Handy Ovid Medline tips

1. To combine a large number of sets using OR or AND in an Ovid database:
    or/1-10 (equivalent to 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10)
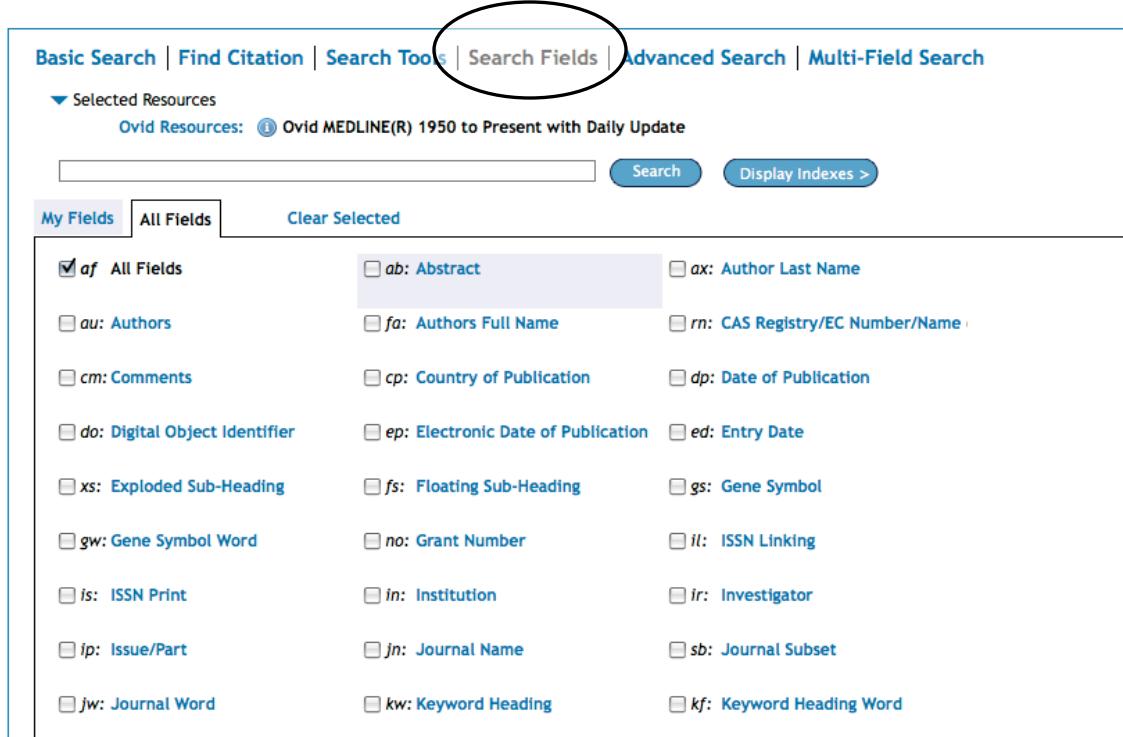
    You can also select specific sets (i.e. the sets don't have to be consecutive)
    and/1-3,4,7,10 (equivalent to 1 and 2 and 3 or and 4 and 7 and 10)

2. To efficiently delete sets in an Ovid database:
    ..pg 1- 10
    ..pg 1-3,4,7,10

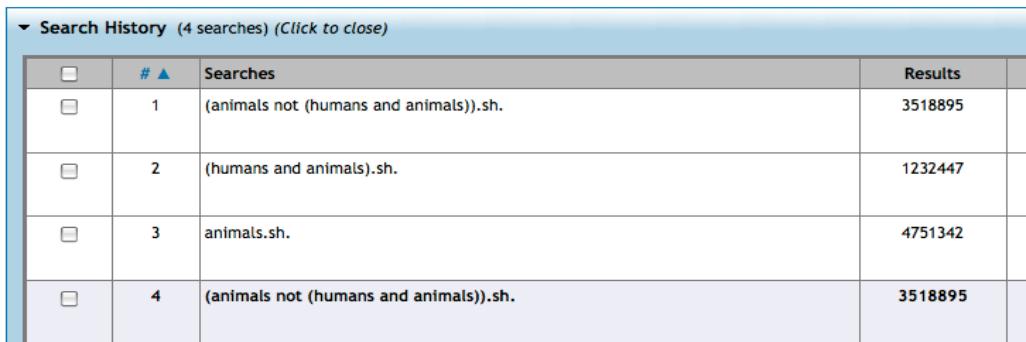3. To check the total number of records in an Ovid database:
    docz.dz

4. To look up the 2-letter codes for the fields that can be searched in an Ovid database:

5. To limit to studies done on human populations

Set 4 gives you studies that are exclusively on animal populations. Apply **NOT** 4 to remove these studies from your final set.

6. To select the right date field from an array of options

In Ovid there is an array of fields that pertain to dates. They are as follows:

a) **Entry date (.ed)**
The Entry Date (ED) field contains the issue (year, month and day) in which the document was indexed as a MEDLINE (R) record. This index appears in the format YYYYMMDD.

NB: The ED (Entry Date) field in Ovid's MEDLINE corresponds to the Completed Date field in PubMed records.

You can limit a MEDLINE search to find records with a range of Entry Dates. For example, to find articles with autism in their titles which were added to MEDLINE by NLM in Sept. 2005, you would enter this search:
1. autism.ti
2. limit 1 to ed=20050901-20050930

**If you're updating a systematic review, the use of the ED field is recommended. Using DP (see below) for a review update means you might miss an older publication that was only added to Medline at a later date.

b) **Date of publication (.dp)**
Date of Publication (DP) field consists of the date of publication for a citation, in the format YYYY MMM DD (1950 dec 3). The Month and day are not always present. This field is also displayed as part of the Source (SO) field.

c) **Update Date (.up)**
The Update Date (UP) field contains the date the record was added to MEDLINE since the yearly reload completion. The Update Date for existing records changes with each global reload to reflect the date Ovid starts processing the reload data. The UP field appears in the format YYYYMMDD.

d) YR: The Year of Publication (YR) field contains the year in which an article or monograph was published. Only the four digit year is contained in the index.

7. To explode a term in a way that lets you see all the narrower terms in your search history:

If you're exploding a term, we recommend a "belt and suspenders" approach. Check off both the explode box (the left column on the right hand side of the page), and also click on the boxes to select each of the narrower terms. This ensures that you're exploding the broadest term (in this case Weight Loss/) even though it may be found in multiple branches of the MeSH Thesaurus, but that you have a record of the narrower terms when you look back at your search history.

☐ Weight Gain	18201	☐ ☐
[−] ☑ Weight Loss	17941	☑ ☐
[−] ☑ Emaciation	572	☐ ☐
☑ Cachexia	3295	☐ ☐
☐ Fetal Weight	917	☐ ☐

8. Differences between NLM's Pubmed and Ovid Medline when it comes to drug terms:

    If you explode the MeSH term Anti-Bacterial Agents in OvidSP Medline, you get **463,487** results.
    If you do the same thing in PubMed using the MeSH browser, you get **220,856** results. Why does
    this happen?

    Explanation: OvidSP Medline and PubMed differ in their treatment of drug terms.
    "In 1996, the MeSH Tree Structure was changed so that specific drugs/chemicals were no longer
    treed under a function (pharmacological action) heading. This means that in MeSH there is no
    branch containing all drugs with a particular effect (e.g. all the antioxidants)" (from *PubMed
    Expert Searching* training manual, March 2006).

    However, OvidSP Medline has continued to list specific drugs/chemicals under MeSH headings.

    Implication:

    In PubMed, it's important to remember the **Pharmacological Action** terms when you want to
    comprehensively retrieve all drugs with a particular action. For example, if you're looking for
    articles about antioxidants in the treatment of cancers:

    Neoplasms [mesh] AND Antioxidants [pa]

    On the other hand, if you're interested in a specific action of a particular drug, it's better to
    combine the drug name as a MeSH term or Substance Word with the pharmacological category
    as a MeSH heading. For example, if you're looking for articles that discuss aspirin as an anti-
    coagulant:

    Aspirin [mesh] AND Fibrinolytic Agents [mesh]

OvidSP Medline Tree view

PubMed MeSH database: