Getting Started with GBS Big Search

GBS Big Search is a customized search engine that lets you search most of the GBS Library's online databases and eBooks and all our print books in one search box.

What does the GBS Big Search actually search?

GBS Big Search searches millions of items in GBS's databases and eBook collections, including background articles, scholarly journal articles, magazine and newspaper articles, and the GBS Library's print books.

It is important to understand that the GBS Big Search does not search all of our resources. Some excellent and highly recommended online databases that it does not search include (among others):

- Issues & Controversies/Issues & Controversies in American History
- Daily Life through History
- Global Issues in Context
- Teen Health and Wellness

The GBS librarians suggest using the above databases and other subject based resources when researching health, science, history, social studies and many Pro/Con Social issues.

Use the LibGuides A-Z Database list to find the best databases for your subject research.

The GBS Big Search Box

Enter your search terms in the search box.

You can use the buttons to limit your search to Reference, Books & eBooks, Journal articles or Magazines. The default search is All.

All searches all of the full text GBS resources that it can access, including books from the print collection, eBooks, Magazine and Journal articles.

The default search does not include Newspaper articles.

If you would like GBS Big Search to search Newspapers, you can access them on the GBS Big Search Results page.
The GBS Big Search Results Page

GBS Big Search is a search engine, so it is designed to return a large number of results, but has many built-in features to help you refine your results with just a few clicks. You can filter by Content Type, Publication Date, and Discipline.

Where possible, it also provides a recommended background article from one of the GBS databases to provide an overview of the topic.

### Recommended Articles

If you are just starting your research, use the Recommended Articles to give you an overview of your topic.

Click on Read More to go to the recommended database article.

This will take you to the database. You will have access to all of the database's features (Google Drive, citation export, etc.) because you are in the database itself.
Limiting by Publication Date

This search for “Civil Rights Movement” retrieved over 55,000 results (and that’s with no newspapers!). That’s way too many. One way to quickly narrow your results is to limit your results by Publication Date. That way, you’re retrieving more recent research and analysis of your topic.

Use the slider or the boxes to limit your dates.

Refining Results by Content Type

If you want to change the scope of your search, such as including Newspaper Articles or excluding Books, just click on the Content Type you wish to include or exclude from your results.

To retrieve results from ONLY one Content Type, double click on the text of the Content Type you want. It will be bolded and underlined:

Previewing and Retrieving Results

When you find an article that you think you might want to read, click preview to read a summary of the article to make sure it’s relevant to your research.

Sometimes titles make something sound more promising than it is. Save time by previewing.
If you decide you want to read the article, click on the title. This will take you to the database (or eBook).

Again, you will have access to all of the database’s features because you are in the database itself.

Locating Print Books in the GBS Library Collection

If GBS Big Search retrieves a book that you may wish to use for your research, make sure to click preview to read a summary of the book to make sure it’s relevant to your research.

Sometimes titles make something sound more promising than it is. Save time by previewing.

If you decide you want to look at the book, click on the title. This will take you to the GBS Book Catalog:

Use the Call Number to locate the book on the shelf. If you have any questions, ask a friendly librarian.
Recommended LibGuides and Related Topics

If the Librarians have created a LibGuide with resources related to your topic, it will appear in a box in the right-hand column of the search results page. Click on the title to go to the LibGuide.

Sometimes GBS Big Search will provide you with Related Topics that may help you refine your research. They will also appear in a box in the right hand column of the search results page. Click on a Topic to retrieve those results.

Search Suggestions

Don't see what you are looking for? Try one of these searches:

civil rights movement america
civil rights movement in america
civil rights movement music
civil rights movement 1960
civil rights movement women
civil rights movement usa
civil rights movement luther king jr
civil rights movement australia

Sometimes GBS Big Search will provide alternative Search Suggestions based on similar searches from other users.

If you see one that looks promising, give it a try.

You can always go back to your original search if it doesn’t give you the results you wanted.

Note that some of these suggestions look more promising than others. They are generated by the system, not by research experts, so bear that in mind when you are searching.

Research Reminders

Remember, searching is a process. You will probably need to refine your search terms or Publication Dates or Content Types. That’s how you locate the best information for your research.

You may even need to look at databases or other resources that are NOT discoverable in GBS Big Search. Again, that is part of the process.

If you have any questions about GBS Big Search or the research process or anything related to finding good information, ask a friendly librarian 😊.