

Search strategy for library users

Your search strategy is your plan of action that takes you from thinking about the information you need to processing the information that you have found.

Regardless of the resources that you are using - a database, an index, or a www search engine - the searching strategy is essentially the same.

IDENTIFY KEYWORDS

SELECT RESOURCES

<http://dozer.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/SuRe/subject.php>

FIND RELEVANT INFORMATION

- *Build a search*
- *Use search operators*
- *Limit search to fields*
- *Use wildcards*

EVALUATE SOURCES

PROCESS INFORMATION

<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/>

Subject Resources@Library

Selected research resources are listed for each subject (eg Finance, Criminology, Genetics, Musicology, etc.) as well as specialised areas (eg Images, Patents, Theses etc.)

They are called *Subject Resources@Library* and include academic materials (subject to editorial or peer-review) and other *reliable* sources.

Connect to *your* Subject Resources@Library

<http://dozer.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/SuRe/subject.php>

INFORMATION DIVISION

Paul Stebbing/LRS 19/99/2004

Library information contacts

www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/contact.html

- *ALL FACULTIES* 03-8344-0444

EXCEPT...

- *LAND & FOOD RESOURCES*

Burnley	03-9250-6851
Creswick	03-5321-4115
Dookie	03-5833-9224
Gilbert Chandler	03-9749-8012
Glenormiston	03-5557-8256
Longerenong	03-5362-2236
McMillan	03-5622-6003
Parkville	03-8344-5017

- *LAW* 03-8344-6177

- *VETERINARY SCIENCE*

Parkville	03-8344-7353
Werribee	03-9731-2331

Key library websites

- *INQUIRY:* www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/inquiry/
Includes FAQs
- *LIBRARY HOME:* www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/
- *LIBRARY CATALOGUE:* cat.lib.unimelb.edu.au/
- *CITATION STYLES:* www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/
- *RESOURCES@LIBRARY:*
dozer.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/SuRe/subject.php
- *CONTACTS FOR RESEARCH HELP:*
www.infodiv.unimelb.edu.au/telars/staff/lr.html



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



Strategy for library users

1 Evaluating what you find

Whether you have found useful information

- on the Library catalogue,
- in journal article indexes,
- in databases or
- on the www

you will need to evaluate what you find in order to review and respond to the literature on your topic and start writing.

Not all sources are equal

Your search results may include a mixture of academic articles and books, popular books and newspapers or magazine articles and primary source documents.

However all of the material you have collected needs to be evaluated in terms of the questions you want to answer and the argument you want to present.

- Will the material you have found answer your question?
- Is it going to be useful?

Books and Articles

Browse the introduction/abstract

- Does it sound relevant?

Browse keywords/subjects/descriptors

- Are they relevant?
- Are they central or peripheral to your topic?

Check date and publisher

- Is the information current?
- Who is the publisher?
- Is the journal refereed or peer-reviewed?
- Who is the author?
- What is their affiliation?

Check the contents page

- Chapters relevant to your topic?

If there is an index...

- Is your topic included?

World Wide Web

Author:

- Who is the author?
- What are their qualifications?
- Is there information about this site?

Content

- Information aimed at experts?
- Is it serious or fun?

Bias

- Is information presented from a particular point of view or is it neutral?
Look for organisations or political, social, affiliations of authors

Currency

- Date of data, last update

Intellectual responsibility

- Is there a contact person?

2 Keeping Track of References

To create a bibliography or reference list it is important to record exact citation details of references you have consulted or may consult. This will form the basis of your bibliography. Citation details may include:

- Title (book, journal article, website)
- Author (book, article, website)
- Journal title, volume, issue (article)
- Date of publication (book, article)
- URL (website)
- Date last visited (website)
- Publisher (book, article)
- Place of publication (book, article)
- Pages (book, article)

Many databases and the library catalogue allow you to create a list of useful references and then print, email or download.

To create a list of references:

- Tick the adjacent check box
- Print selected records
Follow on screen instructions
- Email selected records
Follow on screen instructions

If you photocopy an article or chapter note the citation details on the photocopy - sometimes its hard to retrace your steps later.

You will need to compile your final bibliography in the recommended style - see **Smart Searching 5**