Tips: Desk research

What is it used for?

Gathering information from diverse sources.

Important starting points for desk research are:

- Evolvement of the own Data Literacy, especially the ability of critical research, to assess the viability of data sources and results originating from them.
- A growing collection of already used databases and libraries and also of contacts of experts of different fields, who are ready to share / comment on information.
- A continuously evolving strategy to curate and store found information (including links to the sources) in a clearly arranged way.
    - A strategy to share data with others.

A helpful first step is a mixture of a mind map and of guiding questions, related to the topic. These words and questions can be used in different combinations for search engines, databases / archives (of research institutions also non-university, ministries,...), the online service of your university library, journals,...

An example for a possible search path:

- Using a search engine
- Finding and checking a data source
- Using the search function of the data source
- Finding and checking one item
- Using the name of the author(s) and/or key words of the item within the search function of the data source and after that in the search engine
    - Contacting one author and asking for help / advice
- Using a search engine with different key words / questions