

Searching Tips in LIS Databases

To Connect to LISA, Library Literature or LISTA:

From the GSLIS Collection Library home page, select the database name from the “Quicklist” drop-down menu.

Boolean Operators

- Use “or” to expand search; it is typically used with like-terms or synonymous terms
EX: (online catalog or opac or pac)
- Use “and” to narrow search set to contain two or more elements
EX: (online catalog and academic libraries)
- Use “not” to exclude an element from the search set
EX: (online catalogs and not public libraries)

Searching Strategy	LISA	Library Literature	LISTA
Truncation	Use the * symbol at the root word (ex. librar* will retrieve library, libraries, librarian, etc.) and to indicate an unlimited number of characters within a word (ex. behavi*r retrieves behaviour or behavior)	Use the * symbol at the root word (ex. librar* will retrieve library, libraries, librarian, etc.) and to indicate an unlimited number of characters within a word (ex. behavi*r retrieves behaviour or behavior)	Use the * symbol at the root word to retrieve a variation of the term
Wildcards	Use the ? to find alternative spellings; the ? represents a single character; two ?? represents two characters, etc. (ex. wom?n retrieves woman or women)	Use the ? to find alternative spellings; the ? represents a single character; two ?? represents two characters, etc. (ex. wom?n retrieves woman or women)	Use the ? to find alternative spellings; the ? represents a single character; two ?? represents two characters, etc. (ex. wom?n retrieves woman or women)
Proximity Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WITHIN "X" Find words within a specified radius (ex. carbon within 3 fiber retrieves records that contain carbon and fiber in any order and within a three word radius of one other) • NEAR Find words within 10 words of each other (ex. women near violence retrieves records that contain women and violence in any order and within a 10 word radius of one other) • BEFORE Finds words in a relative order (ex. social before security) • AFTER Finds words that contain words in the relative order specified with the after expression (ex. scope after science) 	No Proximity Operators Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Near (N)</i> - N5 finds the words if they are within <i>five words</i> of one another regardless of the order in which they appear, (ex. tax N5 reform will find results that would match <i>tax reform</i> as well as <i>reform of income tax</i>) • <i>Within (W)</i> - W8 finds the words if they are within <i>eight words</i> of one another and in the order in which you entered them (ex. tax W8 reform to find results that would match <i>tax reform</i> but would not match <i>reform of income tax</i>)

General Searching Tips

1. Enter search term(s) in the three search boxes provided. Remember that you expand terms using 'OR' in either box. (It is usually a good idea to express a single concept with multiple words in each box. So, instead of 'public library catalogs' all in one box, put "public librar*" in one box and "catalog* or OPAC or pac" in the second box)
2. From the pull down menu, select where (i.e. fields) terms will be searched (e.g. title, author, journal name, or default fields).
3. Click on the appropriate Boolean Operator to connect your keywords (e.g. and, or, not)
4. If appropriate, limit search by document type (e.g. feature article = article in Library Literature).
5. Using the "search history" option can further modify your search results. It allows you to combine any combination of searches you've conducted since accessing a particular database. Combine searches or add new keywords to old searches to create new results
6. Below or next to each citation, click on "**Article Now**" to find out if the full-text article is available in any of the other databases.

Refining Your Search

1. Add more keywords and/or choose different fields
 - Think of synonyms or like-terms for your keywords (example: copyright **OR** intellectual property **OR** fair use)
 - Narrow down the topic by adding a new concept. If you are searching for information about copyright and libraries, be more specific. For example, narrow the search to copyright issues with reserve materials in libraries.
 - Start off with a broad field like keyword, all-smart or default field; then, start refining your search by using a different field such as the title or abstract field.
2. Use the Thesaurus (i.e. controlled vocabulary, subjects or descriptors)
 - Using the thesaurus allows you to find the specific words or phrases used to describe an item; sometimes, it also provides you with broader and narrower terms, which can be useful when trying to think of synonyms.
 - Using the thesaurus allows you to retrieve the maximum number of relevant documents in a database.
 - Ex: LISA uses the phrase "user training" for the terms library instruction or bibliographic instruction
 - Ex: The OPAC use the phrase "Myocardial infarction" for "heart attack"