

How to Use Collin College's Library Resources

A few things to keep in mind:

- 1) EACH key point you make in your paper needs to be backed up by outside sources. A key point that isn't proven is useless.
- 2) Generally, the more recent a source is the better. Exception: if you are writing an essay that deals with a specific point in time (Example: if you're writing a paper discussing the differences of TV ownership in the 50s versus today, you might use statistics from the 50s or cite an article from that era).
- 3) Choose sources with evidence that corresponds to the point or points you are making. Don't try to use a source just because it deals with your general subject.

Regardless of what type of source you are looking for, complete these steps FIRST.

- Go to Cougarweb (cougarweb.collin.edu)
- Sign in
- Click the Library tab

Finding Physical Sources (and e-books)

To search for books, encyclopedias, DVDs, CDs and other items that physically reside in the library, start with the Library Catalog. This is also the method you will use to find e-books.

- Look in the center box labeled "Sources for Paper and Projects"
- Find the entry field below "Library Catalog: Find Books, DVDs, and More"
- Enter in your keyword or keywords in the entry field (where it currently says "Enter Keywords Here") HINT: start off with broad keywords; if you're too specific, you may miss out on valid sources
- Click on the search button
- You will now see the results of your search in CougarCAT
- To narrow your search:
 - Look at the "Narrow your search" box to the left of the screen. Do any of the "Subjects" match your topic? Is there a specific "Type of Material" you are looking for, such as a book or DVD?
- To try a different search:
 - Type in a different keyword or different keywords into the "Keyword search for:" entry field at the top of the results screen, and click the "Go!" button
 - It's a good idea to try several searches as not all pertinent sources contain the exact same keywords
- To access a summary of an item:
 - Click on the item's title
 - At the top, right hand corner of the item's list entry a box appears with several options, the first of which is "Summary"
 - Click on "Summary"

- To check the availability and location of an item on the results lists:
 - Find the “Local Availability” label
 - If the number next to this label is anything other than zero, a **physical** copy of the item exists in the Collin College Library system
 - Click on the “Location” button located at the bottom of the item’s information
 - This will tell you which Campus library/libraries the item belongs to and at which specific campus(es) the item is available
- To access an e-book
 - There MUST be a computer icon next to the entry for an e-book to exist. If there is no computer icon, our libraries do not have a digital copy of the book.
 - Click on “Click here to access digital resource” (next to the world icon)
 - If you’re accessing this e-book from off-campus, follow the instructions on the sign-in page that pops up
 - An e-book can only be viewed by one student at a time. If someone else is looking at that particular e-book at the moment, you will not be able to access it
 - Your computer will need to be running Adobe Reader 8.0 or higher for you to view an e-book

Finding Database Resources (You’ll need to begin at the “Library” tab on CougarWeb)

To find newspaper, magazine, and scholarly journal articles, use the databases.

- Look in the center box labeled “Sources for Paper and Projects”
- Click on the “Find Articles” link
- You are now looking at an alphabetical list of ALL the databases the library has to offer
- The general information databases that will be most helpful to you are:
 - Academic Search Complete (primarily periodicals)
 - CQ Researcher (good for argument papers)
 - EBSCOhost (this consists of several databases, including Academic Search Complete)
 - Gale Virtual Reference Library
 - InfoTrac Newspapers
 - Issues and Controversies (good for argument papers)
 - JSTOR (scholarly articles, often very dense)
 - Lexis-Nexis Academic
 - Opposing Viewpoints in Context (good for argument papers)
 - Project Muse
 - Student Research Center

-The library also has many subject specific databases (medicine, science, psychology, technology, etc.) that may or may not be of use to you depending on your topic. The subject guide can be found at the top of the database list page under “Databases by Subject and Format.”

- When you have found the database you would like to search, click on it:
 - If you are using an off campus computer, follow the directions on the sign-in screen
- Find the search entry field and enter in your keyword(s)—remember to start off with broad terms
- Limit your results according to the type of item you are looking for (full text, scholarly journal, and publishing year are some of the options offered by some of the databases)
- Click the “Search” or “Go” button
- Look through results (you may have to look through several pages worth)
- NOTE:
 - Most databases offer a bibliographic citation for each item. This is not always correctly formatted. It is often better to use Knightcite.

Finding Statistics (You’ll need to begin at the “Library” tab on CougarWeb)

To find statistics, use **ONLY** the websites suggested in the Argumentative Essay Research Guide.

- Look in the center box labeled “Sources for Paper and Projects”
- Click on the “Research Guides” Link
- Click on the “English: Argumentative Essay” link
- Scroll down to the “Statistics Online” section in the right hand column on the page
- Figure out which option or options best suit what you’re looking for. Some of these sites have information on them, others offer further links.
- Make sure the statistics you choose are as recent as possible (you should avoid the “State-by-State Data [2000]” link as the information is now several years old) unless you need statistics from a specific time period
- When you create the bibliographic citation for any statistics you use from one of these sites, you will need to include the full URL

KnightCite (You’ll need to begin at the “Library tab on CougarWeb”)

To create a citation for a works cited page, you can use KnightCite.

- Look in the left-side box labeled “Services”
- Find the heading “Writing a Paper”
- Click on “KnightCite”
- In the left-hand column, choose your resource type (book, magazine, journal, etc.)
- Fill in as many fields as you have information for
- If you need help, click on “(Click for Help)” at the top of the page
- NOTE: If you are citing a source from the internet (which in this case could only mean a statistics site), you **MUST** include the website’s URL as part of your citation