

Online Searching: Boolean & Relevance

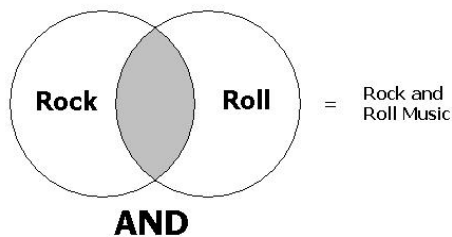
Boolean Searching _____

Boolean searching

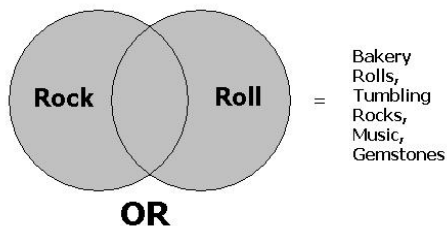
- combines search terms with AND OR NOT, concrete operators
- selects results in a concrete, absolute, mathematical (Boolean) manner
- does not measure relevancy
- is exact, not “relative” in results

Boolean Examples _____

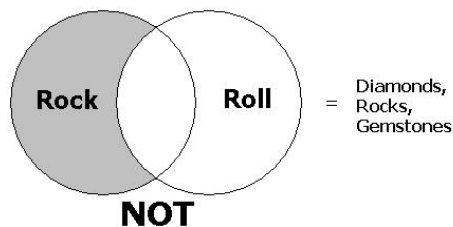
By combining terms with **AND**, you will retrieve items with **BOTH** terms:



By combining terms with **OR**, you will retrieve items with **EITHER** term:



By combining terms with **NOT**, you will retrieve items with **ONE of the terms, but NOT the other.**



Relevance Searching _____

Relevancy searching

- uses a formula for ranking results, following certain criteria using algorithms to determine
 - number of occurrences & proximity of term(s)
 - location of terms (near the top or in important fields)
 - relative scarcity of term(s) in the database
- is useful for “concept” searches with overlapping terms, e.g. RAIN SNOW SLEET. This is called “fuzzy AND/OR” searching as not all search terms need to be present for a record to be retrieved.
- Uses special **search syntax** to further refine searches:
 - + to mark essential terms: +Ohio Columbus
 - to mark unwanted terms -bill gates
 - “ “ to mark a phrase “world wide web”

Relevance Examples _____

Search query: rock roll

When you do a relevancy search, the most relevant results will be listed first

***** **Rock and roll is here to stay**
[both terms, close proximity]

**** **Rock in the treetops, roll on**
[both terms, further apart]

*** **Rock a bye Baby** [one search term]

By adding **search syntax** to a relevancy search, you can make it more precise:

“Rock and Roll”
will get “Rock and Role” as a phrase

+Rock -Roll
will get results with **Rock** but **NOT Roll**

+Rock +Roll
will get results with both **Rock** and **Roll** but not necessarily as a phrase.

