Information Source	Best For	Characteristics	Watch out for
Book **(in academic context)**	• Build up foundational knowledge • Gain an overview of the topic • Gain understanding of concepts, theories, frameworks, etc.	• Usually provides broad overview of the topic • Information usually systematically organized • Comprehensive information about a subject field/topic • Background and historical information • Consolidation of works over a period of time • New editions released based on need to update	• Authoritativeness • Dated information • May require background knowledge • Biased opinion • Self-published books
Scholarly journals	• Updates on topical areas • Findings & research outcomes from academic/research institutions. • Information on a narrow research topic • May contain cutting edge/novel findings in the field • more current than books	• Indepth and focused discussion in a narrow research domain • Written by experts in the field • Can range from historical to very recent • Intended for scholars, researchers, professionals and university students • Can ascertain rankings	• Require subject & research domain knowledge • Dated information also possible • Research outcome may not be yet widely accepted/verified by the academic community
Review papers (a special type of scholarly journal article)	• Overviews, historical developments, background info • Summary or overview in a narrowly defined research area • Compilation of studies & research findings from different research groups on a topic/subject	• Narrow research domain (in most cases) • Written by experts • Contains an historical overview of the research area, describing 'who has done what and made what contribution'	• Dated information • Require subject background knowledge • May not cover certain important studies in the area (e.g. an old review paper will not include recent studies)

Magazines	• Current information • Shorter & easy-to-understand articles • Photographs and illustrations	• Usually quite recent and up-to-date • Can include opinions and analysis • Usually intended for a general audience or non-professionals	• Authors usually not experts • Articles may lack depth • Sources not always cited • Editorial bias
Newspaper	If you are looking for: • Daily information • Localized information and events • Latest happenings and events	• May include quotes from experts, government officials, witnesses, etc. • May contain opinions • Intended for general audience	• Authors usually not experts • Articles may lack depth
Patents	If you are: • Looking for details & specifications of a patented invention • Trying to patent your own invention and searching for similar products • Looking for a potential product to market or commercialize	• Can be a novel product, process, composition of matter, method of improvement, machine or system. • Include details & specifications of the invention	• May require professional background knowledge to understand the patent
Government websites	If you are looking for: • Statistics or reports on an national level • Policies and announcements by a government agency	• May contain historical and recent data • Statistics usually considered as authoritative • May contain surveys & research conducted by government agencies	• Government bias?
Industrial organizations / Associations	If you are looking for: • Statistics or reports in the context of a particular industry • Overview and analysis of an industry (sometimes localized)	• May contain historical and recent data • Statistics usually considered as authoritative	

Websites	• You may gain a quick understanding / learn background knowledge of a certain topic from website like Wikipedia • You may use search engines to access to a large pool of information on a topic	• Almost unlimited amount of information available • Quality varies tremendously from authoritative and trusted information to subjective or even manipulated opinions	• No guarantee on credibility and accuracy • Information may be biased • Require careful evaluation before using the information: check author credentials, source, intention, publication media, etc.