

Searching for Alternatives – Worksheet Essentials

Before you begin your search:

Consider other possible animal or non-animal models (e.g., tissue culture, cell culture, fish, rats, etc.)

Consider your objectives and endpoints

Note any drugs or compounds used in procedures. (e.g., anesthetics, analgesics, test compounds, etc.)

Note methods and procedures using animals, paying particular attention to those procedures that may cause pain or distress to the animal.

List any potential alternatives (all 3 Rs) of which you are aware. (e.g., alternate models, modified techniques, housing modifications, modified restraint, in vitro methods, computer simulations, etc.)

Develop a conceptual search strategy using the keywords and concepts you noted above. A search strategy is necessarily flexible, dependent both on the topic and on the database selected. If too many records are retrieved, additional relevant terms may make the results fewer and more useful; if too little is retrieved, fewer terms and a more conceptual approach may identify the relevant material. Use these terms and concepts as needed when searching.

Database selection: Choose those that are appropriate for the area of study, keeping in mind type of protocol (*research, teaching, or testing protocol*)
(List of Databases: http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/Animal_Alternatives/detailedworksheet2.html)

For your protocol:

Note names of databases searched and years covered by the search. (example: PubMed, 1966-2005)

Note the date(s) on which you searched.

Describe what alternatives-related information you found; how you are integrating those alternative methods, procedures, or models into your protocol, as well as why you are not using others. This is sometimes referred to as the "narrative" or "search results" section.

Additional information may be found at
http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/Animal_Alternatives/detailedworksheet2.html