

Tips for Searching the Catalog and Databases

Catalog: Use it to find materials located in the K-State Libraries

- Note: The “Hale Library Help” IM service is located below the search box.
- This information is local. K-State Libraries either owns or pays to access these materials.
- Variety of formats: books, magazine/journal titles, CDs, DVDs, government documents, and much more.
- Variety of locations: Hale Library, sub-locations within Hale Library (such as various Reference and Current Periodicals locations, Love Science, Government Documents, and Special Collections), Weigel Library (Architecture), Fiedler Engineering Library, the Math/Physics Library, Veterinary Medicine Library and the Annex (storage facility).
- Regarding periodicals (journals, magazines, newspapers): the Catalog can tell you whether or not we subscribe to a particular title, where it is located, and how much of it we have (ex. 1920 – present) ... but it cannot tell you what is inside (to search for articles, use the Databases).
- The “Simple Search” is useful when you already know what you’re looking for (ex. want to browse books by Hunter S. Thompson, need a copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, looking for the 1970’s copies of *Vogue* ...)
- The “Guided Search” allows for greater control when searching by providing more search boxes and allowing you to use “Boolean Operators” (AND & OR ... see below) ... (ex. “Health care AND college students”, “Pablo Picasso AND painting”, “Interior Design AND house OR home”).
- When you find a title that suits your needs, click on it and utilize the Subject Headings to find more resources. Subject Headings are “controlled vocabulary” (ex. “Soft drink” used for pop, soda, soda pop, and Coke).
- Remember to write down the full call number and use the Hale Library Stacks Guide.
- When you find the perfect book, look to see if there are similar titles shelved near it.

Databases: Use them to find articles, book reviews, dissertations, etc.

- Either select a letter to see an alphabetical listing or select a subject.
- Databases are global in scope and content.
- Their content is created and maintained by various companies and organizations.
- Look for the "Guided Search" or "Advanced Search" options so that you have more search boxes. This will allow greater control over your searches and allow you to use Boolean Operators (AND & OR ... see below).
- Look for "Subject Headings", "Subjects", or “Descriptors” to help narrow down your search (works like the Subject Headings in the catalog – controlled vocabulary).
- No full text available? Click on the PowerCat symbol or the "GET IT" button. This will search for your item in other databases and in our catalog for you to see if it's available either online or in print locally. If not, there is a link to the InterLibrary loan request form.

Searching Tips for the Catalog and the Databases:

- Look for a Guided Search or Advanced Search option (so that you can combine search terms).
- Use Boolean Operators = “AND” & “OR”:
 - AND = both concepts must be present, helps limit the search
 - OR = great for synonyms, helps broaden the search, and stay within the subject area
 - Ex. design AND (office setting OR office space)
- Experiment with different search terms. Remember that there is more than one way to express the same concept. Also, different databases may recognize different terms.
- When you're in a database, look for the database's “Help” section.