

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
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	Centers for Disease Control Center for Disease Control Center for Disease Control and Prevention Centre for Disease Control Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
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
a computer-generated image the image was computer generated	a computer generated image the image was computer-generated
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' with an initial capital	elearning e learning
end point or endpoint Note: 'time point' should be written as two separate words (see below)	end-point
evidence base e.g. Production of a robust systematic review can contribute to the evidence base ...	evidence-base
evidence-based e.g. evidence-based medicine	evidence based
false positive (noun)	—

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
<p>e.g. The result was a false positive.</p> <p>false-positive (adjective)</p> <p>e.g. The false-positive result was misleading.</p> <p>Note: follow this guidance for true positive, false negative, and true negative (nouns) and true-positive, false-negative, and true-negative (adjectives).</p>	
<p>fixed-effect model</p> <p>Note: compared with random-effects model</p> <p>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 indicated to avoid being changed to fixed-effect model.</p>	<p>fixed effect model</p> <p>fixed-effects model</p>
<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>	<p>—</p>
<p>forest plot</p> <p>Note: for further information, see Lewis S, Clarke M. Forest plots: trying to see the wood and the trees. <i>BMJ</i> 2001;322(7300):1479-80.</p>	<p>forrest plot</p>
<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>	

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
<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>
<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>	<p>—</p>
<p>I^2 statistic</p>	<p>I-squared statistic</p> <p>I-square statistic</p> <p>I^2 test</p>
<p>intention-to-treat analysis</p>	<p>intention to treat analysis</p>
<p>internet</p>	<p>Internet</p>
<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>
<p>number needed to treat for an additional beneficial outcome</p>	<p>number-needed-to-treat-for-an-additional-beneficial-outcome</p> <p>number needed to treat to benefit</p>

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
number needed to treat for an additional harmful outcome	number-needed-to-treat-for-an-additional-harmful-outcome number needed to treat to harm
online	on-line on line
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>	—
<p>per cent</p> <p>Note: see also Guidance on usage and presentation of commonly used symbols</p>	percent
<p>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)'.</p>	
<p>preoperative</p> <p>perioperative</p> <p>postoperative</p>	<p>pre-operative or pre operative</p> <p>peri-operative or peri operative</p> <p>post-operative or post operative</p>
<p>quality:</p> <p>low-quality (adjective)</p> <p>moderate-quality (adjective)</p> <p>high-quality (adjective)</p> <p>e.g. high-quality evidence</p>	<p>low quality (adjective)</p> <p>moderate quality (adjective)</p> <p>high quality (adjective)</p>
random-effects model	random effects model random-effect model
regimen	regime
<p>risk of bias</p> <p>e.g. We assessed the risk of bias in the included studies using RoB 2.</p> <p>e.g. We assessed the risk of bias in the included studies using RoB 1.</p>	<p>'risk of bias'</p> <p>Risk of bias</p> <p>risk-of-bias assessment</p> <p>Risk of Bias Table</p>

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
risk of bias assessment risk of bias table	
RoB 1 RoB 2 Note: these are official names for the Cochrane risk of bias tools	ROB 2 Rob 2 rob 2 Risk of bias 2
ROBINS-I	Robins-I ROBINS I ROBINS-1
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
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) waiting list or waiting-list control (UK English)	waitlist, wait list control waiting-list, waiting list control
website	web site
well-being	well being wellbeing
white (adjective)	white (noun)

Correct usage	Incorrect usage
e.g. The white participants ... See also: ethnic group names	
World Wide Web	world wide web
World Health Organization	World Health Organisation