

A SELF-TEACHING GUIDE TO eLIBRARYUSA
For American Spaces Staff

It is recommended that you log on to eLibraryUSA before getting started with this guide.

eLibraryUSA (eLU) is a digital resources library. eLU content includes newspapers, magazines, journals, videos, and digital learning resources. Like books in a library, each collection in the eLU digital library is individually produced and published and the content can be searched. Unlike books, the digital content of the collections is dynamic: content in each resource is regularly updated. eLU is available **only** at the global network of American Spaces.

The eLU Resources :

<u>Resource Name</u>	<u>Type of Media</u>
PRESSREADER	Magazines, Newspapers
FLIPSTER	Magazines
GALE ACADEMIC ONE FILE	Journals
JSTOR	Journals, Book Chapters
PROQUEST DISSERTATIONS AND THESES GLOBAL	Dissertations
GALE IN CONTEXT: MIDDLE SCHOOL	Journals, Newspapers, Magazines
GALE IN CONTEXT: OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS	Newspapers, Magazines
KANOPY	Video

Cost/Subscription. The databases are renewed annually (fiscal year) by the Office of American Spaces. eLU databases that were cancelled in prior years had low usage or were not supportive of American Spaces programs and Mission goals. The Office of American Spaces will notify REPS if any database is scheduled to be cancelled.

[Step 1. Getting Started](#)

Be familiar with each eLU resource. Know the following:

- 1) **Content.** Most databases include a statement about the content of the database. You can also refer to the eLibraryUSA website and brochure for a summary of content.
- 2) **Formats.** Format options are usually either full text (complete document) or abstract (summary). Most users assume they will get the full text of an article when they conduct a search. It is not always the case.
- 3) **Navigation.** How to move through the database contents and search results. Navigation in PressReader and Flipster are quite easy. Usually navigation is done by keyboard arrows, screen arrows or back buttons.
- 4) **Conducting Searches.** Each eLU collection can be browsed or searched. Search engines are not standardized, but look similar and generally work the same. Search engines follow ‘Boolean logic.’ Before running searches you should know the various ways of searching including Boolean searching. See more on Boolean searching below.

Step 2. Learn the Basics of Searching

The following information is primarily for use in searching the databases in the Academic and Research Resources in eLU: *Gale Academic OneFile*, *JSTOR*, *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global*, *Gale in Context: Middle School* and *Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints*.

There are two starting points for database searching: a known item/s search and unknown item/s search.

Known item searches are searches for a specific document(s) you know exist. This could be a magazine or newspaper article you read, or someone told you about. You have at least one piece of useful information: the title or author or subject of the article.

For example: you read an article last week in the *National Geographic* about dolphins and you would like to send it to a friend. But you can’t remember the author or title of the document. Or, you remember the author’s name but cannot recall the title. Or vice versa, you remember the title, but not the author. All these are examples for ‘known item’ searches.

Title Search: you know the title or part of the title.

Example: A newspaper article you want to read includes the phrase “tourism entrepreneurs”

Database: GALE ACADEMIC ONEFILE

Search Steps: 1) Select ‘advanced search’ option
2) Enter in tourism entrepreneurs in the search box

Note: if the term appears in a drop-down menu, you can simply select it

3) Select “document title” from the drop-down menu

Under “Showing Results For” at the top of the screen, select “News”

Author Search: you know the author of the document. If the author has a popular (American or English) name, such as “Michael Smith,” you may get many results that are not what you wanted. In these cases, also enter a term in the subject or title field to limit your results, such as a subject field or title.

Example: Author: Michael Smith
 Item Title: Democracy

Database: JSTOR

Keyword Searches: use keyword searches if the term or phrase is unusual, is a proper name (such as a person’s last name), or a special term. Otherwise you will probably get too many results. It is important to know that in many search engines, keyword searches are set up as the default option. If you enter a term in the search box, it will be run as a keyword search. To avoid large result sets, one option is to combine a keyword search with another search field: select the advanced search feature and then select a second field from the drop-down menu.

Database filters are helpful aids for more precise searches and results. Filters help users narrow the volume of their results. Look for filters such as dates, publication, name, subjects and “search within results” options. JSTOR’s advanced search page has a number of filters for publication types and subjects.

Hyperlinks: depending upon the database you search you may find hyperlinks to documents or subjects in your search results. Use the hyperlinks to narrow or broaden your search results.

Unknown item searches: you have a subject or topic you want to research, but do not know what and how many documents exist on your topic. Basic research is searching for unknown items.

Browsing is a popular starting point for unknown items. Look for the browse option in the database. It may be labelled “Browse Topics” or “Browse by Discipline” or just “Browse.”

Subject Guides are another way to begin research or search for unknown items is to look for subject listings. Note: this is not the same as a search in the subject field. Good subject guides have subdivisions within the topic that direct you to more specific topics. Thus you can view and select the term first. With most subject guides, there is an option to search within the broad topic and subtopic.

Boolean Searching/Boolean Operators are encoded within search engines. Many people are not familiar with Boolean operators or how they work, yet they are essential to understanding the mechanics of database searching.

For more on Boolean searching, here is a video by Kate Cushon from Regina University

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMV7X3W_beg

Step 3. Run Sample Searches for Unknown Items

Sample Search: You want to know how solar panels conserve energy.

Sample Search:

Select database: Gale Academic OneFile

Select Subject Guide Search (under “Search Tools”)

“Go to Subject Search Guide”

Enter “solar panels”

Click on subdivisions ▼

View the list of subtopics under solar panels.

This gives more precise results.

Step. 4 Be Able to Explain eLU to American Spaces Visitors

Key Facts about eLibraryUSA and Commercial Resources

eLibraryUSA (eLU) is a digital library. It contains commercial resources with journals, magazines, newspapers, dissertations and videos. All of the databases are searchable.

eLibrary is funded by the U.S. government for exclusive use in the American Spaces worldwide. There are approximately 640 American Spaces in the world.

The databases in eLU are commercial resources, also known as fee-based or subscription resources. The databases are found in public libraries in the United States as well as university and business libraries. There is a guaranteed quality with fee-based resources because professionals and experts are involved in the creation and review of the content. This is why university research always includes fee-based resources. Authors must consult and cite to experts to advance their research.

Commercial resources are known for their quality, including accuracy and currency (are up-to-date). This is why major providers, such as libraries, subscribe to commercial resources even as so information is available for free on the internet. Like the production of books, there are multiple stages in creating online content from creation to publication; for commercial resources these processes are handled by professionals and subject experts.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why were these resources selected for eLU?

The resources in eLU are also in public, academic and corporate (business and law firms) libraries in the United States. These databases meet the standards of information specialists, experts and professionals in North America and Europe. The content of these resources is not in any way changed for use in the American Spaces.

Why are these resources offered for visitors to American Spaces ?

Many visitors to our global network of American Spaces are interested in studying in the United States. Students who plan to study at colleges in North America benefit from learning to use eLU databases before they enter a college or university abroad. Since these are standard resources found in most every academic library in the U.S. students will be better prepared when they start.

For other visitors to our Spaces, we know from surveys that they are interested in learning about U.S. history, culture, society and learning English. The eLU resources support all these interests. We also value diversity of opinion and fact-based information. Newspapers from around the world found in Press Reader provide diverse opinions and perspectives. We have a selection of popular magazines to support entrepreneurship and creative thinking. There is a resource to support all of our visitors at the American Spaces.

Why do these resources cost money?

The resources cost money because the producer of the content paid for professional staff to write the content, to have it fact-checked, edited, and reviewed by experts. The publisher also pays for the information to be digitized and searchable, that is, the ability to access the content by using a search engine. In addition, content is regularly reviewed and content added or removed from the database.

What about Google for research instead?

One of the best internet search engines worldwide, Google is an open path to the universe of information. The content accessed by the Google search engine is a mix of both free content and fee-based content. Therefore, you cannot always know whether the content was produced by an expert or non-expert on the subject. You may not know if it is original or copied, is factually correct or whether the information is still current. The standards for commercial resources are high because the reputation of the producer and the quality of the content is important for business.

Step 5. Market eLU and Track Usage

Tips for Marketing eLU to audiences at your American Space.

Advertise!

Your American Space should advertise what eLibraryUSA is, that it is free, that use is on-site only; and staff will log users on to the databases. Do not limit advertising to a brochure. Brochures are too small and can be easily overlooked. Make an attractive sign. Hold regular introductory sessions.

Quick tip: find the magazines from your country (or other countries) on Press Reader. Print out a screen shot of the magazines and use it to advertise eLU.

Quick tip: Test the streaming of the films in Kanopy and American History before you run a program ! Remember you cannot download the videos.

Show How eLU Appeals to Different Interests

Introduce the scope of eLU in ways that fit and appeal to your audience. For youth you could say: *Find out what is happening in the world. Browse a fashion magazine. Learn about the latest tech gadgets. Read about a new scientific experiment. Watch a video. Learn some English. Research a topic that you are curious about.*

Use eLU to Teach Good Research Habits (especially for students)

If you want to know in what year Albert Einstein was born - yes, use Google!

BUT if you are doing “real research” and do not want to sort through thousands of results that you are not sure are accurate or current, and have everything from a blog entry to an advertisement, commercial databases are a better option than Google. With commercial databases you can trust the information was written and reviewed by a professional. Commercial databases also have many features to help and guide you to conduct research in a systematic and efficient way.

Serious (Real) Research

Research that is intended for publication, whether in an academic journal, magazine, or newspaper, must show sources that are credible. The author may cite resources within the body of the article, such as identifying experts and use exact quotes. For journal articles, the author will show credible sources by listing the title and author of those sources. These are called citations.

Track Usage

The Office of American Spaces keeps statistics on the number of log-ins by country. Do you know usage at the American Spaces in your country ? Inquire with the Office of American Spaces if you would like to know usage numbers for your country: americanspaces@state.gov