Keyword Searching
Strategies and Tips

STRATEGIES	EXAMPLES
Rule #1: Choose the most important words that describe your topic. These become your search terms, or *keywords*.	*Topic:* How does the environment in which identical twins are raised affect their behavior? ***becomes*** *Search phrase:* "identical twins" and environment and behavior
Rule #2: Put quotation marks around common phrases to ensure that the entire phrase appears in any results.	° "identical twins" ° "online privacy protection act" ° "united states of america"
Rule #3: Link multiple words/phrases with *AND* to include them all in your search.	° health <u>and</u> safety ° "psychological testing" <u>and</u> children ° "personal computers" <u>and</u> "internet privacy"

TIPS	EXAMPLES
If one search is unsuccessful, try using a *synonym* to increase your results on the next search.	° "media violence" and <u>kids</u> **=** "media violence" and <u>youth</u> ° "<u>elderly</u> obesity" **=** "<u>geriatric</u> obesity" ° <u>elections</u> and commercials **=** <u>campaigns</u> and commercials
Not getting any results? Don't get too specific—*think broadly*.	If "shoulder pain" didn't return any results, try broadening the search by using "joint pain;" the items identified might contain more specific information in the index or text.
Too many results? Try *narrowing* your search by gender, geographical area, year, publication type, etc.	° aging and effects and <u>women</u> ° "standardized testing" and impact and "<u>united states</u>" ° "presidential campaign" and advertising and <u>2008</u>
Find a good item? Perform a *lateral search* for similar items by clicking on a subject heading in the record.	In the record for a book about farming, click on the subject heading Agriculture United States to see other items about agriculture in the United States that the library owns.