Basic and Multi-Field Searching
OvidSP Databases
(e.g. Medline, Embase, PsycINFO, Ovid Nursing)

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Basic Search or Multi-Field Search –
which one should you use?

Use Basic Search to:
  ● Find a few relevant articles quickly
  ● Get a feel for what is published when you’re starting your literature searching
  ● Search in the same way as you would search Google

Use Multi-Field Search to:
  ● Do a more thorough search especially if Basic Search does not retrieve relevant articles on your topic
  ● Retrieve more focussed results on your topic

If neither of these search modes gives good results you may need to use Advanced Search.
How to do a Basic Search
Choose the Basic Search tab on the Ovid search page.

Enter a sentence or question in the search box, or use keywords.

Choose Basic Search

Enter your search terms

Tick the “Include Related Terms” box

A large number of results may be retrieved, displayed in order of relevance.

Results with 5 stars are the most relevant & are shown at the top of the list. Results with 4 stars or less are unlikely to be very useful.

Search Information lists all the search terms that have been included in the search: synonyms, alternative spellings and names.
How to do a Multi-Field Search

Choose the Multi-Field Search tab.

Enter your search terms or keywords in the search boxes using AND or OR.

Use the * truncation symbol to search for different word endings.

Use OR to find alternate spellings or synonyms.

Choose to search in “All Fields” or “Abstract” or “Text Word” (title and abstract).

Results will be displayed in date order, with the most recent first.
Refining your search results using Limits

Choose as many Limits as you want and click Search again.

Click Additional Limits for more options.

Additional Limits can refine your results further e.g. Clinical Queries, Age Groups, Publication Types, Star Rankings (for Basic Search only).

It is better to apply limits one at a time – you may miss something useful.

Choose your Limits and click “Limit a Search”.

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### Additional Limits

- Clinical Queries
- Age Groups
- Publication Types
- Star Rankings

### Additional Options

- English Language
- Male
- Female
- Full Text
- Humans
- Latest Update
- Evidence Based Medicine Reviews
- Review Articles
- Topic Reviews (Cochrane)
- Basic Search
- Evidence Reviews (ACP Journal Club)
- Core Clinical Journals (AIM)

### Additional Tools

- Limit A Search
- Edit Limits

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### Additional Resources

- AIDS/HIV Journals
- Core Clinical Journals (AIM)
- Biotechnology Journals
- Communication Disorders Journals

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### Additional Languages

- Arabic
- Romanian
- Catalan
- Afrikaans
- Albanian

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### Publication Types

- Articles
- Reviews
- Editorial
- Book Chapters
Accessing the full text of the articles

PDF Full Text may be available for some articles

If the full text of the article cannot be accessed through the database try the library’s E-Journals link on the Library webpage.

Ovid Full Text or Article Linker or Library Holdings – use to go directly to full text or to the library catalogue.

Complete Reference includes the abstract, indexed terms and other publication data.

Find Similar searches concepts and synonyms from the title in other article titles.

Find Citing Articles looks for articles that cite this article from within the Ovid set of journals.
Selecting, printing, emailing and saving results

Options to print, email, export, or save selected references are given on each screen above the search results.

Select the references you want to keep by ticking the box that appears next to each reference. “Keep selected” will create a new set of results of those ticked references.

The “Add to My Projects” option will allow you to save selected references and manage them in named work projects (requires the creation of a personal account).

Save your search strategy (for a temporary period, permanently or as an email alert) by clicking

Saving searches requires the creation of a personal account. Follow the instructions on the Personal Account Login screen after clicking “Save search history”.

To retrieve your search next time you log in to the database, click

For further assistance please see our online Libguides (http://otago.libguides.com/wmhslibrary)

Or contact:
The Reference team during office hours on
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