

# WHERE TO LOOK

how to choose a search tool



	DISCOVERY SEARCH	DATABASES	GOOGLE SCHOLAR	GOOGLE
<b>What's in it?</b>	All of Virginia Tech's physical collection and most electronic content: books, ebooks, videos, magazine articles, journal articles, newspaper articles, and more.	Wide variety of content types depending on database. May be dedicated to a type of content, like newspaper articles, or to a particular subject area.	Scholarly journal articles, theses, books, court opinions, and abstracts.	Anything that's available on the internet: newspapers, magazine articles, government documents, blogs, social media, organization homepages, and more.
<b>How do I access it?</b>	Via <a href="https://lib.vt.edu">lib.vt.edu</a> to be authenticated as part of the VT community.	Via <a href="https://lib.vt.edu">lib.vt.edu</a> to be authenticated as part of the VT community.	Via <a href="https://scholar.google.com">scholar.google.com</a> .	Via <a href="https://google.com">google.com</a> .
<b>What's it really good at?</b>	Finding books and ebooks, items from many disciplines, or items from a wide range of source types.  Preliminary searching when you're just getting started.	Finding items in a specific discipline or narrow scope.  Narrowing your search using filters and limiters specific to a particular database.	Finding items that are freely available in institutional repositories and other places on the web.  Finding out who has cited published items.	Finding freely-available government information, some statistics, and other information that isn't necessarily available in a book or article.  Conducting background research.
<b>Anything to watch out for?</b>	Broad scope can mean a very large number of results. Use filters or advanced search to narrow results.	Narrow scope of individual databases can mean searching multiple databases.	Can be difficult to get a manageable number of results because few search limiters are available.  Not all results from scholarly, peer-reviewed journals.	Often get a large number of results. Sometimes difficult to discern the context and thus the credibility of items found online.
<b>Is full text available?</b>	Yes. Request non-linked items through interlibrary loan.	Yes. Request non-linked items through interlibrary loan.	Maybe. Connect Scholar to VT Libraries for most access.	Maybe. Some items may be behind a paywall. Check Discovery Search for access.

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