

TRUNCATION GUIDE

What is truncation?

Using some symbol, truncation can shorten a keyword so that it will match all terms starting with the same stem. A wild card symbol replaces a letter or letters within the word or at the end.

e.g.: *Therap matches *therapy, therapies, therapeutics, therapist, etc.* Or, *colo#r* matches *color* or *colour*.**

Truncators and wild cards vary depending on the database you are searching. Use the chart below to determine which symbol you need

Types of Truncation

Unlimited: find all words containing the root word

addict\$ = addict, addicts, addicted, addiction, addictions, etc.

Limited: find all words containing the root word up to a specific number of characters

dog\$1 = dog and dogs, but not dogma

One or no character: find the British spelling, plurals, past tense

orthop?edics = orthopedics or orthopaedics

exercise? = exercise, exercises, exercised, exerciser

Single character: find irregular plurals, variations in names

wom#n = woman or women

All#n = Allen or Allan or Allyn

Database	Symbol
Cochrane Library (automatically "stems" search terms)	? exactly one character
	* one or more characters
EbscoHost suite of databases	? exactly one character (can be used multiple times in a word)
	* any number of characters
	# one or no characters
INNOPAC (library catalog)	? exactly one character
	* any number of characters
Ovid	\$ any number of characters (limited)
	* any number of characters (unlimited)
	# exactly one character
	? one or no characters
PubMed	* any number of characters
ScienceDirect	? exactly one character
	* any number of characters
Scopus	* any number of characters
	? exactly one character