Information Skills Tutorial
Choosing a search tool
Where should I search?

There is no one search tool that will search 'everything and everywhere'.

You need to choose a tool depending on the type of information you’re looking for. This will often depend on your assignment.
Read your assignment question carefully and try to work out what type of information you require.


If you are not sure what is expected it’s a good idea to ask your teacher.

Let’s explore the different types of information and where to find them.
Scholarly Information.

Scholarly information is written by people who have expertise in a particular field.

It usually represents in-depth research on a topic and is evaluated by other people who specialise in that field (peer review).

Examples of Scholarly information include:

• books
• peer reviewed journal articles.
Finding Scholarly Information

You can find scholarly information in a variety of places.

**Books** and a small selection of **journals** can be found using the TAFE Library catalogue

http://tafecat.tafensw.edu.au/tafecat.html

The TAFE Library Catalogue:

- Searches all TAFE libraries in NSW
- Will tell where to find an item on the shelves and if the item is available
- Lets you limit your search to your local TAFE Library
- Provides access to a variety of eBooks
Finding Scholarly Information

Journal articles can be found using the online journal databases available through the eResources page of the library website: http://wsilibraries.tafensw.edu.au/eresources/

Online journal databases provide you with access to information that cannot be found through Google or other internet search engines.

They are free for TAFE students to use and can be accessed 24/7 from home. All you need is a password.

Our journal databases cover a wide variety of subjects including art and design, business, education, the environment, health and medicine, horticultural, hospitality, Information technology, science, social sciences and more.
Finding Scholarly Information

You can also search for journal articles with Google Scholar:
http://scholar.google.com.au

(Please note that some of the articles available through Google Scholar are from subscription databases. You may be asked to pay in order to read them.)
Finding News and Current Affairs

You can find news and current affairs in a variety of places.

**Newspaper** and **magazine articles** can be found using the databases available through the eResources page of the library website: [http://wsilibraries.tafensw.edu.au/eresources/](http://wsilibraries.tafensw.edu.au/eresources/)

Check out the **Australian /New Zealand Research Centre (ANZRC)** for a wide variety of Australian Newspaper and Magazine articles.
Finding News and Current Affairs

You can access videos of News and Currents Affairs programs recorded from free-to-air TV through the eResources page of the library website.

Just go to:
http://wsilibraries.tafensw.edu.au/eresources/
and select TVNews.

Google News will also help you search for news stories online:
Finding statistics


Many TAFE libraries also hold books containing various statistics. Try searching the TAFE Catalogue or see a member of library staff for advice.
You can find Australian legislation on the internet.

Commonwealth (Federal) Legislation can be found at: http://www.comlaw.gov.au/

Finding Australian Standards

You can find Australian Standards through the eResources page of the library website:
http://wsilibraries.tafensw.edu.au/eresources/

Please contact your local TAFE Library for more information, including a password.
Finding non-scholarly information

TAFE Libraries hold a wide variety of:

- Books
- DVDs
- Magazines.

Some of these resources provide you with in-depth research, while others take a more practical approach, e.g. recipe books, learner guides for specific modules of a course etc.

You can search for resources using the TAFE Library Catalogue.

The internet is also a great place to find non-scholarly information.
Finding information on the internet

A wide variety of information can be found on the internet.

In the following section we will explore two of the options available: search engines and directories or subject gateways.
Search engines

Search engines use a computer program to create a searchable index of web pages.

When you type your keywords into the search box, the search engine compiles a list of web pages for which the keywords are relevant, and arranges the list in a specific order (e.g. by most popular).

You can find quality information, but also a lot of irrelevant or low quality information this way.

Examples of search engines include:

http://www.google.com
http://www.altavista.com
http://www.dogpile.com/
Directories and subject gateways

Directories are websites that contain links to other websites and online resources. They are usually organised by subject and let you browse through a list of links rather than search by keyword.

Subject gateways are directories on specific subjects, for example medicine or early childhood education.

In a Subject gateway the links are selected by a team of human editors. This means that the websites found through a subject gateway are often of higher quality than some of the results you would get using a search engine, because they have been evaluated by someone before being added to the gateway.
Directories and subject gateways

Directories
BUBLLink at [http://bubl.ac.uk/link/](http://bubl.ac.uk/link/)
Librarians' Index to the Internet at [http://www.ipl.org/](http://www.ipl.org/)

Subject Gateways
Getting help…

If you would like some help deciding where to search you can contact your local TAFE Library for more advice and assistance.

You can also view the other tutorials in the Information Skills series.

Check out the Search Skills Tutorial for tips on effective searching.