<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Glossary of Subject Searching</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDLINE example</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Abstract:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A short summary of an article in a scholarly journal. It usually appears at the beginning of the article.</td>
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<th><strong>Article:</strong></th>
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<td>A brief essay or research report on a subject or topic. Articles can appear in magazines, journals, newspapers, full text online databases, or other sources such as encyclopedias.</td>
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<th><strong>Article index/database:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>A tool for locating journal article, book, or theses citations on a subject.</td>
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<th><strong>Boolean operators:</strong></th>
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<td>Connectors used to combine search terms to retrieve relevant results.</td>
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![Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)
Database record:

The complete set of information about an item arranged in fields. In an article index the fields include citation details such as title, author, date as well as additional information such as abstract, subject headings, date added etc.

Keyword searching looks in these fields.

**Title:** Learning to be a physiotherapist: a metasynthesis of qualitative studies.

**Abstract:**

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE: The health system is increasingly engaging in a wider concept of health which includes lifestyle conditions and well being as well as disease. This challenges physiotherapy educators to take an active role in preparing students for modern health care. Few studies have explored the experience of learning to be a physiotherapist from the student perspective to help illuminate the learning process. The aim of this study was to gain a higher level of theoretical understanding of the longitudinal process of students' learning to be a physiotherapist across the curriculum.

METHODS: A metasynthesis design was used to analyse the findings of four individual research studies, based on interviews with a cohort of 18 physiotherapy students. A qualitative phenomenographic approach to analysis was adopted within the metasynthesis.

**MeSH Subject Headings:**

*Allied Health Personnel / ed [Education]
Attitude of Health Personnel
Cohort Studies
Humans
Longitudinal Studies
*Physical Therapy Modalities / ed [Education]

**Subject headings** (MeSH, Descriptors Controlled vocabulary) are searched for in this field.
**Keywords:**
These are any combination of characters that are searched as free text within the record, citation and abstract or (sometimes) the fulltext. There is no meaning attached to keywords; searches can pick up irrelevant results. E.g. Searching for *carpal tunnel syndrome* as keyword will pick up “The study group excluded *carpal tunnel syndrome*”. Keyword searching uses truncation and wildcard symbols.

**Search strategy**

List of search commands for finding information in a database.

E.g. Medline (ovidsp) search strategy:
1. exp “dementia vascular”/
2. dementia,ti,ab.
3. Alzheimer*,mp.
4. 1 or 2 or 3
5. exp “exercise”/
6. exp “sports”/
7. exercise*,ti,ab.
8. sport*,ti,ab.
9. physical activit*,ti,ab.
10. or /5-9
11. 4 and 10
12. Limit 11 to Aged 80 and over

**Subheading**

Qualifying words which can be added to make subject headings more specific (for example, the subheading rehabilitation can be added to the MeSH heading Carpal Tunnel Syndrome to pick up only those articles on rehabilitative therapy).

**Subject headings** (also called MeSH, Cinahl headings, Emtree, thesaurus)

Known as controlled vocabulary these words are added to records to describe what is covered in the article. They standardize synonyms and variant spellings to provide consistency. The hierarchical organization of these words in the tree structures assists with developing the search strategy.

**Systematic reviews:**

Find systematic reviews in databases such as CINAHL, Pubmed, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, DARE.

**Important:**
Get the full text of Cochrane Systematic Reviews from Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews by clicking on the Full Text Review link or [UBC eLink](#).

**Tree**

The ordered list of subject headings arranged in a hierarchy from broader to narrower terms.