

Legal Research Strategy - Sample Topic

Why develop a search strategy?

By developing a search strategy you will:

- Improve your results when searching the catalogue, databases and the Internet
- Save time by planning your search and keeping a record of search terms

Step 1. Write down your topic

eg. "Discuss the legal issues of native title with particular reference to native title rights and interests. Refer to relevant legislation such as the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) and relevant case law such as the Yorta Yorta case."

Step 2. Identify your search terms (keywords & phrases)

eg. native title - native title rights and interests - Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) - Yorta

Step 3. Consider any alternative keywords or phrases that could be used.

These may be:

- a) related terms / plurals eg. **land rights**
- b) spelling variations
- c) broader terms in case you get only a few results
- d) narrower terms in case you get too many results

Step 4. Develop your search strategy

- a) **Write** each keyword in a concept box
- b) **Combine** keywords with the Boolean Operators AND & OR
- c) **Truncate** terms. Truncation symbols vary from database to database.

NB: Some databases combine keywords using proximity operators such as w/n. E.g. trade w/5 act
 These databases include LexisNexis AU & Lexis.com. Check Help menus for other operators and connectors.

Concept		Concept		Concept
"native title" OR "land rights"	AND	interest*	AND	Yorta

Step 5. Select appropriate resource(s) to search. This usually requires searching one or more databases but can require you to search hard copy resources as well.

Legislation (Primary)	Cases (Primary)	Secondary: Commentary
From this link: http://uow.libguides.com/law Select: <i>Legislation</i> (Provides direct access to a number of resources)	From this link: http://uow.libguides.com/law Select: <i>Cases</i> (Provides direct access to a number of resources)	. textbooks (see Library Catalogue) . journal articles e.g. AGIS Plus Text, Lexis From this link: http://uow.libguides.com/law Select: <i>Journals & Databases</i> . subject specific services e.g. LexisNexis AU, Legal Online, CCH Online

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OR	AND	OR	AND	OR

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