# Deakin University logoSearch Planner

Before you begin your search, develop a search plan by following the steps below.

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| Step 1: Summarise your research question or topic below.  |
| Step 2: Identify the main concepts from your topic. |
| Step 3: Brainstorm synonyms or alternative keywords for your main concepts. |
| Step 4: Develop a search strategy below using search techniques and keywords. |
| Concept 1 |  |
| **AND** |
| ­  |
| Concept 2 |
| **AND** |
|  |
| Concept 3(If required) |
| Step 5: What refining options might you use? Where might you search? (e.g., Date range? Scholarly peer reviewed? Database name etc.) |

## Search techniques: quick reference examples

| Technique | When to use it? | Example | What it does? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| AND | Searching for two different concepts | Teenager AND “social media” | Narrows search results |
| OR | Searching for two similar concepts | Teenager OR adolescent  | Broadens search results |
| NOT | Excluding a term from your search | Teenager NOT child | Narrows search results |
| Truncation (\*) | Searching for alternative word endings | Teen\* | Broadens search results |
| Phrase searching (“”) | Searching for an exact phrase | “Social media” | Narrows search results |
| Wildcard (?) | Searching for alternative spelling | Organi?ation | Broadens search results |
| Using brackets  | Grouping concepts in a single search box | (teen\* OR adolescent) AND “social media” | Allows grouping of keywords within a single search box  |
| Notes |  |  |
| Use this area to make notes and record additional information relevant to your search plan, such as:* databases which are applicable to your topic or discipline
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