

Peer review of electronic search strategies (PRESS)

Use these questions to review your search. The numeric fields in the PRESSing snake game correspond to the question with the same number on the checklist. Read the question and tell the other players what you could do to answer it.

TRANSLATION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Does the search strategy match the research question/PICO?
2. Are the search concepts clear?
3. Are there too many or too few PICO elements included?
4. Are the search concepts too narrow or too broad?
5. Does the search retrieve too many or too few records? (Please show number of hits per line.)
6. Are unconventional or complex strategies explained?

BOOLEAN AND PROXIMITY OPERATORS

7. Are Boolean or proximity operators used correctly?
8. Is the use of nesting with brackets appropriate and effective for the search?
9. If NOT is used, is this likely to result in any unintended exclusions?
10. Could precision be improved by using proximity operators or phrase-searching instead of AND?
11. Is the width of proximity operators suitable?

SUBJECT HEADINGS

12. Are the subject headings relevant?
13. Are any relevant subject headings missing? E.g. previous index terms?
14. Are any subject headings too broad or too narrow?
15. Are subject headings exploded where necessary and vice versa?
16. Are major headings used or are subheadings missing?
17. Are floating subheadings relevant and used appropriately?
18. Are both subject headings and free-text terms used for each concept?

TEXT WORD SEARCHING

19. Does the search include all spelling variants?
20. Does the search include all synonyms or antonyms?
21. Does the search capture relevant truncation? Is the truncation too broad or too narrow?
22. Are acronyms/abbreviations used appropriately?
23. Are keywords specific enough or too broad?
24. Have the appropriate fields been searched?
25. Should long strings be broken into shorter statements?

SPELLING, SYNTAX AND LINE NUMBERS

26. Are there any spelling errors?
27. Are there any errors in system syntax?
28. Are there incorrect line combinations or orphan lines?

LIMITS AND FILTERS

29. Are all limits and filters used appropriately and relevant?
30. Are they relevant for the database?
31. Are any helpful limits or filters missing?
32. Are sources cited for the filters used?



confused about the question?
scan the QR code for
more information