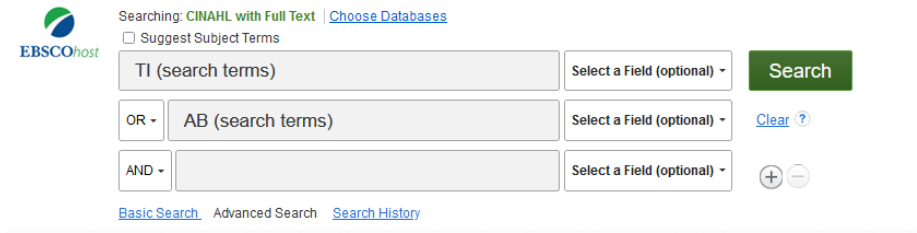# Tip Sheet: EBSCOhost Databases

Suggested Field Tags:

One of the ways that key word searches can be narrowed in databases when running a comprehensive and systematic search is through the use of field tags – most commonly those associated with title, abstract, and key words. The specific field tags that can/should be used differ by database. **In EBSCOhost databases, we recommend TI or AB**, which searches the title and abstract. Due to limitations of the EBSCO platform, title and abstract searches cannot be done in a single search string and must be separated into different search lines.
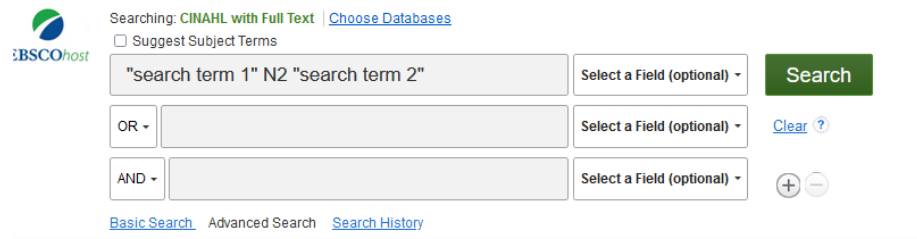
Proximity Operators:

Proximity operators in databases allow you to search for one word/phrase within a certain proximity to another word. For example, you could use a proximity operator to find the word systematic *within two words of* the word protocol. Proximity operators are best used to create relationships or associations between words that cannot be accomplished through phrase searching and other search functions. **In EBSCOhost databases, the proximity operator is N#.**
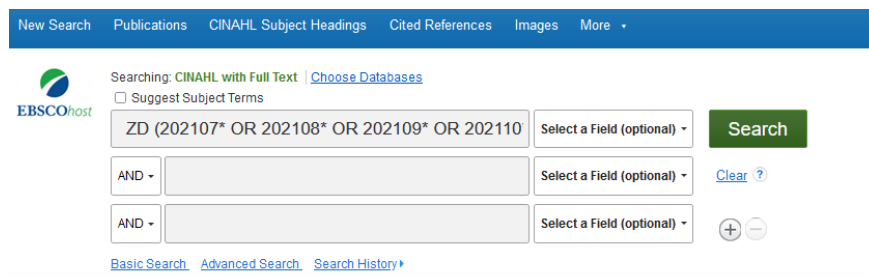
Updating a Search:

When you need to update a search that you have previously performed, best practice is to use database commands that *capture the records entered into the database* after the date of the last search run where such commands are available. Due to a lag between an items publication and its inclusion in the database, entry date is not always the same as publication date, making it a less precise search option that should only be used in cases where the database is not able to distinguish between the two. **In EBSCOhost databases, the command for updating a search is ZD (YYYYMM* OR YYYYMM*).**

Subject Terms:

Subject terms – or controlled vocabulary – go by different names in different EBSCO databases, but typically include one of the following words: thesaurus, description, index, or subject term. Subject terms are located in the blue bar at the top of the search screen, and can be searched using the browsing feature. We recommend changing the results options from "term begins with" to "relevancy ranked".
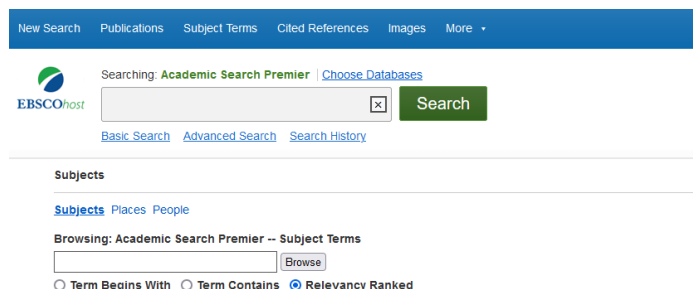
Exporting your RIS File:

The fastest way to export your search results in RIS format (which is used by both Zotero and Covidence) is to use the share : export results option. Note that while, in most cases, a link to download the RIS file is sent to your email within minutes, it *may* take up to 3 days.
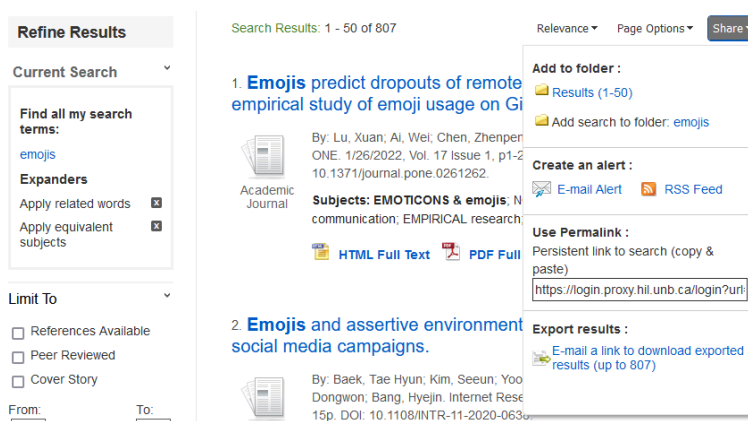
Saving & Exporting your Search History:

The search history is located beneath the search boxes and can be expanded and viewed by clicking on it. Options to save and export your search history are located at the top of the search history view. Note: In all databases where saving your search history is an option, you must have created an account for that platform (i.e. you will need an EBSCO account to save search histories from any of the EBSCO databases).