Welcome to the Mundt Library at Dakota State University. We are here to help you with all of your information needs whether it be research for a class or personal interest in a topic. If you have any questions, feel free to ask a librarian.

In this video you will be introduced to some of the various library resources including the library catalog and periodical index databases. You will learn how the resources differ and be able to determine when you would use each.

The learning objectives that will be addressed include: understanding the difference between the library catalog and periodical index databases, being able to determine when to use the library catalog for an information need, being able to determine when to use a periodical index database for an information need, and being able to recognize that there are different periodical index databases which are used for different purposes.

You are about to conduct some research. Before you simply head to your favorite search engine, let’s look at some of the resources offered by the library to see how they work and what they have to offer you.

Books
Let’s start with all of the books that you see when you enter the library. Books at the Mundt Library are split into two broad categories, those that you can check out and those that you cannot check out. The majority of the books at the library can be checked out. They are in the Main Collection and include fiction and nonfiction. These books cover every discipline and will give you an in-depth looks at various topics. The books that cannot be checked out are in the Reference Collection. They include encyclopedias, manuals, handbooks, etc. These are books that you can use to look up a quick fact or get background information on a topic. Since they are used often, for short periods of time, they cannot be checked out so that everyone has access to them.

It is nice to have access to books full of information. It is even nicer to find the best one for your research. While wondering up and down the stacks may be good exercise, it is not the best way to find a book. To find a book, you will need to use the Library Catalog. The Catalog gives you a search box where you can type in a subject, keyword, title, or author. You can also use an advanced search to limit by a collection or format. For example, you could just search within the Reference Collection or just search for videos.

The catalog not only searches books. It searches all of the material owned by the library including: CDs, DVDs, maps, thesis, e-books, and periodicals. Periodicals include newspapers, magazines, and journals. Note, however, that the catalog can only tell you if we have a periodical. It does not search the articles inside the periodicals. For example you can search the Catalog for a magazine title such as Newsweek to
see whether we have it and which issues we have, but you will not be able to find the individual articles within Newsweek.

So far we have discussed physical items in the library, except for e-books. If you are a distance student, we will mail these items to you. The library, however, is more than a physical space, and it offers more than the items on the shelves. It provides many powerful, online research databases that allow you to carry out research at any time of the day from anywhere in the world where you have internet access. Remember when you search the library catalog for periodicals, you are only searching for the title of the periodical. In order to search the contents of the periodicals, you will have to use a research database designed to find articles in periodicals.

**Articles**

A database is an electronic resource that is designed to help you find information by providing citations. In addition to the citations, the database could also include an abstract or summary of the article and/or the full text of the article.

When you are on the library’s website you will see a long list of databases. You may be wondering why there are so many. Wouldn’t one or two be enough? The answer is that the content in each of those databases is different. Some are for a general audience. Some are for a specialized audience. Some contain popular sources while some contain scholarly sources. Some cover a broad range of topics while some cover only one topic. Some contain only periodicals. Some contain conference proceedings, transcripts, or other sources. Some contain only the newest material. Some contain historic material. Plus, one database may have Journal X from 1994-2002. Another database offers Journal X from 1999-the present. While there is an overlap, in order to give you access to the full range of Journal X from 1994-the present, the library subscribes to both databases.

There are multiple reasons why using a database is a good choice for your research. They are available online 24/7. Plus, the materials in the databases have been selected for inclusion which provides one level of quality control. The materials have also gone through an editorial process before being published which provides another level of quality control. This means that you have access to a higher concentration of quality material than you can find on the open web. Databases also offer easy to use search features which allow you to find multiple sources on your topic.

Your professor may have told you that you could not use internet sources for your research. Now you are saying, “I can’t use the databases, because they are online. I need paper sources.” Actually, the sources found using the databases are NOT internet sources even though you found them using a computer. They are articles from physical periodicals that have been collected in an electronic format. It is easy to do your research using the library catalog and periodical index databases.

When you are off campus, you may be asked to login when you try to enter one of the databases. This is because the library pays a subscription for the students, faculty, and staff of DSU to have access to the material. The login is to verify that you are connected with the University. If you do not know your library id, contact the library and it will be provided to you.
**Practice**

For practice consider the following situation. You are writing a paper on the topic of poison dart frogs. Decide if you would use the Library Catalog or a Periodical Index Database for the following sources you hope to use for your research. Background information on poison dart frogs. Recent research on the medical uses of the frogs’ poison. An audio recording of the frog’s croaking. An in-depth look at the habitat of poison dart frogs in South America.

With your new understanding of the resources offered by the library for your research, you will be able to leap right in. If you continue to have questions about which resource you should use or how to use it, feel free to ask a librarian. They are very familiar with the various databases.

This video provided a look at research resources offered by the Mundt Library. The resources discussed included the Library Catalog and Periodical Index Databases. The content in each was discussed along with situations in which each would be used.

**Answers to Quiz Questions**

- What would you use to find background information on poison dart frogs? Library Catalog or Periodical Index Database?
  - The Library Catalog would give you access to encyclopedias which contain background information on topics.
- What would you use to find recent research on the medical uses of the frogs’ poison? Library Catalog or Periodical Index Database?
  - The Periodical Index Databases would give you access to medical journals.
- What would you use to find an audio recording of the frog’s croaking? Library Catalog or Periodical Index Database?
  - The Library Catalog may provide you with a CD of animal sounds.
- What would you use to find an in-depth look at the habitat of poison dart frogs in South America? Library Catalog or Periodical Index Database?
  - Books found in the Library Catalog provide an in-depth look at topics.