



AVA Library Guide

Using Databases for Your Research

EBSCO subject databases are a reliable tool for locating relevant scholarly, peer-reviewed articles on a specific topic. The AVA currently subscribes to the **Veterinary Source** database. Veterinary Source provides access to research on the prevention, control, diagnosis and treatment of diseases and injury in animals. It covers topics relating to every aspect of animal healthcare, including:

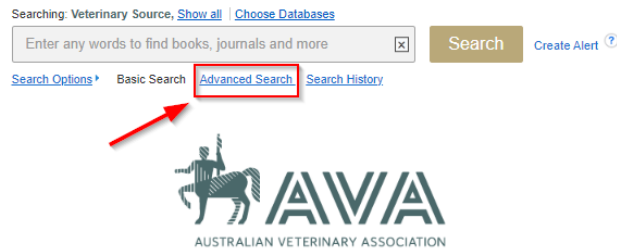
- Animal pathology and parasitology
- Veterinary medicinal care and practices
- Anatomy and physiology
- Small and large animal care
- Nutrition
- Diagnosis
- Animal reproduction and breeding.

The following search tips will provide an overview of how to access Veterinary Source and construct an advanced search for your research project, literature review and evidence-based practice.

How to access Veterinary Source database at AVA

From the AVA Home Page – <https://www.ava.com.au>

1. Click on the **Library, Journals and Resources** link
2. Click on **Veterinary Source database from the menu**
3. Click on **Access Veterinary Source**. You have now navigated to the EBSCO search tool.
4. Click on **Advanced Search**



Before you commence your search

We recommend saving your search in a document, exporting your results to a citation management software (e.g., Endnote), and creating a custom account in the database.

By saving your search, your strategy will be reproducible for another time and appropriately documented.

Identifying keywords

Before beginning your search, you will need to identify keywords related to your topic. These can be single words or phrases and should be seen as the most important words describing your topic.

For example, if you are trying to find scholarly articles on **Cushing's disease in small canines**, you should be able to pull out two topics that result in keywords: the inequities resulting from climate change. The other words in the phrase can go away, so that you're simply left with the highlighted words:

**Cushing's
canine**

The next step is to consider that there are many related terms (i.e. dog or dogs for canine) and/or synonyms for these two topics. Broadening your search terms can often be achieved by scanning:

- your initial research question or evidence-based topic
- course readings
- background research articles from encyclopedias, news articles, popular magazines, etc.
- bibliographies found at the end of books and articles
- specialised vocabulary or terms authors in the field of study are using.

Think of related, broader, and narrower terms connected to each of the key concepts.

It can be helpful to use quotes around keyword phrases (two or more keywords for a single concept) to ensure that the phrase is searched instead of each word individually (e.g. cushing’s can be searched as "cushing’s").

TIP: Make a list or use a chart to keep track of keywords related to your topic. Keep it by your side when you start your research. Make note of which keywords return the most relevant results. It's a dynamic process and you may have to experiment with several synonyms.

Building search strings

Once you have identified keywords, use the following techniques to build search strings for searching library catalogues, databases, and search engines to quickly find more relevant sources to use in your project.

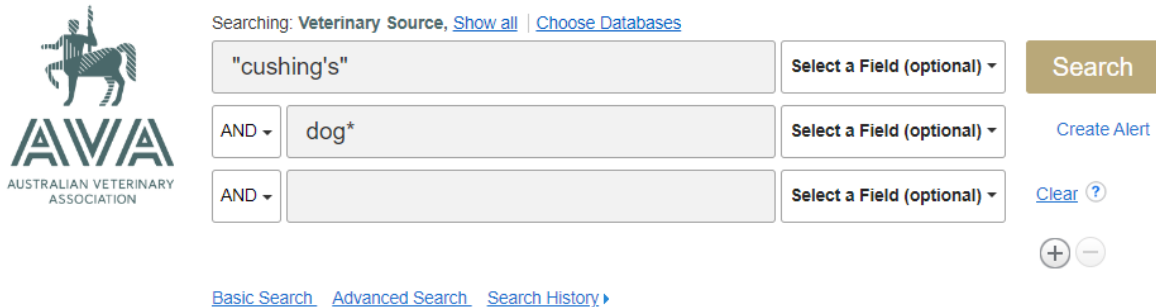
Boolean Operators	Search Modifiers
<p>AND combines different ideas or concepts, narrowing the search. Each result contains <i>all</i> search terms</p> <p>Example: heart AND lung</p> <p>Results will contain both the words heart and lung</p>	<p>Phrase Searching allows adjacent words to be kept together.</p> <p>Example: “Snow White”</p> <p>Results will contain words Snow and White together as an exact phrase.</p>
<p>OR is used when adding synonyms, different spelling, similar concepts, etc., increasing the number of results.</p> <p>Example: heart OR lung</p> <p>Results will contain at least one of the words heart or lung</p>	<p>Truncation broadens search to include various word endings and spellings.</p> <p>Example: histor*</p> <p>Results will contain terms that begin with histor, e.g., history, histories, historical.</p>
<p>NOT excludes terms to make the search more specific, reducing the number of results.</p> <p>Example: heart NOT lung</p> <p>Results will contain heart but do not contain the word lung</p>	<p>Nesting utilises parentheses to control the logical order in which words are interpreted by the system.</p> <p>Example: (fairy tales or folklore) AND gender</p> <p>Results will include the word gender and either or both the words fairy tales and folklore.</p>

Example search string

In the example of **Cushing's disease in small canines**, the search terms can be combined as:

dog* AND "Cushing's"

When these two keywords are searched from EBSCO's Veterinary Source advanced search page, it retrieves 228 results.



Searching: [Veterinary Source](#), [Show all](#) | [Choose Databases](#)

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"cushing's" Select a Field (optional) Search

AND dog* Select a Field (optional) Create Alert

AND Select a Field (optional) Clear ?

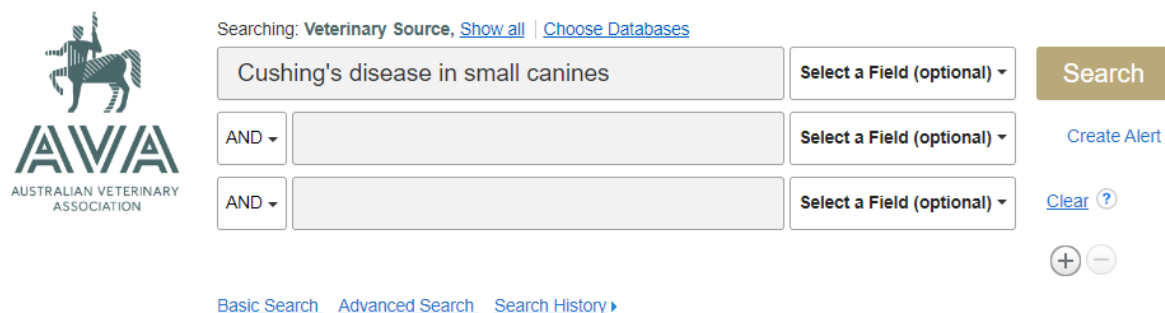
+ -

[Basic Search](#) [Advanced Search](#) [Search History](#)

Refine Results

Search Results: 1 - 20 of 228

This compares to how the same database reacts when the topic is searched in a similar manner to a Google keyword search ("Cushing's disease in small canines"). Note that this does not work well and brings up over 2,100 results. If you are trying to identify the body of research on this topic, then having to sift through 2,100+ results is far more inefficient than having a list of 228 results.



Searching: [Veterinary Source](#), [Show all](#) | [Choose Databases](#)

AVA AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION

Cushing's disease in small canines Select a Field (optional) Search

AND Select a Field (optional) Create Alert

AND Select a Field (optional) Clear ?

+ -

[Basic Search](#) [Advanced Search](#) [Search History](#)

Refine Results

Search Results: 1 - 20 of 2,118

Field Codes

You can use Field Codes to create a search using indexed fields referenced in either the citation or full display (or full texts, if available).

EBSCO uses two-character abbreviations for field codes such as:

- SU – Subject
- AU – Author
- TI – Title
- SO – Source
- AB – Abstract
- IS – ISSN
- IB - ISBN

When using field codes, each code must be entered in UPPER case as shown in the example above to get the best results. Otherwise your codes could be interpreted as simple text, and your results might not be what you expect. You could also use the Advanced Search Guided Style screen with drop-down menus to select field codes, which will automatically use the UPPER case.

If you enter a word that is used as a field code, (for example, AN) EBSCO assumes you want to search using the field code rather than the word. In this case, you should place quotation marks around your search terms.

If searching multiple terms using the same Field Code, you can use parentheses to simplify your search. For example: Instead of the author search AU Smith AND AU Peters NOT AU Lee, use parentheses to enter the search as AU (Smith AND Peters NOT Lee)

Suggested Subject Terms

Subject Terms are a standardised set of terms that bring consistency to the search process. In EBSCO databases, you can add a SU delimited by selecting the drop-down menu in the advanced search features and choosing SU - Subject

To identify appropriate Subject Terms you can use smart text options, or you can review those allocated to a resource you have located in your original search. For this option, click on the link to the resource and review the Subject Terms. Use these to refine your search.

For example, “Cushing’s disease” is listed in the Subject Term as “Cushing’s syndrome”

Cushing's syndrome--an epidemiological study based on a canine population of 21,281 dogs.

Authors: [Carotenuto_Gala¹](#)
[Malerba_Eleonora¹](#)
[Dollini_Costanza¹](#)
[Brugnoli_Francesca²](#)
[Giannuzzi_Pasquale³](#)
[Semprini_Giovanni⁴](#)
[Tosolini_Paolo⁵](#)
[Fracassi_Federico¹](#) federico.fracassi@unibo.it

Source: [Open Veterinary Journal](#) 2019, Vol. 9 Issue 1, p27-32. 6p.

Document Type: Article

Subject Terms: [*CUSHING'S syndrome](#)
[*DOGS](#)
[*DOG breeds](#)
[*CDDS ratio](#)

Author-Supplied Keywords: [Cortisol](#)
[Hyperadrenocorticism](#)
[Hypercortisolism](#)
[PDH](#)

Using Limiters



Limiters let you narrow the focus of your search so that the information retrieved from the database you search is limited according to the values you select. You can use more than one limiter if more than one is available. Common limiters include:

- Full Text – Click to limit results to articles with full text.
- Peer Reviewed – Limits search results to articles from peer-reviewed journals. Peer-reviewed journals are publications that include only those articles that have been reviewed and/or qualified by a selected panel of acknowledged experts in the field of study covered by the journal.
- Date Published – Use this option to search for articles within a specified date range. Create a range by using the drop-down lists to specify the months of the range and enter the last four digits of the year in the entry fields to specify the years of the range.

Limiters do limit one another. If you select both Full Text and Date Published limiters, the results that are retrieved include only Full Text items that are within the selected publication dates.

Linking to Full Text

Links through to text are provided at the bottom of each article. Click on the relevant link to access the full text.

4. Development and evaluation of a health-related quality-of-life tool for **dogs** with **Cushing's** syndrome.  

By: Schofield, Imogen; O'Neill, Dan G.; Brodbelt, Dave C.; Church, David B.; Geddes, Rebecca F.; Niessen, Stijn J. M. *Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine*. Nov/Dec2019, Vol. 33 Issue 6, p2595-2604. 10p. DOI: 10.1111/jvim.15639. Database: Academic Search Complete

Background: Clinical signs and consequences of **Cushing's** syndrome are likely to impact upon a **dog's** life. Quantification of this impact on a **dog's** health-related quality-of-life (HRQoL) could con...

Subjects: **CUSHING'S** syndrome; **DOGS**; PRINCIPAL components analysis; CRONBACH'S alpha; **DOG** diseases; **DOG** owners; Live animal merchant wholesalers; All Other Animal Production

[HTML Full Text](#) [PDF Full Text](#)