



Quick Start Guide to Library Services for Distance Learners

To begin your library skills journey, you'll need to know where to start – The WKU Library has a vast amount of online resources for WKU students at <http://www.wku.edu/library>, and the Library homepage makes searching easy! You can even request loan items, no matter where you are, and renew your books online!

This tutorial will focus on resources accessible at a distance. At the end of the tutorial you will have knowledge of the following:

- Resources available for distance learners through WKU Libraries
- How to identify and access these resources
- How to search databases, journals and the internet in the most effective way
- Index of useful links on writing, style guides, research tips and strategies, and tutorials

Familiarizing Yourself with Resources at WKU Libraries

The top three resources for finding scholarly articles and books are easily accessible through the [WKU Library homepage](#). They are:

- **One Search:** a one-stop search to find research materials, such as books, journal articles, and digital objects. One-Search is located at the front and center on the WKU Library homepage at www.wku.edu/library. This search box gives users results across nearly all library collections with a relevant-ranked list similar to a Google search.
- **Web Accessible Databases:** There are two types of databases, general databases and subject specific databases.

General databases are interdisciplinary and will work for finding just a few articles on a topic or beginning research on a more in-depth project. *Academic Search Premier* is the general database at WKU.

Subject specific databases are better for finding articles from journals in a specific discipline. You will turn to these when you have exhausted your findings in Academic Search Premier, or when you're doing an in-depth project in a specific discipline.

You may find it helpful to use [Research Guides and Subject Guides](#), developed by WKU Librarians, as your compass to find the best database(s) for your project. You can also access a complete list of WKU databases at <http://libguides.wku.edu/databases>.

- Academic Search Premier (EBSCOhost): A large multi-subject database ... you will find a little bit of everything here!
- NEWSSTAND (ProQuest): WKU's core newspaper database includes the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post
- JSTOR: Full text archives of many journals – great for history and humanities
- PsycInfo (EBSCOhost): The top database for psychological research and behavioral sciences

- ERIC (EBSCOhost): Your go-to for education research
- ABI/Inform Global (ProQuest): Great for business articles
- **TopCat:** the online catalog used to view the location of the library's print materials including books, print journals and reserve materials. Once you have entered your search terms, Topcat will provide you with a listing of records. You may click on these records to view the following information: Library of Congress Call Number, Title, Author, item location, and a physical description of the item. Use this information to determine if the item is what you need for your projects and research. You may print or email item records for ready reference while searching for the item.

Accessing Databases

Library databases are accessible wherever there is an internet connection available! The first thing to remember when trying to access any WKU Library resource online from an off campus location is that you must login. At the time of your search you will have an opportunity to select "Off Campus Login." Once you make the selection, you will be taken to a login screen where you will use your NetID and password to login and search library databases, ejournals, ebooks, and more!

There are a few very specialized databases that do not allow direct access. However, as a WKU student, you can access these databases as well with a password for that specific database. Call our Reference Desk at (270) 745-6125, email web.reference@wku.edu, or request live chat at the [online reference desk](#). You will be provided a password for that specific database. When you call or email, please provide your full name and your WKU ID.

Once you have logged in, you will have access to a listing of databases provided by the WKU Library. These databases can be viewed [alphabetically](#) or [by subject](#). Among the many databases provided are Ebscohost, JSTOR, LexisNexis, FirstSearch, WilsonWeb and many others. You will retrieve mostly journal articles from WKU Libraries Web Accessible Databases and most of these will be full text.

Using the Kentucky Virtual Library Gateway

The Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL) provides access to digital collections of historic newspapers, images, maps, books, collections of historical letters, and oral histories, as well as a gateway to several databases, including EBSCOhost, Academic Search Premier, CINAHL, NoveList, WorldCat, ProQuest, and Grolier. KYVL provides easy access to research materials with one login.

To use the KYVL gateway, go to their website at <http://www.kyvl.org/> and log-in using the following information

User ID: knv0000001 **Password:** taunts66

If you have any questions, please contact the Reference Desk at 270-745-6125 or web.reference@wku.edu.

Finding Websites

Google Scholar is one of the best search tools for beginning researchers. Web coverage is comprehensive and results are usually highly relevant. If you haven't done it before, try a Google Scholar - go to www.google.com and select "more" from the menu along the top, or click here to go directly to [Google Scholar!](#)

If you'd like to learn more about search engines other than Google, read the descriptions and ratings at [Search Engine Watch](#).

Quick TIP: Whether you're looking for scholarly articles, books or websites, it's important to understand how to search strategically to narrow your results, and find the information you need! View our "Search Techniques" section, beginning on page 5, for tips on strategic searching.

Basic Research Materials

If you need fast access to basic research materials, such as biographies, statistical data, dictionaries, or maps you have easy access at <http://libguides.wku.edu/readyreference>. The WKU Library also provides access to online newspapers at <http://libguides.wku.edu/newspapers-news>.

Borrowing Materials Not Accessible Online

Distance Learners may request books, reserved materials and other print materials that are not readily available online by submitting a request to Library Services. Please note: Turnaround time will normally take 24-48 hours, with mail items taking up to 5 business days, depending on your location. Requests are processed in the order they are received, so please plan accordingly. Whenever possible, we will email materials to reduce turnaround time.

Requests may be submitted in three ways:

- Submit the Online Form at http://www.wku.edu/library/dlps/extended_campus/item_request_form.php
- Call 1-800-922-9585
- Email extcamp.library@wku.edu

Please include the following information, so we can process your request:

All requests require:

- Name
- Student ID Number
- Campus Location (Web, Glasgow, Elizabethtown, Ft. Knox or Owensboro)
- Daytime Phone Number
- Course Title or Number
- Instructor's Name.

Additional information is required, based on type of material requested:

Article Requests:

- Author
- Title
- Volume/Issue Number
- Page Numbers
- Date of Journal

Book Requests:

- Author
- Title
- Call Number

Narrowing Your Search

Sometimes narrowing your search can be the most difficult part of the research process. We have access to millions of results, right at our fingertips. While this is a wonderful thing, it can also make online research more challenging than ever before!

This section will address both *where* and *how* to search to get the most effective results.

Research Guides

If you do not have a “go-to”, one of the best places to start is with the correct Research Guide. WKU Research Guides are organized by academic departments, and were created by Subject Specialist. Research Guides introduce you to relevant search terms for your specific topic, applicable databases, listings of print resources, and faculty recommendations. They act as a compass, and will point you in the right direction, allowing you to narrow your search to the correct location! Research Guides are arranged alphabetically by subject, making it easy to find the one that meets your needs: <http://libguides.wku.edu>.

If you prefer to go directly to the Research Guide for your college, you may do so by clicking the appropriate link below. Please keep in mind that Research Guides arranged by college are starting points. Many disciplines cross college lines. The subject areas below are listed only as examples of what may fall under specific colleges, and is not meant to be all inclusive:

- **College of Arts and Letters:** <http://libguides.wku.edu/cat.php?cid=47879>
Applicable to online degrees in or related to: Criminology; History; Social Responsibility and Sustainable Communities; Gender and Women’s Studies; Sociology; Interdisciplinary Studies; Aging Studies
- **College of Business:** <http://libguides.wku.edu/cat.php?cid=36350>
Applicable to online degrees in or related to: Business; Management; Technology Management; Administration; Training; Leadership
- **College of Education and Behavioral Sciences:** <http://libguides.wku.edu/cat.php?cid=36353>
Applicable to online degrees in or related to: Adult Education; Elementary, Middle Grades, Secondary, Early Childhood, and Special Education; Literacy; Gifted and Talented; Mathematics Specialist; Autism Spectrum Disorders; Career Counseling; International Student Services
- **College of Health and Human Services:** <http://libguides.wku.edu/cat.php?cid=36359>
Applicable to online degrees in or related to: Healthcare Administration; Communication Disorders; Kinesiology; Athletic Administration; Athletic Training; Sports Media and Branding; Worksite Health Promotion; Nonprofit Administration; Family and Consumer Sciences; Child Studies; Family Studies; Family Home Visiting; Dental Hygiene; Occupational Health & Safety
- **College of Science and Engineering:** <http://libguides.wku.edu/cat.php?cid=47880>
Applicable to online degrees in or related to: Engineering Technology Management; Mathematics; Biology; Lean Six Sigma
- **Library Science, Instructional Design & Information Literacy:** <http://libguides.wku.edu/cat.php?cid=36363>
Applicable to online degrees in or related to: Instructional Design; Library Media Education; Instructional Technology

Learning to Use Library Resources

Faculty and staff at the WKU Library have put together some helpful tips and strategies to help you find what you need, so you can save time and energy! We have listed links below to some of the items students find most useful:

Research Tutorials

Research Basics: <http://libguides.wku.edu/content.php?pid=227807&sid=2178845>

EBSCOhost Tutorial: <http://www.wku.edu/library/dlps/documents/guides/ebSCOhost.pdf>

One Search Box Tutorial: <http://www.wku.edu/library/dlps/documents/guides/onesearchbox.pdf>

TopCat Tutorial: <http://www.wku.edu/library/dlps/documents/guides/topcat.pdf>

Style Guides, Manuals and Citations: <http://libguides.wku.edu/stylewrite>

Databases: <http://libguides.wku.edu/databases>

Additional Tutorials: <http://libguides.wku.edu/tutorials>

Search Techniques

The subject, keyword, author and title search strategies below are helpful in determining what is available through the WKU Library. Using these strategies will aid you in finding the best possible materials for your projects and assignments.

- **Subject Search**

- *Enter the subject or topic, omitting all punctuation

- *Truncation on the right is implied (Just to clarify, the term Truncate or Truncation means: to shorten or cut off)

- **Keyword Search**

- *Enter words and/or phrases

- *Use quotes to search phrases: ex. "world wide web"

- *Use + to mark essential terms: +explorer

- *Use ? To truncate: browser?

- **Author Search**

- *Enter the author's last name and first name

- **Title Search**

- *Enter the title of a book, journal and/or recording

Boolean Searches

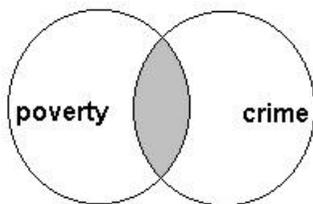
Boolean Searches are considered the best searching strategy. Having the option to search using **AND**, **OR** and **NOT** will aid in locating relevant materials to your search topics. For example, if you are trying to find information on Cancer but you do not want information on Breast Cancer, you can apply the Boolean Search phrase 'Cancer NOT Breast.'

- Boolean Search
 - *Use AND, OR, NOT to combine search terms
 - *Use opening and closing parentheses to group search terms: (world wide web)
 - *Use quotes to search phrases: "world wide web"
 - *Use ? To truncate: browser?

Below are examples of some Boolean Searches:

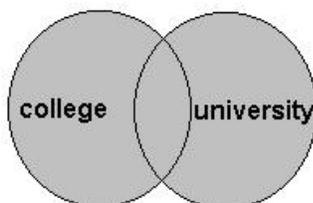
Using the **AND** operator will retrieve records in which both Crime and Poverty are present. This is illustrated by the shaded area overlapping the two circles representing all the records that contain both the word 'poverty' and the word 'crime.' The shaded area represents the records relevant to both poverty and crime.

- Using the Boolean Search with **AND** can look like the image below.
- The image shows that search results will reflect both poverty **AND** crime



The **OR** operator is most commonly used to search for synonymous terms or concepts and will produce more search results. This searching strategy will retrieve all the unique records containing one of the terms, the other term, or both.

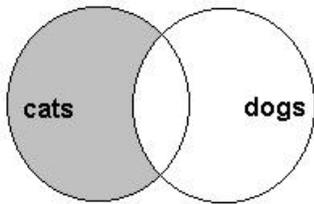
- Using the Boolean Search with **OR** can look like the image below.
- The image shows that search results will reflect all records relating to College and University.



The **NOT** search strategy is used to avoid related information to the desired search term. This is illustrated by the shaded area with the word cats representing all the records containing the word 'cats.' No records are retrieved in which the word 'dogs' appears, even if the word 'cats' appears there too. Note: Be careful using the **NOT** operator

because the term you do want may be present in an important way in documents that also contain the word you wish to avoid.

- Using the Boolean Search with **NOT** can look like the image below.
- The image shows that search results will reflect only records relating to cats and not dogs.



Additional Search Tutorials

More tutorials, specific to database, are located at <http://libguides.wku.edu/content.php?pid=227807&sid=4111236> – here you will find tutorials for EBSCOhost, Proquest, ERIC, SsyncINFO, LexisNexis, CINAHL, MeSH, MEDLINE, and more!

Understanding Sources

Characteristics of Popular Magazines and Scholarly Journal

	Popular Journal Article	Scholarly Journal Article
Purpose:	Report current events Entertain Summarize research of general interest	Report results of research
Audience:	General population	Scholars, researchers and students in a particular field of study
Authors:	Journalists Often unnamed	Researchers Always named
Characteristics:	Short Pictures, advertisements No citations (sources) Everyday language Not peer reviewed*	Long (5 pages +) Describes research methodologies Citations Technical or specialized language Peer reviewed*

*Peer reviewed articles are those that have been reviewed and accepted for publication in a journal by a selected panel of recognized experts in the field of study covered by that journal.