

Using Truncation and Wildcards

Use the wildcard and truncation symbols to create searches where there are unknown characters, multiple spellings or various endings. Neither the wildcard nor the truncation symbol can be used as the first character in a search term.

Truncation

Truncation is represented by an asterisk (*). To use truncation, enter the root of a search term and replace the ending with an *. *EBSCOhost* finds all forms of that word.

For example, type **comput*** to find the words **computer** or **computing**.

Note: The Truncation symbol (*) may also be used between words to match any word.

For example, **a midsummer * dream** will return results that contain the exact phrase, **a midsummer night's dream**.

Wildcards

The **wildcard** is represented by a question mark ? or a pound sign #.

To use the ? wildcard, enter your search terms and replace each unknown character with a ?. *EBSCOhost* finds all citations of that word with the ? replaced by a letter.

For example, type **ne?t** to find all citations containing **neat**, **nest** or **next**. *EBSCOhost* does not find **net** because the wildcard replaces a single character.

Note: When searching for a title that ends in a question mark, the symbol should be removed from the search in order to ensure results will be returned.

To use the # wildcard, enter your search terms, adding the # in places where an alternate spelling may contain an extra character. *EBSCOhost* finds all citations of the word that appear with or without the extra character.

For example, type **colo#r** to find all citations containing **color** or **colour**.

Note: Searching the U.S. spelling of words will also include some spelling variations (i.e. colour or odour) but not all spelling variations.

When using the pound/hash (#) wildcard, plurals and possessives of that term are not searched. For example, when running a search for the term **colo#r**, the terms "colors" and "colours" will not be searched (which they are by default when using the singular "color" or "colour" without a wildcard operator).