!

- `caps(coke)` First letter is capitalized.
- `allcaps (caw)` All letters are capitalized.
- `nocaps (cola)` All lowercase

Narrowing your search

- ▶ Limit your search to headline/lead: `hlead(language)`
- ▶ Use proximity operators: `quebec! w/3 language w/3 law`
- ▶ Make sure you are using specific terminology
- ▶ Check your truncations, eg: `cat*` is too short a word root.

- ▶ Try the FOCUS feature
- ▶ Allows you to search for terms within your search results

Broaden your search

- Consider additional synonyms
- Use truncation, wildcards
- Too many words? Pare down your search to the essential concepts
- Review the segments you are searching in and whatever limits are being applied.