

Basic Searching in PubMed

PubMed contains over 29 million citations for biomedical literature from MEDLINE, life science journals, and online books.

Accessing the Database

1. Go to the Hardin Library homepage at <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/hardin/>
2. Click on the link that says "PubMed." It is located under the heading "Popular Resources." (NOTE: While PubMed is freely available, it is best to access it from the Hardin Library website so that you will have access to full text articles that you are only entitled to as an affiliate of the University of Iowa).
3. If you are off-campus, you will be prompted for your Hawk ID and password.

Searching via Keywords (Quicker, but less focused search)

1. Break your search into concepts. For instance, a search on the effects of aspirin on hypertension has two concepts. "Aspirin" is one and "hypertension" is the other.
2. Search one term at a time.
3. Check the "Search Details" box on the bottom, right-hand side of the screen to see how PubMed interpreted your search and make changes accordingly.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 as necessary for additional terms.
5. Combine searches and then limit your search as necessary (See "Combining Searches" and "Limiting Results" on the second page of this handout).

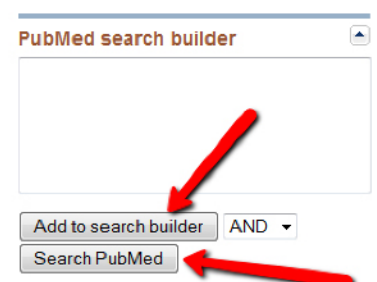
Searching via MeSH (More structured search to yield higher quality citations)

1. Break your search into concepts. For instance, a search on the effects of aspirin on hypertension has two concepts. "Aspirin" is one and "hypertension" is the other.
2. Change the drop box to "MeSH," then enter one concept in to the search box at a time.



A screenshot of the PubMed search interface. On the left, there is a dropdown menu with "MeSH" selected. A red arrow points to this dropdown. To the right of the dropdown is a search input box. Below the input box, the word "Advanced" is written in blue. To the right of the input box is a blue "Search" button.

3. You will be given a list of MeSH terms. Use the descriptions beneath the terms to determine which is most appropriate and then check the box to the left of your chosen term. (Note: if you want to use subheadings, click the link for the MeSH term).
4. Now, near the top, right of the screen, click the "Add to Search Box" button.
5. If you have another term to search, clear the top search box and enter your new term.
6. Once you have entered all of your terms, select "Search PubMed."
7. Combine searches and then limit your search as necessary (See "Combining Searches" and "Limiting Results" on the second page of this handout).



A screenshot of the "PubMed search builder" interface. At the top, it says "PubMed search builder" with a small upward arrow icon. Below this is a large empty search box. At the bottom of the search builder, there are two buttons: "Add to search builder" and "Search PubMed". A red arrow points to the "Add to search builder" button. To the right of the "Add to search builder" button is a dropdown menu with "AND" selected. Below the "Add to search builder" button is the "Search PubMed" button, which is also pointed to by a red arrow.

Combining Search Results (Search History)

1. From any PubMed screen, click the “Advanced” search link below the search box.

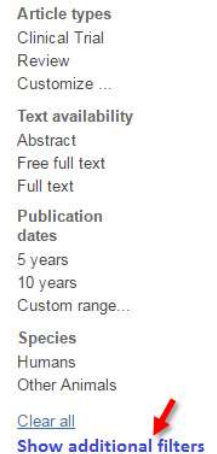


2. This takes you to the Advanced Search Builder page, where you can combine your previous searches by typing the “#” plus the number to the left of the appropriate search into your search box as shown in the picture below and then clicking the “Search” button.



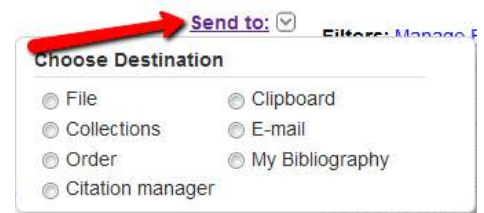
Limiting Search Results

1. Options for limiting search results are at the left on the search page. Commonly-used limit filters are human subjects, English language and articles with abstracts. For English language and other limits filters that aren't shown in the default list on the search results page, click “Show additional filters.”
2. Notice that when a limit filter is activated, its name in the left sidebar list turns blue with a checkmark to the left; also, a line saying “Filters activated” appears at the top of the results list.




Managing Results

1. You can check the boxes to the left of citations and then email or print them out for later use. Once you have checked all the citations you are interested in go to the top right of the screen and click on the “Send to” link.
 - a. To email: simply click the “email” option.
 - b. To print: click the “Clipboard” option. Then, click the link for “Clipboard” near the top right of the screen. All the items you've selected will display for printing. HINT: If you set the format to “Abstract” and then click the box for “MeSH and other data” the email will contain an ULink button for each citation.



Finding Full Text

1. Click the title of an article to see more information, including options for full text access, abstracts (when available), and MeSH terms.
2. To see if full text is available, use the ULink button.  (It is generally located near the top right of the screen).
3. If no full text is available, contact us at Hardin or use our interlibrary loan service <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/hardin/illa.html>

As always, if you need assistance, do not hesitate to contact Hardin Library.

<http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/hardin/contact/>