

Tip Sheet: IEEE Xplore Digital Library

Suggested Field Tags:


One of the ways that key word searches can be narrowed in databases when running a comprehensive and systematic search is through the use of field tags – most commonly those associated with title, abstract, and key words. The specific field tags that can/should be used differ by database. **In IEEE, we recommend Abstract**, which searches the abstract.



The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Search' tab selected. Below the tabs, there is a section titled 'Enter keywords and select fields.' It contains three search rows. The first row has a 'Search Term' input field, an 'in' dropdown menu set to 'Abstract', and a help icon. The second row has an 'AND' dropdown, a 'Search Term' input field, an 'in' dropdown menu set to 'All Metadata', and 'up', 'x', and 'plus' icons. The third row is identical to the second row.

Proximity Operators:

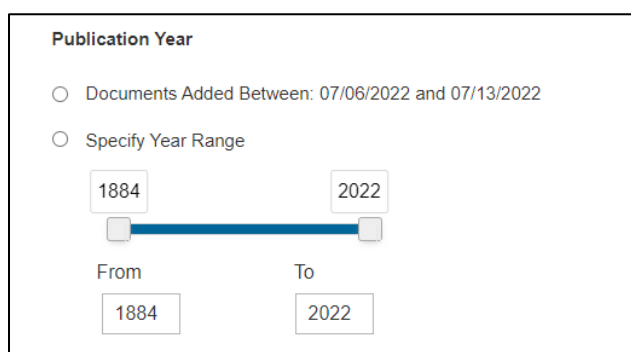
Proximity operators in databases allow you to search for one word/phrase within a certain proximity to another word. For example, you could use a proximity operator to find the word systematic *within two words of* the word protocol. Proximity operators are best used to create relationships or associations between words that cannot be accomplished through phrase searching and other search functions. **In IEEE, the proximity operator is NEAR/# for 'within # words of' or ONNEAR/# for 'before and within # of words of'.**



The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Search' tab. The search term input field contains '(search term) NEAR/2 (search term 2)'. The 'in' dropdown menu is set to 'Abstract'. The second row shows an 'AND' dropdown and a 'Search Term' input field, with the 'in' dropdown menu set to 'All Metadata' and 'up', 'x', and 'plus' icons.

Updating a Search:

When you need to update a search that you have previously performed, best practice is to use database commands that *capture the records entered into the database* after the date of the last search run where such commands are available. Due to a lag between an item's publication and its inclusion in the database, entry date is not always the same as publication date, making it a less precise search option that should only be used in cases where the database is not able to distinguish between the two. **In IEEE, limit by single publication year or range of years under Advanced search or results page.**



The screenshot shows the 'Publication Year' filter. It has two radio buttons: 'Documents Added Between: 07/06/2022 and 07/13/2022' and 'Specify Year Range'. The 'Specify Year Range' option is selected. Below it, there is a range slider with '1884' and '2022' markers. Below the slider, there are 'From' and 'To' labels with input fields containing '1884' and '2022' respectively.

Database Quirks:

You can only use **up to 8 wildcards** (* or \$) in your search strategy. Depending on your search translation you may need to be strategic in which terms require a wildcard. Wildcards can be used at the start, end, or middle of the word, and require at least 3 characters to work. Wildcards will work within quotation marks.

Examples:

If you enter a search for...	IEEE <i>Xplore</i> looks for all instances of
electro*	electron, electrons, electronic, electronics, electromagnetic, electromechanical, and electrostatic
*optic	optic, fiber-optic, electrooptic, acoustooptic, etc.
me*n	Matches men, mean, median, and any other word that begins with me and ends with n .
wom*n	Matches woman or women.

You can only search **up to 25 terms** per search strategy not separated by a Boolean operator.

IEEE *Xplore* will **automatically search plurals, verb forms, and both British and American spelling** of most keywords you use. If you *do not* want the database to automatically do this, you will need to put quotation marks around the words to search them as exact words or phrases instead.