eHRAF Advanced Search Tips

Reading this section is important because it will help you better understand how an Advanced Search works in eHRAF World Cultures and Archaeology. Following a few tips will greatly improve your search results.

1.Keywords

There are no right and wrong keywords in Advanced Search, only your creative thinking and vocabulary.

You can enhance a keyword search using the "Add Subjects" function, or find new keywords in the A-Z Index or in the texts of your search results. For example, you may search for the word "sage," see reference made to *Artemisia*, the Latin name for this

 In Advanced Search, your search of culture names, countries or regions will be far more successful if you choose them from the "Add Culture" menu than if you enter their names (e.g. Afghan, Pashtun, Asia) as keywords.

Truncation

Truncating your word with an asterisk at the stem (e.g. dog*) will retrieve singular as well as plural forms, or other word variations (e.g. lactat* for lactation, lactated, lactating, etc.). But sometimes you don't want to truncate. For example, if you add an asterisk to a search for "seal" or "seals," the animal, the results may include texts containing the words "sealant," "sealer" and "sealing."   Evaluating your results will usually give you a good idea when to reformulate your word or add more words to your search.

Separating words, Quotations, Hyphens

Put a phrase in quotation marks and don't use a hyphen (e.g. "breast feed*" instead of "breast-feed*").

You can eliminate conjunctions "and" and "or." Simply leave a space between each word or phrase. You will be able, instead, to click on Boolean operators AND and OR in the search form. Be sure to set Boolean operators "AND" and "OR" smartly!

2. Boolean operators (And, Or, Not)

AND and OR are especially wonderful tools for broadening or refining a search with subjects, keywords and clauses. Setting them purposefully will make a huge difference in finding good results.

OR: One or the other term can be present in the text of a paragraph.
Use it for related or "sibling" terms (e.g. dog* canis* canine*).

Example:

```
○ And ● Or
dog* canis* canine*
```
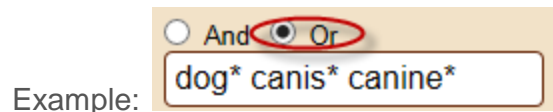
AND: Both terms must be present in the text of a paragraph.
Use it for unrelated or "paired" terms (e.g. cook* herb* to search for the cooking of herbs).

Caution! Using AND for subjects and/or keywords only searches paragraphs, not whole pages or chapters. Paragraphs usually consist of just a few sentences, so using AND can limit two terms, and greatly limit three or more terms. Keep this in mind so you don't spend valuable time adding clauses only to be disappointed with the search results.

Example:

```
● And ○ Or
cook* herb*
```
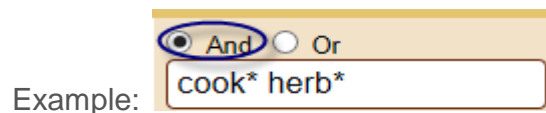
NOT: This ensures that the first but not the second term of your search will be present in your search results (e.g. famil* NOT familiar searches for family and families but not the adjective "familiar").

3. Other Considerations, Tips, and Hints

Any search can produce some results that are not relevant. Viewing the text "snippets" produced in your search results can help you to refine your search further.

If you take a break while searching in eHRAF, or leave your search unattended, you will lose your search and place in eHRAF. To save repeating your search from the beginning, write down the name of the culture you were researching when you stopped and do a "print

While performing a search focused on one or a few cultures, check out the *Collection Documents* in Browse Cultures to get a broader view of the relevant ethnographies, archaeological works and time period you are researching.

References to date and time period can also be found on the left-hand side of the document or in the pages themselves. This information is useful because it puts your search results into spatial and temporal perspective. It may also help you adjust your keywords to vocabulary used in earlier decades. For example, authors in earlier ethnographies may describe domestic violence or spousal abuse with phrases like 'husband is hitting wife" or "man beats wife."

By now, you probably realize that eHRAF is quite different from any other search platform you are using. In eHRAF *Advanced Search*, we provide the tools, but you are in control! You decide which subjects, cultures and keywords to use, how to truncate your words, and whether to use Boolean operators. Yes, it's "old-school" but rewarding. Once you try a few searches and make adjustments by adding or taking away terms, the resulting information is useful. No other database has the ability to first "filter" a search through cultural regions, subregions and even subsistence types before reaching the subject-indexed texts. This is eHRAF's strength and makes it truly unique.