Detailed Searching

You can use the Advanced Search form for many field searches, but below are codes for everything the search engine can do. You might also want to try Data for Research, which offers more options for searching data archived in JSTOR: Information on the Data for Research beta.

Boosting Term Relevance in Search Results

You can increase the importance of any term in your search by using the caret (^) symbol followed by a number that represents the rise in relevance.

For example:

the search cat^7 dog gives an occurrence of the word cat in an item seven times more importance than the word dog.

Narrow Search Results with Field Abbreviations

You can narrow search results to a variety of item or journal information. This is possible because JSTOR uses fields for categorization of metadata. Each field is represented in a search by its abbreviation.

For example:

au:smith finds all items for which Smith is listed as an author.

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More JSTOR Field Abbreviations:

- **ty**: type of item
  - ty: fla = full length article
  - ty: brv = book review
  - ty: edi = opinion piece
  - ty: (nws OR mis) = other items
  - cty: pamphlet = pamphlet
- **ti**: titles of items or reviewed works
- **rt**: title of a reviewed work
- **au**: equivalent to searching within both aa and ra fields [ex: au: smith yields same set of results as (aa: smith OR ra: smith)]
- **so**: or **jo**: journal title
- **no**: issue or number
- **sn**: or **in**: International Standard Serials Number (ISSN).
- **gl**: grouping level (to search for specific topics as listed in the original print journal table of contents)
- **la**: language
  - JSTOR uses the [Library of Congress' three letter MARC language codes](https://www.loc.gov/marc/). Here are some examples:
    - la: ara = Arabic
    - la: chi = Chinese
    - la: dut = Dutch
    - la: eng = English
    - la: fre = French
    - la: ger = German
    - la: gre = Greek Modern
    - la: heb = Hebrew
    - la: ita = Italian
    - la: jpn = Japanese
    - la: lat = Latin
    - la: por = Portuguese
    - la: rus = Russian
    - la: spa = Spanish
    - la: swe = Swedish
    - la: tur = Turkish

**Combining Search Terms with AND, OR, NOT**

You may combine search terms and fields using AND, OR, and NOT (Boolean logic).

**AND**

When you combine search terms with AND in a full-text search, your results contain everything in which both terms appear. Combining search terms makes your search results more precise.

You can explicitly denote AND in the following ways: `cat AND dog`, `cat && dog`, `cat & dog`, `+cat +dog`, `(cat dog)`
Using OR between search terms allows you to find all items that contain either term. Using OR will search for items that contain either the word "cat", the word "dog", or both.

For example: cat OR dog, cat || dog

Searches using NOT will only find items that do not contain the search term following it. To find all items with the word cat that do not contain the word dog, search for: cat NOT dog, cat -dog (Be sure to include a space before the dash, but not after)

Searching for More Than One Term

If you want to include more than one term in a field search, use parentheses () to enclose your search terms, or quotation marks (" ") to search for an exact phrase.

Examples:

- ti:cat dog will find the word cat in the item title field and the word dog in any field
- ti:(cat dog) will find the words cat and dog in the item title field in any order
- ti:"color purple" will find the exact phrase color purple in the item title field
- ti:(peacekeeping "united nations") will find the word peacekeeping and the phrase united nations in the item title field

Searching for Common Phrases

JSTOR search allows you to find terms that are within a set number of words of each other using the tilde (~) symbol. For example, if you want to search for the terms debt and forgiveness and want only results with those words within ten words of each other, you would construct the following query: "debt forgiveness"~10.

In the Advanced Search interface, you can choose Near 5, 10, or 25 words from the drop-down list between search terms.

Note: Proximity searches are based on word count only. All punctuation is ignored.

Searching for Plural Terms

JSTOR allows you to search for singular and plural forms of a word at the same time by adding an ampersand to the end of the singular form of a word.

For example:

- cat& finds cat and cats
- bus& finds bus and busses
- sky& finds sky and skies
- knife& finds knife and knives
- person& finds person and people
- goose& finds goose and geese
Searching for Multiple Spellings of a Term

You can find words with spellings similar to your search term by using the tilde (~) symbol at the end of a search term.

For example, ti:dostoyevsky~ helps find items with dostoyevsky in the item title field, as well as variant spellings like dostoevsky, dostoevski, dostoyevsky, dostoevski, dostoyevskii, dostoevski, etc.

Note: This way of searching searches a very large number of words. Narrowing this kind of search to the item title, or another field, is recommended. The first letter always remains the same.

Wildcards

Wildcards take the place of one or more characters in a search term. A question mark is used for single character searching. An asterisk is used for multiple character searching. Wildcards are used to search for alternate spellings and variations on a root word. Wildcard characters cannot be used in place of the first letter of a word or within an exact phrase search.

For example:

- A search with the term te?ts finds the words tents, tests, texts, and any other five-lettered words that start with te- and end with -ts
- A search on bird* finds bird, birding, birdman, birds, and other words that start with bird-
- Wildcard characters may be used in a field search: au:sm?th or ti:shakespeare*
- A search on organi?ation finds organization or organisation
- behavior* searches for behavior, behavioral, behaviorist, behaviorism, or behaviorally
- p*diatric searches for pediatric or paediatric
- wom?n AND "science education" searches for science education with woman or women or womyn
- (novel& or fiction) AND feminis* searches for words that start with feminis-, like feminism or feminist, that contain novel or novels or fiction

Note: The closer to the start of a term you use the wildcard, the longer your search will take to process. Using multiple wildcards within a single search term will also result in longer search times.

Stemming

Using the number sign (#) after a word stem performs a search that finds all related variations of a term.

For example:

- operate# finds operate, operating, operation, and operative
- goose# finds goose, geese, and gosling
- went# finds went, go, and going

Stopwords
Stopwords are words that appear so frequently in the text they lose their usefulness as search terms. JSTOR search ignores the following list of stopwords to avoid searches that find almost every document in the archive:

a, about, above, after, again, against, all, also, although, am, an, and, another, any, are, as, at, back, be, because, been, before, being, below, between, both, but, by, can, could, did, do, does, doing, down, during, each, either, even, ever, every, few, for, from, further, get, go, goes, had, has, have, having, he, her, here, hers, herself, him, himself, his, how, however, if, in, into, is, it, its, itself, just, least, less, like, made, make, many, may, me, might, more, most, must, my, myself, neither, never, no, nor, not, now, of, off, on, once, one, only, or, other, ought, our, ours, ourselves, out, over, own, put, said, same, say, says, see, seen, shall, she, should, since, so, some, still, such, take, than, that, the, their, theirs, them, themselves, then, there, therefore, these, they, this, those, three, through, to, too, two, under, until, up, us, very, was, way, we, well, were, what, when, where, whether, which, while, who, whom, why, will, with, would, you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves

JSTOR search does recognize the AND, OR, and NOT operators. They do affect your search if you include them.

If stop words are part of an exact phrase search (""') then they will be used in the search.

For example:

- "to be or not to be" will find this phrase
- to be or not to be (without double quotes) will cause an error

**Grouping Combined Search Terms**

Parentheses allow you to determine the order in which terms are combined. The search: "currency reform" AND (russia OR "soviet union") will search for items that contain the phrase currency reform and that contain either russia or soviet union.

Without grouping parentheses, the search is interpreted as "currency reform" AND russia OR "soviet union", which returns items containing either both currency reform and russia or containing soviet union. By using parentheses, you can control the grouping of search terms.

Additional Examples:

- (finch OR sparrow) AND exotic will search for items that contain the word exotic and either the word finch or the word sparrow
- (birds OR butterflies) NOT sparrow will search for items that contain either the word birds or butterflies and do not contain the word sparrow
- birds NOT (sparrow robin) will search for items that contain the word birds but do not contain both the words sparrow and robin (remember, a space between terms defaults to an AND operator)
- birds NOT (sparrow OR robin) will search for items that contain the word birds but do not contain either of the words sparrow or the word robin

**Search Within Results**
To search within an existing set of search results, check the "search within these results" box and enter a new search term in the text box (deleting any text already there). Then click the "search" button. The new query will be appended to the first with the AND operator. If the new term is entered with the operator NOT at the beginning, the original query and the "search within these results" query are joined with NOT.

For example:

- the original search for the word dog, and the word cat entered in the "search within these results" box, will find dog AND cat
- the original search for the word dog, and the words NOT cat entered in the "search within these results" box, will find dog NOT cat