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This issue highlights some reference resources and research starting places for both legal and non-legal topics. Included are some new legal reference materials, a couple of medical directories, and ways to find electronic journals and newspapers on the Web.

As we know, most legal research is usually well served by starting with directories such as *AustLII*, *Australian Parliament House*, *Weblaw* and *Findlaw*, but what do we do when researching non-legal issues? *Looksmart* is gaining a reputation of offering a well-organised directory. What do you think? Do you have another preference? Search engine preference from the feedback seems on casual analysis to show a preference for *Alta Vista* and *Google*. Do you agree? Do you have another preference?

- AustLII <http://www.austlii.edu.au>
- Australian Parliament House Subject Guides <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/resourcguides.htm>
- Findlaw <http://www.findlaw.com>
- Looksmart <http://www.looksmart.com/>

- Alta Vista <http://www.altavista.com/>
- Google <http://www.google.com/>

Other research 'favourites' would be of interest to many people so please email them to the Column Coordinator with your comments.

### TOP PICKS

#### *Legal sites*

- *LexisONE* Lexis Publishing now provides a free online legal resource aimed at individual attorneys and small firms. Free access to (US) case law, (US) free forms and Legal Internet Guide will prove invaluable for the non-US legal practitioner interested in US materials. Case law coverage includes US State Supreme and Federal Circuit cases from 1 January 1996 and all Supreme Court cases from 1790. Registration is required to access case law material and is free at present.  
<http://www.lexisone.com/>
- *Law Portal* Access to non-subject specific legal information in Australia. The site is well organised and easy to move through. An alternative approach to AustLII's directories  
[http://www.lawportal.com.au/full\\_screen.asp](http://www.lawportal.com.au/full_screen.asp)

### ***Legal Reference***

*Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law* © 1996 on Findlaw.

<http://dictionary.findlaw.com/>

Pac-Info's *Search Systems* is a collection of US and Canadian Public databases. Links are included to legal collections and people as well as more general material such as Who's Who.

<http://www.pac-info.com> (US)

<http://www.pac-info.com/locations/canada.shtml>  
(Canada)

### ***Non-legal Reference Materials***

For those working in medical negligence and other medico-legal areas these provide a basic free reference collection:

*MEDLINEplus* from the National Library of Medicine (USA) hosts medical reference sources including dictionaries and encyclopaedias.

<http://medlineplus.gov>

*Medterms.com* provides access via alphabetical arrangement as well as through a search option. Compiled by the authors of *Webster's New World Medical Dictionary*.

<http://www.medterms.com/>

*Your Dictionary.com* Special topic dictionaries and language dictionaries. This is a good multi-disciplinary starting point for researching outside our 'comfort zone'

<http://www.yourdictionary.com/>

*Virtual Reference Collection* from MIT. A really useful directory of Internet reference materials.

<http://libraries.mit.edu/services/virtualref.html>

### ***Electronic Journals – Law and more***

*Australian Journals Online*. The National Library of Australia's listing of journals is impressive. Access to the journals is alphabetical or by subject headings.

<http://www.nla.gov.au/oz/ausejour.html>

*Law Review Projects*. A subject index and searchable interface to Internet law journals. An invaluable adjunct to commercial abstracts and indexes.

<http://www.lawreview.org/>

*Contents Pages from Law Reviews and other Scholarly Journals*. UT Tarleton Law Library. Scanned contents pages include the latest three months only. Fills the gap between publication and arrival of the journal or index in Australia.

[http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/tallons/content\\_search.html](http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/tallons/content_search.html)

*FindArticles.com* is a partnership between *LookSmart* and the *Gale Group* to publish a selection of full text journals for libraries, businesses and information technologists. The search engine is unsophisticated but effective.

<http://www.findarticles.com/PI/index.jhtml>

## *Newspapers*

I am sure we have all been asked by our clients to find information about a news item 'I half heard on the way to work this morning – could you...?' While librarians in larger libraries can easily answer these questions by accessing large commercial databases and news feeds this is often not the case in smaller organisations. Daily news is now firmly established as 'Internet content', while historical/archival data remains the province of commercial databases.

Some of the better sites for accessing news are:

*The Editor & Publisher's Database Directory of the World's Media Online* is a directory of newspapers with links to, and information about, the particular publication. The information includes description of online newspapers, frequency, type, publishing information, content, archives, etc. From the front page there are various approaches to finding relevant newspapers with menu driven options and criteria selection.

<http://emedial1.mediainfo.com/emedial/>

*OnlineNewspapers.com* from Web Wombat. This directory has a streamlined presentation and access to newspapers without providing publication details and information.

<http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/>

*Yahoo's Daily News* includes material from Reuters, AP, CNN, etc. Archive searching is available for up to 30 days of archives, however it appears that the archives do not include most of the news feeds. The page includes links to other news sources.

<http://dailynews.yahoo.com/>

*1stHeadlines* is a bit slow to load, but the quick links are very current and easy to use. Daily headlines and links to stories. Archives are not available. Topic arrangement plus search capacity.

<http://www.1stHeadlines.com>

*ABC Australian News*. Regional and subject gateways to ABC news.

<http://www.abc.net.au>

*Reuters World News* is updated throughout the day. Free search engines are provided through alternative sites, but results using links for searching were poor.

<http://www.reuters.com/>