

# SEARCH STATEMENT WORKSHEET

**Step 1.** Write your research question.

To develop a good search strategy, your research topic or question should be condensed into a single succinct sentence, not too broad or too narrow.

**Step 2.** List the types of literature that may contain useful information for your topic.

**Step 3.** Isolate the main concepts of the research topic and write them in the top column of the table below.

**Step 4.** Build a list of relevant/useful search terms for each concept.

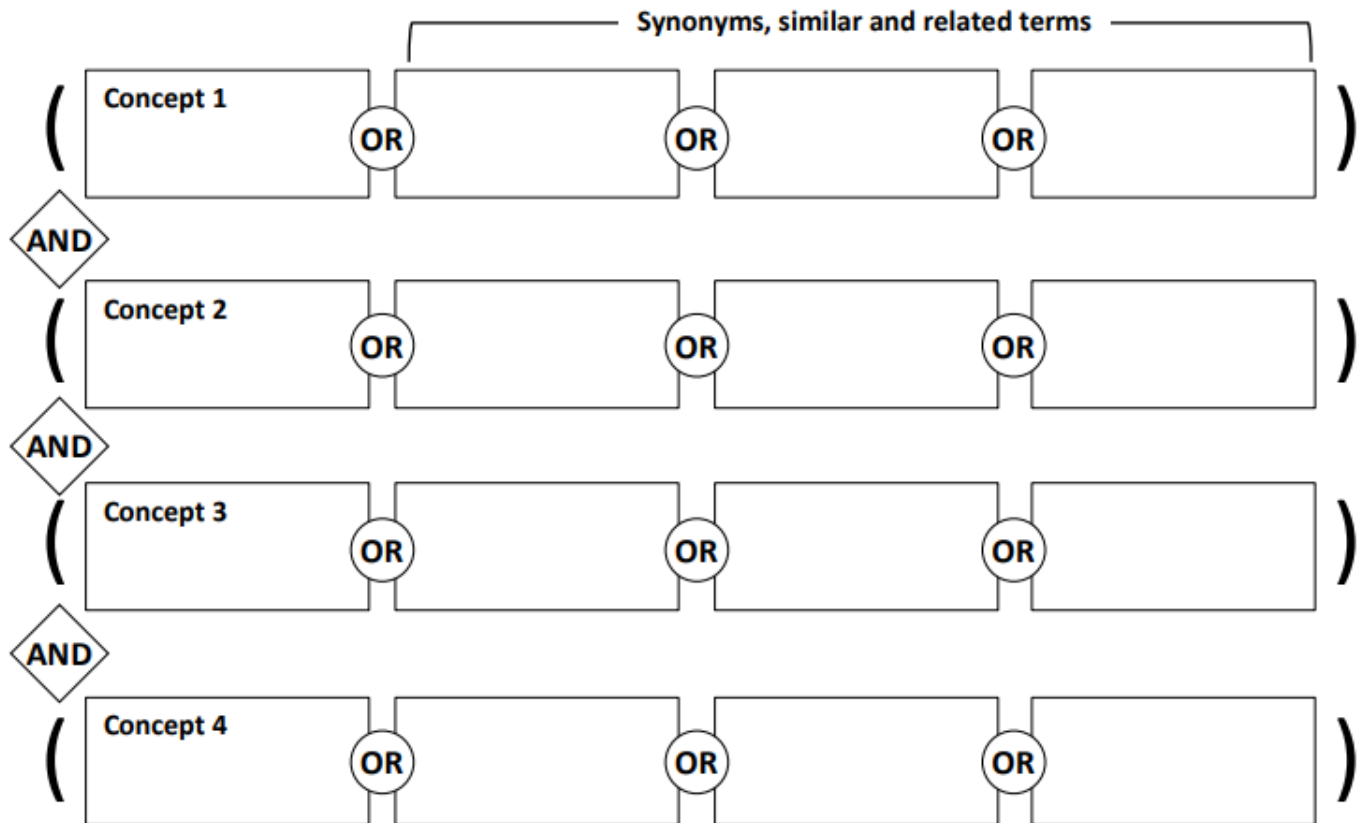
Start with a simple search in the database then review the abstracts and subject headings for many articles in order to generate a comprehensive list of search terms. Each list should consist of: author keywords (words which appear in the title/abstract of the articles) and subject (like those from a database or the catalogue) add/subtract columns as needed.

CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2	CONCEPT 3	CONCEPT 4

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**Step 5.** Translate the above list into a single search statement.

- Search statements may vary slightly from database to database
- Combine the search terms using AND/OR and brackets ( )
- Add a row (search box) for each main concept



The Search Statement Worksheet has been adapted with permission from a Search Statement Worksheet created by Evan Schilling, University of Waterloo Architecture Librarian.