

Searching Web of Science: a basic guide

This guide is designed to help you search Web of Science effectively but it can also help you search other databases. Web of Science (WoS) provides details of articles, conference proceedings, data and other items from thousands of reputable journals across many subject areas (sport, exercise, health, medicine, biology, social & policy sciences, management...), many of which the Library provides in full text.

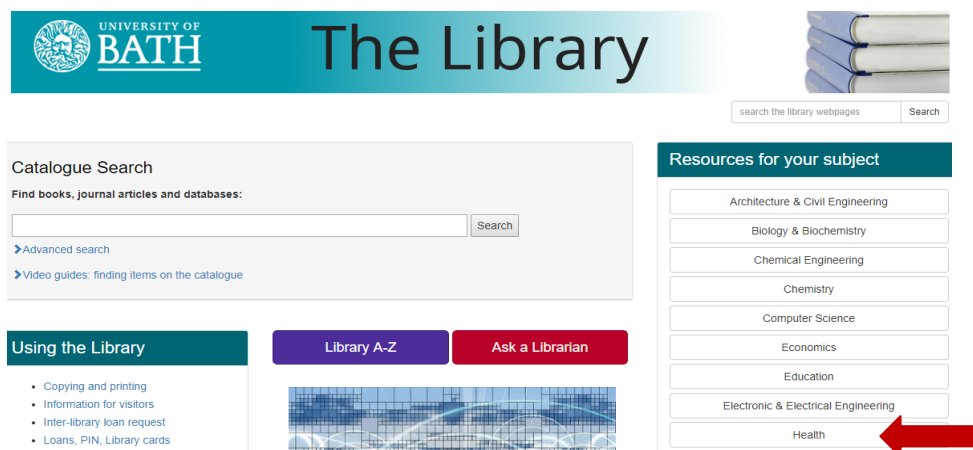
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9. **Saving searches and email alerts:** please refer to the guide:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/guide-to-saving-searches-and-setting-up-email-alerts-in-health-databases/attachments/health-save-search-alerts-guide.pdf>

1. Accessing Web of Science (WoS)

- a. You need to access WoS via the Library website to get full access. Go the Library homepage: <https://library.bath.ac.uk/home> - if you are a health student, click “health” within the “Subject Resources” section. Other students will find Web of Science listed on the library’s resource pages for other subjects – or via a search of the Library Catalogue.



The screenshot shows the University of Bath Library homepage. At the top, there is a teal header with the University of Bath logo and the text 'The Library'. Below the header, there is a search bar with the text 'search the library webpages' and a 'Search' button. To the left of the search bar is a 'Catalogue Search' section with a search box and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar is a 'Resources for your subject' section with a list of subjects: Architecture & Civil Engineering, Biology & Biochemistry, Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, Education, Electronic & Electrical Engineering, and Health. A red arrow points to the 'Health' option.

b. Within the Library's Health section, click 'Search the Literature' and then the 'Web of Science' link (the first of the listed databases).

The screenshot shows a library website with a navigation bar at the top containing links like 'Home', 'Search the literature', 'Referencing', 'Learning at Bath', 'Researching at Bath', 'Data & statistics', and 'Further resources'. Below the navigation bar, there are two main sections: 'Search for a recommended book, journal or article' and 'Search for journal articles (and other academic literature)'. The 'Search for journal articles' section includes a sub-section 'Search library databases' with a red box around the 'Web of Science: all databases' link. To the right, there is a 'Search for systematic reviews' section listing various databases like Cochrane Library, Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD), EPPI-Centre Knowledge Library, PEDro Physiotherapy Evidence Database, PROSPERO, and TRIP.

2. Thinking about search terms: *read this section before searching WoS*

2a Search terms

When you conduct a basic Web of Science search, the database looks for your search terms within the titles and abstracts (summaries) of journal articles. **Think carefully** about your search terms before entering them into Web of Science. To help you do this, **look at your assignment title / research question** and identify the most important words or phrases that appear in it i.e. write down those words or phrases that distinguish it from any *other* assignment title or research question.

For this exercise, please either use your own title or use the following title as an example:

“Investigate to what extent carbohydrate intake impacts upon the endurance of marathon runners”

2b. Sub-themes

The following are the most important words/phrases that appear within the title above. Each represents a separate **sub-theme** that relates to the overall theme of the title:

carbohydrate
endurance
marathon

2c. Thinking about alternative words or phrases

Think about the potential range of alternative words and phrases that could be used to describe each separate sub-theme. Consider terminology that you already know from **academic books, journal articles, lectures and tutorials**, as well as more commonly-used language. **Why do this?** This will help you decide which words to enter into PubMed's search boxes. Also, if you enter a large range of relevant search terms, you are more likely to **increase the number of useful search results**.

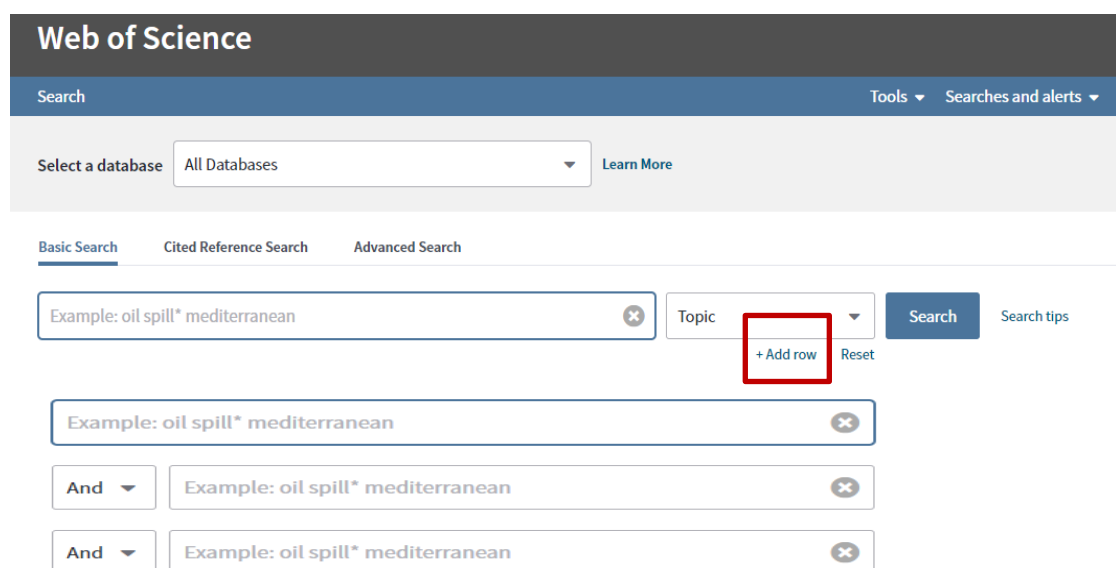
Tip: You might find it helpful to write down your alternative words in separately-themed rows e.g.

Sub-theme	Alternative words/phrases	Any others?
Carbohydrate	Carbohydrates	
Endurance	Fatigue, Exhaustion	
Marathon	Ultramarathon	

3. Entering your search terms

3a. Create multiple search boxes

Click **+ Add Row** as many times as necessary to create multiple search boxes i.e. you need one search box for each sub-theme than you have identified.



The screenshot shows the 'Web of Science' search interface. At the top, there is a 'Search' bar with 'Tools' and 'Searches and alerts' dropdowns. Below this is a 'Select a database' dropdown set to 'All Databases' with a 'Learn More' link. The main search area has three tabs: 'Basic Search' (selected), 'Cited Reference Search', and 'Advanced Search'. The search input field contains 'Example: oil spill* mediterranean'. To the right of the input field is a 'Topic' dropdown, a 'Search' button, and a 'Search tips' link. Below the main input field, there are two additional search boxes, each with an 'And' dropdown and a 'Reset' button. A red box highlights the '+ Add row' button, and a red arrow points to the right from the right side of the interface.

3b. Enter your search terms

Enter each set of search terms (i.e. each sub-theme) in its own separate search box.

Enter the word **or** between each alternative word/phrase.

1 st search box	Carbohydrate*
2 nd search box	endur* or fatigu* or exhaust*
3 rd search box	*marathon*

The screenshot shows a search interface with a dark blue header containing 'Search', 'Tools', and 'Searches and alerts'. Below the header is a light grey bar with 'Select a database' and a dropdown menu set to 'Web of Science Core Collection', with a 'Learn More' link. Underneath are tabs for 'Basic Search', 'Cited Reference Search', 'Advanced Search', and '+ More'. The main search area contains three rows of search boxes. The first row has 'carbohydrate*' in a text box and a 'Topic' dropdown. The second row has an 'And' dropdown, 'endur* or fatigu* or exhaust*' in a text box, and a 'Topic' dropdown. The third row has an 'And' dropdown, '*marathon*' in a text box, and a 'Topic' dropdown. To the right of the third row is a blue 'Search' button and a 'Search tips' link. At the bottom right of the search area are '+ Add row' and 'Reset' links.

In the above example, note the default “And” that appears between boxes. This means that at least one word/phrase from each search box will appear in each of your search results.

3c. Useful search tips!

Truncating words using an asterisk

As in the examples above, try using an asterisk where relevant – this might help increase your number of search results.

You can add this at the end of the stem of a word to find variations e.g.

endur* searches for **endure, endures, endured, enduring, endurance**

You can also add an asterisk just before the start of a word:

marathon searches for **marathon, marathons, ultramarathon...**

Searching for a specific phrase

You can enter “**speech marks**” around a phrase so that Web of Science searches for only those words in exactly the same order. For example, “**protein drink**” OR “**protein beverage**”

Click the search button and take a look at your results: consider their relevance to your topic and note the number that you retrieve. You can use the “**re-sort**” options above your results so that results appear in order of “relevance”, or most highly cited, rather than most recent.

Sort by: Date Times Cited Usage Count **Relevance** More

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Select Page 5K Save to EndNote online Add to Marked List Create Citation Report Analyze Results

1. **Metabolic Factors Limiting Performance in Marathon Runners**
By: Rapoport, Benjamin I.
PLOS COMPUTATIONAL BIOLOGY Volume: 6 Issue: 10 Article Number: e1000960 Published: OCT 2010
links Free Full Text from Publisher View Abstract
Times Cited: 30 (from Web of Science Core Collection)
Usage Count

2. **Commercial sport drinks versus light meal combat rations: Effect on simulated combat maneuvers**
By: Bell, DG; McLellan, TM; Boyne, S
Conference: Annual Meeting of the Canadian-Society-for-Exercise-Physiology Location: MONTREAL, CANADA Date: NOV, 2001
Sponsor(s): Canadian Soc Exercise Physiol
MILITARY MEDICINE Volume: 167 Issue: 8 Pages: 692-697 Published: AUG 2002
links View Abstract
Times Cited: 3 (from Web of Science Core Collection)
Usage Count

4. Refining your search terms

4a. Retrieving too few results?

Take another look at the range of your search terms that you entered and consider whether or not any further terms exist on your topic – if so, add these and try another search. If you still retrieve few results, search more broadly on the topic e.g. remove one set of search terms and try again.

4b. Retrieving too many irrelevant results?

Take another look at the range of your search terms and consider whether or not any of the terms were of only marginal relevance – if so, remove these and try another search. If you still retrieve many irrelevant results, you might be able to search more narrowly by identifying a further sub-theme and enter its related set of search terms in an additional search box.

4c. Proximity searching:

Proximity searching can be useful if there are many potential variations of a specific phrase.

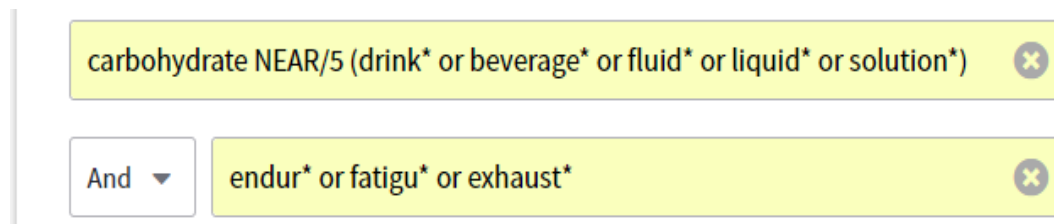
Examples:

A “carbohydrate-protein drink” may be known as a “carbohydrate drink”.

“Strength and power training” may be known as “training for power and strength”.

By entering the word **NEAR/** and a number, you can search for two search terms to appear near each other e.g. within 5 words of each other. For example:

carbohydrate NEAR/5 (drink* **OR** beverage* **OR** fluid* **OR** liquid* **OR** solution*)

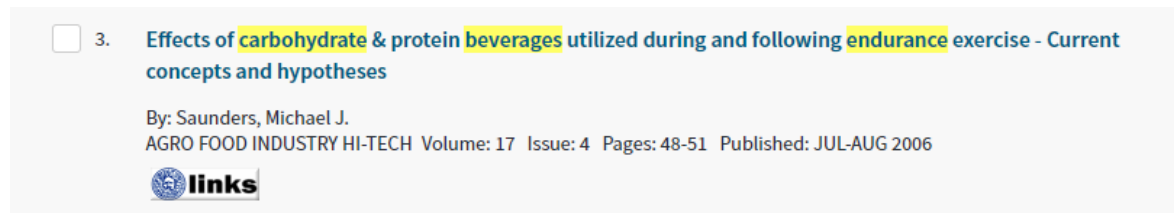


carbohydrate NEAR/5 (drink* or beverage* or fluid* or liquid* or solution*)

And ▾


endur* or fatigu* or exhaust*

If relevant to your topic, undertake a “proximity search” by adapting your search terms (as in the above example). Note the number of results of a proximity-search compare to your previous search (and note the proximity of the highlighted words in your results).



3. **Effects of carbohydrate & protein beverages utilized during and following endurance exercise - Current concepts and hypotheses**

By: Saunders, Michael J.
AGRO FOOD INDUSTRY HI-TECH Volume: 17 Issue: 4 Pages: 48-51 Published: JUL-AUG 2006

 links

5. Engaging with abstracts (summaries)

Click view abstract to the right of any results in which you are interested potentially. Abstracts summarise the findings and methodologies of an article. Note the terminology used in abstracts. By increasing your awareness of relevant terminology, this may help you modify/expand your search terms and in turn, help you retrieve a greater number of relevant results.

6. *Checking if you can view the full article*

6a. Checking online availability

To find out whether or not the full text of an article is available for you to read, click the blue and white 'Links' button:



This button will take you to a "links" page which will provide a link to the full article (e.g. if the library subscribes to the relevant journal).

6b. If the full article is NOT available online:

Search the Library Catalogue via the Library homepage: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/library/>

Search the Catalogue for the journal title (not the article title) – you may find that we provide a printed copy of the journal in the library. If we do, click the '**shelf locations**' tab within the journal's catalogue record to find out whether we hold the relevant year/volume/issue.

7. *Broadening your perspective on a topic*

7a. Times Cited

Back to your search results: Note the words **times cited** to the right of each result. This tells you the number of times an individual article has been cited/referenced by other articles (indexed by Web of Science). You can click on this number to connect to records of these other articles and to potentially read their full text.

This is **good practice** as it may help you demonstrate an understanding of how a research area has developed and as a result, you might get **higher marks**.

7b. Cited references

Click the title of one of the results. This takes you to the full record for the relevant article. In the right-hand column, you will find a link to **cited references** – click on this to follow-up references that appear within the article. Again, this will help broaden your perspective topic, but it may also help develop your understanding of the citing article.

Also note: Below the abstract, you may find lists of "key words" and "author key words" that might provide inspiration for amending your own search terms

8. Saving and emailing results

The screenshot shows a search results interface. On the left, there's a sidebar with search filters and a 'Refine Results' section. The main area displays three search results. The first two results have checkboxes selected, and a red box highlights these checkboxes. A dropdown menu is open above the first result, showing options for saving and emailing. The third result has a checkbox that is not selected.

a. It is good practice to save multiple copies of selected results so that you have “back-ups” in the event of losing one set (e.g. save to your email accounts, memory sticks etc...).

b. Click/select the box next to any individual result(s) of interest.

c. Options for saving your selected results appear above the search results. For example, you could click the **envelope icon** above to email them. You could also select “**save to other file format**” (this enables you, for example, to save results, in HTML format, to a location of your choice, such as a memory stick, or the University’s “H Drive”).

d. If you are interested in saving references to either EndNote Online or EndNote Desktop, please refer to: <https://library.bath.ac.uk/c.php?g=665356&p=4710904>

e. **If selecting results to save across multiple pages of results:** click “Add to marked list” after each page. When you’re finally ready to email/save, click “Marked List” near the top of the screen – this takes you to a screen where you will also find saving/emailing options.

Try also searching other databases: no single database indexes all articles published on a topic.
For further advice on using the database: please contact your Subject Librarian.

Peter Bradley: 31/01/2019