# Searching using CINAHL

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## Before you start searching

To search on the database it will help you if you’ve thought about what terms you are going to put in and how you are going to enter them.

If you haven’t already done so, I recommend having a look at the Constructing a Search Strategy tutorial and, if you find it helpful, completing your own Constructing a Search Strategy Support Sheet.

Throughout your studies, you can access both of these on the Library Health and Social Work subject pages in our How to… Guides section

## Why CINAHL?

CINAHL is a great database to choose as your starting point as …

It’s easy to use

It’s easy to modify your search

It’s a big database so even if you aren’t using the most popular term, you should get some results

It’s appropriate for the majority of healthcare topics

## How do I find CINAHL?

Go to the Library homepage http://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/

Click on Subject Help

Choose Health and Social Work

Click Databases

## You’ll need to log in

To access any Brookes electronic resource you’ll need to log in

using your Brookes student number and portal password.

## CINAHL Search Screen

There are lots of different ways of searching for your topic and lots of different options.

To begin with, ignore everything on the screen, except the top search box.

## Entering your search

You need to enter the search strategy you’ve already prepared.

Begin by typing (or copying and pasting) all of the alternative terms you’ve though of for your first keyword, all separated by OR.

If this doesn’t sound familiar and make sense, then you need to have a look again at When to use AND and OR and Constructing a Search Strategy.

## Entering another search

Click Search and then clear the box ready for you to do exactly the same thing with the terms identified for your next keyword.

If you have another line of terms, repeat the process again. Remember to clear the box after you search on your final set of terms too.

CINAHL stores each set of terms ready for you to work with. Look down the screen to see…

## Search History

CINAHL has kept a list of your entered searches in Search History

At the moment there are 2 separate searches, one finds us all the articles on the database which have to do with handwashing and one that finds all the articles on complying with something. They aren’t linked in any way.

Look at the numbers of results for each search on the right. If these are very low (unless it’s a very niche topic) try and think of some more alternative terms as you probably haven’t yet thought of the term that the majority of people are using.

## Combining Terms

To get a list of the articles on the database which are about handwashing AND compliance

Click the boxes next to each line

Click on Search with AND

## CINAHL Results

The results of your search will be displayed with the newest article at the top

If you’re very lucky, the top one will be just what you’re looking for.

Remember, no matter how good your search terms you’ll always get some results which aren’t relevant to you.

## Adding limits to your search

Options to limit what results are displayed appear on the left of the results screen.

You can choose things like

Date

Language

Peer Reviewed

Age

If you’re still struggling with too many results, try our Too many results? guide

## Finding full text

On CINAHL, the following symbols below an article record mean that we definitely have it available in full text.

Just click on the symbol to gain access.

If for any reason a link isn’t working, please email healthcarelibrarians@brookes.ac.uk and let us know.

If you’re trying out another database which doesn’t have these options, remember you can always search for the journal using the E-journals by title option in the search box on the Library homepage.

You can also use the Cairns Library at the John Radcliffe hospital to get access to additional resources.

## Further help

For more help with forming a search strategy look at the Constructing a Search Strategy guide

If you’re wondering what the \* means, then you can look at our guide Truncation and Wildcards

For more help with what AND and OR mean and when to use them look at our When to use AND and OR guide

If want to try your search on a different database, look at the database specific guides on our How to… guides pages

If you have questions you’d like to ask a librarian…

## Any Questions?

healthcarelibrarians@brookes.ac.uk

Ask for help if you need it.