

Know How Research Skills: Finding Books & E-Books Transcript

Introduction

Slide 1: Welcome to the Know How Research Skills tutorial on finding library books and electronic books.

There are two short quizzes that you must successfully complete to get credit for this tutorial. When you are done, you will be able to email your professor and print out a certificate.

Your work will not be saved so you must complete this all at once.

Slide 2: This tutorial will show you why and when you should include books in your research and how to efficiently locate them in the ACC libraries.

Slide 3: We have over 130,000 print books and over 30,000 electronic books, commonly called e-books, at the ACC libraries.

Slide 4: The e-books have the advantage of being accessible 24 hours a day from any computer with internet access.

Slide 5: You can even access them with a smartphone.

Slide 6: There is a good chance you have at some point gone to a library and found a book. Books are usually the first thing that comes into people's minds when they think of libraries.

But you may not have thought too much about whether or not you should use a book or if it is the right source for your project

Slide 7: Something else like an article from a periodical, such as a magazine or journal might be a more appropriate choice.

Slide 8: And you may not have thought about using just part of a book, without reading the whole thing. This can be a quick and useful thing to do.

Slide 9: And the odds are pretty good that you haven't used an e-book before.

Part I

Slide 1: Part 1: Books & E-books. When is it most likely that books will be a useful source of information for your needs?

First, think about what you need. Is your project long and in-depth or just something short?

Slide 2: Books tend to go into more depth on topics. Obviously they're longer than most other forms of information. The authors are almost always experts in the topic. Also, books usually give extensive histories of a topic and can offer multiple perspectives on an issue.

So you can see why books would be useful for an in-depth research project or long paper.

Slide 3: But if you just need something like a quick update on a topic for a short paper, a book may be overkill.

Slide 4: An article from a magazine or journal might be all that you need. And as we said earlier, don't forget about using a small portion within a book, rather than the whole thing.

Slide 5: For example, here's a book called *The Laws That Shaped America: Fifteen Acts of Congress and their Lasting Impact*. It's 545 pages and chocked full of information, but if all you need is information on the Homestead Act for a short paper, you might want to focus on that one chapter.

Slide 6: Use the table of contents at the front of the book.

Slide 7: And the index at the back of the book to locate this sort of specific information. And for electronic books, you can even search the entire contents for specific keywords.

Slide 8: Another thing to consider is how important up-to-date information is for your topic.

Books tend to be more useful for history, art, literature and big ongoing social issues, the sorts of areas that have been around a long time and where change happens more slowly.

Slide 9: In science and technology and current social issues, where change is constant, journals and websites tend to be more up to date than books. But even in these fields, books serve as valuable places to store big ideas and information that doesn't change.

Slide 10: For example, even though Biology and genetics are rapidly changing, people still read Charles Darwin.

Slide 11: Another feature of books that may not have occurred to you is how easy they are to use. It doesn't take a user manual or access to electricity for people to jump right into using a book.

Slide 12: Books have been around such a long time that they are an important part of human history. There are still millions of books that are only available in print form, although this is steadily decreasing.

Part II

Slide 1: Part 11: Finding books in the library. So we have seen when and why books are useful, and you know that the library has lots of them, you may have seen them on the shelves. But how do you actually find what the library has and how do you get your hands on them?

Slide 2: The key to finding books at all the ACC libraries is the catalog. This will show you what we own, which campuses have it, where it is on the shelves, and if it is currently available.

Slide 3: On the very front of the library's webpage is a box labeled "Quickly Find Books & Videos." You can do a keyword search here. Keywords are words or phrases that best describe the information you want.

This kind of search is very flexible. It will find your search words in the title, the author's name, the subjects, and other places.

But sometimes you want to be a little more picky with your searches and narrow down your results.

Slide 4: You have a lot more options if you click on the “Books & Videos” link on the ACC Library home page, and then on “ACC Library Catalog.”

This will take you into the library’s online catalog. Here you can select specific ways to search, including author and title.

But keyword searching is still the most flexible way to use the catalog, and it’s most useful if you don’t have a specific book in mind but just need to find books or videos on a topic.

Slide 5: So let’s try a keyword search for “battery life.”

The drawback to keyword searches is you might get numerous irrelevant results that happen to include your keywords. For example, a keyword search for “battery life” leads to useful books but also ones like *College Majors and Careers: a resource guide for effective life planning* and *Mavericks, Miracles, and Medicine: the pioneers who risked their lives to bring medicine into the modern age*.

Slide 6: Why does this happen? Because computers are stupid. All they do is find records in our catalog that have those two words—battery and life—somewhere in the title, author name, subject headings, or other places. They don’t know you really want information about how long batteries last.

Slide 7: So picking the keywords you search the catalog with can have a big effect on the quality of your results. In general, use specific words. If they don’t get any results, then try using more general words.

Don’t do searches with extra words that don’t relate directly with your topic, like “Why do some batteries last longer?”

Slide 8: Usually searching for single, common words isn’t a good idea. The word “management” gets almost 7000 results.

This can result in many books that you don’t need ending up in your hit list.

Slide 9: But what if we get a little more specific? A search for “management theory” gets less than 200 results, but that’s still a lot to go through.

So let’s see some other ways to narrow your results. Unless your search words only found one single result that matched, you will see a list of titles to choose from.

The library catalog lists the books at all the ACC libraries. But maybe you are in a hurry and can’t wait two days to have a book sent to your campus. You can change the “View Entire Collection” option to just your campus. So the results will be only those print books you can get to right away, including electronic books that you can access from home.

Slide 10: Print books will have an icon that shows two books stacked up. You may also see some videos listed too. These show a little DVD or a TV. E-books will have a little icon of a book with the letter E printed on the cover.

Slide 11: If you need newer material for your topic, near the top of the results list, you have the option to rearrange the list by date, instead of by relevance.

Slide 12: OK, you see some books listed you want. Here's how to interpret the record for a single print book. Let's take a closer look.

The title and author are shown, along with the publisher, date, and edition. Then there's the Call Number, Campus, and Availability.

The Call Number is the address for the book on the shelf. ACC libraries, like almost all colleges, uses a system called the Library of Congress classification. It's a mix of letters and numbers. The books are on the shelves alphabetically by the letters and then numerically by the numbers. Think of it like a street address. Only one book will have that exact call number. We recommend writing this down because there are likely to be lots of books with similar call numbers when you actually go to look on the shelves. And that's a good thing because you can browse in that area and find other books on the same topic.

In the campus listing, the phrase "Book Shelves" means you can go get it off the shelf and check it out. There are many other locations, such as Reserve Item, Textbooks, Media Shelves and so on. We won't go into all those here. If it's unclear where an item is, ask the library staff.

Often you will see the little notice "There are additional copies/volumes of this item." If there are more than three copies you have to click on the title to see which campuses have the other copies.

Clicking on the title also will give you more information about the book, often a lot more.

Slide 13: You might see the table of contents, which can help a lot in deciding if a book will be useful for your topic. The number of pages will be given, something students frequently care about.

If you want even more information about a particular book, you can click on the image of the cover. You won't always get the same info, but often you can see the table of contents, a summary, book reviews, and so on.

Slide 14: If you want a book from another campus, it can be sent to you. This usually takes two weekdays. If you're in the library, ask the reference librarian, who will call the other campus to make the request. If you're not in a library, click on the "Request" button. Put in your ACCeID and say which campus you want the book sent to. You can do this from any computer with internet access.

This request button also can be used if a book is checked out. When it comes back, the book will be held for you.

Slide 15: Let's go back to our results list. To get to the e-books, click on the title. We get our e-books from several vendors, so the next steps will vary a bit, but the overall process is pretty much the same.

First, click on the link under the words "Connect to." If you are on campus, you should go straight to the intro screen for the book. If you are off campus, you will have to use your ACCeID.

At the intro screen, which tells you more about the book, click on "View this e-book."

The table of contents should appear on the left side and the opening page of the book on the right. At this point you can go through page-by-page like you would a print book by clicking the "Next" button in the upper right. Or you can look over the table of contents and click on entries to go directly to that section of the book. In the lower left, there's a search box that lets you put in specific words to find in the entire text of the book. That's a real advantage e-books have over print books. The other advantage is that you can get to e-books any time, since you don't have to actually visit the library.

Slide 16: The catalog also has a link to "Other Library Catalogs." Use this to get to the catalogs for Austin Public Library, University of Texas, and several others

Slide 17: You can get a free card, called a TexShare card, that lets you check out materials from many area libraries. Just fill out a form in the library.

Slide 18: So remember, the library catalog is your best friend when you need to find books. It will tell you what the library has, which campus has it, where it is on the shelf, and whether it's currently available. But if you have any questions, don't forget to ask a librarian!