

Updating Cochrane Handbooks

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Cochrane has multiple *Handbooks*, including the [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions](#), the [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Diagnostic Test Accuracy](#), the [Cochrane-Campbell Handbook for Qualitative Evidence Synthesis](#) and the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Prognosis Studies* (in development). This guide details how updates to these *Handbooks* are managed.

Cochrane Handbooks should focus on **methodological content**. Information about Cochrane processes, policies, structures, and platforms is detailed in the [Cochrane Community](#).

Process for managing updates:

- Chapter authors can submit updates to their chapters to the Editors throughout the year.
- Editors may also scope and invite updates to their *Handbooks* as part of annual planning.
- Cochrane’s central team supports the development of new *Handbooks* and maintaining online versions.
- Editors will consider substantial or major edits to chapters, such as the introduction of a new methodological approach or tool. Depending on the extent of the changes, the editors may or may not request peer review.
- Chapter updates will not be approved based solely on updating references, changes to abbreviations, acronyms or hyperlinks, or other minor edits. We also do not expect chapters to be updated annually.
- When chapter updates are approved by the editors:
 - Depending on the extent of the edits, the chapter may be copyedited.
 - The chapter citation will be updated within the online and PDF versions, if relevant, with the following number in the version and the date of the last update. For example:

Cumpston M, Flemyng E, Thomas J, Higgins JPT, Deeks JJ, Clarke MJ. Chapter I: Introduction [last updated November 2024]. In: Higgins JPT, Thomas J, Chandler J, Cumpston M, Li T, Page MJ, Welch VA (editors). Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions version 6.5. Cochrane, 2024. Available from training.cochrane.org/handbook.

- Adding a second decimal point (e.g., version 6.5) represents an update.
- Adding a third decimal point (e.g., version 6.5.1) represents a correction.
- A summary of the change will be listed on the Handbook's versions and changes page (see an example [here](#)).
- The previous version of the *Handbook* will be archived using the standard URL: <https://training.cochrane.org/handbook/archive/vXX/>. A note at the top of the web pages will need to highlight that it’s an archived version (see [here for example](#)).

If substantial changes accumulate over time, which represents a major revision to the Handbook as a whole, a new version may be released at the editors' discretion (e.g., version 7.0 or version 2.0). Each editorial team should determine the threshold for this new version after considering timelines and team resources.