Research Assistant Training: The Open Web
Outline

1. Assess a Resource
2. Sources of Statistics
3. Google Advanced Search
Assess A Resource

Credible
Authoritative

Relevant Library Guide
Credibility

Is this source of information credible?
• Is it reasonable for me believe anything that this source says?
Authoritativeness

Is this an authoritative source for this particular topic?
• Should I cite this source?
  OR
• Should I use this source to locate a better source?
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Sources of Statistics
Getting Started

First, look for news or journal articles for references to specific studies or data.

Look for study reports, not raw data.
It can be useful to have access to the data, but you don’t want to be in a position of having to do data analysis.

Relevant Library Guide
Government

Government agencies gather considerable statistical data, but determining which agencies might have what you’re looking for can be challenging.

A good place to start: https://data.gov
The Home of the U.S. Government's Open Data

Here you will find data, tools, and resources to conduct research, develop web and mobile applications, design data visualizations, and more.

250,255 DATASETS AVAILABLE

Search
250,255 datasets found

FDIC Failed Bank List 1982 recent views
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation — The FDIC is often appointed as receiver for failed banks. This list includes banks which have failed since October 1, 2000.

CSV HTML

Electric Vehicle Population Data 1855 recent views
State of Washington — This dataset shows the Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) that are currently registered through Washington State Department...

CSV RDF JSON XML

Crime Data from 2020 to Present 1656 recent views
City of Los Angeles — This dataset reflects incidents of crime in the City of Los Angeles dating back to 2020. This data is transcribed from original crime reports that are typed on paper...

CSV RDF JSON XML
NGO Sources

Could include thinktanks, policy institutes, advocacy organizations, academic centers, professional organizations.

National Center for State Courts

National Conference of State Legislatures
Things to remember

Be aware of bias
• Read reports critically. Are the conclusions supported by the data?
• Research authors and funders to find out what kind of slant they might have.

Seek counter-evidence
• Make sure you’re being balanced in your approach to the research.
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Google Advanced Search
Google Advanced Search

Google includes advanced search options (though they aren’t obvious):
• Run a search for “Google advanced search”
• Go directly to https://www.google.com/advanced_search
Advanced Google Searches

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Then narrow your results by...

Find pages in the language you select.

Find pages published in a particular region.

Find pages updated within the time you specify.

Search one site (like wikipedia.org) or limit your results to a domain like .edu, .org or .gov

Search for terms in the whole page, page title, or web address, or links to the page you're looking for.

Tell SafeSearch whether to filter sexually explicit content.

Find pages in the format you prefer.

Find pages you are free to use yourself.

You can also...

Find pages that are similar to a URL.
Climate Change & Regional Planning - University of San Diego

The Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report, states that the past five years (2016-2020) have been the hottest 5-year period since at least 1850.

People also ask

What is climate change short definition?
What are the mechanics of climate change?
What are 10 facts about climate change?
What are 3 facts about climate change?

Climate - Sustainability - University of San Diego

The main goals of the Climate Collaborative are to: Address and prevent the harmful effects of climate change; Promote a high quality of life for the San Diego...

San Diego, 2050 is Calling.

Climate change threatens the iconic beaches of San Diego. A recent study by San Francisco State University economists found that, by 2060, San Diegans could ...
Google Advanced Search

You can also use operators directly in the search bar:

• site: Search within one domain
• filetype: Find file format (i.e., pdf)
• AROUND(x) Proximity search: find terms within x words of each other
Google Advanced Search

For a longer list, see https://moz.com/learn/seo/search-operators

Our previous search would have been:

“climate change” site:sandiego.edu
Google Advanced Search

Another useful search:

[legal research topic] libguides site:.edu
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Finding Deleted Information: The Wayback Machine
Wayback Machine

https://archive.org/web/

Preserves old versions of web sites. How might this be useful? trying to find information from a site that no longer exists; looking for a report that has been removed from a government website.
Explore more than 670 billion web pages saved over time

Find the Wayback Machine useful? DONATE

Tools
Wayback Machine Availability API
Build your own tools.

WordPress Broken Link Checker
Banish broken links from your blog.

404 Handler for Webmasters
Help users get where they were going.

Subscription Service
Archive-It enables you to capture, manage and search collections of digital content without any technical expertise or hosting facilities. Visit Archive-It to build and browse the collections.

Save Page Now
Capture a web page as it appears now for use as a trusted citation in the future.
Only available for sites that allow crawlers.

FAQ | Contact Us | Terms of Service (Dec 31, 2014)
Saved 7,072 times between February 2, 2001 and April 4, 2022.
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4. Finding Deleted Information with the Wayback Machine
Contact the Reference Librarians

https://www.sandiego.edu/law/library