# Tip Sheet: Inspec (Engineering Village)

## 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 Inspec, we recommend Subject/Title/Abstract, which searches any of the following fields: 'Abstract,' 'Title,' 'Controlled term,' or 'Uncontrolled term'.



## 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 Inspec, the proximity operator is NEAR/# for 'within # words of' or ONEAR/# for within the number specified in exact order. Note: In Inspec, NEAR cannot be used with truncation, wildcards, parentheses, braces, or quotation marks.



## 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 items 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 Inspec, under Quick search limit by range of publication by year.
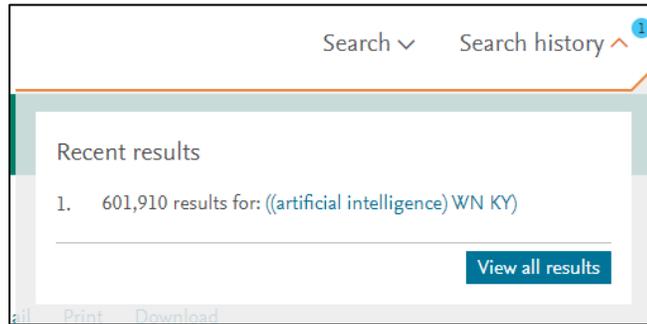
## Database Quirks:

- Inspec translates search terms entered in the **Quick Search field tag "Subject/Title/Abstract"** from your **search term** into **((search term) WN KY)** in the search history, which is what gets recorded in your manuscript.
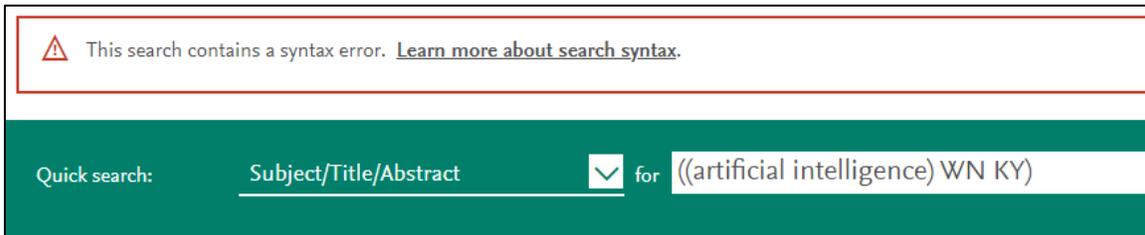


If you need to re-run your search you cannot copy/paste this back in the Quick Search box - you get a *"This search contains a syntax error"* message instead. **Searches must instead be completely rebuilt to re-run.**