

# Westlaw NZ

## Search Terms and Connectors

Westlaw NZ supports the use of a number of different types of connectors. The most commonly used connectors are AND and OR. By default if you enter multiple terms with no connectors, Westlaw NZ will automatically insert the '&' (AND) connector between each term. The connectors you can use on Westlaw NZ, their symbols and examples are listed below:

Connector	Symbol	Retrieves
AND	& (or a space)	For example: <b>trade &amp; mark &amp; registration</b>  Results displayed will be documents where all those words exist, in any order, and not necessarily together
Multiple Character Wildcard	!	For example: <b>object! will retrieve object, objects, objected, objection, objecting</b>  Use this to search for terms with multiple endings
Universal Wildcard	*	For example: <b>withdr*w</b> will return withdraw and withdrew  When you place the universal character within a term, it requires that a character appear in that position.
OR	or	For example: <b>car or automobile or vehicle</b>  The "or" operator is always processed before the others (even if it isn't the first search operator you've entered)
BUT NOT	%	For example: <b>taxation % income</b>  Documents not containing the term(s) following the % symbol. Use the % connector with caution; it may cause relevant documents to be excluded from your search result. You cannot <i>begin</i> your search string with this character, it must appear <i>between</i> terms
Phrase	" "	For example: <b>"fiduciary duty"</b>  Phrase search terms appear in the exact order as in the quotation marks, and plurals will automatically also be found eg <b>fiduciary duties</b>  If you prefer to search only for the exact term you have entered, place a hash symbol at the beginning of the term eg <b>"#fiduciary #duty"</b>
Numerical Connectors	/n	For example: <b>drone /15 privacy</b> Finds <b>drone</b> within 15 words of <b>privacy</b> , in any order
Numerical Connectors	+n	For example: <b>capital +3 punishment</b>  Finds <b>capital</b> within 3 words of <b>punishment</b> , in the order that you entered the words

Plurals and Turning off Irregular Plurals		<p>Westlaw will automatically retrieve irregular plurals. For example, entering child will also retrieve children and goose will also retrieve geese. <b>Disadvantage</b> will find <b>disadvantages</b> but not <b>disadvantageous</b>.</p> <p>You can turn off plurals of a particular term by placing the <b>#symbol</b> in front of the term. To retrieve damage but not damages, type <b>#damage</b>. Placing the # symbol in front of a term also turns off the automatic retrieval of equivalencies. To retrieve child but not children enter <b>#child</b>.</p>
Compound Terms		Typing good-will will retrieve good-will, goodwill and good will.
Nesting (parenthesis)	()	<p>Nesting is an advanced search strategy that allows you to combine multiple search terms and/or concepts in one search statement. It is called nesting because parentheses ( ) are used to group main concepts together when you use more than one connector and three or more keywords. For example, to search for information on fringe benefits for a motor vehicle you could enter the following search using parentheses and connector to group the main concepts:</p> <p><b>(fbt or "fringe benefits tax") and ("motor vehicle" or car)</b></p>
Tips for searching		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Searches go from left to right</li> <li>• Putting brackets around terms forces those searches to be done first</li> <li>• If you want to find one term within a certain number of words of another term, use the forward slash with a number. For example <b>colour or shape or animation /15 "trade mark"</b></li> </ul>
Using more than one numerical connector, and using brackets	/ number  + number  ( xxx )	<p><b>Lease! /20 option! /15 purchas!      Lease! /20 (option! /15 purchas!)</b></p> <p>The above examples will find the same result. This is because:</p> <p>(a) The smaller numerical connector, ie the number 15, takes precedence over the higher number.</p> <p>(b) Normally, the insertion of round brackets will force the search inside the brackets to be searched first, but because the smaller number takes precedence, the brackets aren't really necessary.</p> <p>If you wanted to ensure that the larger number ran first, you would use the brackets as follows to override the smaller number precedence:</p> <p><b>(Lease! /20 option!) /15 purchas!</b></p>

## Search examples:

1. You may want to find wording around the concept of **"lease with option to purchase"**. Try the following:
  - **lease option purchase** - this will find documents with all three words, with plurals, though not necessarily together or in the order you entered them – probably too many hits to be helpful
  - **"lease with option to purchase"** - this will find the exact phrase, including plurals, but would not find the phrase **"lease with an option to purchase"**
  - **leas! /12 "option to purchase"** - this will find lease, leases and leasing etc within 12 words of the phrase "option to purchase", including "options to purchase", but will not find variations on the words option or purchase - such as optional or purchasing or purchased
  - **leas! /15 option! /20 purchas!** - this will find lease and option within 15 words of one another, and then find both those words within 20 of purchase. Variations of each word will be included
  
2. You may want to find wording around the concept of **cancellation period for out-of-time contracts**. Try the following:
  - **cancellation period contract** - this will find documents with all three words, with plurals, though not necessarily together or in the order you entered them – probably too many hits to be helpful
  - **"cancellation period" "out-of-time"** - this will find the exact phrases, including plurals – this search is somewhat limiting. The hyphens are not strictly necessary – Westlaw NZ will find those words anyway
  - **contract! /25 cancel! "out of time"** - this will find contract and cancel within 25 words of one another, including variations, as well as the phrase "out of time"