

Psychology thesaurus



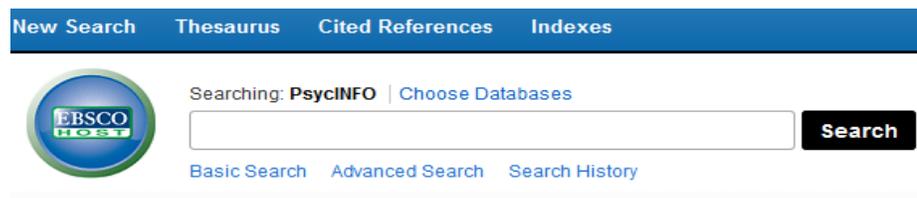
In the classical sense of the word a thesaurus is a type of reference work. You can use it to search for e.g. specialized vocabulary in a particular field of study. In a thesaurus you usually find synonyms, broader and narrower terms, and sometimes antonyms. Often a thesaurus does not give you the definition of a word, like dictionaries do, but is designed to find exactly the right word to describe what you mean by using relationships between words.

A thesaurus can also help you to understand the terminology in books and articles written by people from other backgrounds better. For example, one psychologist would label a certain disorder as 'hysteria', while another would call it 'conversion disorder', and yet another 'functional neurological symptom disorder', and all would describe the same thing.

Because of new discoveries or other movements in culture and science, names and common terms change. In a thesaurus this can all be traced.

On the topic of Psychology literature database PsycINFO has its own thesaurus available on their platform. It can be found at the top of the screen when you visit PsycINFO.

Click thesaurus →



Type the term you're interested in in the search bar of the thesaurus. →

Suppose you have to write an assignment on **depression**. It's very useful to familiarize yourself with the various names of the term and its variants.

You can use this type of results when you're preparing your search. In the results from the thesaurus displayed here you see 'Major Depression' (the disorder), followed by depression as an emotion, a few specific types of depressive disorder, an instrument for measuring depression, as well as completely different disorders in which depression is a symptom (such as 'Bipolar Disorder').

Browsing: PsycINFO -- Thesaurus

depression

Term Begins With Term Contains Relevancy Ranked

Page: [Previous](#) | [Next](#) ▶

Select term, then add to search using:

(Click term to display details.)

- [Major Depression](#)
- [Depression \(Emotion\)](#)
- [Postpartum Depression](#)
- [Treatment Resistant Depression](#)
- [Recurrent Depression](#)
- [Atypical Depression](#)
- [Zungs Self Rating Depression Scale](#)
- [Spreading Depression](#)
- [Reactive Depression](#)
- [Long-term Depression \(Neuronal\)](#)
- [Endogenous Depression](#)
- [Bipolar Disorder](#)
- [Beck Depression Inventory](#)
- [Anaclitic Depression](#)
- [Seasonal Affective Disorder](#)
- [Manic Depressive Psychosis](#) **Use** [Bipolar Disorder](#)
- [Unipolar Depression](#) **Use** [Major Depression](#)

This already helps you to zoom in on the specific topic you're interested in. Is your assignment on winter depression? You can click on the term 'Seasonal Affective Disorder'. You'll get a screen like this:

Select term, then add to search using: OR Add

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Year Term Introduced	1991
Scope Note	A mood disorder characterized by major depression that recurs the same time every year, typically in the winter months. 1
Broader Terms	<input type="checkbox"/> Affective Disorders 2
Related Terms	<input type="checkbox"/> Major Depression + 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Phototherapy <input type="checkbox"/> Recurrent Depression
Used for	SAD 4 Winter Depression

Here you see everything the thesaurus has relating to that term. You see when this term was first registered within the literature at PsycINFO, and a definition of it (1). Following that you find broader terms (2). A winter depression is classified within 'Affective Disorders' (mood disorders). Following that you find the terms from the thesaurus that are related to your search term (3). A common treatment for the disorder is light therapy ('Phototherapy'), and because it's a disorder that usually returns every winter it's a recurring condition ('Recurrent Depression'). Finally, at the bottom, you find synonyms for your term (4). In this case simply the often used abbreviation 'SAD', and of course 'Winter Depression'.

This will hopefully help you get a better view on the topic you're interested in, and you'll see what PsycINFO links to your original search term. As has been mentioned before: you can use this to prepare your search.

Suppose that, for an assignment, you have to research whether analgesia (pain medication) are addictive. You could go ahead and search for **(painkiller* OR "pain medication" OR analgesi*) AND addicti***, but then you won't find the following articles:

"Concerns about pregabalin: Further experience with its potential of causing addictive behaviors"

"Beliefs and social norms about codeine and promethazine hydrochloride cough syrup use and addiction among multi-ethnic college students"

This is because there are many types of painkillers that can be specifically named in the title. So you won't find those results when using the search string **(painkiller* OR "pain medication" OR analgesi*)**.

To have PsycINFO help you with this you can select the options **Explode** and **Major Concept** on the right of the terms in the thesaurus, and add them to your search. This is how you do that:

We're searching for Analgesia in the thesaurus, and end up at Analgesic Drugs.

Searching: PsycINFO | Choose Databases

DE "Analgesic Drugs" OR DE "Aspirin" OR DE "Atropine" OR DE "Carbamazepine" OR DE "Codeine" OR DE "Dihydroergotamine" OR DE "Heroin" OR DE "Meperidine" OR DE "Methadone" OR DE "Morphine" OR DE "Papaverine" OR DE "Pentazocine" OR DE

Search

Basic Search | Advanced Search | Search History

Browsing: PsycINFO -- Thesaurus

analgesia

Term Begins With Term Contains Relevancy Ranked

[Back to List](#)

[Previous](#) | [Next](#)

Select term, then add to search using:

Explode

Major Conce

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Analgesic Drugs	Year Term Introduced	1973	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Broader Terms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Narrower Terms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aspirin			<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Atropine			<input type="checkbox"/>

When we also tick **Explode** and click Add, PsycINFO adds all Descriptors (DE) belonging to 'Analgetic Drugs' separately to the search term, using the OR operator, so that any related specific painkillers are also included in the results.

In addition you can tick **Major Concept** when you want to add to the search that term should be one of the most important ones in your results. In that case you should use the operator AND. You can also combine Explode and Major Concept. You'll find an example of a search you can create using the Thesaurus when you continue with the MESI course.



Searching: PsycINFO | Choose Databases

(DE "Epilepsy" OR DE "Epileptic Seizures"
OR DE "Experimental Epilepsy") AND (MM
"Fatigue")

Search

Basic Search Advanced Search Search History

Browsing: PsycINFO -- Thesaurus

fatigue

Term Begins With Term Contains Relevancy Ranked

[Back to List](#)

Select term, then add to search using: AND

	Fatigue	
Year Term Introduced		1967
Scope Note	A usually transient state of discomfort and loss of effi	
Broader Terms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Symptoms

Suppose you're searching for all articles about any type or name of **epilepsy**, but you want to put emphasis on **fatigue**. You don't want articles on **epilepsy** where **fatigue** is only mentioned once as one of its symptoms.

This search will give you the articles *"Fatigue in patients with epilepsy and its association with sleep quality"* and *"Impact of pediatric epilepsy on sleep patterns and behaviors in children and parents"*, but not *"Clinical experience with generic levetiracetam in people with epilepsy"*, in which fatigue is only mentioned as a side effect of medication.

Conclusions:

Use **Explode** and **Add** to also add more specific terms of a thesaurus term in your search.

Major Concept and **Add** are used to indicate that a thesaurus term should be represented specifically and prominently in the search results.

You can always edit the search you create with this later by hand, for example by combining it with the help of Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) with specific title words.