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Cochrane Review specific

In this section:

Cochrane Review: content, structure, and format

For guidance on the content, structure, and format of Cochrane Reviews see:

- [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions](#)
- [Methodological Expectations of Cochrane Intervention Reviews](#) (MECIR)

Titles of Cochrane Reviews

Titles for all types of Cochrane Reviews should be in sentence case. Avoid the use of abbreviations (except for those listed as [common abbreviations that do not need to be defined](#), see [Abbreviations and acronyms](#)), and avoid superfluous elements (e.g. 'effects of', 'comparison of', 'a systematic review of').

Titles can include italics (see section on [Character formatting](#)) but no other formatting.

Titles do not have a full-stop at the end.

Guidance on the structure of titles for Cochrane Reviews of interventions is included in the [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions](#).

Author contact details

The Cochrane format for entering the contact details for all authors in Cochrane Reviews is outlined below. A consistent format helps ensure that there is only one record per person entered in [Archie](#), Cochrane's central server for managing reviews and contact details.

Entering author contact details in Archie

Note: formats for email addresses, international telephone/fax numbers, and web addresses are based on the Telecommunication Standardization Sector of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-T) Recommendation E.123: Notation for national and international telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and web addresses (02/2001).

Contact detail	Guidance	Correct	Incorrect
Name: prefix and suffix	Select correct prefix from drop-down menu.		
	Use open punctuation in suffix field, i.e. without full stops and with no extra spaces.	PhD	Ph.D
	Use 'Dr' or 'MD'; 'Dr' or 'PhD'.	Dr Jones Mr Jones, MD Dr Jones Mr Jones, PhD	Dr Jones, MD Dr Jones, MD Dr Jones, PhD Dr Jones, PhD
Name: first name and family name	Mandatory for all authors	John Smith	J Smith
Name: middle initials	Avoid punctuation and use initials only.	David RA Jones	David R.A. Jones
Name: middle initials	If authors want their middle name published as well as	First name: Paul Simon Middle initial: Family name: Johnson	First name: Paul Middle initial: Simon Family name: Johnson

Contact detail	Guidance	Correct	Incorrect
	their first name, or are known by their middle name and prefer to use the initial for their first name followed by their full middle name, then enter their middle name in the first name field after their first name or initial.	First name: P Simon Middle name: Family name: Johnson	First name: P Middle name: Simon Family name: Johnson
Email address ^a	Lower-case letters Note: include only one email address in the email field	myname@domain.org	Myname@domain.org
Department/organization	Recommended for all authors if institutional address is available Type in details as they should appear. Author affiliations should be in English.	Department of Neurology	Neurology
City/Country	Mandatory for all authors	City: Liverpool	City: Liverpool L12 2AP
Zip/postal codes	Zip/postal codes must be entered in the specific separate field and not alongside the city name.	Zip code: L12 2AP	Zip code: 9100 Aalborg
Telephone and fax number (international notation ^a)	Separate groups of numbers using a space (not hyphens or full stops).	+44 151 123 4567 +44 151 1234567	+44-151-123-4567 +44.151.123.4567
	Do not use the trunk prefix '0'.	+44 151 123 4567 +44 151 1234567	+44 0151 123 4567 +44 (0)151 123 4567
	+ [country code] [area code] [local number]	+44 151 123 4567 +44 151 1234567	0151 123 4567
Web address ^a	Use without prefix 'http://'.	www.cochrane.org	http://www.cochrane.org

^aTelecommunication Standardization Sector of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-T) Recommendation E.123: Notation for national and international telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and web addresses (02/2001)

Abstracts

Guidance on the format and content of Cochrane Review abstracts is available in the [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions](#) and the [Methodological Expectations of Cochrane Intervention Reviews \(MECIR\) reporting standards](#).

Abstracts must be no more than 1000 words long, and it is highly desirable for abstracts to be less than 700 words.

Plain language summaries

Information about the required structure and content of Plain language summaries is provided in the [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions](#).

Plain language summaries should be between 400 and 700 words long.

Headings

In this section: [Headings in Cochrane Review text](#) | [Headings in Cochrane Review tables](#)

Headings in Cochrane Review text

Some predefined headings are automatically included in the review and cannot be removed or altered (e.g. 'Background'). The formats of the different heading levels are shown below in [Heading levels available in Review Manager 5](#).

Some sections of Review Manager 5 (RevMan 5), such as 'Data collection and analysis', have predefined subheadings that authors should generally use in those sections (optional subheadings). These can be activated or deactivated manually; for example, 'Selection of studies' can be activated under 'Data collection and analysis'.

Predefined headings should be used where appropriate (rather than free-text equivalents), and any headings that are not predefined need to be styled using the drop-down heading styles (see [Heading levels available in Review Manager 5](#)). The headings in reviews that are being updated should be adjusted to meet this format if they do not comply with it initially (this will ensure that the rendering of the reviews on the Cochrane Library looks good, and is consistent within and across reviews).

Authors can also insert author-defined headings (i.e. not one of the predefined subheadings). These headings should use sentence case (i.e. only the first letter of the first word in upper-case) and the section text should start on the next line. The next available heading style from the pull-down list in the tool bar should be applied to the heading; for example, Heading level 1 is used for 'Background', and users would then apply Heading level 2 for the first author-defined subheading used in this section.

There is no need to insert a blank line between a heading and a subheading because the software automatically inserts a space.

Heading levels available in Review Manager 5

Heading level	Example	Fixed or optional
1	Methods	Fixed (e.g. 'Background', 'Methods')
2	Criteria for considering studies for this review	Fixed (e.g. 'Criteria for considering studies for this review') or Optional (e.g. 'Description of the condition')
3	Types of outcome measures	Fixed (e.g. 'Types of studies') or Optional (e.g. 'Searching other resources')
4	Primary outcomes	Optional (e.g. 'Primary outcomes')
5	Heading 5	Optional (user-defined)
6	Heading 6	Optional (user-defined)

Headings in Cochrane Review tables

See [Tables](#)

Search methods

In this section: [Citing databases and study registers](#) | [Search terms](#)

Citing databases and study registers

The preferred format for the following databases is all upper-case letters: MEDLINE, CENTRAL, OLDMEDLINE, and CINAHL (not CINHAL). A number of databases use a mixture of lower-case and upper-case letters, for example, Embase (not EMBASE),

PsycLIT (not PsychLIT) and PsycINFO (not PsychINFO).

Each Cochrane Review Group is responsible for preparing a register of studies in their area of expertise. The name of the register may vary, but it will follow one of the following formats depending on the Cochrane Review Group's choice: [Cochrane Group name] Specialized Register; [Cochrane Group name] Specialised Register; or [Cochrane Group name] Trials Register.

The databases and trials registers and other resources that are searched for studies for a Cochrane Review are listed in the 'Search methods for identification of studies' (in the 'Methods' section). The databases and registers must be listed in the following order: [Cochrane Group name] Specialised Register (or Specialized Register or Trials Register), CENTRAL, MEDLINE, Embase, and any other databases.

(In the [Abstract](#), brief text may be used to describe the sources searched, e.g. 'We searched CENTRAL, MEDLINE, Embase, five other databases and three trials registers (month year)').

In the Search Methods section, the date of the latest search (day month year) should be provided along with the issue or version number (as appropriate) of each database, e.g. CENTRAL (year, issue number). The date of inception of the database should be given where known. Database names should include the platform or provider name, and websites should include the full name and URL.

The date range (for databases) or search date (for study registers) of each search must be listed with each database; for example, CENTRAL (year, issue number), and for most other databases, such as MEDLINE, it should be in the form 'MEDLINE (year to day month year)'.

Example:

- Cochrane Wounds Specialized Register (searched 10 February 2015)
- Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL; 2015, Issue 1) in the Cochrane Library (searched 10 February 2015);
- MEDLINE Ovid (1946 to 10 February 2015);
- Embase Ovid (1974 to 9 February 2015);
- CINAHL EBSCO (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature; 1982 to 9 February 2015);
- PsycINFO Ovid (from 1806 to 10 February 2015);
- AMED Ovid (Allied and Complementary Medicine; 1985 to 10 February 2015);
- LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Health Science Information database; 1982 to 10 February 2015);
- ISRCTN registry (www.isrctn.com; searched 10 February 2015);
- US National Institutes of Health Ongoing Trials Register ClinicalTrials.gov (www.clinicaltrials.gov; searched 10 February 2015);
- Australian New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry (www.anzctr.org.au; searched 10 February 2015);
- World Health Organization International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (apps.who.int/trialsearch; searched 10 February 2015);
- EU Clinical Trials Register (www.clinicaltrialsregister.eu; searched 10 February 2015).

Other formatting options for MEDLINE and Embase:

- MEDLINE Ovid (1946 to November week 3 2015)
- Embase Ovid (1974 to 2015 week 47)

Search terms

Search terms consist of text words (preferred spelling is two words, not 'textword') and indexing or controlled vocabulary terms. The preferred format for referring to the National Library of Medicine's controlled vocabulary used for indexing articles for MEDLINE (and PubMed) is MeSH (*not* MESH).

Tables in Cochrane Reviews

See [Tables](#).

Figures in Cochrane Reviews

See [Figures](#).

Cochrane Review software

Software used on Cochrane Reviews:

- Covidence
- GRADEpro GDT
- Review Manager 5 (RevMan 5)

See also [Names](#)

Information on how to cite software is available in the [References](#) section.