**Embase syntax: a comparison with Ovid**

January 2012

1. **General syntax 1)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Embase.com** | **Ovid** | **Comments** |
| Field search | heart:ti | heart.ti. |  |
| Multiple field search | heart:ti,ab | heart.ti,ab. |  |
| Phrase search | ‘heart attack’  “heart attack”  heart-attack | heart attack | Embase: hyphens can be used instead of single or double quotes |
| Adjacency (same order) 2) | heart next/1 attack | heart adj attack | Ovid: adj = no intervening words 3) |
| Adjacency (any order) 2) | heart near/n attack | heart adjn attack | Ovid: adjn indicates any order |
| Truncation (unlimited) | heart\* | Heart$ | Incl. 0 characters (Ovid also \* or :) |
| Truncation (0-n characters) | gene or gene? or gene?? .. | gene$n | Each ? = 1 character (exactly) |
| Mandated wildcard | wom?n | wom#n | 1 character (exactly) |
| Optional wildcard (0-1 char.) | colo\*r | colo?r | Embase: \* = 0-n characters |
| Numerical strings | “19” (or ‘19’) | “19” (or ‘19’) |  |
| Set numbers | #19 | 19 | Embase: # is obligatory |

1. neither platform has stopwords
2. within n words of each other, i.e. there are up to n-1 *intervening* words.

In Embase, next/0 (near/0) retrieves the same result as next/1 (near/1)

1. In Ovid, it is not possible to search same order adjacency for 1 or more intervening words
2. **Limits**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Embase.com (#1 and ..** | **Ovid (limit 1 to …** | **Comments** |
| Abstracts 1) | [abstracts]/lim | … to abstracts |  |
| English language 1) | [english]/lim | … to english |  |
| Languages 1) | french:la | … to french |  |
| Human 1) | [humans]/lim | … to human |  |
| Animals | [animals]/lim | … to animals | Embase: includes animal studies  Ovid: limited to actual animals |
| Animal studies | - | … to animal studies | Limit is only available on Ovid 2) |
| Publication year 1) | [2001]/py | ... to yr=2001 |  |
| Publication year range 1) | [2001-2004]/py | ... to (yr=2001-2004) |  |
| Gender | female/de (or male/de) | … to female (...to male) |  |
| Priority journals | [priority journals]/lim | … to priority |  |
| Publication types | [review]/lim | … to review | Ovid: includes source types |
| Age groups | [infant]/lim | … to infant |  |
| Experimental subjects | * (*search using Emtree*) | … to amphibia | Ovid: 35 groups available 3) |
| Route of drug admin | * (*search with subheadings*) | … to oral |  |
| Clinical queries 4) | - | *33 separate queries* | Limits not available on Embase |
| Recent update | *No equivalent; use /sd* | … to update |  |
| Since date | [11-11-2011]/sd | *-* |  |
| Within date | [14]/wd | *-* |  |
| Publication year range | [2007-2009]/py | … last 2 years | Ovid: up to current year |
| Combined limits | male/de and [human]/lim | … to (male and human) |  |

1) On Ovid these can be searched using: ab=y, en=y, lg=fre, hu=y, yr=2001 and up=y, *for example* ..l/1 ab=y

2) Embase equivalent is: animal-tissue/de OR animal-cell/de OR animal-model/de OR animal-experiment/de

3) Defined by Brian Haynes at McMaster University in Canada ([http://hiru.mcmaster.ca/hedges/](http://hiru.mcmaaster.ca/hedges/))

1. **Combinations and special cases**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Embase.com** | **Ovid** | **Comments** |
| Truncation in phrase | heart next/1 attack\* | heart attack$ |  |
| … with field limit | (heart next/1 attack\*):ti | heart attack$.ti. | Fixed order |
| … not adjacent | (heart near/2 attack\*):ti | heart adj2 attack$.ti. | Any order |
| Truncation + wildcard | sul\*ur next/1 dioxid\* | sul#?ur dioxid$ | Ovid #? = 1 or 2 characters |
| Multiple truncation | structur\* near/2 relat\* | structur$ adj2 relat$ | Any order |
| Multiword phrase (i) | “structure activity” next/1 relat\* | structure activity relat$ | Next operator is used 1) |
| Multiword phrase (ii) | (structur\* next/1 activity) and relat\* | structur$ activity relat$ | >1 “next” not allowed |

1. For Embase, “*structure activity*” (using quotes) cannot here be replaced by *structure-activity* (hyphenated).
2. **Exact search 1)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Embase.com** | **Ovid** | **Comments** |
| Journal | nature/jt | nature.jn. | Excludes e.g. Nature Medicine |
| Journal abbreviation | j-biochem/ta | j biochem.ja. | Embase: can also use quotes |
| Author | smith-a/au | smith a.au. | Embase: can also use quotes |
| smith-a-a/au | smith aa.au. | Ovid: initials are adjacent |
| Descriptor | leukemia/de 2) | leukemia/ | Ovid: also searchable using SH |
| leukaemia/de | leukaemia/ | Maps synonym to preferred term |
| Subheading | leukemia/dm\_dt,dm\_rt | leukemia/dt,rt | Disease subheadings |
| aspirin/dd\_ae,dd\_ct | aspirin/ae,ct | Drug subheadings |
| Subheading (floating) | drug-therapy/lnk | dt.fs. | Ovid: uses 2-letter codes |
| Explosion | leukemia/exp | exp leukemia/ |  |
| aspirin/exp/dd\_ae,dd\_ct | exp aspirin/ae,ct | With subheadings |
| Major term | leukemia/mj | \*leukemia/ |  |
| leukemia/exp/mj | exp \*leukemia/ | With explosion |

1. In general, exact searches use /XX rather than :XX, where XX is a field code

See also /PY (shown under Limits), /SD (since date; not shown) and /WD (within days; not shown)

1. Interchangeable with /DM or /DD which used to denote medical and drug terms respectively
2. **Field search 1)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Embase.com** | | **Ovid 1) 2)** | | **Comments** |
| Accession number | AN | 2002354099:an | AN | 2002354099.an. |  |
| Article title | TI | heart:ti | TI | heart.ti. | Embase: incl. Original title 3) |
| Original (non-English) title | TT | See note 3) | OT | heart.ot. |  |
| Author | AU | smith-a:au | AU | smith a$.au. | With any initials after first one 4) |
| Author address | AD | univ:ad | IN | univ.in. | Ovid: AD = corresponding author |
| Author email address | EM | ‘me@net.com’:em | - | - | Ovid: displayed with address |
| Author country | CA | italy:ca | AD | italy.in. | For corresponding author |
| Abstract | AB | heart:ab | AB | heart.ab. |  |
| Citation | CT | heart:ct | - | - | Includes AU,TI,PY,JT,PI,VI,PG |
| Abstract and citation | AC | heart:ac | - | - |  |
| Journal title | JT | nature:jt | JX | nature.jx. | See also Exact search |
| Journal abbreviation | TA | biochem:ta | JA | biochem.ja. | Embase: see also Exact search |
| Journal country | CY | france:cy | CP | france.cp. | Country text may differ |

For notes, see continuation of table on next page

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description (cont.)** | **Embase.com** | | **Ovid 1) 2)** | | **Comment on Embase** |
| ISSN | IS | 0021924x:is | IS | 0021-924x.is. | Embase: including eISSN 5) |
| ISBN | IB | 1402037635:ib | IB | 1402037635.ib. | Available for Book Series |
| CODEN | CD | aajnd:cd | CD | aajnd.cd. | Not assigned to new journals |
| Source publication date | PD | *(various formats)* | DP | 11 sep 2001.dp. | Embase: format 2001-09-11, but as Ovid for Medline unique items |
| Publication year | PY | 2009:py | YR | 2009.yr. | See also Limits |
| Volume | VI | 100:vi | VO | 100.vo. |  |
| Issue | IP | 10:ip | IP | 10.ip. |  |
| Page number | PG | ’10’:pg | - | - | Either first or last page |
| Start page | SP | 10:sp | PG | 10.pg. |  |
| Language of article | LA | french:la | LG | french.lg. | Language text may differ |
| Language of summary | LS | french:ls | SL | french.sl. | Language text may differ |
| Conference date | DC | ‘1989-02-26’:dc | CF | 20110226.cf. | Ovid: part of “Conference info” |
| Conference location | LC | detroit:lc | CF | detroit.cf. | Ovid: part of “Conference info” |
| Conference name | NC | care:nc | CF | care.cf. | Ovid: part of “Conference info” |
| Editor name | ED | smith-e-a:ed | ED | smith ea.ed. | Conference editors |
| Publication type | IT | review/it | PT | review.pt. | Ovid: part of “Publication type” |
| Source type | PT | journal/pt | PT | journal.pt. | Ovid: part of “Publication type” |
| Index term | DE | leukemia:de | HW | leukemia.hw. | Word search (not exact) |
| Drug trade name | TN | aspirin:tn | TN | aspirin.tn. |  |
| Drug manufacturer | MN | bayer:mn | MF | bayer.mf. |  |
| Device trade name | DN | ultrasound:dn | DV | ultrasound.dv. |  |
| Device manufacturer | DF | johnson:dm | DM | johnson.dm. |  |
| CAS registry number | RN | 3843-74-1:rn | RN | 3843-74-1.rn. |  |
| Clinical trial number | CN | nct00054717:cn | CN | nct00054717.cn. |  |
| Molecular sequence nr | MS | 123620:ms | MS | 123620.ms. |  |
| Embase section headings | CL | 37:cl | EC | 037.ec. | Embase: no leading zeros |
| Publication item identifier | II | S0093691x02011287:ii | - | - |  |
| DOI tag | - | 10.1016 | DO | “10.1016”.do. | Embase: no field code available |

1. Field searches are “non-exact” searches in Embase.com, corresponding to searches in “word-indexed” fields in Ovid. Some Ovid fields are “phrase indexed” fields (= Embase “exact search”): these are underlined.
2. Additional Ovid fields are:

AF (All Fields; use no field abbreviation in Embase)

AR (Article Number; searchable in Embase.com within PG)

BS (Book Series; searchable in Embase.com within JT)

BT (Book Title; not available in Embase.com)

CG (Conference publication; searchable in Embase as NC, DC and LC)

DD (Date Delivered; use Since Date /sd in Embase)

EM (Entry week; use Since Date /sd in Embase)

MP (Multiple Fields; use no field abbreviation in Embase)

PB (Publisher; not available in Embase.com)

RD (Revised Date; not available in Embase.com)

RF (Number of References; not available in Embase.com)

TW (Text Word; corresponds to Embase TI+AB+TN)

1. Embase TT (Original title) is not currently operational
2. For last name searches use smith:au (Embase.com) or smith a$.au. (Ovid)
3. eISSN on Ovid is available in a separate field (EN)