

How to Find the Information that's Out There

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Sea of information

Can seem overwhelming



photo: flickr – Jill – Glossy Veneer

Most information is

not online

not free

many books are still in
paper only



photo: flickr – Sam and Ian



photo: flickr – babblingdweeb

Interlibrary Loan

Libraries will get you the information you need even if it comes from another library.



photo: flickr - Newton Free Library

Books

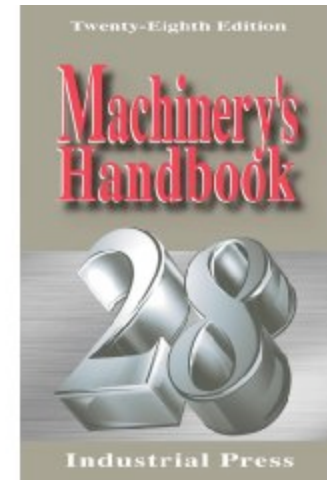
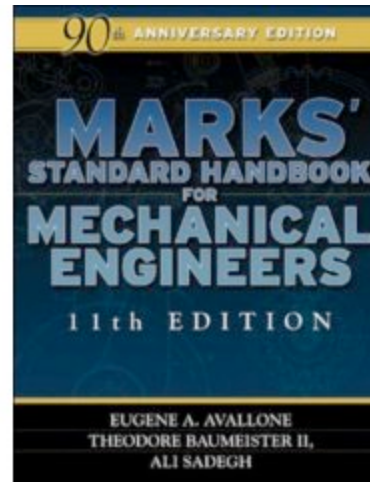
Google Books

Engineering ebooks

ENGnetBASE

Knovel

ASM Handbooks Online



Internet: Deep Web

Much information is not searchable with a general internet search engine

- **Fee based databases**

Most ebook and journal databases are fee-based

- **Highly structured**

- Example: patent databases



photo: flickr – A nita Gould

Patents

Google Patents

Google Patents

[Portable ramp for wheelchairs](#)

US Pat. D246449 - Filed Feb 23, 1976

DESCRIPTION FIG. is a perspective view of a **portable ramp** for wheelchairs ...
view thereof in folded condition and attached to the rear of a **wheelchair**. ...

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
An Agency Of The United States Department Of Commerce

US Patent and Trademark Office

Full text and image database

- *Classification search*

USPTO PATENT FULL-TEXT AND IMAGE DATABASE

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Data current through July 29, 2008.

Query [\[Help\]](#)

Term 1:

in Field 1:

AND

Term 2:

in Field 2:

Select years [\[Help\]](#)

Also on the Deep Web Engineering Index (Compendex)

10 million records,
updated weekly

Available at academic and
company libraries

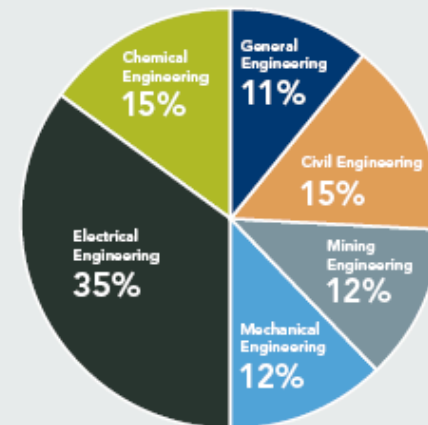
Searchable by a fee-
based information service



Compendex Quick Facts

- Over 10 million records
- Over 35 years of literature (from 1969 - present)
- 190 engineering disciplines covered
- Publications from over 55 countries
- Over 650,000 records added annually
- Over 5,600 journals, trade magazines and conference proceedings indexed annually
- Updated weekly

Compendex Subject Coverage



Tips for navigating

Ask yourself:

- What specific information do I need?
- Different types of information do I need
- Where can I find them?

Know

- Some basic strategies
- Where to get help



photo: flickr - Elissa Ernst

Where to get help navigating the sea of information?

Professor

Librarian

Fee-based Information
Service



photo: flickr - kayiwa

Portable Ramp

What do you want to know?

Identify your key concepts.

Ask one question at a time.

What type of ramp?

dog, bicycle, wheelchair

What problems do people have with portable ramps?

People in wheelchairs

Caregivers

What type of ramp?

With fixed dimensions

Folding: horizontal or longitudinal

Locking mechanism?

Material ?

Aluminum, fiberglass

Surface type ?

Gritty, patterned



Prairie View Industries, Inc.



Strategies

Retrieve a manageable number of records

If too many records,
be more specific in
your search.

If too few records,
be less specific in your
search.

ramps

horizontal fiberglass folding
ramp

Strategies

Look for and use synonyms .

folding ramp, portable ramp,
wheelchair ramp

Connect concepts appropriately.

or's, and's

folding ramp

or

portable ramp

or

wheelchair ramp

ramp

and

fiberglass

Strategies

Be careful with terms like:
new, development, effect

The word “new” might be used in an old document

[Portable ramp for wheelchairs - all 4 versions »](#)

AM Poe - US Patent D246,449, 1977 - [Google Patents](#)

... DESCRIPTION FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a **portable ramp** for wheelchairs showing my **new** design in a folded condition; FIG. ...

[Cited by 12](#) - [Related Articles](#) - [Web Search](#) - [Import into RefWorks](#)

Information about a new development, might not use the word “development”

May 16, 2008 - [Roll-A-Ramp® - Accessible Design](#)

Roll-A-Ramp ® is a versatile **portable ramp** system for wheelchair and scooter ... Converts from a roll up ramp to a **folding ramp**; 40% more strength than ...

www.accessibleconstruction.com/services/ramps/roll-a-ramp.html - 13k -

[Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

Strategies

Truncation

Word endings

ramp

ramps

ramping

rampage

- Google automatically searches for plurals.
- Many databases do not automatically search for plurals or other word endings.

Strategies

Use phrase searching

Can improve search results

This article is not about portable ramps.

[Portable load scale for mining trucks and the like - all 2 versions »](#)
CR Harris, RW Blaylock... - US Patent 4,203,497, 1980 - [freepatentsonline.com](#)
... being constructed in part from a high strength **aluminum** alloy, is lightweight and **portable**. ... If for example, the **ramp** members are not available at a remote ...
[Cited by 10](#) - [Related Articles](#) - [Cached](#) - [Web Search](#) - [Import into RefWorks](#)

Put phrases in quotation marks.

“portable ramp”

Types of information

Books

Scholarly articles

Trade magazine articles

Newspapers

Conferences

Government documents

Technical Reports

Patents

Standards

Product Literature

Blogs

JRRD Volume 41, Number 3B, Pages 443-452
May/June 2004
Journal of Rehabilitation Research & Development

Design features of portable wheelchair ramps and their implications for curb and vehicle access

CONNECTING INDUSTRY
ThomasNet 

- [Ramps: Portable](#) (58 companies)
- [Ramps](#) (131 companies)
- [Ramps: Loading](#) (72 companies)
- [Ramps: Yard](#) (67 companies)
- [Wheelchair Ramps](#) (56 companies)
- [Ramps: Aluminum](#) (29 companies)

MILITARY SPECIFICATION

RAMP, LOADING, VEHICLE: PORTABLE, FOUR-SECTION,
12,000-POUND CAPACITY

Summary

Most information not online.

If it is online, it might not be searchable with a general search engine.

Identify your key concepts.

Use synonyms.

Use phrases, truncation and connecting words as needed.

Know where to get help.



Photo: Flickr - sbisson