

Journal articles

What are journals and journal articles?

- Law journals are very important scholarly sources of legal information.
- They are published periodically - that is, every month, 3 months, 6 months, etc.
 - individual parts are known as **issues**
 - these individual issues are then compiled, or bound, into **volumes** (usually for each year)
- They contain individual articles, which may be debates, summaries, arguments, case studies, or case summaries.
- Articles provide an in-depth analysis of the law, how it works, and how it can be improved.
- They are generally written by experts in their field.

What are the different types of law journals?

- Generalist - e.g. Australian Law Journal, Flinders Law Journal
- Subject oriented - e.g. Torts Law Journal
- Practitioner - e.g. Australian Bar Review, Law Society Bulletin

Why should I use journal articles?

Generalist and subject oriented journals are useful to:

- gain an in-depth analysis and understanding of the law, how it works, and how it could be improved - this is extremely useful information when researching for essays that require you to analyse or critically discuss a legal issue
- learn about primary sources of law that regulate an area
- find summaries of cases, which can be very useful when trying to understand a complex, or long judgment
- find references to further articles, book chapters, research reports, etc. on your topic

Practitioner journals are useful because:

- they provide succinct overview of new developments in law and legal practice
- as such, they are great to get a quick, broad understanding of a legal issue and the primary sources of law involved

How do I search for journal articles?

- The best way to search for journal articles on a topic is to use a **database**
- Databases allow you to search for interesting articles from a large number of journals
- Some are **full-text** databases - these allow you to read the article straight away
- Others provide a **brief description** of articles, along with a citation of where you can find it
 - you'll often see a FindIt@Flinders link alongside the article details, which will generally link you to the full-text to read
 - or, use the citation details to search FindIt@Flinders to locate the article (see below: 'I know the journal article I want')

Which database should I use?

This depends on the information you are looking for.

- If you want information about legal issues or the law in Australia - use AGIS
- If you want information about legal issues or principles that are common to many countries - you can use a combination of AGIS, Google Scholar, Legal Trac, or the other databases listed under 'International law journal databases' in the Law Subject Guide list.

I already have the details of the article I want to read - how do I find it?

If you have the citation (or publication) details of a journal article you want to read, simply search FindIt@Flinders for either:

- the **title of the journal** - this will tell you if the Library has access to
 - an online version - you'll see a 'View Online' link which will take you to the journal to read
 - a print copy - write down the location number to find the journal in the Library
- the **title of the article** - you may find a quick link to an online version of the article

Please be aware that **FindIt@Flinders does not index many law journal articles.**

- This means that FindIt@Flinders will not link you to the article online, even though it is actually available online
- If you search for the article title and have no luck, try searching for the journal title - chances are, you'll find a link to the online version

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