

Organizing and documenting search terms

- As you read through key articles keep track of potential terms in the table of concepts.
- Track the subject headings and note their entry terms ("used for" terms) in the table as potentially relevant keywords.
- Use highlighting or different colours to differentiate between terms you have already looked up and those you haven't.
- Include spelling variations in your table as additional terms.
- As you look up each term, decide whether you'll eventually search it as a subject heading or keyword. If you decide to use it as a keyword, then also decide if you'll run it as a title and abstract search only.

IMPORTANT things to note

- If a term results in 0 hits, note this and keep it in the table as a potentially useful term. (It may do this in one database but result in hits in another database).
- If you decide not to use a term, note "not relevant" in the notes field.
- Use the notes field to keep track of questions for further discussion with your research team or as reminders about how you want to use the term (for example, whether a term should be paired with a drug, etc.)
- Use the notes field to jot down any decisions about a term that you want to document for later reference.
- Keep a separate table for each database.

Question: What factors affect wait times for total joint (hip or knee) replacement?

Concept	Term	Resource	Notes
total joint replacement	Exp Arthroplasty, Replacement/ Hip Joint/su Exp Joint prosthesis/ Exp Joint Diseases/su [Surgery] Exp Knee Joint/su	MEDLINE MEDLINE MEDLINE MEDLINE	YEAR of ENTRY: 98; use JOINT PROSTHESIS 1979-97
	((joint adj3 lower extremit\$) or hip\$ or knee\$).mp. AND (replac\$ or arthroplac\$ or prosthese\$ or surger\$).mp.		
wait times	Exp "Appointments and Schedules"/ (postpon\$ or delay\$ or schedul\$ or anticipat\$ or queue\$).mp. (wait\$ adj3 (time\$ or list\$)).mp.	MEDLINE	includes Waiting Lists/ as narrower MeSH

