

Guide to searching OVID databases


Library Services – www.uwe.ac.uk/library

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- EMBASE
- Maternity and Infant Care
- MEDLINE
- Social Policy and Practice

What is OVID?

OVID offers a range of different databases that can help you find articles and information for your research. The databases provide access to abstracts, reports, conference proceedings and often full-text articles published in health and social science journals.

Each database covers a different range of journals, so you may need to use more than one to carry out a thorough search. Clicking on the  icon next to its title gives you more information about that particular database.

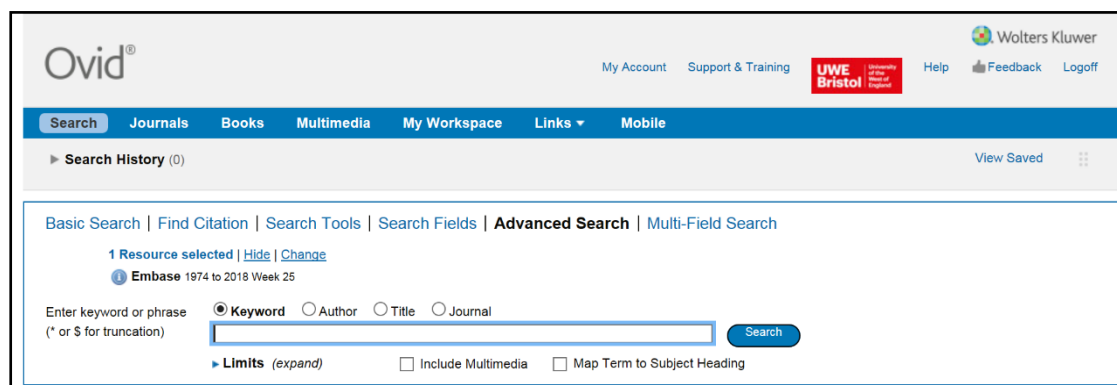
OVID journals is a collection of full text journals. You can search these directly, but it is more thorough to carry out a search in one of the databases in order to retrieve a wider range of articles.

Accessing OVID

<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/library/browse-databases>

Select one of the OVID databases e.g. **EMBASE** by clicking on the database record. Click on the direct link and you will be prompted to log in using your UWE Bristol username and password if you have not already logged in during your session.

You will now be on the advanced search page of the database you chose, within the OVID website:



The screenshot shows the OVID search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Ovid logo on the left and links for My Account, Support & Training, UWE Bristol, Help, Feedback, and Logoff on the right. Below this is a blue navigation bar with tabs for Search, Journals, Books, Multimedia, My Workspace, Links, and Mobile. The main content area has a search history section and a search bar. The search bar is set to 'Keyword' and contains the text 'Embase 1974 to 2018 Week 25'. There are radio buttons for 'Keyword', 'Author', 'Title', and 'Journal'. Below the search bar, there are checkboxes for 'Limits (expand)', 'Include Multimedia', and 'Map Term to Subject Heading'. A 'Search' button is located to the right of the search bar.

This allows you to carry out a thorough subject search and develop an effective search strategy.

Searching the database

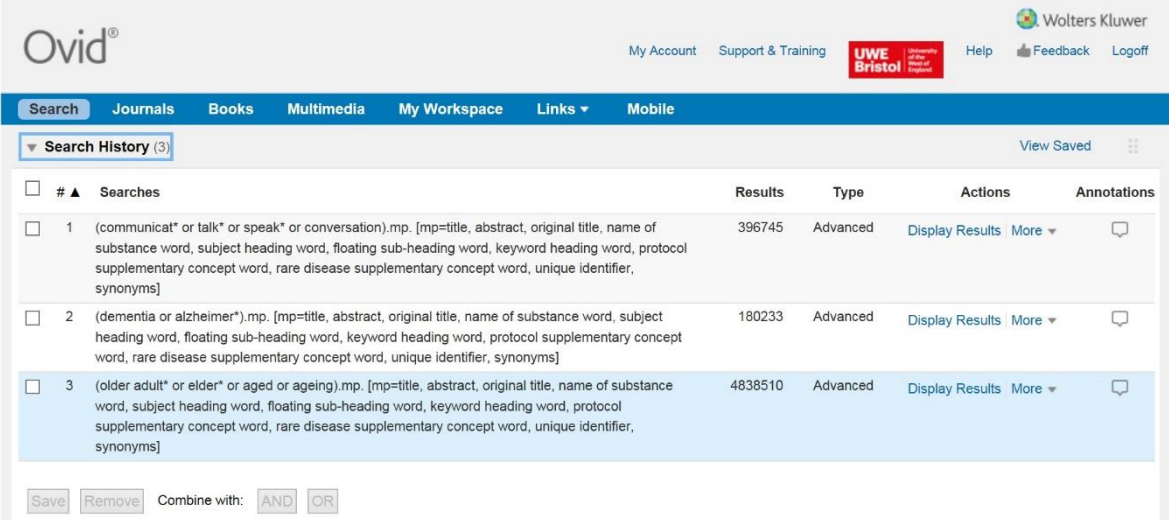
When using Advanced Search, it is best to search for each concept one at a time. The database will look for your keywords in the title, abstract and subject heading fields of the references.

Example search: **What are the challenges of communicating with older people living with dementia?**

In this example, we can search for each concept separately (i.e. three distinct searches) and then combine the three sets of results with an AND search. Don't worry if you can't see your previous searches, they are all under the **Search History** tab.

Tips:

- Ovid automatically searches for multiple words as a phrase e.g. older people, so there is no need to type "older people".
- truncation: the asterisk symbol [*] represents any number of characters at the end of a word e.g. communicat* finds communication, communicates, communicating, etc.
- It is always advisable to use a range of synonyms to describe each concept rather than relying on just one search term. These can be combined with OR on each separate line e.g. communicat* OR talk* OR speak* OR conversation



The screenshot shows the Ovid database interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Search' selected, and other options like 'Journals', 'Books', 'Multimedia', 'My Workspace', 'Links', and 'Mobile'. The 'Search History' tab is active, displaying a table of three search entries. Each entry includes a checkbox, a search number, the search query, the number of results, the search type, and actions like 'Display Results' and 'More'. The third entry is highlighted in blue.

<input type="checkbox"/>	# ▲	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	(communicat* or talk* or speak* or conversation).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	396745	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗉
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	(dementia or alzheimer*).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	180233	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗉
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	(older adult* or elder* or aged or ageing).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	4838510	Advanced	Display Results More ▾	🗉

At the bottom of the search history, there are buttons for 'Save', 'Remove', and 'Combine with: AND OR'.

Combining searches

When you have searched for each concept, click on Search History and you will see the results of each individual search. In order to find articles which match all the search criteria, tick the box to the left of each row and click AND.

Search History (3) View Saved

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	# ▲	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	(communicat* or talk* or speak* or conversation).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	396745	Advanced	Display Results More ▼	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	(dementia or alzheimer*).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	180233	Advanced	Display Results More ▼	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	(older adult* or elder* or aged or ageing).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	4838510	Advanced	Display Results More ▼	

Save Remove Combine with: AND OR

You will then see the results for your combined search in a new row, which should show fewer results.

Search History (4) View Saved

<input type="checkbox"/>	# ▲	Searches	Results	Type	Actions	Annotations
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	(communicat* or talk* or speak* or conversation).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	396745	Advanced	Display Results More ▼	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	(dementia or alzheimer*).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	180233	Advanced	Display Results More ▼	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	(older adult* or elder* or aged or ageing).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, floating sub-heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier, synonyms]	4838510	Advanced	Display Results More ▼	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	1 and 2 and 3	3115	Advanced	Display Results More ▼	

Viewing your results

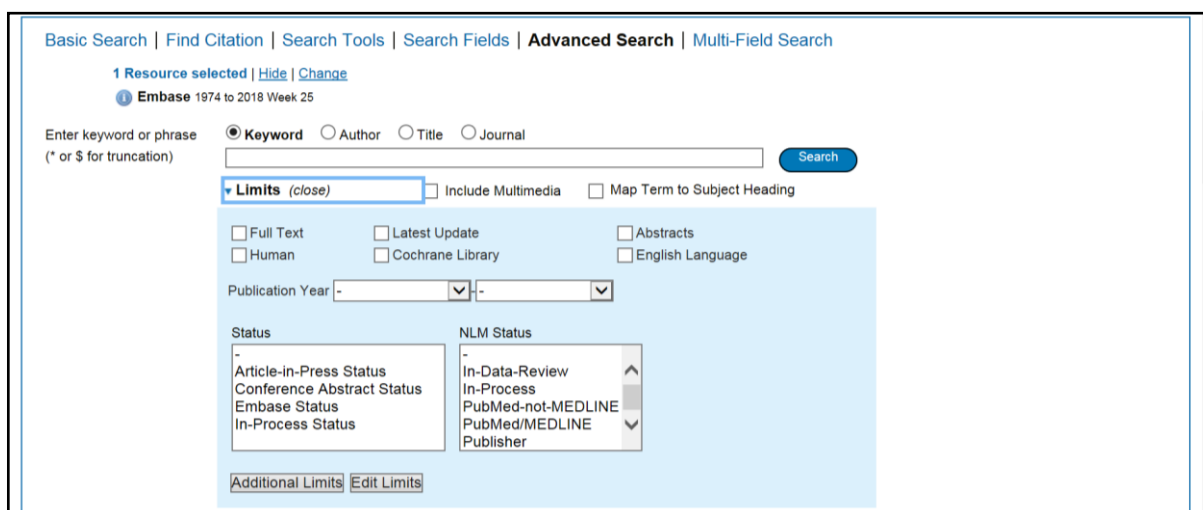
The first 10 results of your search are displayed automatically. Use the Next link to see more results. You can change the number of results shown and the format by using the drop-down menu.



To view further details of a record either click on the title of the article, Abstract Reference or Complete Reference. To access the full text, click on 'Check for full text' to see whether the article is available in full text.

Limiting your search

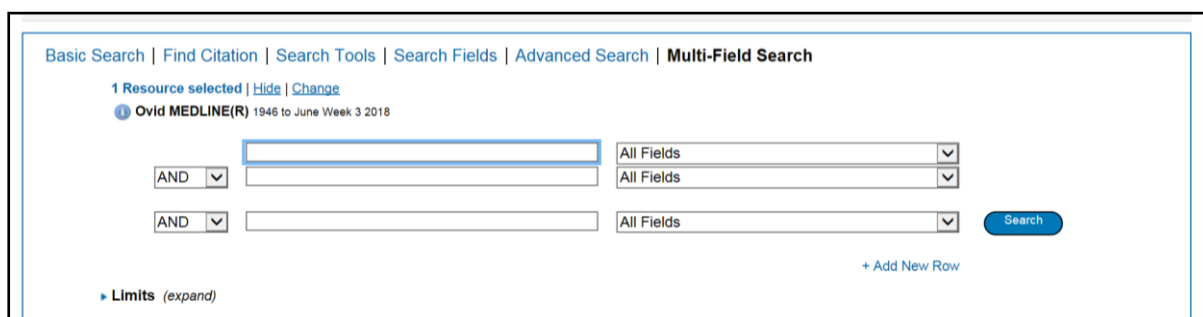
You can refine your search by clicking the Limits link under the search box. You can limit by publication year, language or publication type, but options vary depending on the



database(s) you are using.

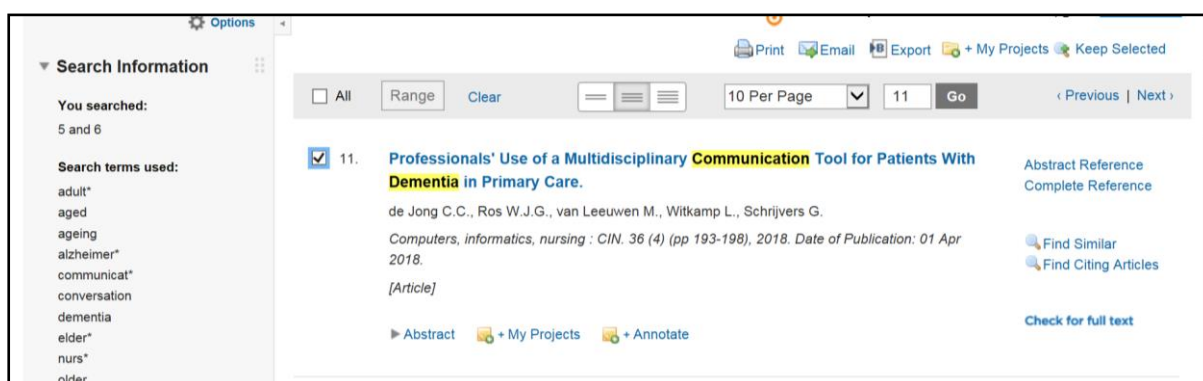
Multi-Field Search

You may prefer to use Multi-Field Search, which allows you to search using multiple search terms, in multiple fields, in a single step. You may need to select the most appropriate database fields from the drop-down menu rather than searching within All Fields (default).



Printing and emailing your results

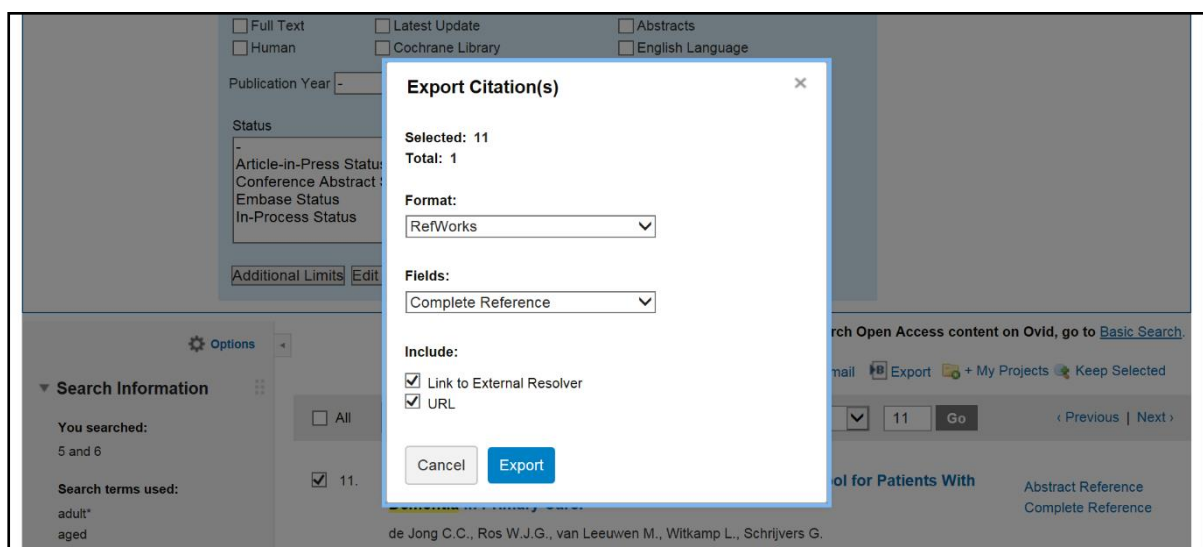
You can select particular references to print, save or email by ticking the box to the left of each one. Then go to the top of the results and select the appropriate action.



Exporting search results

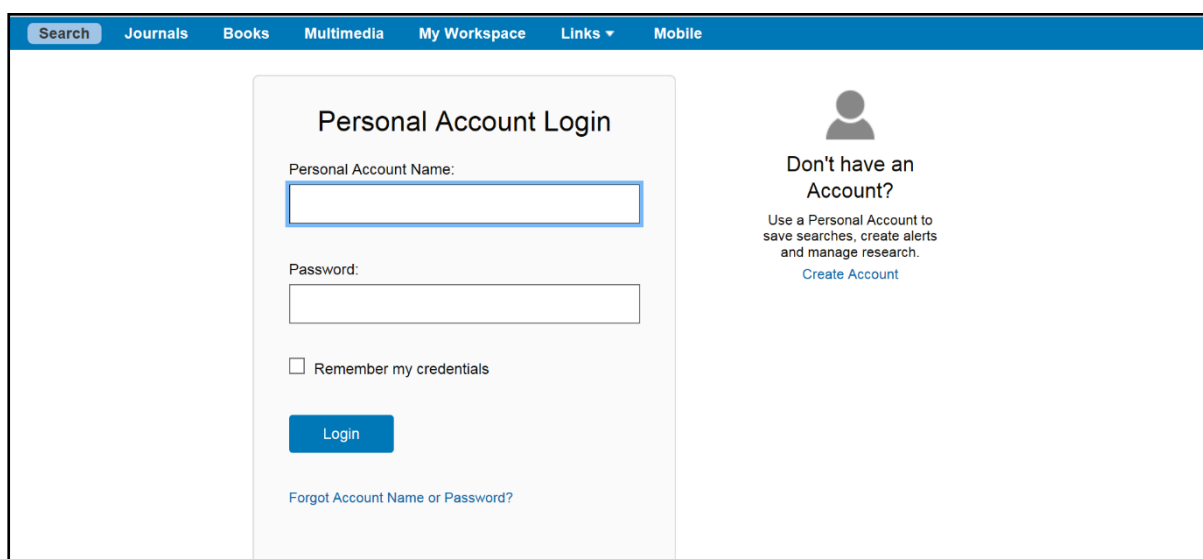
You can export references to RefWorks. It is useful to already have [RefWorks](#) open in another window before you export your results.

In Ovid, select the references you want to export by ticking the box to the left of each one. You can also select a range of results e.g. 1-50 by typing in the number. Then click on **Export** at the top of the results. Choose Export to RefWorks from the drop-down menu.

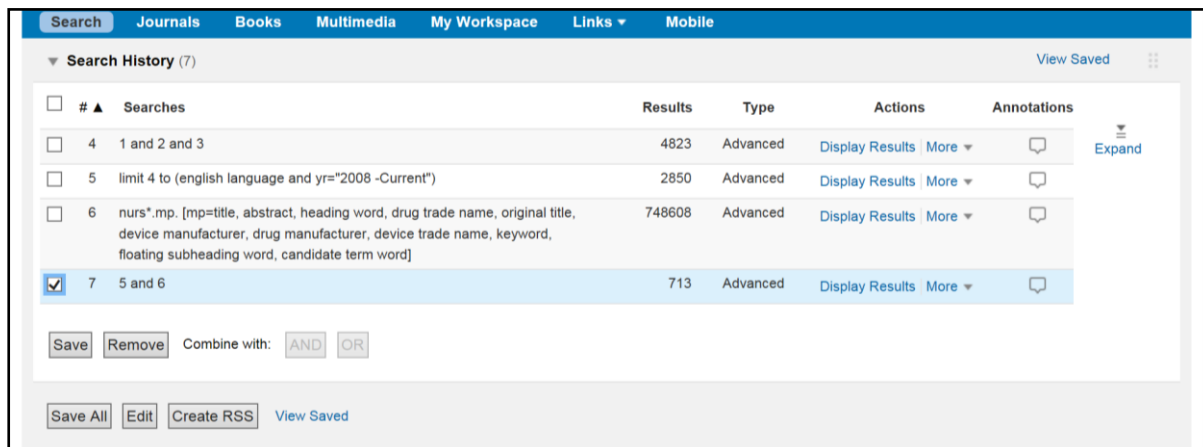


Saving searches

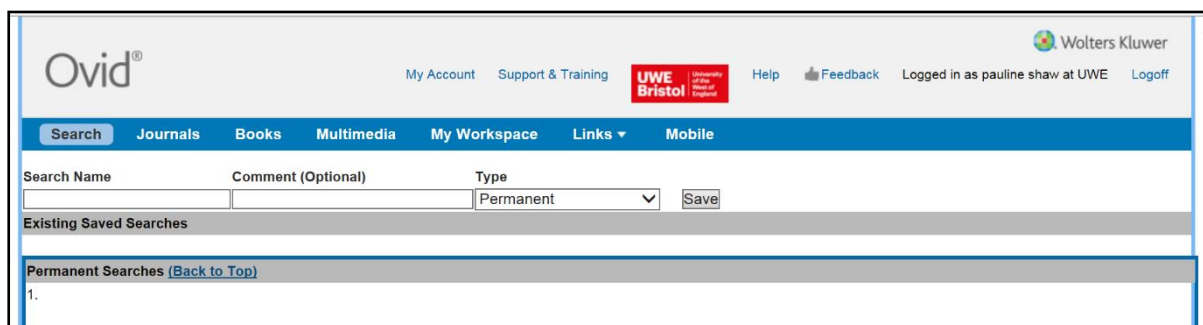
To save a search, click on My Account at the top of the screen. This will prompt you to Create an Account within Ovid if you haven't already done so.



Then select the search you want to save, or click on Save All at the bottom of the Search History, to save your search strategy.

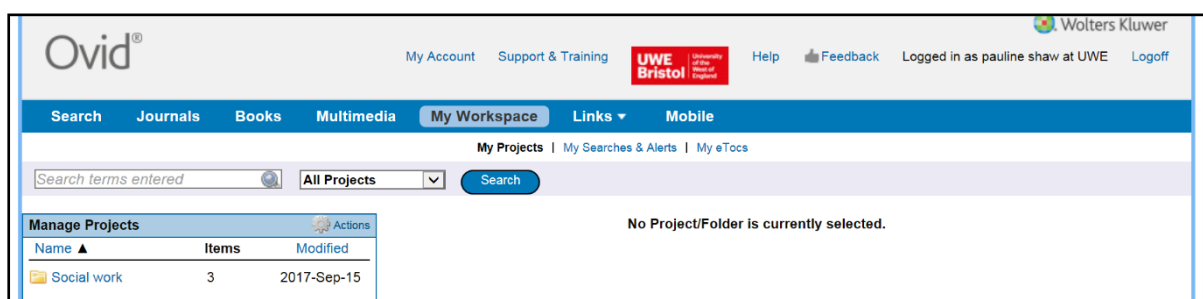


Give your search a relevant name and save it as a permanent search. You will see a message telling you that your search has been saved. You will then be able to log into your personal account to re-run this search at a later date.



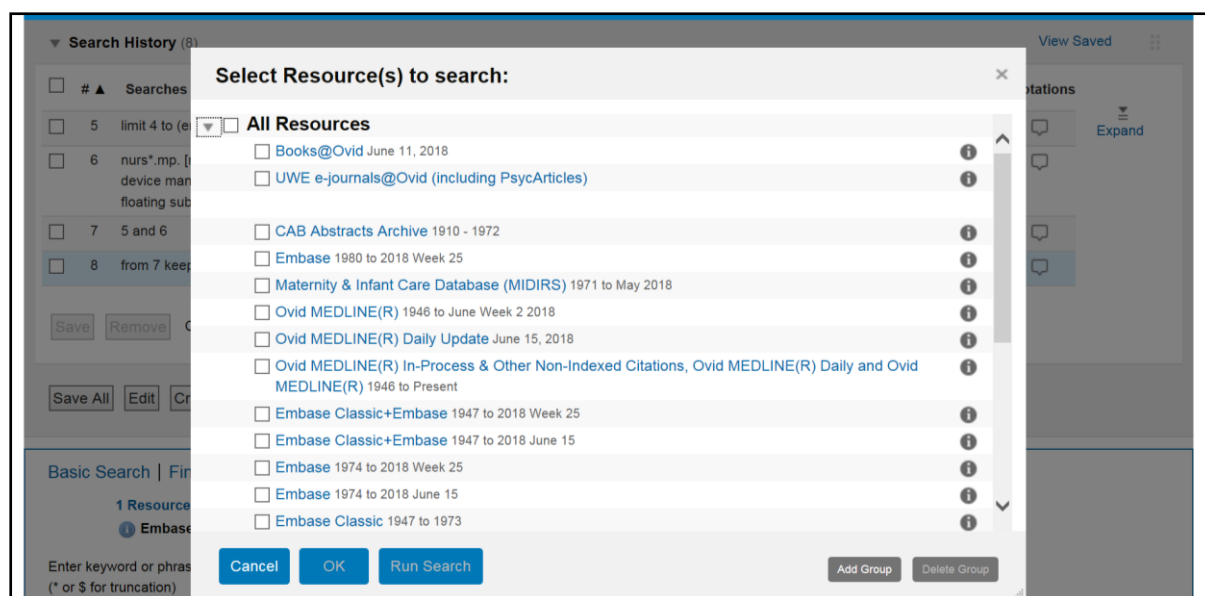
My Projects

My Projects is a space within the My Workspace area of Ovid where you can store your citations and organise them into distinct projects. Your saved searches and alerts appear next to My Projects. You will need to create an account in order to access this area.



Changing databases

You may want to search a different database within Ovid. To change databases, click Change on the main search page. Then select the new database and click Run Search to repeat your previous search. If you choose OK, this starts a brand new search and clears your previous search.



Further help is available from within Ovid, via the help button.

This guide can be made available in alternative formats on request.

Updated September 2020.