

### **What is Google Scholar?**

Google Scholar is a way to search scholarly materials using the familiar Google interface. The scholarly materials include peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles, from academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories, universities, and other scholarly organizations. It is important to note that Google Scholar simply finds items, but does not always provide access to them.

### **What are the strengths of Google Scholar?**

Google Scholar is best for those who want a reliable alternative to general search engines. Google Scholar is easy to use, provides access to a variety of materials, gives a good overview of a topic, and provides the “cited by” feature.

### **What are the limitations of Google Scholar?**

Google Scholar’s limitations are that it does not provide an index clarifying exactly what is being searched, it has limited searching and sorting capabilities, and it does not provide information about how often it is updated, to name a few. Most importantly, Google Scholar is not a replacement for the scholarly databases the library provides which provide more comprehensive coverage of a topic.

### **Once I find a citation using Google Scholar, how do I find the full-text?**

Some items that are freely available on the internet will be linked to the full text through Google Scholar. Each item will differ in how to retrieve the full text. In some cases, you can click on the title, and on the detailed record for that item there will be a link to the full-text if it is available. Other times, there will be a link to the PDF beside the title on the results screen. If full-text is unavailable from Google Scholar, check the library catalog and the A-Z Resource Locator to see if we have it in the library in print or electronically.

### **Why am I being asked for payment?**

Some publishers or subscription services that provide documents will ask you to pay to view them.

**Never pay for an item in Google Scholar.** First, check the library catalog and our A-Z Resource Locator to see if the item is available in our library. If it is not, place an Interlibrary Loan request and receive the item without having to pay a fee. Contact the library if you need assistance with locating an item that you found in Google Scholar.

### **Is there a way to perform a more focused search to narrow my results?**

Yes, Google Scholar has an advanced search option which can be found on the right side of the search box. The advanced search allows you to search by author, date, publication, and subject area. Also take a look at [googleguide.com](http://googleguide.com) to learn more precise ways to search in Google and Google Scholar.

### **Other features in Google Scholar:**

**Cited by:** this provides a list of results that cite that article. Note that this list is not complete, but this can be a good way to find more sources relevant to a topic.

**Web Search:** this searches the author’s name and the first few words of the title in Google. If you click on it, you will be able to see what it is searching in the search box.

**Related Articles:** this provides items in Google Scholar that are related to this one.

**Library Search:** this goes into WorldCat, a catalog of libraries all over the world, and searches for this item. Enter the city and state or zip code and see where this item can be found in nearby libraries.

**All versions:** this link will show all of the versions of a single item that are available. An item may have been published in an online journal, in a free database, on someone’s personal website, or other locations. This feature also allows you to see if an item is available in full-text in one of the versions.