

HOW TO SEARCH

ICGP LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICE

Searching skills are necessary for every clinician hoping to stay up-to date.



TEN TOP TIPS TO BECOME A BETTER SEARCHER

- ☒ Plan - Be clear about your information needs. What question are you trying to answer? Think about the search terms before you begin.
- ☒ Think about terminology and spelling .e.g. for an Irish site enter 'General Practice' but if it is an American site, 'Family Practice' or 'Primary Care' would be more appropriate.
- ☒ Decide on appropriate search tool(s) .i.e. do you need a medical database or an EBM site or a patient information site, etc.? Use multiple Library recommended sources - no single source will cover everything but they may complement each other.
- ☒ Become familiar with the sources you are using. Are there any search guides/tutorials available?
- ☒ Use Boolean operators .i.e. the terms AND, OR and NOT if possible.
- ☒ Set limits .e.g. English language, particular years .e.g. 1995-2005, type of publication .e.g. review article.
- ☒ Match to the thesaurus terms .e.g. MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) if provided. This will help ensure you are searching for the terms you actually want.
- ☒ When you find a suitable source, check its list of references - you may find more relevant items there. Use the related articles/similar results button if available.
- ☒ Remember to keep a written note of the sources used for reference purposes and to facilitate future searches.
- ☒ Seek Advice – ask library staff for advice if you need any help: library@icgp.ie