

British Nursing Index

Search techniques for DIALOG DATASTAR users

Select **ADVANCED SEARCH** option next to BNI in the list of available databases

Searching using subject headings

- It is usually most helpful to find the thesaurus terms which relate to the subject you are searching for. Type a word or phrase in the search box and tick the **thesaurus-mapping box** above. Click on **SEARCH**.
- In addition to the results for the word you searched for, your search will be mapped to a list of **thesaurus descriptors** linked to that subject, which you can use to search. Usually the first is the most appropriate, but scroll down the list to use another descriptor. Tick the box to the left of the term you choose.
- You can tick **more than one descriptor** and combine them by using the **OR / AND** Boolean option above the list.
- **OR** will widen your search to include articles with **either** term.
- **AND** will narrow it to only articles containing **both** terms.
- When you have selected your descriptors, click on **SEARCH** at the top or at the end of the thesaurus list.
- If not using any of the thesaurus descriptors click on **CANCEL** to return to the results page for your initial search.

Searching using free text

- Remove the tick from the thesaurus-mapping box.
- Type a word or phrase in the search box. Do not include punctuation such as hyphens or apostrophes. If you are using an abbreviation e.g. DVT, HRT, MMR, remember to search also for the term in full. Click on **SEARCH**
- **Truncate** a word by using a dollar sign (\$) to retrieve all variants on it; e.g. child\$ will retrieve articles containing the words child, children, childhood.
- Use **\$ and a digit** to limit retrieval e.g. child\$3 will find child and children but not childhood.
- **Check the spelling** of words by typing a question mark straight after them (no space) and clicking on **SEARCH**
- Check **authors' names** by entering last name first, followed by a hyphen, first initial and question mark e.g. **jones-t?**

Searching by individual fields

- Select from the list of **options** next to the search box, the first of which is 'Whole document'. The 'Source' option searches journal titles.
- Continue as for free text searching above.

Combining searches already carried out

- Each of your search results will be allocated a number on the left hand side.
- Having searched for each topic **individually**, type the numbers of the results you want to use, e.g. 2 and 4 in the search box and click on **SEARCH** to link the topics together.
- You can combine searches with **not** e.g. 2 not 4 in the search box to exclude a topic.

Limiting results

- Use the boxes lower down on the search page to limit your search to articles added **since** a particular year, or number of months ago. You can do this on a search already performed by typing its number in the search box.
- As a separate search, **highlight dates** using the Publication year option to find only articles published in a particular year or range of years. Combine the results with the results of your subject search, as in Combining Searches, above.

Searches using the thesaurus

- Use the **BNID** thesaurus browse headings/enter a term options and tick and **SEARCH** to select terms you want to use.

Searches using the journal list

- As a separate search, you can use the Source journals options to find only articles on a subject published in a specific journal. Combine the results with the results of a subject search, as above.

Selecting results to print, save or email

- From your search results, click on 'show titles'.
- Tick the box to the left of each article you wish to select
- (From 2004, there are abstracts to help you select articles of interest; click on [Link to fully indexed abstract](#) to see them.)
- When you reach the bottom of the page, click on **NEXT TITLES**
- When you have selected as many as you want, click on **DISPLAY** **SAVE** or **EMAIL** at the bottom of the page, but do not change any settings.
- To save, or email, follow instructions on the next page.
- To print, after clicking on **DISPLAY**, click on **PRINT SCREEN** on next page
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