



Searching for Technical Information Prescott Library, La Tech University

Choosing a Topic

To get an idea about current issues or problems in a particular field of study, look in relevant periodicals (magazines and scholarly journals). The simplest way to locate these is to search the Tech Library Catalog. Type in a broad subject area such as marketing, education, electrical engineering, biomedicine, etc. and then add the words “and periodicals” to your search. This should result in a list of periodical titles—which then are accessible online by clicking on the URL or are available in paper by copying the call number provided and looking for that item on the 3rd floor Periodical shelves.

Additionally, the library subscribes to *CQ Researcher*, an excellent database that provides full text electronic reports on important current events and controversial topics. You can find this in the *A-Z List* of resources.

Conducting your Research

A good research paper should include material from a variety of sources: books, journals, newspapers, government information, reputable websites. They may also include material you may not have considered before such as statistics, patents, and technical reports. Below is a systematic way for conducting research along with links from the library webpage for finding appropriate resources.

1. First, think about the **type** of material you'd like to use: books, journal/newspaper articles, government information, patents, statistics, technical standards, websites.
2. Next, decide which of the following links are the best places to locate **that type** of information from the library's website.

Books: Library Catalog; Electronic Book Collections: Credo Reference, EBSCO NetLib, Knovel, Gale Virtual Reference Library)

Journal articles: Articles or click on Subject List, then choose your desired subject area (arranged by College); Google Scholar

Newspaper articles: Click on “More” then Newspapers, then either click on Lexis-Nexis Academic or choose a particular newspaper listed

Government Info: Gov Info then either search the Library Catalog or click on Federal websites or Louisiana websites.

Patents: Gov Information > Federal websites > USPTO; Scopus; Google Patents

Statistics: Statistical Abstract, Subject List > Reference > Facts & Statistics;

Also try adding the phrase “and statistics” to your search in the different indexes and in the Tech Library catalog

Technical Standards: ASTM, IEEE, a few others are listed in the Tech catalog

Websites: Scirus.com; Google Scholar

3. Most of the databases contain full text journal articles. Look for the html or pdf links or the phrase “full text.” If you do not see this, click on the words **LinkSource**, the symbol **LS**, or the phrase *Check LinkSource for more information* because the full text may be available elsewhere. The Tech Library may even have a paper copy of the journal. Look for a link to Prescott Library or the Louisiana Tech Catalog which would provide a call number. All paper copies are located on the 3rd floor of the library. The phrase “**Request this item through ILLiad**” means that this article is only available by ordering it from another library using our free InterLibrary Loan service.
4. e-Books: EBSCO (**NetLibrary**) books are also listed in the Prescott Library catalog. You can print the contents of these books. **Knovel** is a database of technical reference books, mostly for engineering and the life sciences. **Credo Reference** and the **Gale Virtual Reference Library** provide the electronic version of reference books covering all subject areas.
5. A new search engine called **EBSCO Discovery** is now available. It is similar to doing a Google search, but it will only retrieve material found in the Tech catalog or through the EBSCO periodical databases.
6. When accessing resources from off campus, you will need to enter your Username from your Tech Email Address (JDOE@latech.edu) and your Email account password. On your laptop access the library using the La Tech open air portal. The library is also available from your mobile phone or iPad.
7. If Prescott Library does not own the book, journal article, or technical report you need, you may request it through Interlibrary Loan (ILLiad). Also, you can click on **Catalogs** and check other **Louisiana Academic Libraries**.

If you have questions or problems, click on **Contact Us** at the top of the webpage or email kevinc@latech.edu.

Works Cited Citation Format

When printing or emailing citations from the EBSCOhost indexes, you may now choose a particular bibliographic style format for the Works Cited page of your research paper. Simply click on the button **Citation Format** and choose the style you want (APA, MLA, etc) from the drop down box.

Prescott Library also has copies of several style manuals such as the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association** and the **MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers**. Just ask for these at the Information Desk on the main floor. The information can also be found by doing a Google search. The **OWL at Purdue** (Purdue’s online writing lab) is a very helpful website.