



State Library
of Victoria

HOW TO USE THE **Library**

Information. Ideas. Inspiration. For everyone.

About the State Library

The State Library is Victoria's major reference and research library. Its collection includes over two million books on a wide range of subjects, as well as magazines, newspapers and many other items.

The Library's mission is to collect and preserve material that records and reflects the cultural and social history of Victoria and the Victorian people over the last 150 years.

- Anyone can use the Library free of charge (but fees apply for services such as copying).
- It is not a lending library, so you must use material inside the Library building.
- Most of the collection is kept in storage, so you may need to ask for items to be retrieved.
- You must register as a Library user before requesting books from storage.
- You can access the catalogue, databases and the internet on computers in the Library.
- Word-processing facilities are not available, but you can use laptop computers at powered desks.
- You must leave your bags (except for small handbags) in the locker room off the front foyer.
- Eating is not permitted in the Library. Bottled water can be brought into the main reading rooms.
- Mobile phones must be switched off or used in silent mode.

What kind of material does the Library have?

The Library holds an enormous amount of material, and not just books. There are also newspapers, magazines, journals, manuscripts, maps, pictures, objects, sound and video recordings, databases and more. If all material in the Library was laid out in a straight line, it would stretch for almost 90 kilometres!

While the Library has information available on almost every topic, from aeronautics to Zuni Indians, its key subject strengths are Australian and Victorian history and literature, the arts and genealogy.

The Library has the largest newspaper collection in Australia and extensive holdings of Victorian and Australian government publications.

Where is the material kept?

Some material is kept in the Library's reading rooms and other public areas, and some is kept in storage areas.

Reading rooms and other areas

The main reading rooms and public areas of the Library hold the following material:

- **Information Centre**
reference books (dictionaries, encyclopedias, directories, etc)
- **Redmond Barry Reading Room**
general books and magazines (almost 100,000 items)
- **Arts Reading Room**
visual arts, music and performing arts material
(including music CDs, videos and DVDs)
- **La Trobe Reading Room**
Australian history, literature, biography, travel and Aboriginal studies
- **Newspaper Reading Room**
old and new newspapers (Australian and overseas)
- **Genealogy Centre**
genealogy resources (books, journals, microfiche, CD-ROMs, etc)
- **Experimedia**
new media and digital technology, computer games and learning
- **Heritage Collections Reading Room**
rare books, manuscripts, maps and pictures (by appointment)

(See also the individual guides to each room/area, and see the *Library Map* for locations of rooms/areas.)

Computers in all the reading rooms can be used to access the internet, electronic indexes and full-text databases (to search for journal articles).

Items in storage

Because the Library's collection is so large, it is not possible to make every item available in the reading rooms. Less frequently used material and rare and fragile items are kept in special storage areas in the Library, or at the offsite store. Library staff are able to retrieve this material for you.

How do I find what I'm after?

There are a number of ways to find information in the Library. You can browse the open shelves, search the catalogue or ask staff for assistance at any time. Or you can use the telephone, online and email information services, without even visiting the Library.

Browsing

If you are not looking for anything in particular or only have a vague idea of what you want, you can browse the shelves in the reading rooms to find items such as books, magazines and newspapers.

Searching the catalogue and databases

Most of the Library's collection is listed in the online catalogue, which can be accessed on computers throughout the Library or from home. You can use the catalogue to search for items and information by keywords, subject, title or author, and to find where items are located and how to access them. (See the *How to Use the Catalogue* guide.) To search for and read journal articles, you can access electronic indexes and full-text databases on Library computers, or from home if you live in Victoria.

Staff assistance

If you need help with your information search, Library staff can help you. Just ask for assistance at any of the information desks.

Telephone, online and email assistance

You can call the Library's telephone inquiry service on (03) 8664 7002.

AskNow! is an online information service you can access from the Library's website, to get live, interactive research assistance from librarians Australia-wide. Librarians will answer questions requiring brief factual information, or help you devise an appropriate search strategy. (Depending on the time you try the service, you may be chatting to a librarian in any of the states or territories.)

Another option is to email your question via the Ask-a-Librarian email reference service, also found on the Library's website at slv.vic.gov.au/services/information/ask.html

How do I access the material?

Finding items on shelves

If the catalogue indicates that your item is available in a particular reading room, you can find it on the reading room shelves yourself.

Requesting items using the catalogue

In most instances you will need to send an electronic request through the catalogue to have an item retrieved from storage. Retrievals normally take up to 30 minutes and requests must be made by 5.30pm each day for same-day delivery. Items are delivered to the shelves marked 'Collect books here' in the Information Centre and the La Trobe Reading Room. If an item is being retrieved from the offsite store, 24 hours' notice is needed. If you have not finished with an item when you leave the Library, it can be held on reserve for you for up to one week.

Registering as a Library user

Before you can request items through the catalogue or access databases from home, you need to register as a Library user and get a Library card. Registration is free and can be done at the Book Desk in the Information Centre. You can start the registration process online through the Library's website.

Requesting heritage and original material

Heritage Collections material such as manuscripts, maps, pictures and rare books are usually viewed under supervision in the Heritage Collections Reading Room. Materials are delivered to the reading room at 10am, 1pm and 4pm, on weekdays. All items must be requested at least an hour in advance of these retrieval times. For weekend deliveries, requests must be made by 3pm on Friday.

Some manuscripts and Pictures Collection items, including architectural drawings, may need to be brought in from the offsite store, so you should give at least 24 hours' notice for their retrieval.

To request Heritage Collections material when you are in the Library:

- for rare books, children's literature or maps, go to an information desk in one of the reading rooms

- for manuscripts or pictures, go to the desk in the La Trobe Reading Room

To request Heritage Collections material from outside the Library, telephone the La Trobe Reading Room or the Heritage Collections Reading Room. All telephone numbers are listed on the back page of this booklet.

Viewing visual material online

You can also view digital copies of many heritage items through the Library's online Pictures and Australian Manuscripts catalogues. The Pictures Catalogue contains over 215,000 images, including photographs, prints and drawings, with full catalogue entries.

What other services and facilities are available?

Copying and printing

Combined copier-printers are located in reading rooms throughout the Library. The Copy Centre contains a colour copier-printer and an overhead photocopier for copying fragile items. You will need a Library card for copying and printing. You can add credit to the card using cash or EFTPOS.

Personal copying equipment such as digital cameras can also be used to copy collection material, except in the Keith Murdoch Gallery. Ask staff for information about guidelines and conditions, or go to slv.vic.gov.au/about/information/policies/personal_copying/.

Internet and email

Full internet access, including web-based email, is available from most computers in the Library. Access is free of charge, and bookings are not required. There are a number of PCs in each reading room with a 15-minute time limit during busy periods.

Children's computers, with content filtering, are available in the Information Centre. Children under the age of 12 must be supervised by a parent or guardian.

To listen to music online, please provide your own headphones.

Wireless access

Free wireless broadband web access is available in the Library. This service is offered in conjunction with RMIT University and is available to all registered Library users and RMIT students with compatible laptops or PDA devices. You can also access your Optus Wireless Connect account at service provider rates in various parts of the Library. For more information, go to slv.vic.gov.au/about/using/wireless.

Many of the desks have power for laptop computers. Please make sure that your power cord cannot trip other users.

Services for business

The Library offers a range of services for businesses and professionals. The Conference Centre manages venue hire for corporate functions and conferences.

Disability services and facilities

The Library is accessible for wheelchair users. The Disability Room on the ground floor (off the Information Centre) is equipped with technology to convert text to speech or braille, and to allow internet access for the visually impaired. No appointment is necessary. Text magnifying equipment is available in the Library, and staff at the information desks can help with using the catalogue and finding Library materials. For more information, contact the Disability Services Librarian: voice telephone 8664 7005; TTY 9639 7006; fax 9639 2301; email info@slv.vic.gov.au; or go to slv.vic.gov.au/services/disability/.

How can I find out more about the Library?

Free sessions introducing the Library's collections and resources are held regularly. Printed guides to the reading rooms and public spaces, a Library Map, *How to Use the Catalogue* guide and other information sheets are available. Library exhibitions and events are listed in the monthly *At the State Library* sheet. *State Library of Victoria News* is a free magazine published three times a year. The Library's website at slv.vic.gov.au has information about the Library's collections, services and events.

General opening hours

Monday–Thursday	10am–9pm	<i>book retrievals close at 5.30pm</i>
Friday–Sunday	10am–6pm	
Public holidays	10am–6pm	<i>closed Good Friday & Christmas Day</i>

Exhibitions opening hours

Open daily	10am–5pm	<i>closed Good Friday & Christmas Day</i>
------------	----------	---

Inquiries

General	8664 7000
Ask-a-Librarian	8664 7002
Book Desk	8664 7375
Advance Orders	8664 7002
Conference Centre	8664 7291
Disability Services	8664 7005
TTY telephone typewriter	9639 7006

Reading rooms and collections

Arts Reading Room	8664 7006
Genealogy Centre	8664 7008
Newspaper Reading Room	8664 7011
Experimedia	8664 7285
La Trobe Reading Room	8664 7009
Heritage Collections	8664 7219 <i>by appointment</i>
Reading Room	

State Library of Victoria
328 Swanston Street
Melbourne 3000
slv.vic.gov.au



Authorised by the Victorian Government,
328 Swanston Street, Melbourne
Printed by CPP,
47 Market Street, South Melbourne