

Use **Advanced Search** when **Advanced Search** returns too many – or too few – results, or results that were not what you're looking for.

Advanced Search allows you to do keyword searches in multiple fields and without having to enter any Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT).

You may be able to search other libraries. If this list appears, select a group of libraries.

To find only books, videos, or other type of material, select it from this list.

To find materials from a specific period, select from this list and enter a year.

**All these words**

Use this when you want materials whose title, author, subject, or series contains every word you entered.

This is the same as adding a Boolean AND between your search words.

The more words you enter, the *smaller* the search results will be.

**Any of these words**

Use this when you want to search using several keywords at once.

This is the same as adding a Boolean OR between your search words.

The more words you enter, the *larger* the search results will be.

**Starting with these words**

Use this when you have a title or subject that contains **stop words**.

This search won't ignore any of the words you enter.

Use it also when a title is very long—just enter the first few words.

**This phrase**

Use this when you want materials whose title, author, subject, or series contains your search words as a phrase.

This is the same as surrounding your search term with quotation marks.

**Cross References**

After searching, the **Browse** tab may include cross-references to point you to the correct term and to related terms.

**Examples:**  
MDs See Physicians  
Vipers See Snakes  
Diet See A/so Food

**Please note!**

Search terms are not case sensitive.

Destiny puts an "AND" between each field.

**Stop Words**

Because they're very common, the following words are ignored when searching:

a, and, are, at  
be, but, by  
for  
if, in, into, is, it  
no, not  
of, on, or  
s, such  
t, that, the, their, then,  
there, these, they, this, to  
was, will, with

To include any of them in your search, make sure to select "Starting with these words."

**Truncation**

Add an asterisk to the end of a word to find plurals, words with alternative spellings, or variant endings.

An \* matches any number of characters, including none, at the end of a word.

**Example:**  
electron\* finds:  
electron  
electrons  
electronic  
electronics

**Wildcards**

Substitute ? for one or more letters to find variant forms or when you're unsure of the spelling.

A ? matches any single character in or at the end of a word.

**Examples:**  
a?sorption finds:  
absorption  
adsorption

Johns?n finds:  
Johnsen  
Johnson

## Research tips . . .

### Determine your keywords

Look at the words in your essay question or research topic.

List all the main words and additional words that describe your subject.

Then add synonyms and related terms to the list.


Use reference works such as encyclopedias to learn the basic facts and background information about your topic and gather some additional keywords and search terms.

Then use these words when searching.

### Find subject terms for your keywords

To discover the “official” subject terms for your keywords, you can use the **Catalog**:

On the **Search** page, enter a few keywords and click **Subject**. When the results appear, try these:

A. Find something in the list that looks promising. Click  **Details** and look under **Explore!** to find the “official” subject headings (terms) used to describe your topic.

B. Click the Browse tab to learn which terms are used to describe your topic.

Add any relevant subject terms to your keyword list. Then search again using the terms you found.

### Start with a broad search

Perform a few searches using your keywords and subject terms on the **Search** page.

Start with a **Keyword** search that finds materials by matching your words with words anywhere in the records.

Then try a **Subject** search to find subjects that match your words.

These initial searches will give you a feel for what materials the library has on your topic.

**Refine your search** on the **Advanced Search** page where you can decide not only *where* but also *how* you want the **Catalog** to search for your keywords.

### Not enough search results?

Broaden it to find more materials:

- Type in more keywords and use “Any of these words” instead of “All of these words.”
- Use more general terms.
- If you have a **Look in** box, search other libraries as well as your own.
- Use **truncation** (\*) to get variations or alternate spellings of your term.
- Check your spelling.
- You may be using slang or “unofficial” keywords. To discover the correct terms, use the techniques described under **Find subject terms for your keywords**.
- Your topic may be too specific and there aren’t many materials on it. You may need to change it to a more general topic.
- Your topic may be too new to have much written about it yet. You may need to alter your topic a bit.

### Too many search results?

Narrow it to find the most relevant materials:

- If there are words that you know are not in the title, author, subject, or series, put NOT (and a space) in front of each unwanted word. (Make sure to use uppercase letters; Destiny ignores “not” and “Not.”)
- Try limiting the results to materials of a certain type or published during a certain time span.
- Use more precise search terms.
- Use subject terms (headings) instead of keywords.
- Remove any truncation.
- If you still find too much information, your topic may be too broad with lots of materials on it. Narrowing your topic may make your results list more manageable.

**For additional help,  
ask your librarian!**