

# Research Plan

## 1 What information do I need?

Title/Topic:

What are the concepts, ideas, themes that make up my topic?

Think of synonyms, alternative spellings and variant forms of words. Consider narrow, specific and broad words related to the concept.

First Concept:

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Second Concept:

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Third Concept:

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Write down relevant date limits, language limits, geographic region, format of information.  
eg: video, web page, etc.

## 2 Where should I look for information?

### Resource brainstorming

Write down key authors, organisations, recommended reading, web sites, & experts, which will be useful to consult when researching your topic.

# Selecting and using sources of information

## Library Search

Type of Search:

Select appropriate types below

Your Notes:

Write down words to use below

Author

Enter author surname first:

**Smith, F or Organisation name.**

Title

Leave out "A", "An" or "The" at the start of a title.

**Type words in exact order.**

Keyword

Use \* as the 'truncation symbol' to search for alternate word endings

**Australia\* for Australia, Australian, etc**

Two words together are searched as a phrase

**eg "New Zealand"**

Use **AND** to search for more than one different concepts

**eg (contract) AND (health)**

Use **OR** to search for similar concepts

**eg (internet) OR (online)**

Subject

Search a known title or do some test searches:

**Find appropriate subject headings.**

Please consider:

Library Search: Notes

Too little information?

**Think broadly about your topic when searching within the catalogue.**

Too much information?

**Look at the table of contents and Indexes of books to see if they contain information you need.**

Looking for journal articles?

**Search a subject database, the catalogue indicates if the Library holds a journal.**

# Selecting and using sources of information

## Databases

### Tips:

Use the help button on each database to find out about its unique features and the best way to construct your search. Not all databases work the same way.

#### Keyword Searching:

Use search strings to link words *eg: naturalism AND theatre AND (20th Century OR Post War OR Fifties OR Sixties ...)*

- Use synonyms to describe each concept, link with the word **OR**. *eg (naturalism OR realism)*
- 'Nest' each concept in parentheses. *eg: (20th Century OR Post War OR Fifties OR Sixties)*
- Use the appropriate truncation symbol for the specific database *eg: \$, \*, ? eg: theat\**
- Search **each concept separately** if the database allows you to combine sets of results
- If the database does not allow you to combine sets of results, **link the search string** for each concept with the word **AND**

#### Subject Searching:

Uses the specific index or thesaurus terms particular to the database *eg: naturalism or "kitchen sink drama"*.

- Use the **help information** for instructions on subject searching as each database varies.
- A **subject heading** will draw together all articles on a subject avoiding the use of large numbers of synonyms.
- Use a **keyword search** to find an excellent article on your topic then analyse the subject headings associated with it.

### Type of Search:

Select appropriate types below

### Your Notes:

Write down words to use below

### Name of Database:

<input type="checkbox"/> Search String using keywords	
<input type="checkbox"/> Subject headings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other types of searches. <i>eg: author, journal title.</i>	

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Please consider:

Database Search: Notes

<p>Too little information? <b>Think different words.</b> <b>Think about different ways to approach the topic.</b></p> <p>Too much information? <b>Limit your search by language, date or other options offered by the database.</b> <b>Try adding more words to the search.</b></p>	
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## Internet Search

Tips:

Searching on the internet is useful to find a variety of grey literature, and open access papers. Grey literature is all documentation not formally published like reports, conference papers, websites, official documents, theses, newsletters or sources of informal communication.

- Use advanced search functions where available to make your search more specific.
- Use search engines for finding specific information, using uncommon words or if you wish to search a large number of websites.
- Search the same concept through several search engines for wider coverage *eg: Google Scholar, Duck Duck Go Search, Bing Search, etc.*
- Use search strings and boolean operators, some engines can be searched just as in databases.
- Remember, results and type of sources found on the internet may vary depending on the field you specialise.

Search Engine:

Select appropriate types below

Your Notes:

Write down words to use below

Name of Search Engine:

Type of literature: <input type="checkbox"/> Official Report <input type="checkbox"/> Open Access Document <input type="checkbox"/> Conference Papers <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
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Name of Search Tool:

Type of Source:

- Official Report
- Open Access Document
- Conference Papers
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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Type of Source:

- Official Report
- Open Access Document
- Conference Papers
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Please consider:

Internet Search: Notes

Too little information?

**Try another search engine, or browser. Try different words. Think about different ways to approach the topic.**

Too much information?

**Limit your search by language, date or other options offered by the search engine. Add more words to the search. Use more specific words.**

## Experts

Find Experts:

Select appropriate types below

Your Notes:

List people who are experts in this area and their contact details

User experts as additional sources of information. Prepare by researching the topic thoroughly beforehand.

## Need more help?

Explore our resources or contact us via Live Chat

<https://www.library.sydney.edu.au/>

Your Notes:

Write down notes to use below

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