

Research Skills: Basic Steps at DCCC: Find books, online articles and internet search engines:

Reference Desk Phone Number: (610) 359-5146

STEPS TO THE ONLINE BOOK "CARD CATALOG":

1. Go to <http://library.dccc.edu>
2. Click on *search for books, videos, etc.*
3. Type your topic into the field provided or pull down the menu for alternate search strategies.
4. Write down the **call number** of the book so you can find it on the shelves.

STEPS TO THE ONLINE MAGAZINE, JOURNAL, AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES USING DATABASES:

1. Go to <http://library.dccc.edu>
2. Click on *search for articles*
3. Provide the user name and password which can be obtained from the librarians.
4. Select the appropriate database to retrieve articles on your topic.
5. Select *full text* articles to limit your search to results whereby the entire article is attached.

STEPS TO FINDING QUALITY WEB SITES USING SEARCH ENGINES:

1. If you know of a web address (also known as a URL), simply type it into the **address field** at the top of your Internet browser. Example: Typing www.ipl.org into the address field will bring you to a page called the Internet Public Library.
2. If you *do not* have a web address in your hand but you wish to "surf" the World Wide Web for information on a particular topic, you must first choose a **search engine**. Some examples are google.com AND yahoo.com

A search engine will:

- scan the web for you and retrieve web sites which contain information on your topic.
- give you a "fill in the blank", that is, a place to type in your subject.

A search engine will not:

- evaluate whether the site is appropriate for your research paper. YOU have to discern whether the site is legitimate or not. (n.b. while some search engines

purport to have experts judging the sites for accuracy, authenticity, reliability , etc., you must be the final judge.)

Some ways to check site for reliability of a web site which is to be used for research papers or debate:

Is there an author or an organization that will take responsibility for the accuracy of the information?

Does the author or organization provide contact information, preferably including a street address and telephone number in addition to an email address?

Is there a date noted as to when the site was last updated?

Are there any grammatical or spelling errors?

If the site is intended to promote a particular agenda, i.e. political or commercial; is the agenda clearly stated or is there hidden bias in the site?

Tip: Become familiar with the parts of a web address or URL. Note the ending of the address called the domain. Common domains include:

.com for commercial sites

.org for organizations

.gov for government sites

.mil for military sites

.edu for educational sites

Exercise: Go to google.com Click on [advanced search](#). Go to section called domain. Type .edu in field provided. Now go to top and type: school uniforms pros cons. Try the same search while limiting to .org sites only and then .gov sites only.