

Refining Searches in EBSCO

This handout assumes that you know how to get into the EBSCO collection, choose databases, and perform simple searches. If you need instruction in these areas please refer to the previous handouts.

We will use **zombies** as an example topic. Pull up the EBSCO collection and choose the database *Academic Search Premier*. Type in the word *zombies* in the **Search** field and hit the **ENTER** key.



Searching: **Specific Databases**, [Show all](#) | [Choose Databases by Subject >](#)
zombies 
[Search Options](#) | [Basic Search](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Visual Search](#) | [Search History](#)

You should see the following screen.*

The screenshot shows the EBSCO search results page for the query 'zombies'. The interface includes a left sidebar for refining results, a main results area with four entries, and a top navigation bar. The search results are as follows:

- 1. How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Zombies.**
By: DREZNER, DANIEL W., *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2/18/2011, Vol. 57 Issue 24, pB13-B14, 2p
Subjects: AUTHORSHIP; **ZOMBIES**; WORLD politics; **ZOMBIES** in literature; **ZOMBIES** in motion pictures; THEORIES of International Politics & **Zombies** (Book)
Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ●●●●●●●●
HTML Full Text
- 2. A DISJUNCTIVE THEORY OF INTROSPECTION: A REFLECTION ON ZOMBIES AND ANTON'S SYNDROME.**
By: Macpherson, Fiona, *Philosophical Issues*, Oct2010, Vol. 20 Issue 1, p226-265, 40p; DOI: 10.1111/j.1533-6077.2010.00187.x
Subjects: INTROSPECTION; HALLUCINATIONS & Illusions; **ZOMBIES**; DELUSIONS; SHOEMAKER, Sydney
Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ●●●●●●●●
PDF Full Text (233KB)
- 3. The living dead? The construction of people with Alzheimer's disease as zombies.**
By: BEHUNIAK, SUSAN M., *Ageing & Society*, Jan2011, Vol. 31 Issue 1, p70-92, 23p; DOI: 10.1017/S0144686X10000693
Subjects: ALZHEIMER'S disease; SOCIAL constructionism; **ZOMBIES**; DEMENTIA; PATIENTS; AVERSION; ALZHEIMER'S disease -- Patients; STIGMA (Social psychology); SOCIAL aspects
Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ●●●●●●●●
- 4. Go on. Bring a zombie to life.**
By: Mabery, Jonathan, *Writer*, Oct2010, Vol. 123 Issue 10, p22-24, 3p, 1 Color Photograph
Subjects: HORROR tales; **ZOMBIES** in literature; **ZOMBIES** in motion pictures; VAMPIRES in literature; DAWN of the Dead (Film); BROOKS, Max; GUNN, James
Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ●●●●●●●●
HTML Full Text

At the bottom right of the page, there is a status bar that reads "Internet | Protected Mode: On".

889 Results for...
Boolean/Phrase: zombies

Page: 1 2 3 4 5

1. [How I Learned](#)
By: DREZNER, DANIEL W., *Lib*
Subjects: AUTHORSHIP; ZOMBIES

2. [A DISJUNCTIVE THEORY OF INTROSPECTION: A REFLECTION ON ZOMBIES AND ANTON'S SYNDROME.](#)
By: Macpherson, Fiona. *Philosophical Issues*, Oct2010, Vol. 20 Issue 1, p226-265, 40p; DOI: 10.1111/j.1533-6077.2010.00187.x
Subjects: INTROSPECTION; HALLUCINATIONS & Illusions; ZOMBIES; DELUSIONS; SHOEMAKER, Sydney
Database: Academic Search Premier
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Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ●●●●●●●●

4. [Go on. Bring a zombie to life.](#)
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Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ●●●●●●●●
HTML Full Text

There are 889 total entries

This screen will show the first 10 entries. To go to the next page click on the number 2 or the forward arrow key.

At some point you will need to narrow down your topic. Let us assume, therefore, that you have decided to work with **zombies** and their **portrayal in movies**.

EBSCO HOST

Searching: **Specific Databases**, Show all | Choose Databases by Subject »

zombie portrayal in movies Search Clear ?

Search Options | Basic Search | Advanced Search | Visual Search | Search History

No results were found.

- **No luck? Try *zombie movies*.**

EBSCO HOST

Searching: **Specific Databases**, Show all | Choose Databases by Subject »

zombie movies Search Clear ?

Basic Search | Advanced Search | Visual Search | Search History

Page: 1

1 Results for...

1. [Looking back at a PC extravaganza.](#)
By: Leo, John. *U.S. News & World Report*, 1/31/94, Vol. 116 Issue 4, p19, 2p, 6 Co
Subjects: UNITED States; POLITICAL correctness
Database: Business Source Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ●●●●●●●●
HTML Full Text

Refine your results

Full Text
 References Available
 Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

1994 Publication Date 1994

You have retrieved one result and it has nothing to do with zombies in movies.

The best way to search online databases is to use **Boolean searches**. In Boolean searching you can combine terms with the words **AND** and **OR**.

- Type in the search *zombies and movies* in the search box and hit **ENTER**. The following screen appears.

The screenshot shows the EBSCO search interface. At the top, the search box contains 'zombies AND movies' with 'Search' and 'Clear' buttons. Below the search box, there are navigation options: 'Basic Search', 'Advanced Search', 'Visual Search', and 'Search History'. The search results are displayed on a blue background with a pagination bar showing 'Page: 1 2 3 4 5'. On the left side, there is a sidebar with '51 Results for...' and 'Refine your results' options, including checkboxes for 'Full Text', 'References Available', and 'Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals'. The main results area shows three entries:

- 1. How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Zombies.**
By: DREZNER, DANIEL W... *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2/18/2011, Vol. 57 Issue 24, pB13-B14, 2p
Subjects: AUTHORSHIP; **ZOMBIES**; WORLD politics; **ZOMBIES** in literature; **ZOMBIES** in motion pictures; THEORIES of
Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ██████████
HTML Full Text
- 2. Varieties of Zombieism: Approaching Comparative Political Economy through 28 Days Later a**
By: Hall, Derek. *International Studies Perspectives*, Feb2011, Vol. 12 Issue 1, p1-17, 17p; DOI: 10.1111/j.1528-3585.20
Subjects: **ZOMBIES**; **ZOMBIES** in motion pictures; COMPARATIVE government; RESEARCH; COMPARATIVE economics;
WILD Zero (Film)
Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ██████████
- 3. Zombies, Epiphenomenalism, and Physicalist Theories of Consciousness.**
By: Bailey, Andrew. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Dec2006, Vol. 36 Issue 4, p481-509, 29p
Subjects: **ZOMBIES**; **ZOMBIES** in motion pictures; PHILOSOPHY of mind; CHARACTERS & characteristics in motion pictu
Database: Academic Search Premier
Add to folder | Relevancy: ██████████

This search has resulted in 51* entries. The entry records should contain **both** the word **Zombie** and the word **movie**.

- Look at the first few entries. Look at the **Subjects**. You will see the phrases *motion pictures* and *zombies in motion pictures*.
- Try the following search: **zombies AND motion pictures**. You should see the following screen on the next page...

EBSCO
 Searching: [Specific Databases](#), [Show all](#) | [Choose Databases by Subject](#) >
 zombies AND motion pictures

Basic Search | [Advanced Search](#) | [Visual Search](#) | [Search History](#)

Page: 1 2 3 4 5 >

76 Results for...
 Boolean/Phrase: zombies AND motion pictures

Refine your results

Full Text
 References Available
 Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

1988 Publication Date 2011

 [Show More >](#)

Source Types

All Results
 Academic Journals
 Magazines
 Newspapers

Subject: [Thesaurus Term](#)

- Zombies, Epiphenomenalism, and Physicalist Theories of Consciousness.**
 By: Bailey, Andrew. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Dec2006, Vol. 36 Issue 4, p481-509, 29p
 Subjects: **ZOMBIES**; **ZOMBIES in motion pictures**; PHILOSOPHY of mind; CHARACTERS & characteristics in **motion pictures**; CHARACTERS
 Database: Academic Search Premier
 | Relevancy:
- Zombie trouble: Zombie texts, bare life and displaced people.**
 By: Stratton, Jon. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, Jun2011, Vol. 14 Issue 3, p265-281, 17p; DOI: 10.1177/1367549411400103
 Subjects: POLITICAL refugees; ILLEGAL aliens; **ZOMBIES in motion pictures**; SHAUN of the Dead (Film); FIDO (Film); UNDEAD (Film)
 Database: Academic Search Premier
 | Relevancy:
- Go on. Bring a zombie to life.**
 By: Maberry, Jonathan. *Writer*, Oct2010, Vol. 123 Issue 10, p22-24, 3p, 1 Color Photograph
 Subjects: HORROR tales; **ZOMBIES in literature**; **ZOMBIES in motion pictures**; VAMPIRES in literature; DAWN of the Dead (Film); BROOKS
 Database: Academic Search Premier
 | Relevancy:

You have pulled up 76* entries

- Now try the following search: *zombies and film*

EBSCO
 Searching: [Specific Databases](#), [Show all](#) | [Choose Databases by Subject](#) >
 zombies AND film

Basic Search | [Advanced Search](#) | [Visual Search](#) | [Search History](#)

Page: 1 2 3 4 5 >

156 Results for...
 Boolean/Phrase: zombies AND film

Refine your results

Full Text
 References Available
 Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

1985 Publication Date 2011

 [Show More >](#)

Source Types

All Results
 Academic Journals
 Magazines
 Newspapers

Subject: [Thesaurus Term](#)

[Subject](#)

[Publication](#)

[Company](#)

- PEER REVIEW.**
 By: Rushkoff, Douglas. *Discover*, Aug2007, Vol. 28 Issue 8, p72-73, 2p
 Subjects: ZOMBIE **films**; HORROR **films**; **ZOMBIES**; **ZOMBIES in motion pictures**; **FILM** genres
 Database: Academic Search Premier
 | Relevancy:
- Day OF THE DEAD.**
 By: Bloom, Clive. *Times Higher Education*, 6/24/2010, Issue 1953, p38-41, 4p, 5 Color Photographs, 1 Black and White Photograph
 Subjects: **ZOMBIES**; ZOMBIE **films**; **ZOMBIES in motion pictures**; **FILM** festivals; BANKERS; CONSUMERS
 Database: Academic Search Premier
 | Relevancy:
- Dead Man Still Walking.**
 By: Bishop, Kyle. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, Spring2009, Vol. 37 Issue 1, p16-25, 10p, 3 Black and White Photographs
 Subjects: **ZOMBIES in motion pictures**; MONSTERS in motion pictures; ZOMBIE **films**; HORROR **films**; **FILM** criticism; THEMATIC analysis
 Database: Academic Search Premier

 | Relevancy:

You have pulled up 156* entries

Let's see if we can expand this search a bit by trying a more complicated Boolean search. Let us try a search using the **Boolean** operator **OR**. If you type in a search that connects words with the word **OR** the search engine will look for records that contain either of those terms. If you search for *movies OR films OR motion pictures* the search engine will look for records that contain **any** of the three words.

What do you do, though, if you want one word to be present in any record retrieved and you **ALSO** want any of three other words to appear in any of the records retrieved? In this case, what do you do if you want the records to contain the word *zombie* **AND** contain **any** of the words that refer to **movies**?

ANSWER: You can **NEST** terms by putting them in **parentheses**.

- Do the following search:

Zombies AND (movies OR film OR motion picture)

The screenshot shows the EBSCO search interface. At the top, the search bar contains the query "zombies AND (movies OR film OR motion picture)". Below the search bar, there are buttons for "Search" and "Clear". The search results are displayed in a list format. The first result is "Dead Man Still Walking" by Kyle Bishop, published in the *Journal of Popular Film & Television* in Spring 2009. The second result is "Varieties of Zombiism: Approaching Comparative Political Economy through 28 Days Later and Wild Zero" by Derek Hall, published in *International Studies Perspectives* in February 2011. A blue arrow points to the search bar area, highlighting the search query.

You have now retrieved 176* articles.

The search engine processes the requests **in the parentheses** first. It sees that you are asking for records that contain **ANY** of the following three words: *movies; film; motion picture*. It will retrieve records that **only** contain the word *movies*. It will retrieve records that contain **two** of the three words. It will retrieve records that contain **all three** of the words. As long as a record has **at least one** of the three words that record will be retrieved.

The search engine will then process the search terms that are OUTSIDE of the parentheses. In this case it sees that you are asking for the word *zombies* in addition to the words inside the parentheses. It sees that you have connected the word *zombies* with the words in the parentheses by using the Boolean operator **AND**. It therefore knows that you only want records that contain the word *Zombies* in addition to **at least one** of the words **within the parentheses**. Any record that is retrieved HAS to have the word *Zombies* in it.

In order to refine searches you have to be able to come up with **keywords**. For further information refer to the following handouts:

- **Finding Keywords**
- **Understanding Boolean Searches**

**Actual numbers will vary because EBSCO updates its collection constantly, adding new articles on a daily basis. In addition, it renegotiates licenses every year and may drop and/or add journal and magazine titles.*