

Research in the Library³

Library Guides

Accessing Library resources – start at the RMIT University Library homepage
www.rmit.edu.au/library

Library Catalogue: <http://cat.lib.rmit.edu.au>

For **online subject guides** offering direct links to key online resources go to:

- <http://www.lib.rmit.edu.au/pathfinders/civil.html>
- <http://www.lib.rmit.edu.au/pathfinders/chemeng.html>
- http://www.lib.rmit.edu.au/pathfinders/environmental_eng.html

Searching the Literature

Identify types of resources to be searched

<i>Do you need background information?</i>	Consult textbooks, encyclopedias, dictionaries	General search engines for definitions, general readings. Library resources – check subject guide for suggested titles or search the RMIT Library catalogue. Some will be online, others in print.
<i>Do you need recent, focussed information on narrow aspects of the topic?</i>	Search for journal articles, conference papers.	Library databases – consult subject guide for the most relevant titles. Some articles and papers will be available in full-text. Google Scholar for additional “scholarly resources”, some available in full-text. General search engines for a variety of free, mainly full-text resources.
<i>Do you need specialised materials?</i>	Design data	Books (printed) – check subject guide for suggested titles.
	Cost data	Books (printed) – check subject guide for suggested titles, eg Rawlinson’s construction costs
	Standards	Australian Standards Online database via online subject guide or the Library’s Search it gateway, or ASTM Standards in print – see subject guide.
	Patents	Free Internet databases – check subject guide for suggested URLs.
	Technical reports	Free Internet databases – check subject guide for suggested URLs – or search a known site e.g. Austroads at http://www.austroads.com.au/

Define your topic

(consult your supervisor, do background reading to better understand)

Develop a strategy for searching databases and Internet search engines

1. Identify the key aspects of your research question or topic.
2. Compile a list of keywords and phrases for each aspect of the topic, identifying alternative or synonymous terms, variant spellings and abbreviations.

³ Original chapter by Heather Ross, School Liaison Librarian, RMIT Library

ALTERNATIVE TERMS	PLURALS / ALTERNATIVE ENDINGS
greywater, domestic wastewater, household water	stadium, stadiums, stadia
ALTERNATIVE SPELLING	ACRONYMS / ABBREVIATIONS
greywater, graywater, grey water, gray water	FRC, fiber reinforced concrete

- Define the relationships between your keywords with the Boolean operators **AND**, **OR** and **NOT**. Library databases and most web search engines use Boolean operators.

OR finds records that contain any of the terms e.g. greywater **OR** domestic wastewater.

It broadens your search, increasing the number of references retrieved.

AND finds records that contain both terms e.g. greywater **AND** biofiltration.

It narrows your search, reducing the number of references retrieved.

NOT finds records with the first term, but not the second. E.g. greywater, **NOT** blackwater.

Use with care; it is easy to exclude relevant references where aspects of both words are considered or compared.

- Be prepared to try different combinations of terms.
- After your first search of each database or search engine, scan the resulting references for additional or alternative terms to incorporate in your search strategy.

Search library databases and Internet search engines

Library databases

- Almost all can be used from off-campus.
- Often more scholarly than Internet resources, better quality controlled through peer review process, indexing is more consistent.
- Tiny compared to Internet search engines, require more structured searching.
- Many databases are not full-text, although it may be possible to link to the full-text provided as part of another library database via the Library's **Find it** service.
- Access library databases, e-journals and e-books through **Search it** www.rmit.edu.au/library/searchit (see below)

Google Scholar www.scholar.google.com

- Coverage – strong bias towards life sciences/medical sciences.
- Still in test (beta) mode, some of database seems to be static i.e. not updated.
- Some free full-text
- To access full-text already paid for by RMIT Library, you need to be authenticated, so access Google Scholar via the Library's **Search it** interface (see below).

Google and other general search engines

- Use advanced search features for flexibility.
- To reduce large results, limit by date, language or part of the document searched.
- Users need to evaluate all references.
- Shortcomings – they do not usually index commercial databases and some databases of free specialised materials.

Locate and obtain the full text of references not held in full-text at RMIT

- Check *Coolcat* to locate books, etc. held by other Victorian university libraries.
- Obtain a reciprocal borrowing (CAVAL) card from an RMIT library Loans Desk and borrow books, etc. directly from other Victorian university libraries.
- Request items from other libraries through RMIT Library's Document Delivery Services.

SEARCH IT

To find articles on a topic you need to search library databases.

The Library's gateway to databases, e-journals and e-books is called **Search it**.

To access Search it:

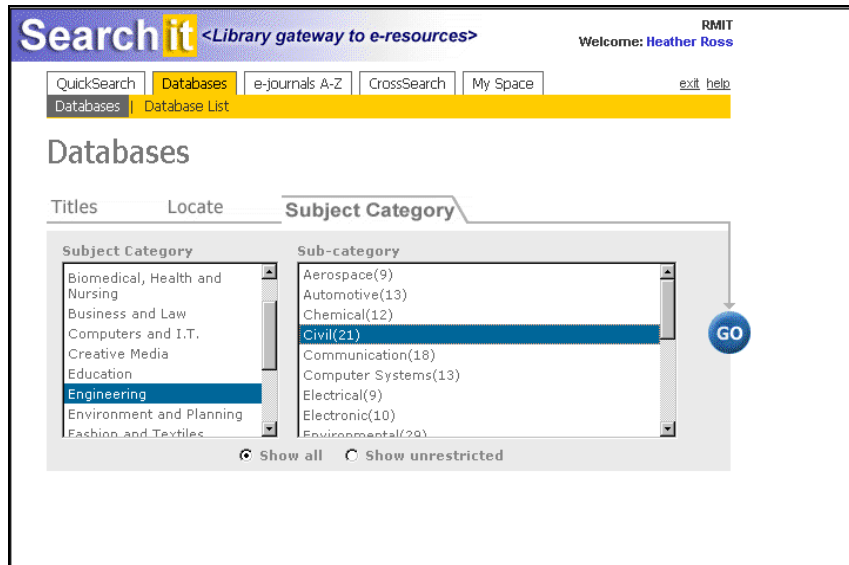
1. Start at the RMIT Library homepage and select Databases, e-journals and e-books to go to the **Search it** access screen.
2. Select Databases to find databases by title or subject category.
3. At the login screen enter your NDS username and password, then click Login to open the main Databases menu screen.

To search for databases by title:

1. Refer to the printed Library guides or the online subject guides to help you choose relevant databases.
2. Under Databases A-Z type the database name into the search box, click GO.
3. From the Results list click on the title link to open the database and begin your search.

To search for databases by broad subject category:

1. Under Databases click on the Subject Category tab.
2. Scroll down the (left-hand) Subject Category list to Engineering.
3. In the (right-hand) Sub-category list select Civil Engineering, then click GO to see a list of databases.
4. To open a database and begin your search click on the database title.



FIND IT

Why do you see a **Find it** button in some databases as well as in the RMIT Library catalogue?

A number of databases include the full-text of journal articles, while others give a reference to the article – author name/s, article title, journal title, vol. number, issue number, page numbers, publication date and an abstract or summary, but not the article itself.

If you can't see a direct link to the full-text, but you can see a **Find it** button, click on the button to open a menu containing a link to another database containing the journal, or other steps you can take to find the full-text.

26. [A Geotechnical Solution to Reduce Acid Mine Drainage Generation at Recreio Mine](#)
Correa, KCR; Costa, JFCL; Koppe, JC, *International Journal of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Environment* [Int. J. Surf. Mining Reclam. Environ.]. Vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 113-122. Jun 2003.
Coal mining is frequently associated with **acid mine drainage** (AMD) generated by **tailings** and waste dumps containing sulphide minerals. A practical and economical alternative to minimise AMD generation is to avoid the contact ...
[View Record](#) | [Full-Text Linking](#) | [Find it](#)

27. [Odiel River, acid mine drainage and current characterisation by means of univariate analysis](#)
Sainz, A; Grande, JA; Torre, MLS, *Environment International* [Environ. Int.]. Vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 51-59. Apr 2003.
... processes: a natural one of temporal patterns, and accelerated process derived from the extractive activity southwestern Spain; it flows to the south and into the ...
[View Record](#) | [Full-Text Linking](#) | [Find it](#)

28. [A description of how metal pollution occurs in the Odiel River \(Spain\) through the application of cluster analysis](#)
Grande, JA; Borrego, J; Morales, JA; De la Torre, ML, *Pollut. Bull.*. Vol. 46, no. 4, pp. 475-480. Apr 2003.
... indicator. In the case described here, the combined industrial effluents and sea water plays a determining role in the chemical makeup of the water in the estuary of the Odiel River ...
[View Record](#) | [Full-Text Linking](#) | [Find it](#)

29. [Modeling acid mine drainage on a watershed scale](#)
Herr, JW; Chen, CW; Goldstein, RA; Herd, R; Brown, R, *Water Resources Association* [J. Am. Water Resour. Assoc.]. Vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 289-300. Apr 2003.
The Cheat River of West Virginia is impaired by **acid mine drainage** (AMD) and its river segments were placed on the 303(d) list, which requires the maximum daily load (TMDL) to meet the water quality ...
[View Record](#) | [Full-Text Linking](#) | [Find it](#)

Find it service @ RMIT University Library - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: http://131.170.6.53:9003/sfx_local?sid=CSA:aqualine-set-c&p

Find it RMIT University Library

Title: Odiel River, acid mine drainage and current characterisation by means of univariate analysis

Source: Environment international [0160-4120] Sainz vol: 29 iss: 1 pg: 51

Full text available on [ScienceDirect](#)
year: [] volume: 29 issue: 1 start page: 51

Full text available on [Elsevier SD Freedom Collection](#)

Click on this link to display full text

If the Library does not have the journal electronically but has a subscription to the journal in print, the **Find it** menu will provide a link to the library catalogue. Search the catalogue for the **title of the journal**, not for the article title.