

# Library Research in a Nutshell

Go to the George T. Potter Library homepage:  
<http://library.ramapo.edu>

**Need books?**

Use the  
**Online Catalog**

Write down:  
\* Location  
\* Call Number

Scroll down the  
search screen to see  
"Tips for Using  
Basic Search"

**Need articles?**

Use **general databases**  
such as:  
*Academic Search Premier* or  
*Expanded Academic ASAP*  
OR  
Use **subject-specific databases**  
such as:  
*America: History and Life*  
(American History)  
*PsychArticles* (Psychology)



**Need background and  
general information?**

**What if you get only a  
citation or abstract and not  
the full text of an article?**

Click on the "**Check Availability**"  
link below the citation or enter the  
periodical title in the "Check  
Journal Availability" link on the  
home page to see if the full text is  
available in another database or in  
our print periodical collection.  
If the article is available in another  
database, click the link "**Find  
article**" or "**find periodical**" in  
the database that includes the  
date for your article.

**What if the full text of the article  
is not available in the library?**

Request the article through  
**Interlibrary Loan**  
Forms are available on the home  
page and at the reference desk

**Not sure how to research  
your topic?**

Visit the  
**Reference Desk**

OR

Call 201.684.7574

OR

Use **chat reference**  
with a NJ  
academic librarian at  
**QandA NJ**  
(Click on link on Library  
homepage)

**Encyclopedias,  
Handbooks &  
Dictionaries:**

Available via  
**Electronic resources:**  
(see  
**Title Directory A-Z**)

*Britannica Online*

*CQ Researcher*

**In Reference Stacks:**

*The Encyclopedia  
Americana*  
AE5 .E333 2000

*The World Almanac and  
Book of Facts*  
AY67 .N5 W7 2004

*Dictionary of American  
History*  
E174 .D52 2003

# Welcome to the George T. Potter Library

<http://library.ramapo.edu>

Reference staff will help you learn how to use library resources. Ramapo College students have access to materials not available for free on the Internet. These scholarly resources include thousands of books, periodicals, and multimedia materials. Your instructors will want you to use library resources to make sure you are using reliable and authoritative materials for your research papers.

## How do I search for books?

Use the online catalog to find the library's books, periodicals, and multimedia materials. The online catalog tells you if the library owns an item, where it is, and if it is available for checkout. Be sure to write down the location and call number of the item so you can find it on the shelf.

- Note the *Tips for Basic Search* at the bottom of the initial search screen.
- Also note the subject(s) for each item; these links may help you expand your search.

## Search Tips

The default search is by keyword. You may add the following or click on "Advanced Search":

- AND = all search terms must appear in results: mexico and agriculture  
OR = at least one search term must appear in results: teenagers or adolescents  
NOT = search term must not appear in results: china not porcelain  
" " = search by phrase: quotation marks for two or more words together: "gun control"  
? = truncation: used at end of search root word to search all forms of word:  
law? = law, laws, lawyer, lawyers  
( ) = use parentheses to group terms: (drugs or alcohol) and (teenagers or adolescents)

## How do I search for articles?

You must use a database to search for articles. Databases consist of article citations (references), abstracts or summaries, and sometimes the full text of articles. The library provides access to both general and subject-specific databases, such as business and literature databases. It is a good idea to start your search for articles with a general database that covers broad subject areas, such as:

*Academic Search Premier* or *Expanded Academic ASAP*

Most databases have common search features, including keyword and subject searching. Search results may include the full text of articles; however, sometimes only citations and/or abstracts are available. If full text is not available, use the "**Check Journal Availability**" link to see if the journal issue you need is available in another database or in print or microform. If the journal is not available, request the specific article you need through Interlibrary Loan.