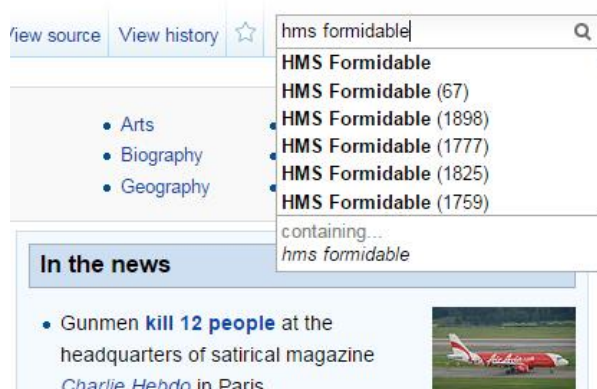
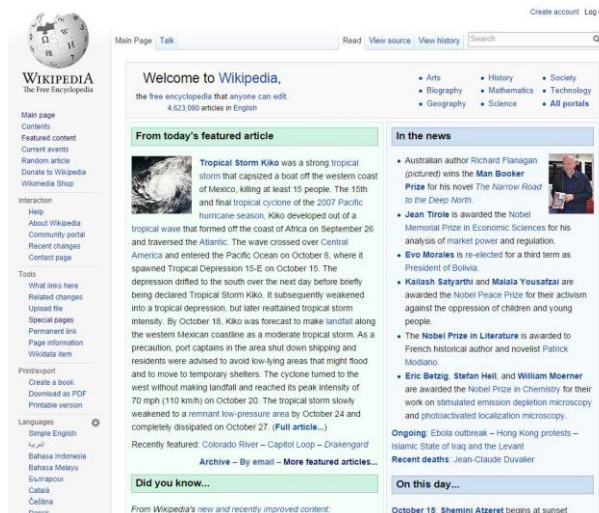


## Wikipedia

[www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)

Wikipedia hosts more than 4.5 million articles in English that anyone can contribute to. It can, therefore, lack consistency in terms of quality. However, Wikipedia has a very active and diligent military history group, that ensure the large number of articles related to warfare are in a good state.

The benefit of Wikipedia articles over the other websites included in these research guides is that they tend to be written in slightly more readable prose.

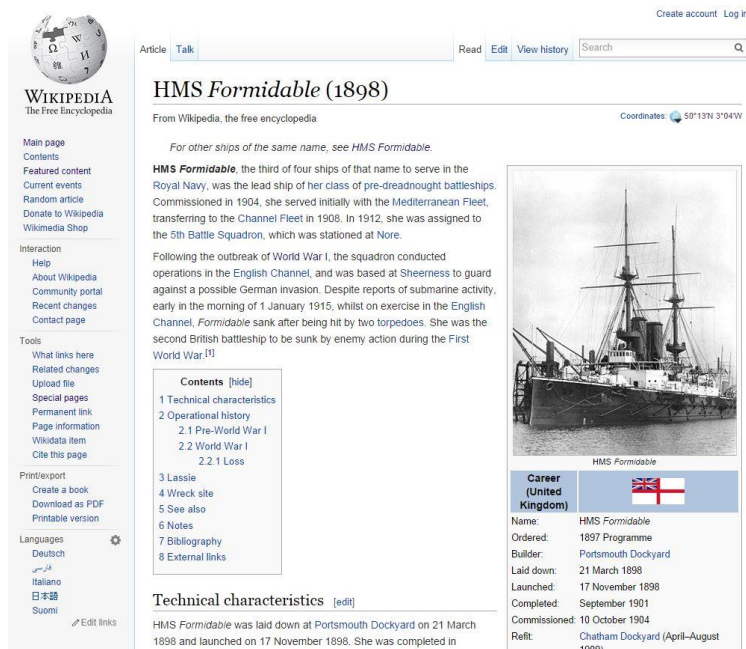
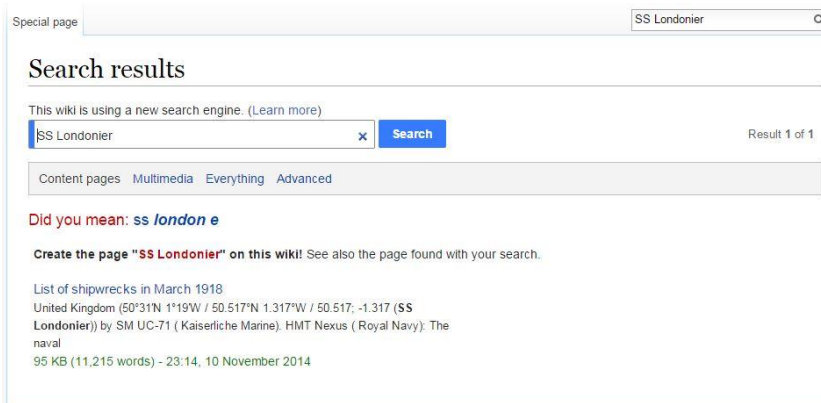


The easiest way to search for a wreck is to use the searchbox in the top right corner. This will usually create a drop down list of potential articles. As with PastScape, there may be dozens of like-named articles ranging from countries to interesting people. There is typically an article for any warship that has ever existed but unfortunately there are fewer for merchant ships unless they have a particularly significant history.

As warships tend to have their names re-used multiple times (consider *HMS Ark Royal*), there is often a disambiguation page for ship articles which tends to list all the known ships of a certain name and provide links to specific articles on each one. A blue link means that there is an article on that subject. If the link is red, it means an article has not yet been created.



If, when typing your search term into the search box, no suggested articles appear in the drop down box, hit return anyway and Wikipedia will search for any mention of the ship's name; it's worth looking at these in case there is anything of interest.



Once you find an article, especially one on ships, you will usually encounter a number of common elements. There tends to be an introduction, followed by contents, then the main body of the article broken into several sections. There is often an 'infobox' on the right hand side. A bibliography and references may be listed at the bottom.

However, assessing the reliability of the article can often be tricky. Keep an eye out for footnotes at the end of sentences or paragraphs, which should relate to sources listed below. Ideally these should be reliable and publically available sources (books, academic works, websites etc.). Facts related in the article, particularly statistics or quite drastic claims, should ideally have a

reliable source to back them up. Otherwise it can be hard to tell if a single editor with little knowledge on the subject has blindly asserted something with little or no real basis.

Wikipedia also has a mechanism for allowing peer review by in-house experts. Take a look in the top right hand corner of the page; if there is a small green icon depicting a plus sign in a circle (⊕), this means the article has been reviewed by another editor and classed as 'good'. If there is a small gold star (★), this means the article is a featured article and has had a thorough review by several other editors. This sort of article can be considered very reliable.

One of the useful features of Wikipedia is its links to other websites. At the bottom, the references, bibliography and external links sections may point you towards other useful websites that may contain even more detailed information. In fact, given that Wikipedia articles are supposed to be based on reliable sources, it is often best to think of the site as a starting ground that can point you to other sources of information, rather than a source in its own right.