Used properly, the following concepts will help you construct a good effective search.

**Boolean Operators**
The boolean operators AND, OR, NOT are used to connect search terms.

- **AND** will retrieve records with both search terms. Searching for “human experimentation” and prisoners will retrieve records containing ALL of these words.

- **NOT** Totally eliminates words from a search. Searching for “human experimentation” NOT torture will eliminate any records mentioning torture.

- **OR** is used for synonyms, and will find either one or the other or both terms. The search prisoner OR detainee OR inmate will retrieve records with either prisoner OR detainee OR inmate (or all three).

**Nesting**
If you’re working with a one line search box, you will need to nest (or put in parenthesis) synonyms, so that the search will be executed properly.

An example of correctly constructed search with a one line search box:

“human experimentation” AND (prisoner OR detainee OR inmate)

You can also construct a good search by utilizing all of the search boxes.

Keep each different “piece” of your topic on a separate line. Think of synonyms for each of the different pieces -- connect them with OR. Most importantly, do NOT change the AND off to the left. The following is an example of a well-constructed search:
Field Searches
Search for your keywords in a particular field and focus your results quickly by clicking on select a field optional, and choosing ABSTRACT or TITLE.

There are advantages and disadvantages to this. The advantages: it will focus your results very quickly, and usually will bring the “best” results to the top—a good thing, particularly if you’ve a search that returns thousands of results. The disadvantage: you’ve thrown out lots of good results, just because the words you’re searching for didn’t appear in the article title.

Field searches bring you a step closer to finding the proper subject terms, too. Ultimately, you want to find subject terms for your topic, and end your search with a subject search, using the subject terms that you found.

Exact phrase searching
When searching a phrase, it’s best to use what is called exact phrase searches. Enclose your phrase or term in “between quotation marks”.

This will keep the databases, and Google, from tearing your terms apart and searching them separately. For example—human experimentation.

Without “ “ around this phrase, the databases/search engines will retrieve results by the author John Human discussing experimentation....

A better, and more precise search:

“human experimentation”