

Common terms and terminology 2

Common terms and terminology

Some terms and phrases are commonly used in Cochrane documents. The way in which these should be presented is shown below. See also [Names specific to Cochrane](#).

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
care giver or caregiver (be consistent)	care-giver
Chi ² statistic Chi ² test	Chi-squared test or statistic Chi-square test or statistic χ^2 statistic
cluster-randomized trial	cluster randomized trial
co-author	coauthor
controlled before-after studies	controlled before after studies
cross-over study/trial	cross over study/trial or crossover study/trial
double-blind Note: also single-blind, triple-blind	double blind Note: also single blind, triple blind
dropout Note: the verb form is 'drop out' without hyphenation	drop-out drop out
e-learning Note: at start of sentence use 'E-learning'	elearning e learning
end point or endpoint Note: 'time point' should be written as two separate words (see below)	end-point
evidence base evidence-based	evidence-base evidence based
false negative, false positive, true negative, true positive (when used as nouns) e.g. the result was a false positive false-positive, false-negative, true-negative, true-positive (when used as adjectives) e.g. a false-positive result	—
fixed-effect model Note: compared with random-effects model Note: there is also a fixed-effects model (i.e. when the pool of studies is assumed to be fixed and only provides an estimate of the average of the effects of just these studies, without aiming at generalization to future studies), but this would rarely be appropriate for a Cochrane Review. If used it should be clearly	fixed effect model fixed-effects model

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
indicated to avoid being changed to fixed-effect model.	
<p>follow up (verb) or follow-up (adjective or noun)</p> <p>e.g. 'Seven participants were followed up for 10 days.' (verb)</p> <p>e.g. 'The follow-up period was 10 weeks.' (adjective)</p> <p>e.g. 'The follow-up was shorter than expected.' (noun)</p>	—
forest plot	forrest plot
<p>GRADE</p> <p>More recently, GRADE assessments refer to 'certainty', rather than 'quality'. Use the terminology consistent with the GRADE guidance of software you are using, and in summary of findings tables, use the corresponding wording for the grades of evidence (see below).</p> <p>For certainty:</p> <p>GRADE Working Group grades of evidence</p> <p>High certainty: we are very confident that the true effect lies close to that of the estimate of the effect.</p> <p>Moderate certainty: we are moderately confident in the effect estimate; the true effect is likely to be close to the estimate of the effect, but there is a possibility that it is substantially different.</p> <p>Low certainty: our confidence in the effect estimate is limited; the true effect may be substantially different from the estimate of the effect.</p> <p>Very low certainty: we have very little confidence in the effect estimate; the true effect is likely to be substantially different from the estimate of effect.</p> <p>For quality:</p> <p>GRADE Working Group grades of evidence</p> <p>High quality: further research is very unlikely to change our confidence in the estimate of effect.</p> <p>Moderate quality: further research is likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and may change the estimate.</p> <p>Low quality: further research is very likely to have an important impact on our confidence in the estimate of effect and is likely to change the estimate.</p> <p>Very low quality: we are very uncertain about the estimate.</p> <p>Note: for further information, see The GRADE Working Group clarifies the construct of certainty of evidence.</p> <p>See also: Handbook version 6, chapter 14.</p>	
<p>'Gram' should be capitalized and not hyphenated when used as Gram stain; gram negative and gram positive should be lowercase and only hyphenated when used as a unit modifier.</p> <p>e.g. Gram staining</p> <p>e.g. the bacteria were gram negative</p> <p>e.g. gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria</p>	<p>Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria</p> <p>gram positive and gram negative bacteria</p> <p>gram staining showed ...</p>
<p>handsearch</p> <p>e.g. We handsearched three journals.</p> <p>e.g. The handsearching process ...</p>	<p>hand search</p> <p>hand-search</p>

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
<p>hand washing</p> <p>Note: present as two words unless being used to modify a noun.</p> <p>e.g. The studies investigated hand washing for prevention of infections.</p> <p>e.g. The studies investigated hand-washing promotion for prevention of infections.</p>	<p>The studies investigated handwashing.</p> <p>The studies investigated hand-washing.</p> <p>The studies investigated handwashing promotion.</p> <p>The studies investigated hand washing promotion.</p>
<p>health care (noun) or healthcare (adjective)</p> <p>e.g. healthcare professionals (adjective)</p> <p>e.g. important aspect of health care (noun)</p>	—
I ² statistic	<p>I-squared statistic</p> <p>I-square statistic</p> <p>I² test</p>
intention-to-treat analysis	intention to treat analysis
internet	Internet
<p>low-income, middle-income, and high-income countries</p> <p>Note: see the classifications of all countries according to their economies on the World Bank website</p>	<p>developing countries</p> <p>developed countries</p>
<p>multiple-drug resistance</p> <p>multiple-drug resistant</p>	<p>multidrug resistance</p> <p>multidrug resistant</p>
number needed to treat for an additional beneficial outcome	<p>number-needed-to-treat-for-an-additional-beneficial-outcome</p> <p>number needed to treat to benefit</p>
number needed to treat for an additional harmful outcome	<p>number-needed-to-treat-for-an-additional-harmful-outcome</p> <p>number needed to treat to harm</p>
online	<p>on-line</p> <p>on line</p>
open-label	open label
<p>participant or person; participants or people</p> <p>Note: use participant (for people participating in any trials/studies mentioned in the review) or person instead of subject or patient, unless it changes the meaning of the text (e.g. people with ulcers rather than patients with ulcers). If trials are exclusively concerned with a single population such as children or women, use children or women instead of participants.</p>	—
per cent	percent

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
Note: see also Guidance on usage and presentation of commonly used symbols	
PICO: broadly speaking, PICO stands for 'population, intervention(s), comparison(s) and outcomes', but there is no standard definition. For example, the 'P' can stand for 'participants', 'population' or 'problem', and the 'C' for 'control', 'comparator' or 'comparison(s)'.	
preoperative	pre-operative or pre operative
perioperative	peri-operative or peri operative
postoperative	post-operative or post operative
quality: low-quality (adjective) moderate-quality (adjective) high-quality (adjective) e.g. high-quality evidence	low quality (adjective) moderate quality (adjective) high quality (adjective)
random-effects model	random effects model random-effect model
regimen	regime
risk of bias e.g. We assessed the risk of bias in the included studies using RoB 2. e.g. We assessed the risk of bias in the included studies using RoB 1. risk of bias assessment risk of bias table Note: For more about the names of Cochrane risk of bias tools, see Names specific to Cochrane .	'risk of bias' Risk of bias risk-of-bias assessment Risk of Bias Table
short-term or long-term (adjective) e.g. short-term follow-up was three months short term or long term (noun) e.g. outcomes that occurred in the short term	—
summary of findings table	summary-of-findings table Summary of findings table 'summary of findings' table SoF table

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
subgroup	sub-group sub group
Tau^2	Tau-squared Tau-square Tau^2 statistic Tau^2 test T^2 t^2
text word	textword
time point	timepoint time-point
time-to-event analysis/data	time to event analysis/data
wait list or wait-list control (US English)	waitlist, wait list control
waiting list or waiting-list control (UK English)	waiting-list, waiting list control
website	web site
well-being	well being wellbeing
white (adjective) e.g. The white participants ... See also: ethnic group names	white (noun)
World Wide Web	world wide web