When you’re searching for information you may find that using keyword searches are limiting in the amount of resources they bring back. Here you will learn about truncation searching, a technique that will help you to broaden your search results, and help lead you to the information you need.

**Truncation**

Truncation is an advanced search technique that helps you broaden your search results by allowing for variations on a word. Truncate means to shorten. Most often you will use an asterisk (*) to denote the word you’re truncating.

Let’s say you’re working on a paper about teenage drunk driving and you’ve used a keyword search and a phrase search and you’re still not finding enough varied sources, using truncation for teenage will help because this search will bring back any sources containing a variation of the word teenage.

**Example:**

To truncate teenage for your search on drunk driving you will enter your search like this: teen*

This will expand you search results and include sources with the word teen, teens, and teenagers

You might end up with a few strange results from words that also use teen as their root but truncation is still a great way to ensure you’ve found

You don’t always have to use an asterisk at the end of a word sometimes it’s helpful to include it in other locations like with the word women if you search wom*n you will get results for women and woman, so you cover a larger amount of resources.

**TIP:** Not all databases or search engines use the same characters for truncation, most use an asterisk (*) but some may have their own character. Some databases or search engines may not allow for truncation. If you click on the help menu in the database or search engine you will find their specific rules for advanced search techniques like truncation.