



Scanning text

You can use the scanning technique to look up a phone number, read through the small ads in a newspaper, or for browsing television schedules, timetables, lists, catalogues or webpages for information. For these tasks you **don't need to read or understand every word**.

Scanning is also useful when you don't have time to read every word. This could be when you're studying or looking for specific information from a book or article and need to find it quickly.

Tips: better scanning

- Don't try to read every word. Instead let your eyes move quickly across the page until you find what you're looking for.
- Use clues on the page, such as headings and titles, to help you.
- In a dictionary or phone book, use the header words to help you scan. You can find these in bold type at the top of each page.
- If you're reading for study, start by thinking up or writing down some questions that you want to answer. Doing this can focus your mind and help you find the facts or information that you need more easily.
- Many texts list things in alphabetical order from A to Z. These include everyday materials, such as the phone book or indexes to books and catalogues.
- There are many ways to practise scanning skills. Try looking up a favourite recipe in the index of a cookbook, search for a plumber in your local Yellow Pages or scan webpages on the internet to find specific information.