

# Quick Guide to INSPEC

Kresge Engineering Library  
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/ENGI/>

**\*\* THIS PDF IS NO LONGER BEING UPDATED. PLEASE SEE THE HTML GUIDE FOR UP TO DATE INFO. 8/11/11 \*\***

INSPEC provides comprehensive coverage of the world's research literature in physics, astronomy, electrical engineering, electronics and computer science. It indexes over 3,400 journals and 2,000 conferences each year. Coverage goes back to 1898. You can access INSPEC from the link on the top right corner of the Kresge Engineering Library home page (<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/ENGI/>).

## SEARCHING

INSPEC launches with the **ISI Web of Knowledge** basic search screen. Use the drop-down menus to change the fields in which your keywords are searched; search field options include **Topic, Author, Publication Name, Treatment Types, Astronomical Object**, and others.

The default search is *all words*, meaning the database will automatically retrieve articles that contain all of your keywords anywhere in the record. To override the default search, use boolean operators and/or truncation symbols.

### Search Operators (Booleans)

To override the default search, use Boolean operators. Enclose exact phrases in **quotation marks (“ ”)**. Nest search operators inside parentheses.  
**AND** finds records that contain both your search terms.  
**OR** finds records that contain at least one of your search terms.  
**NOT** finds records that contain your first search term but not your second.

### Truncation Symbols

Use truncation symbols to find variant endings and spellings of your search terms.  
\* replaces an unlimited number of characters  
**irrigat\*** = irrigate, irrigates, irrigation  
? replaces one character  
**gr?y** = gray, grey  
\$ replaces zero or one character  
**cell\$** = cell, cells, cello, but not cellophane

## AUTHOR SEARCHING

To search for an author's name, change the drop-down menu to **Author** and enter the **Last name First initial\*** (note: no comma between last and first names), e.g. **Sastry S\***. Note that this retrieves all authors named Sastry S, so some results may not be relevant (especially in the case of very common names).

Search for:

Sastry S\* in Author

Example: DiCarlo A \* OR Di Carlo A \*

Tip: If you know the author's institution, combine a search for the author's name with a search for the author's institution (drop-down menu choice: **Address**). This will narrow down your results and make them more relevant. To browse author names, change the drop-down menu to **Author** and click on the magnifying glass icon to the right of the drop-down menu. Browse alphabetically or enter a last name first initial to jump to a particular entry.

### SEARCH RESULTS and LIMITING SEARCHES

Search results are displayed in reverse chronological order by default. Change the order by using the **Sort by** drop down menu on the top right of the screen. Once you execute your search, you can use the **Refine Results** menu in order to limit your search results to specific document types, authors, treatments types, languages, or other limits.

The screenshot shows the Inspec search results interface. The search topic is '(wireless network\*)' and there are 77,859 results. The 'Refine Results' sidebar on the left allows filtering by document types (e.g., Conference Paper, Journal Paper), authors, source titles, subject areas, treatment types, and countries/territories. A 'Controlled Index' section is also present. The main results list shows four entries with titles like 'WSN and P2P: a self-managing marriage' and 'A secure self-organizing sensor network'. Annotations include: 'Refine your results by document type, authors, controlled index terms, and more.' pointing to the sidebar; 'These are related terms from the INSPEC Thesaurus.' pointing to the 'Controlled Index' section; and 'Use UC-eLinks to locate the full text of an article, either online or in print.' pointing to the 'UC-eLinks' button in the first result.

### SUBJECT SEARCHING

You can search subjects most easily through keyword searches. For more precise results, use the **INSPEC Thesaurus**. INSPEC utilizes a thesaurus, or mapped scheme of uniform subject headings, to facilitate subject searching. To identify appropriate subject headings, perform a keyword search then scan the results for relevant articles. View the **Complete Reference** to see the **Controlled Indexing** terms, which are linked for easy searching.

**Controlled Indexing:** peer-to-peer computing; wireless sensor networks

The screenshot shows the 'Inspec Thesaurus' interface. It includes a search box with the text 'wireless networks' and a 'Find' button. Below the search box, it displays 'Results Page 1 (Terms 1 - 17 of 17)'. A list of terms is shown, each with an 'Add' button and a 'T' icon. The terms include: ad hoc networks, Bluetooth, distributed sensors, indoor radio, LAN interconnection, local area networks, microsensors, mobile computing, mobile radio, packet radio networks, personal area networks, and protocols.

You can also browse terms in the thesaurus by changing the drop-down menu option on the main search page to **Controlled Index** and clicking on the magnifying glass icon to the right of the drop-down menu. In the example to the left, a search for the keywords "wireless networks" retrieves related controlled terms.