A search statement is what you type into a library database. It is made up of keywords, combined using Boolean Operators: AND, OR, NOT. ¹

For example, to learn about the impact of smartphones on society, you might build your search statement as follows:

- **AND** – all keywords or concepts must be found in your list of results
- **OR** – any keyword may be found

**Quote marks** find two or more words always together

**Truncation** * captures any combination of letters to follow

**Brackets** () isolate a concept

To end up with the following search statement:

```
(smartphone OR “mobile phone” OR “cell phone”) AND (societ* OR cultur*)
```

**NOT** – excludes keywords or concepts

```
smartphone AND society NOT “cancer risk”
```

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¹ Some databases require that AND OR NOT be capitalized in order to function as operators, and so it is a good idea to always capitalize by default

² This is helpful to anticipate how different authors may use different words to refer to the same idea

³ This will find society, societies, societal, etc.

⁴ Brackets and quote marks are not required around independent keywords or concepts, like smartphone in this case

⁵ Most databases have their own help guides with additional operators, including proximity, mentions, wildcard, etc.

⁶ Although NOT is a powerful operator, you may accidentally exclude results of actual interest