**Online Research Skills**

**1. Check Your Sources**

Evaluate information found in your sources on the basis of accuracy, validity, and appropriateness for needs, importance, and social and cultural context.

Do not believe everything you read online. Is the information up to date? Does the information come from a trusted source? Is the information balanced – giving more than one opinion?

**2. Ask Good Questions**

Developing and refining search queries to get better research results. Narrow your search to a specific topic to avoid getting a large result. By changing a few words the results can differ. Think of alternative search terms.

**3. Go Beyond the Surface**

Display persistence by continuing to pursue information to gain a broad perspective. Don’t stop at the first search as this may not be the most trustworthy. Create a fact tree when you are researching. For example “How many planets are in the Milky Way?” Then, on branches coming out from the tree, write facts or pieces of information that answer the question. Each fact must come from a separate, documented source. Find at least 10 sources of information to complete your fact trees.  
   
**4. Be Patient**

Persist in information searching despite challenges. Don’t give up. Talk to your peers or others you respect to get ideas of how you can move forward.

**5. Respect Ownership**

Respect intellectual property rights of creators and producers. Downloading of other people’s material e.g. music piracy is actually stealing. “How would you feel if someone downloaded your music, movie, or book without paying for it?” How it would feel to not get paid for other types of work, such as working in an office or a school. How is piracy similar? How is it different?  
   
**6. Use Your Networks**

Use social networks and information tools to gather and share information. It is good for collecting data e.g. Your family’s countries of origin. However be careful about this information and make sure you don’t plagiarise. Quite often it is better to go to the original source than quote from sites such as Wikipedi.