PsycINFO on Ovid

Contents

PsycINFO’s Search Options.................................................................2
Boolean Logic ..................................................................................3
Using Parentheses.............................................................................4
Wildcard and Truncation Symbols.......................................................5
Using Field Codes.............................................................................6
The Thesaurus....................................................................................7
Exploding Thesaurus Terms.................................................................8
Adding Limits to Completed Searches...............................................8
Displaying Search Results................................................................8
Using Results Tools to Focus your Search Results...........................10
Printing, Emailing or Exporting Search Results to EndNote................10
Saving Searches and Setting Up Alerts.............................................10
**PsycINFO’s Search Options**

PsycINFO on Ovid has three search options:

### Basic Search

This search is set to include related terms. It's a useful option for first year students, or those inexperienced with the workings of PsycINFO.

**Example:**

Searching for depression would also find records with related terms like sad, sadness, depressive etc. When you click on Display to see the search results a list of the related terms searched will appear at the left hand side of the screen.

### Advanced Search

Advanced Search is set to map your search term to the appropriate thesaurus term (Map term to Subject Heading). If you turn this off, the default is then to map all terms searched to the fields listed below.

- **Title** e.g. cognition.ti, cognitive therapy.ti
- **Abstract** e.g. Meyers Briggs.ab, clinical trials.ab
- **Heading word** (a word in the subject headings) eg counseling.hw, academic achievement.hw
- **Table of contents** (for book records) eg glossary.tc
- **Key concepts** (indexers use these to supplement subject headings) eg psychosis.id, bipolar.id
- **Original title** (non English titles, where the original article was in another language) eg evidencias.ot
- **Tests and measures** (names of tests and measures identified in the source document) eg interview.tm

The results will appear as word or phrase.mp
e.g. insecure attachment.mp. [mp=title, abstract, heading word, table of contents, key concepts, original title, tests & measures]

However once you have turned off Map Term to Subject Heading, you can specify fields for each term you search, and override the default setting.

**For higher degree searching turn off Map Term to Subject Heading, and either specify fields for each term you search, or use a combination of thesaurus searching and either .mp or .tw**

### Multi-Field Search

This option allows you to select from a list of fields in which to search for terms. It can be useful for more complex searching than Basic Search, but is not appropriate for higher degree students or research staff, who require greater levels of flexibility and precision.

**Example:-**

if you searched for depression and set the field box to Title, your search would find only records where the word depression occurred in the title of the article.

**Unfortunately there are problems with the logical operators connecting the boxes in Multi-Field Search. Never mix ANDs and ORs when combining multiple boxes - the results will NOT be what you expect!**
**Boolean Logic**

Boolean logic defines logical relationships between search terms. The Boolean search operators **AND**, **OR** and **NOT** allow you to broaden or focus your search results.

The **AND** operator combines search terms so that each result contains all of the terms.

For example, social AND behavior will find articles that contain both social and behavior.

The **OR** operator combines search terms so that each result contains at least one of the terms.

For example, analgesic OR psychotropic will find articles that contain either analgesic or psychotropic.

The **NOT** operator is used to exclude search terms.

For example, analgesic NOT psychotropic will find articles that contain the term analgesic, but not the term psychotropic.

There are two additional operators which can be used

**ADJn**

This will find records that contain search terms within a specified number (n) of words from each other in either direction. To use the adjacency operator, separate your search terms with ADJ and a number from 1 to 99.

**Example:**

therapist adj5 relationship finds records that contain the two words within five words of each other in either direction.

This particular search retrieves records containing such phrases as

therapist patient relationship,

patient therapist relationship, or

relationship of the therapist to the patient.

**NOTE:** If you want to add a field name to your proximity searches make sure you enclose the search terms in parentheses.

(therapist adj3 relationship).ti,ab

**FREQ=n**

The frequency operator (FREQ) lets you specify a minimum number of times a term must occur in a record retrieved from your search. Records containing your search term are retrieved only if the term occurs at least the specified (n) number of times. In general, records that contain many instances of your search term are more relevant than records that contain fewer instances.

**Example:**

diet.ab. /freq=5 would find articles where the word diet occurred at least 5 times in the abstract
Using Parentheses

Parentheses can be used to protect the logic of your search. Without parentheses, a search may not behave the way you intend!!

Example 1: eating disorders OR depression AND self esteem OR media wrong method

Example 2: (eating disorders OR depression) AND (self esteem OR media) correct method

In the first example, the search will retrieve

- everything on eating disorders - even if the articles have nothing to do with any of the other terms,
- results which include both depression and self esteem,
- everything on media - even if the articles have nothing to do with any of the other terms.

In the second example, parentheses control the query to find only articles about eating disorders or depression that also refer to self esteem or media.

The simplest way to remember how to use parentheses - if you use "or" use parentheses around the terms. There's an entertaining demonstration of the use of parentheses in Boolean searching from the Hunter Library at the Western Carolina University. It's called "What the heck is Boolean searching?"
**Wildcard and Truncation Symbols**

Use the wildcard and truncation symbols in searches where you are looking for words with unknown characters, multiple spellings or various endings.

There are two wildcard options in PsycINFO

# A hash replaces a single character anywhere in a word. It doesn't allow for the absence of a character.

**Example:**

ne#t would find all citations containing neat, nest or next. Ovid would not find net because the wildcard replaces a single character. Use one hash for each character you want to replace.

? A question mark can substitute for a single character, or the absence of a character, and can be very useful in allowing for variations in British and American spelling of words.

**Example:**

colo?r retrieves results that contain the words color or colour. You can use multiple wild cards in a single query word.

There is only one truncation symbol in PsycINFO, but it can be used in two different ways

$ A dollar sign can be used only at the end of a word, and allows for all possible endings To use truncation, enter the root of a search term and replace the ending with a dollar sign. Ovid will find all available forms of that word. You can also use an asterisk *

**Example:**

beHAV$ finds behave, behavior, behaviour, behavioral, behavioural, behaviorism etc.

$N A dollar sign plus a number allows you to specify the maximum number of characters that may follow the root word or phrase.

**Example:**

dog$1 finds dog or dogs, but not dogma, which has more than one character after the truncation.
Using Field Codes

Like PubMed and Embase, and CINAHL, PsycINFO has a number of searchable fields. These are extremely useful in improving the accuracy of your searching. In fact they're essential for higher degree searching.

Some of the most commonly used are:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Code</th>
<th>Field Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>The Author (AU) field contains the names of individuals responsible for creation of the work represented by the record. If all authors are not included, the last name listed is followed by &quot;et al.” The author names are entered into the database as they appeared in the original document, in the format of last name followed by first and middle names or up to two initials. Thus, a person named &quot;James C. Smith&quot; may appear as “Smith James C,” &quot;Smith J Charles,” &quot;Smith, JC&quot; or &quot;Smith J&quot; Enter the last name, or if it is a common name, enter the last name, a space, and the first initial. e.g. Matthews G.au You can even use a wildcard to allow for either first initial or Christian name e.g. Matthews G$.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TI</td>
<td>Article Title</td>
<td>The Title (TI) field contains the Title of a document in English. If the language of the document is not English, language of the document appears in square brackets after the title, such as Hermina Sinclair-De Zwart's Bibliography. [French]. The original or transliterated title appears in a separate field, Original Title (OT). e.g. Dispositional mindfulness is associated with reduced implicit learning.ti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>The Abstract (AB) field includes abstracts written or edited by the American Psychological Association (APA) for journal articles. APA abstracts contain information specifically targeted to be of use with various forms of literature. For example, experimental and empirical articles will always contain the purpose of the study, the hypothesis, the subject population, methodology, results and significant conclusions. Names and genres of instruments used are included wherever possible, as well as names, dosage and route of administration of drugs. e.g. mindfulness.ab Historical Note: From 1995, dissertation records contain abstracts as well. Journal-provided abstracts have been used with little modification, whenever possible, since 2003. Older PsycINFO records have a higher percentage of staff-written and modified journal abstracts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JN</td>
<td>Journal Name</td>
<td>The Journal Name (JN) field contains the full name of the journal in which an article was published. Enter as many of the words or letters in a journal name as are needed to distinguish it from other journals, for example, &quot;cognitive sci$&quot; for &quot;Cognitive Science.” e.g. cognitive sci$.jn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JW</td>
<td>Journal Word</td>
<td>To search by a journal word, use the Journal Word (JW) field. The Journal Word (JW) field contains individual words from every journal name in the database. This field is used to retrieve every occurrence of a journal which includes a particular word, such as &quot;occupational.” e.g. occupational.jw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Subject Heading</td>
<td>The Subject Headings (SH) field contains the Subject Headings (also known as &quot;descriptors” or &quot;index terms&quot;) from the American Psychological Association’s Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms. Indexers at the APA use the terms to describe the topic or content of a document. e.g. cognitive therapy.sh You can look up any of these terms by using Search Tools tab, and choosing the Thesaurus option. When search results are displayed, subject headings which describe the major point (focus) of a document will be preceded with an asterisk (*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A complete list of search fields available in PsycINFO can be found at [http://ospguides.ovid.com/OSPguides/psycdb.htm#search](http://ospguides.ovid.com/OSPguides/psycdb.htm#search)

A word or phrase can be searched in multiple fields at the same time - simply separate the field codes with a comma.

**Example:**

anxiety.ti,ab

**The Thesaurus**

The PsycINFO thesaurus contains the subject headings from the Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms. American Psychological Association indexers use this controlled vocabulary known as index terms or descriptors to indicate the content of each item in the database. Subjects are assigned to every record using major and minor descriptors, which describe the primary and secondary focus of the document. Subject headings, which describe the major focus of a document, are preceded by an asterisk (*) in the PsycINFO record.

For example the article

*Brown, Kirk Warren, and Kasser, Tim*

*Are psychological and ecological well-being compatible? The role of values, mindfulness, and lifestyle*


has the following thesaurus terms assigned to it

**Subjects:** *Happiness; *Lifestyle; *Personal Values; *Well Being; *Mindfulness; Ecology; Psychology

The Thesaurus is arranged in a hierarchy that permits searching various levels of detail from the most general level to more specific levels.

- You can **Explode** terms in the thesaurus to include Narrower terms in the hierarchy.
- You can also select **Major Concept** to ensure that you retrieve only material where the subject is a primary focus of the article

To access the PsycINFO thesaurus you can either:-

1. Click on **Search Tools**, then use the drop down box to **Map Term**. This option will try to match the term you type to the appropriate Thesaurus term.

or
2. Click on **Search Tools**, then use the drop down box to choose Thesaurus. This option will allow you to look for a specific word or phrase. If you type in happy, the database selects the closest alphabetical match - which is happiness.

or

3. Simply use **Advanced Search**, and leave the **Map Term to Subject Heading** box ticked. This option can sometimes produce bizarre results!

**Exploding Thesaurus Terms**

Some Thesaurus terms in PsycINFO, like mental disorders, have a long list of more specific terms "Narrower Terms" underneath them. If you know the thesaurus term you can simply explode it using the Advanced Search box

**eg.** **exp cognitive behavior therapy**

This will mean that PsycINFO will search not only the term you have chosen, but all of the narrower terms listed below it. In this example, both Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy will be searched.

You can also explode a term from within the PsycINFO Thesaurus by clicking in the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cognitive Behavior Therapy</strong></th>
<th>10170</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Broader Terms]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Narrower Terms]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychotherapy</td>
<td>4782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance and Commitment Therapy</td>
<td>517</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adding Limits to Completed Searches**

Some limits can be added simply by checking the appropriate boxes below the search box on the Advanced Search page.

A complete [list of limits](#) is available from the Ovid Web site

**Displaying Search Results**

PsycINFO's default display is citation only. This includes title of the article, author(s), name of journal, volume number, date and pages.

To see abstracts for all references, simply click Abstract in the toolbar at the top of the search Results list. Abstracts will now be displayed for all results.

To see more detail for an individual reference click on Complete Reference (in the blue box to the right of the reference).

You will now be able to see:-

- title,
- author(s),
- author contact information,
- abstract,
- publication source,
- publisher,
- ISSN,
- language,
- key concepts,
- subject headings,
- digital object identifier,
and much more, for that reference.

You can further customize the Citation View by selecting the Customize Display feature on the Source Information widget on the left of your screen.

To change the number of records displayed per page use the drop down box above the results display. The default display is 10 records per page, and the maximum display is 100.
Using Results Tools to Focus your Search Results

Use the Results Tools column on the left of your screen:

- At the top of the column, under the details of your search, is the Sort option. You can sort your results by Year of Publication, Author, Journal name, and many more.

Next is the Filter By option, which will allow you to limit your search to specific years, journals, or books. There is also a Publication Type option which will allow you to select only peer reviewed journals.

Printing, Emailing or Exporting Search Results

Options for printing, emailing, or exporting results to bibliographic software, including EndNote appear at the top of the search results display.

The maximum number of results that can be printed, emailed or exported is 200, so results from large searches will need to be dealt with in batches which do not exceed 200.

Instructions for exporting results to EndNote are below.

**Internet Explorer**
- Run your search and mark references at search results
- Click Export
- At Export Citation List: window choose Export To – EndNote – from dropdown menu
- Choose from the Select Fields to Display options
- Click Export Citation(s) References will be exported to an open EN library.
- Check and edit your references as necessary.

**Firefox**
- Run your search and mark references at search results
- Click Export
- At Export Citation List: window choose Export To – EndNote – from dropdown menu
- Choose from the Select Fields to Display options
- Click Export Citation(s)
- At the next window – click “open with” button then select EndNote from the dropdown menu
- Click OK
- References will be exported to an open EN library.
- Check and edit your references as necessary.

Saving Searches and Setting Up Alerts

To save searches or to set up autoalerts of new articles on your topic you will need to create an account. The first time you attempt to save a search you will be prompted to do this.

Save your searches by clicking the Save History button from the Search History window.
Note: To save a search you must give it a name.

The following options are available:

Temporary - Saves the search for a period of twenty-four hours, then deletes it.

Permanent - Saves the search indefinitely. Use this option to save and rerun at another time or for base strategies from which you can develop further searches.

AutoAlert - Creates a search that runs automatically on a regular basis and emails results. Use this option to keep you up to date with new articles on your topic. You can also use it to keep up to date with a specific journal or author.