1. Preparation
   - Assemble your review and support teams
   - Map out all responsibilities and contributions.
   - Develop a draft protocol
     - Decide on the research question and approach (PRISMA-P or other guideline).

2. Planning
   - Draft a protocol synopsis
     - Refine and define your approach.
   - Get your team’s feedback on these steps:
     - Formulate a precise research question and hypothesis to be tested.
     - Define your eligibility criteria.
     - Decide on your study search strategy.
     - Decide on the outcomes of interest and key variables to record.
     - Choose methods to evaluate study quality and risk of bias.
     - Choose methods to analyze and interpret data in context.
     - Choose reporting guidelines.

3. Preliminary/pilot work
   - Look for related reviews
     - Do a preliminary review. Has your research question been answered already?
     - Find a related review? Change your approach (angle, criteria, etc.)
   - Perform pilot searches of the literature
     - Test keywords, possible search strings, and code for any automated search programs.

4. Protocol
   - Develop the full advance protocol
     - Follow a guideline such as PRISMA-P.
   - Develop the protocol from your synopsis and any pilot search results.
   - Include specific details such as data management plans, any program coding, and any software used.

5. Protocol checklist
   - Ensure your protocol is complete
     - Use a protocol checklist, such as PRISMA-P.

6. Peer review
   - Are funding and/or ethics approval needed?
     - (YES): The protocol will be peer reviewed by experts during a formal peer-review step.
     - (NO): Get the protocol peer reviewed by colleagues or by a trusted peer-review service.
   - Submitting to online platforms (Cochrane, etc.):
     - (YES): the platform (Cochrane, Campbell Collaboration, Joanna Briggs Institute, etc.) will require peer review as part of proposing your protocol to the review team.
     - Amend and finalize your protocol according to the peer reviewers’ feedback.

7. Public archive
   - Do you want your protocol in public archives?
     - (YES): Convert the protocol into a protocol manuscript and publish it in a peer-reviewed journal that publishes protocol articles.
     - Does the target journal/organization require public archiving?
       - (YES): Archive the review protocol and/or the completed protocol checklist in a public or institutional online repository.

8. Preregistration
   - Publicly register the protocol in an online registry
     - Revise it, as needed, according to any feedback from the registry administrators, before the review is performed.
     - You might need to reformat the protocol for a specific online form (PROSPERO, etc.)
   - Consider submitting a protocol manuscript
     - Publishing your protocol manuscript in the format of a “registered report” helps to avoid publication bias.

9. Performing the review
   - Perform the search
     - Follow the preset sources and search terms described in your protocol.
   - Screen studies
     - Follow the preset eligibility criteria.
   - Extract and record data on a preset form
     - Exclude further studies if needed.
     - Decide on the final synthesis approach from the quality and risk of bias of each study.
     - Describe, summarize, combine, and analyze data.
     - Identify key concepts/findings.
     - Draw conclusions.
     - Assess review quality.
   - If you change or refine the reviewing methods, you also MUST:
     - Amend the archived protocol or registry record.
     - Give reasons.
     - Archive previous versions online.
     - Make formal corrections to any published protocol article or accepted Stage 1 registered report.
     - Describe any deviations from the protocol in the final review report.

10. Publication
    - Write the review report and prepare illustrations (forest plot, etc.)
    - Follow structured guidelines and complete the associated checklist (PRISMA, MOOSE, etc.)
    - Submit the manuscript to a suitable peer-reviewed journal
    - Update online registry (eg, PROSPERO) records to show study progress

11. Posting of dataset online
    - Check journal policy
      - Does the journal allow sharing of datasets?
    - Upload the dataset to a public repository if needed

12. Publicity
    - Promote your published systematic review to the public
      - Post on social media and other channels.

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