

## How do I use advanced search techniques in CINAHL?

Please note, this guide is designed to be read after the guide on using Boolean operators in CINAHL.

There are a number of techniques you can use to improve the thoroughness of your searches. Two of the main advanced searching techniques used in CINAHL are, truncation and phase searching.

### Truncation


The truncation symbol is an asterisk \* It can help you to get more results quickly and easily. It is also known as “stemming”.

Some search terms can have lots of different, but useful endings. For example, your search might be looking for information on **Nursing**, but you would also like your results to find articles which talk about the **nurse** or **nurses**. **Nursing**, **nurse** and **nurses** all start with the same four letters, **nurs**.

Truncation means that you don't have to write out all of those different endings. Simply type the beginning of the word and then replace the ending with the asterisk \*. So, a search for **nurs\*** would find nurse, nurses and nursing.

### Here's what it would look like in CINAHL

A search for Nurs\*:



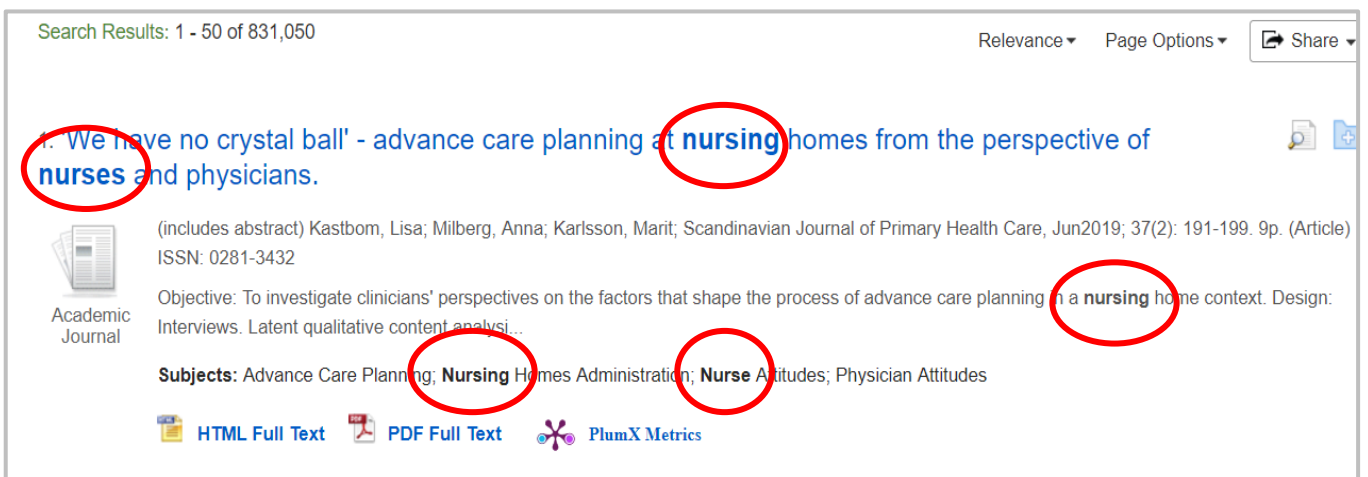
Searching: CINAHL Complete | Choose Databases

Suggest Subject Terms

Nurs\* Select a Field (optional) Search

AND Select a Field (optional) Clear ?

Would bring back results like this, which include the keywords nursing, nurses or nurse:



Search Results: 1 - 50 of 831,050 Relevance Page Options Share

1. 'We have no crystal ball' - advance care planning at **nursing** homes from the perspective of **nurses** and physicians.

(includes abstract) Kastbom, Lisa; Milberg, Anna; Karlsson, Marit; Scandinavian Journal of Primary Health Care, Jun2019; 37(2): 191-199. 9p. (Article) ISSN: 0281-3432

Objective: To investigate clinicians' perspectives on the factors that shape the process of advance care planning in a **nursing** home context. Design: Interviews. Latent qualitative content analysis.

Subjects: Advance Care Planning; **Nursing** Homes Administration; **Nurse** Attitudes; Physician Attitudes

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**Warning:** Be careful not to make the stem/beginning of the word too short, as it may bring back irrelevant results. For example, if you searched for nur\* it would find anything which started with nur, including **nursing**, but it would also find irrelevant words such as **nurturing** and **Nurofen**.

## Phrase searching

Phrase searching helps to keep your search terms together using the double speech marks “ ”. It reduces your results but can make them more specific.




Some search terms are phrases and it makes sense to keep them side by side in the order you have written them, for example “hand hygiene”. Without the quotation marks this search would find documents that contain both words, hand and hygiene, within five words of each other and in any order.

Phrase searching also brings back hyphenated words. For example, a search for “health care” would bring back health care and health-care. This also works the other way round, if you searched for health-care it would also find health care. However, if the same keyword is also written as a single word you need to search for that word as well. A search for **health-care** or “**health care**” would **not** find **healthcare**.

Be careful when using phrase searching, as only the exact phrase is searched for. A search for “**Health care worker**” would **not** find the plural **health care workers**. However, if you searched for **Health care worker** or **Health care workers** without the speech marks, it would find both the singular and plural versions of the keyword (please note this would not happen for words where the plural has a significantly different ending, i.e. child/children). To overcome this issue, you could either use truncation within your phrase, “**health care worker\***” (see below for more details) or you could split the phrase up and search for “**health care**” **worker**, so that only health care is written as a phrase within the speech marks.

## Here’s what it would look like in CINAHL

This search covers all variations of healthcare worker, health-care worker and health care worker (as well as the potential plurals):

<input type="checkbox"/> Select / deselect all		Search with AND	Search with OR	Delete Searches
Search ID#	Search Terms			
<input type="checkbox"/> S3	 S1 OR S2			
<input type="checkbox"/> S2	 healthcare worker			
<input type="checkbox"/> S1	 "health care" worker			

It would bring back results like this, which include the keywords: health care worker(s), health-care worker(s) or healthcare worker(s):



1. **Health care worker** sensitivity to chlorhexidine-based **hand** hygiene solutions: A cross-sectional survey

(includes abstract) Barnes, Sara; Stuart, Rhonda; Redley, Bernice; American Journal of Infection Control, Aug2019; 47(8): 933-937. 5p. (Article) ISSN: 0196-6553

• Chlorhexidine is a common disinfectant in **hand** hygiene products in hospitals; however, **healthcare worker** sensitization varies from 0-3%. • This study showed nurses more frequently report sympto...

**Subjects:** Occupational Exposure; **Health** Personnel; Hypersensitivity Epidemiology; Chlorhexidine Adverse Effects; **Handwashing**; Female; Male

Cited References: (30)




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## Phrase searching and Truncation combined

You can also use truncation and phrase searching together. A search for “hand wash\*” would keep your two keywords together, in the same order, as well as finding hand-washing and hand washing.

### Here’s what it would look like in CINAHL

A search for handwash\* OR “hand wash\*”:

<input type="checkbox"/> Select / deselect all <input type="button" value="Search with AND"/> <input type="button" value="Search with OR"/> <input type="button" value="Delete Searches"/>	
Search ID#	Search Terms
<input type="checkbox"/> S3	 S1 OR S2
<input type="checkbox"/> S2	 "hand wash*"
<input type="checkbox"/> S1	 handwash*


Would bring back results like this, which include the keywords/phrases: hand wash, hand washing, handwash, handwashing, hand-wash or hand-washing:

2. **Hand Washing** of Nursing Students: An Observational Study.

(includes abstract) Avşar, Gülçin; Kaşıkci, Mağfiret; Yağci, Nilay; International Journal of Caring Sciences, Sep-Dec2015; 8(3): 618-624. 7p. (Article - research, tables/charts) ISSN: 1791-5201

Background: **Hand washing** is the most important way in transmission of hospital infections and is the easiest, most efficient and cost-effective method to prevent hospital infection. Therefore, he...

**Subjects:** Cross Infection Prevention and **Control**; **Handwashing**; Students; **Nursing**; Health Behavior; Adolescent: 13-18 years; Adult: 19-44 years

 PDF Full Text

## This is how a full advanced search could look in CINAHL:

**Search History/Alerts**

[Print Search History](#)
[Retrieve Searches](#)
[Retrieve Alerts](#)
[Save Searches / Alerts](#)

Select / deselect all
 [Search with AND](#)
[Search with OR](#)
[Delete Searches](#)
[Refresh Search Results](#)

Search ID#	Search Terms	Search Options	Actions
<input type="checkbox"/> S13	S4 AND S8 AND S12	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (548)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S12	S9 OR S10 OR S11	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (34,945)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S11	in-patient infection	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (28,738)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S10	inpatient infection	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (360)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S9	hospital infection	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (8,110)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S8	S5 OR S6 OR S7	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (839,137)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S7	nurs*	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (831,050)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S6	healthcare worker	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (11,919)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S5	"health care" worker	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (6,477)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S4	S1 OR S2 OR S3	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (8,920)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S3	"hand hygiene"	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (3,217)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S2	"hand wash"	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (1,022)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> S1	handwash*	Search modes - Boolean/Phrase	<a href="#">View Results</a> (7,846)   <a href="#">View Details</a>   <a href="#">Edit</a>

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