



TIPS SHEET FOR DTIC's *PUBLIC SEARCH* TOOL

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Below are a few tips to enhance your research. Need help or have a question? Contact the **DTIC Reference Team at 1-800-CALL-DTIC (1-800-225-3842)** or send an email to dtic.belvoir.us.mbx.reference@mail.mil.

Boolean Operators connect and define the relationship between search terms. Narrow or broaden your results by using the three Boolean Operators **AND**, **OR** and **NOT**.

- ◆ the phrase *radar calibration* will bring up the same results as *radar AND calibration*
- ◆ *radar OR calibration* will find all content containing either one or both of these terms
- ◆ *bridge NOT cable* will find all content containing bridge except content that mentions cable

Wildcards are another way to return results that match a combination of characters. Replace a single character in a search term with a **question mark**.

- ◆ *defen?e* finds *defense* and *defence*

Combining Truncation with **Wildcards** finds records that meet the conditions of the search terms that have a wildcard(s) or are truncated.

- ◆ *qu?ck bro** finds *quick brown* and *quack brother*

Truncation is used to search a portion of a word by using an **asterisk**. The **asterisk** is used to represent the rest of the term, which will retrieve results that include words that begin with the entered letters.

- ◆ *terror** finds *terrorism*, *terrorist*, and *terror*

Nesting is used to create complex queries by grouping **AND**, **OR**, **NOT**, and **NEAR** statements using parentheses.

- ◆ *bridge AND (suspension OR concrete) NOT cable* will bring up results for bridge suspension, or concrete bridge, but not cable bridge

Proximity Operator finds records with terms in proximity to each other throughout a document whether they are in the same field or not when the operator **~** is used. A proximity search allows us to specify a maximum edit distance of words in a phrase:

- ◆ *"radar calibration"~5* this will change the proximity to five words

Boosting is used to make one term more relevant than another. This is done by entering a term, phrases, or group followed by the boost operator **^**, and then a value. The default boost value is 1, but can be any positive floating point number. Boosts between 0 and 1 will reduce the relevance.

- ◆ *quick^2 foxes* will find all documents about foxes, especially quick foxes

Boosts can also be applied to phrases or to groups:

- ◆ *"jeep tank"^2*
- ◆ *(light weapon)^4*