

Westlaw AU

Connectors & Expanders

Westlaw AU supports the use of connectors and expanders when conducting a key word search. This search method allows you to enter key terms from your topic or issue and connectors and expanders specifying the relationship between those terms. For example you can specify that your terms appear as an exact phrase, in the same document or within a close proximity of each other.

The most commonly used connectors are **AND** and **OR**. By default if you enter multiple search terms or topics into a search box with no connectors, Westlaw AU will automatically insert the '&' (AND) connector in between each term.

Choosing Search Terms

When conducting research choose search terms significant to your issue or query. After selecting the terms, consider adding alternative terms. For example, if you are searching for the term *spouse*, you might also want to search for *partner* and *de facto*.

Variations of Word Forms

When choosing search terms, consider the various forms they might take. When you search for the term *liable*, for example, you may also want to search for *liability*. If you do not search for all variations, you may miss relevant documents.

Multiple Character Wildcard (!)

To search for terms with multiple endings use the ! character. For example: **object!** will retrieve *object*, *objected*, *objection*, *objecting* and *objectionable*.

Single Character Wildcard (*)

To search for words with variable characters, use the * character. When you place the universal character within a term, it requires that a character appear in that position. For example, **withdr*w** will return *withdraw* and *withdrew*.

Choosing Connectors

Connectors specify the relationship between terms in your retrieved documents. If you type multiple terms without connectors, Westlaw AU uses the AND (&) connector.

The connectors available on Westlaw AU and their symbols are listed below:

CONNECTOR	SYMBOL	RETRIEVES
AND	& (or a space)	<i>E.g. trade mark registration</i> Retrieves documents with the terms <i>trade</i> , <i>mark</i> and <i>registration</i> .
OR	or	<i>E.g. penalties or fines</i> Retrieves documents with either <i>penalties</i> or <i>fines</i> or both terms.
BUT NOT	%	<i>E.g. taxation % avoidance</i> Retrieves documents that contain <i>taxation</i> but not <i>avoidance</i> .
PHRASE	“ ”	<i>E.g. "fiduciary duty"</i> Retrieves documents with the exact phrase <i>fiduciary duty</i> .
Numerical Connectors	+n (n is a number)	<i>E.g. capital +3 punishment</i> Retrieves documents with <i>capital</i> within 3 words of <i>punishment</i> , in their given order.
	/n	<i>E.g. "unfair dismissal" /10 contract</i> Retrieves documents with <i>contract</i> within 10 words of the phrase <i>unfair dismissal</i> , in any order.

Plurals

When you enter the singular form of a term Westlaw AU will automatically retrieve both the singular and plural. For example, entering **child** will also retrieve **children** and **jury** will also retrieve **juries**. If you enter the plural form of a term, only the plural form is retrieved.

Note: If you enter the term disadvantage Westlaw will find disadvantages but not disadvantageous.

Turning Off Plurals and Equivalentents (#)

You can turn off plurals of a particular term by placing the **# symbol** in front of the term. To retrieve damage but not damages, type **#damage**.

Placing the **# symbol** in front of a term also turns off the automatic retrieval of equivalencies. To retrieve child but not children enter **#child**.

Compound Terms

Typing **good-will** will retrieve *good-will*, *goodwill* and *good will*.

Nesting (parenthesis)

Nesting is an advanced search strategy that allows you to combine multiple search terms and/or concepts in one search statement. It is called nesting because **parentheses ()** are used to group main concepts together when you use more than one connector and three or more keywords.

For example, to search for information on fringe benefits for a motor vehicle you could enter the following search using parentheses and connector to group the main concepts: (fbt or "fringe benefits tax") and ("motor vehicle" or car).

Order of Priority

The order in which the Westlaw AU connectors are processed is as follows:

Order	Connector
1.	Brackets () – inserting brackets around terms will ensure those terms are processed first. E.g. (colour or shape or animation) AND copyright AND infringement
2.	OR – generally processed first.
3.	+n
4.	/n
5.	AND
6.	% = but not

Tips for Searching

- Searches are processed from left to right
- Putting brackets around search terms forces those search to be done first. Brackets also clarifies the search. For example (vehicle or car) and accident.
- To locate one term within a certain number of words of another term, use the forward slash with a number For example (colour or shape or animation) /15 "trade mark"