Source . **U**nderstand . **R**esearch . **E**valuate.

Internet Searching Skills :Summary

The Internet has become the first stop for most people in their quest for information.

Deconstructing a URL helps to understand and evaluate the source of information

Keywords represent the central concepts in your search. An easy way to identify keywords is to look for the **5 Ps**:

- ❖ **Period (when)**
- ❖ **Place (where)**
- ❖ **Process (how)**
- ❖ **Product (what)**
- ❖ **People (who)**

Links to online resources:

Archives Online   http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline

Infopedia   http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/

HistorySG   http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/history

NewspaperSG   http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/

OneSearch   http://search.nlb.gov.sg/

PictureSG   http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/pictures

Domain Extensions

Websites – Domain Extensions

.com ➡	Commercial	.mil ➡	Military
.edu ➡	Education	.net ➡	Network
.gov ➡	Government	.org ➡	Organisation
.int ➡	International		

Source . **U**nderstand . **R**esearch . **E**valuate.

Evaluating websites:

Unlike print materials, some content you find on the Internet may not have been verified or edited for correctness. As a result, not everything you find on the Internet is authentic or accurate. You can evaluate a website using the five criteria of **Authority**, **Accuracy**, **Currency**, **Objectivity** and **Coverage**.

CRITERIA	FOCUS ON	QUESTIONS TO ASK
Authority	Author ❖ Publisher ❖ Contact addresses ❖ Type of website	• Is the author's identity indicated clearly? • Are the author's qualifications and credentials stated? • Has contact information, such as a phone number or a physical address, been provided? An email address is not enough.
Accuracy	❖ Facts presented ❖ Writing style ❖ Citations and References ❖ Bibliography	• Is the information free of obvious factual errors? • Is the information free of grammatical, spelling and typographical errors? These kinds of errors not only indicate a lack of quality control, but also a likelihood of inaccuracies in information. • If statistical data is shown using charts or graphs, are they clearly labelled and easy to read? • Are citations and references written in a consistent and correct format? For example, if a reference is made to a study or statistical data is used, is the source mentioned? • Is a bibliography or reference list provided at the end of the article?
Currency	❖ Date of publishing ❖ Updates and revisions ❖ Currency of links	• Are there indications relating to date and timelines? • Is there a copyright © indicator? • Are there any other indications that the material is kept current, such as updated links to related sites? • If data is presented in graphs or charts, is it clearly stated when the data was gathered?
Objectivity	❖ Purpose of the document ❖ Opinions versus data ❖ Objectives met by the contents	• Is the information provided meant for public knowledge? • Is the information free of advertising pitch? • For product marketing websites especially those endorsed by famous persons, are you able to differentiate facts from opinions? • Are biases, limitations and scope of research clearly stated and acknowledged?
Coverage	❖ Clarity of content ❖ Balance between textual and graphical information ❖ Supporting links ❖ Sources of information	• Are you able to identify the main themes and messages based on the information published? • Are the viewpoints clearly presented, with well-supported arguments? • Is there a balance between textual and graphical information? • If there are links, do they have any form of explanation or annotation (rather than merely a listing of links)?

Overview of search process
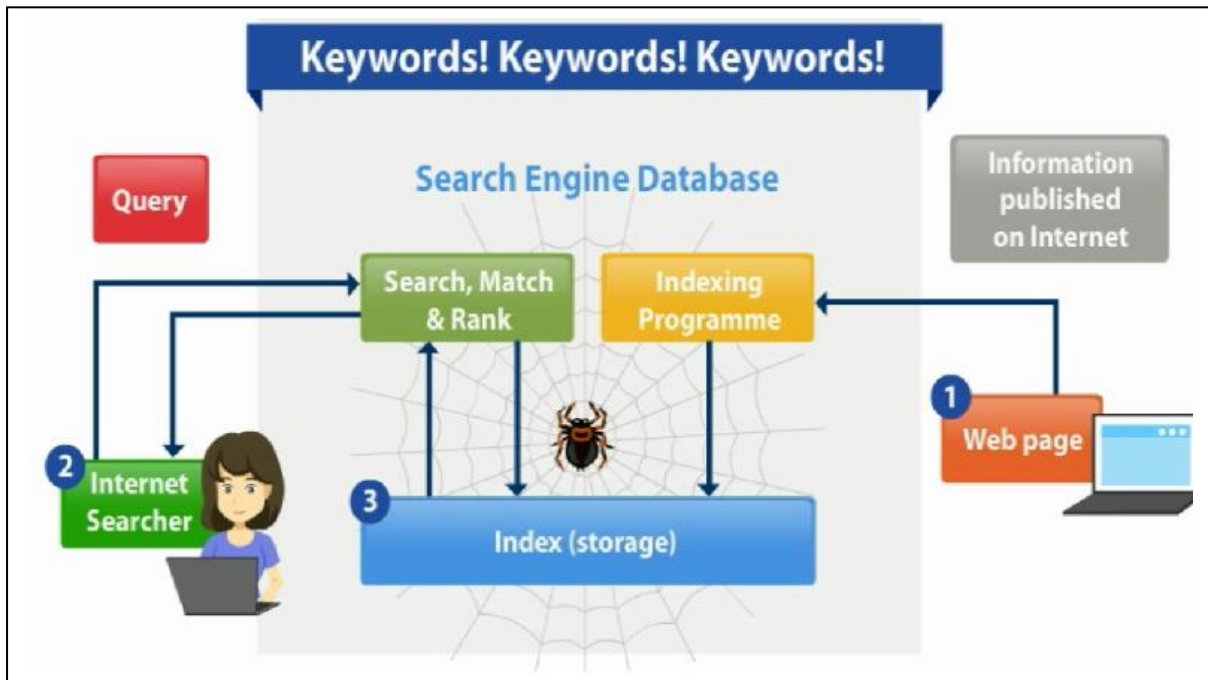
Search Strategies

A **search statement** is a combination of the keywords and search techniques, such as Boolean and pseudo-Boolean operators, phrases, field searching and file type searching.

Boolean and pseudo-Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) help to refine a search.

Boolean	Pseudo-Boolean	Explanation
AND	+	Use to combine two or more keywords. Results are fewer
OR		Use to broaden the search. Use with synonyms
NOT	-	Use to remove keywords. Results are fewer

Note: For Boolean operators NOT, you can also use the minus sign (-) just before the keyword.

Examples:
Search textbox: "Formula One" OR "car racing"
Search textbox: "Formula One" NOT sponsorship
Search textbox: "Formula One" -sponsorship

Identify Keywords

First strategy: Specific keywords

Search box: Car racing Singapore

Second Strategy: Types of Websites

Search textbox:

Car racing Singapore Infopedia
Car racing Singapore site:nlb.gov.sg historysg

Search textbox:

"Formula One" site:www.singaporegp.sg
"Formula One" site:stb.gov.sg

Third Strategy: Keywords and specific document types

Search textbox:

"Formula One" filetype:pdf
"Formula One" filetype:doc
"Formula One" filetype:ppt

Online Catalogue (National Library Board website)
http://catalogue.nlb.gov.sg/

Besides searching strategies using subject headings, you can also search for NLB's collection of print resources using keyword search functions.