

Free science journals

The worldwide web is a wonderful source of information, but the sheer amount of content can be overwhelming. Where do you start looking for science news? In each issue of *Science in School*, we will suggest useful websites for particular purposes.

Are you looking for a good article to use in a lesson? Or do you just want to browse a science journal or two for inspiration? Here is a selection of free online science journals and some useful tools for tracking down the books, articles and journals you need.

Some free online journals

Blue Sci: www.bluesci.org

Blue Sci is a free online science magazine produced by students of the University of Cambridge, UK.

CBE-Life Sciences Education: www.lifescied.org

CBE-Life Sciences Education is a free, online, peer-reviewed journal of science education, published by the American Society for Cell Biology.

Frontiers: <http://192.171.198.135/frontiers/>

Frontiers is a free online journal of articles on research projects in astronomy and particle physics funded by the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council, UK.

Nature: www.nature.com

Some of the contents of the wide range of *Nature* journals, especially special articles and selected features from the *Nature Reviews* journals (e.g. *Nature Reviews Microbiology* and *Nature Reviews Genetics*) are free online.

New Journal of Physics: www.iop.org/EJ/journal/NJP

The *New Journal of Physics* is an open-access, online research journal covering the whole of physics, published by the Institute of Physics, UK and the Deutsche Physikalische Gesellschaft, Germany.

New Scientist: www.newscientist.com

Although not all content in this popular science magazine is free to non-subscribers, many of *New Scientist's* latest articles are.

PLOS Biology: www.plosbiology.org

PLoS Biology is a peer-reviewed, open-access journal published by the Public Library of Science (PLOS), a non-profit organisation committed to making scientific and medical literature a public resource.

Plus magazine: <http://plus.maths.org>

Plus is a free online magazine which aims to introduce readers to the beauty and applications of mathematics.

Sci-Journal: www.sci-journal.org

Sci-Journal is a free online journal which publishes the work of young scientists. The journal is based at the University of Southampton, UK.

Seed Magazine: www.seedmagazine.com

Seed Magazine is popular science magazine; the freely available website includes articles from the magazine as well as other regularly updated content.

The Scientist: www.the-scientist.com

Much of the recent content of *The Scientist*, which follows developments in the life sciences, is free online.

Search tools

Google Scholar: <http://scholar.google.com>

Using the normal Google search engine, you can retrieve all sorts of information – some reliable, some less so. Google Scholar allows you to have more confidence in your results by searching the scholarly literature across many disciplines and sources: peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles.

PubMed: www.pubmed.org

PubMed is used by researchers in the life sciences to scan the scientific literature, and allows you to search by topic, author, or journal. The results list is linked to the article abstracts; if the complete article is freely available or if you have a subscription to the journal it is published in, you can link to the article.

The amount of information can be dismaying, so try narrowing the search by clicking on the 'Limits' tab to enter a more specific search. For an introduction to a topic, select 'Reviews' from the 'Type of Article' list; you then only retrieve articles that give an overview of your selected topic. You can also limit the search to articles that are freely available (choose 'Links to free full text').

Digital Object Identifier (DOI): www.doi.org

Many published articles have a DOI, an online identifier that remains unchanged even if, for example, the journal moves to another publisher. The DOI website has a search box into which you can enter the DOI (e.g. 10.1073/pnas.0500398102); this takes you straight to the page for that article. If the journal is not free and you do not have a subscription, you will normally see the abstract.

The DOI website offers some other useful tools to install, such as a DOI button. Whenever you come across a DOI in an online text, you can highlight it and click on the button to jump straight to the article or abstract.

International Standard Book Number (ISBN):

<http://isbntools.com> or www.amazon.com

The ISBN is used internationally to identify a particular edition of a book. The ISBN (e.g. 0340831499) can provide a very useful shortcut to find other details of the book, such as the title or authors.

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