Wildcard Searches in EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS)

In EDS, you can use three types of wildcard characters in your search terms. The question mark (?) matches exactly one letter. The pound or hash sign (#) matches zero or one letter. The asterisk (*) matches multiple letters. Use wildcards to create searches where there are unknown characters, multiple spellings or various endings. None of the wildcards can be used as the first character in a search term.

**Question-mark wildcard**

To use the ? wildcard, enter your search terms and replace each unknown character with a ?. For example, type ne?t to find all records containing neat, nest or next.

Trailing question marks (?) will be automatically stripped from all words in a query, as shown below:

- Appendicitis: is surgery the best option? --> Appendicitis: is surgery the best option
- k??? --> k

**Pound/hash wildcard**

To use the # wildcard, enter your search terms and place # where an alternate spelling might contain an extra character. For example, type colo#r to find all citations containing color or colour.

Trailing # will be automatically stripped from all words with a prefix less than 3 characters.

- c# --> c
- na# --> na
- ddd# --> ddd# (no stripping, prefix greater than 2 characters)

**Note:** When using the pound/hash (#) wildcard, plurals and possessives of that term are not searched. For example, when running a search for the term colo#, the terms "colors" and "colours" will not be searched (which they are by default when using the singular "color" or "colour" without a wildcard operator).

**Asterisk wildcard** (also called Truncation symbol)

To use the asterisk (*) wildcard, enter the root of a search term and replace the ending with an *. For example, type comput* to find the words computer or computing. The asterisk (*) may also be used between words to match any word. For example, 'a midsummer * dream' will return results that contain the exact phrase, 'a midsummer night’s dream.'

**Special cases for advanced users**

If you want to use a question mark as a wildcard at the end of a word, you need to precede the ? with # as shown below:

- boss#? --> boss#? (no stripping, preceding # wildcard)
- k??##? --> k??##? (no stripping, preceding # wildcard)
To use # at the end of a prefix less than 3 characters, you need to immediately precede it by another # or ?.

- d## --> d## (no stripping, preceding # wildcard)
- d?# --> d?# (no stripping, preceding ? wildcard)
- dd?# --> dd?# (no stripping, preceding ? wildcard)