

Library + Google for Better Research

Why: Google and Library Resources together can get you more information

How: Use this guide

The MLC Library has many materials available through its book catalog and article databases. Some of these resources, however, can be found by starting with Google tools. Be a smart researcher—use these tips to help you use both Google and our library’s resources to get the information you need.

Google (Google Web Search, Google Scholar, Google Books)	Library Catalog and Databases
Enter a “natural language” search or question	Enter keywords—nouns are best
Think of words or phrases the author might have used (e.g. different terms for ethnic groups over time)	Think of standardized terms used in this particular field of study
Searches full text of pages and documents	Searches key fields (title, author, publisher, abstract)
Start with specific terms or phrases, then broaden as necessary	Start with broader terms, then narrow as necessary
Try some synonyms of your original search terms	Try some synonyms of your original search terms
Search full text in Google Scholar, then click through to our library’s link for full text of the article or ebook	Use library databases for the most current information
Google Scholar may find free downloadable information not found in a library database search	Library databases may contain information not searched by Google Scholar
Google Books has full text of many pre-1923 magazines and journals	Library databases may have full text of newer magazines, journals, and newspapers, or actual copies on the shelf
Google Books may find a useful book, but only show a small portion of it	Enter the title in the library catalog, MNLINK, or Worldcat to borrow the complete from the library or through ILL
Full text of many government documents is searched, but not shown fully in Google Books	Enter the title of the document in HathiTrust to locate the full text of the document

No matter how you find your information, it is important to determine the credibility of your sources.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Is the author credible? Do they have credentials that make them an expert? What institution or outlet are they writing for?
- Is the article recent (or does it matter, as in the case of historical records)?
- Does the publication or author hold a particular bias?
- Is the article scholarly and/or peer-reviewed?
- Is the information on a credible site (.edu, .gov, a well-known journalism site, etc.) or is it on a personal page or blog?
- Is the writing professional and accurate or sloppy?

For more information about using Google with library resources, read *Harnessing the Power of Google: What Every Researcher Should Know* by Christopher C. Brown, Libraries Unlimited, 2017.

Please ask library staff if you have any questions about using the MLC Library.