

## Truncation

Most library catalogs, article databases, and other online information retrieval systems allow for a symbol to be used at the end of a word to find items that have been listed with variant endings of that word. This is known as **truncation**. You may want to use truncation when you are looking for a word with different spellings, or different forms of a word, such as singular or plural forms and different endings. Truncating a word will automatically broaden your search for information and insure that you retrieve all items containing a form of the word.

The **asterisk mark (\*)** is the most commonly used truncation symbol.

Example: *Politic\** will retrieve

- politic
- politics
- political
- politically
- politician
- politicians

Some online systems provide automatic truncation which means that you don't have to type the asterisk mark. The College of DuPage Library Catalog has automatic truncation.

**Be careful using truncation!** For example, if you truncate the word "cat" in order to get everything on "cats", you will also find items on cataclysm, catacomb, catalepsy, catalog, etc.