SOME GOOGLE SEARCH OPERATORS

Target construction	Example	Comment
AND	law AND romans	Example requires both words appear in the document. Closer words rank higher. Must use upper case <<AND>>. Lower case <<and>> will be treated as a search term, not an operator. AND is the default operator, so you don't have to specify it. Warning: Because Google sometimes supplies synonyms or terms from outside the document, a matching term may not appear in the document.
OR	grace OR mercy	Example matches documents with either word. Documents with both words rank higher. Must use upper case <<OR>>.
NOT	"jewish law" -rabbinic -modern	Example requires the phrase <<jewish law>> be in the document, but excludes the document if it contains the word <<rabbinic>> or the word <<modern>>. No space between hyphen and word to be excluded.
use () for grouping/nesting	Apparently not supported!	Operator OR has higher precedence than AND. So in Google A AND B OR C retrieves what you would expect of A AND (B OR C)
exact phrase	"infant baptism"	Example matches exact phrase.
variable distance word sequence	"filled * spirit"	Asterisk matches one or more whole words. The example matches <<"filled in spirit">> as well as <<"filled with the holy spirit">>. Words must appear in the order specified but can be any(?) distance apart. Closer words rank higher, I think.
numeric range	1495..1544 Romans 6..8 "Romans 6..8" melchior AND (hofman OR hoffman OR hoffmann) AND 1495..1544	First example matches any number 1495 through 1544. Note number, double periods, number, no spaces. Second example matches Romans and a number between 6 and 8, inclusive. Third example matches chapters or verses between Romans 6 and Romans 8, inclusive. Fourth example combines spelling variations of the name Melchior Hofmann with the date range.
require stopword require word as spelled	band called the the band called "the the" the who	First example requires that both words <<band AND called>> appear in the document, but it ignores the stop word <<the>>. Second example requires <<the the>> appear in the document. To search a stopword, use quotes. I haven't found a list of stop words for Google, but definite articles in many languages (like the in English or der in German) are stopwords. Third example is a special case: because the **first** word is a stopword, it is required for a match, so this is the same as "the" AND who.

Remember ranking is the key to Google's effectiveness, not use of search operators.

When many items match a search statement, Google estimates the number of items retrieved. In my experience, and the estimate can be half or twice the real count. Use the rc=1 request parameter to request an accurate result count for up to 1M documents.