

Searching Tips & Hints

Add Words to Improve Results

More words will increase the number of search results. But documents containing all of the words entered will be ranked highest.

Example: kid teacher history learn

Enclose Exact Phrases in Quotes

The results will include documents containing those words in that exact order.

Examples: "civil war maps" "jackie robinson" "declaration of independence"

Use a Plus Sign to Require and a Minus Sign to Exclude

Example: +washington +state -george
Retrieves documents containing the words "state" and "washington" but not "george."

Capitalize Proper Nouns

Example: Library Congress
Only finds documents containing "Library" and "Congress" (but not "library" and "congress").

Try Alternate Spellings

Some proper names and common words have variant spellings (British vs. American or because of transliteration differences). Include all known spellings for the broadest search results.

Examples: Mohammad Muhammad Mohammed labor labour

SYNONYM CHART

in addition to/ instead of:	also use:
African Americans	abolition, afro-american, black, colored, names of individuals, Negro, Negroes, slavery, suffrage
agriculture	crops, names of crops , farms, harvest, land, livestock, names of livestock
celebrities and prominent individuals	actor, senator, artist, writer, names of individuals
cities and towns	neighborhoods, markets, peddlers, slums, names of streets, names of cities
emigration and immigration	aliens, colonization, emigrant, immigrant, migration, ports of entry, nationalities, names of places
ethnicity	culture, race, pluralism, names of ethnic groups
family	child, children, divorce, home, household, husband, marriage, spouse, wife
industry	business, factory, names of companies, types of industries, manufacturing, production, work
labor	names of occupations, factory, guilds, migrant, strike, unions
recreation	amusement park, beach, boats, games, hobbies, names of sports, leisure, parks, playgrounds
scenic views	names of places, landscape, panorama, view, vista
transportation	automobile, car, cart, horse, railroad, ship, train, vessel, wagon
war	arms, artillery, battlefields, bombers, casualties, infantry, military, names of wars, troops, weapons
women	female, girl, lady, mother, suffrage, names of individuals