

Distinguish, differentiate, compare and explain what is the difference between Databases and Search Engines. Comparison and Differences.

Difference between Databases and Search Engines

What is a database?

A database is an organized collection of electronic, digitized information that can be searched in a variety of ways. Databases typically include information from magazines, journals, newspapers, and electronic books. Since most of the information found in a database has previously appeared in print form, it has gone through the editorial process. As a result, there is the expectation that the information in a database is credible and reliable.

How: Databases are provided to the library by vendors as part of a subscription service. It is no different than the library subscribing to an individual magazine, journal or newspaper. These are not free services available to anyone on the web.

Why Use a Database

Information is organized. Articles and other types of information are collected, organized and made available by the database provider. You may search for information by keyword, subject heading, author, title, and more. Results can be very relevant.

Reliability: Most of the information included in a database has gone through the editorial process. It has been checked for accuracy and reliability.

Ease of access: Databases organized by the library are available 24/7. You have access to thousands of high quality, full-text magazines, journals, newspapers, and more.

Bottom line: Use an appropriate database. Particularly, if you are looking for credible, scholarly information that is carefully organized and easily accessible,

Types of Databases

Essentially, there are two basic types of databases available by the library:

1. General Databases

These are large databases that provide full-text access to thousands of magazine, journal, and newspaper articles on virtually all subjects.

Examples of General Databases:

Academic Search Premier

Academic OneFile

Proquest

2. Specialized Databases

Specialized databases typically collect and organize information based on specific subjects or disciplines. For example, information on business, health, art, history, literature, etc.

Examples of Specialized Databases:

Business Source Premier

Health Source: Nursing

Grove Music Online

Literature Resource Center

Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection

What are Search Engines

Information on the web is not available in an organized meaningful way. It is a vast reservoir of articles, ads,

propaganda, opinions of every variety, full-text books, government documents, and so much more. A search engine will allow you to search for information found on the web using simple keywords. But subsequently, it lacks the advanced search capabilities provide by most databases.

Also, most information found on the web has not gone through the editorial process. Anyone can publish whatever they like on the web. Consequently, there is no guarantee that information on the web is credible or reliable.

How Search Engine Work

Search engines use software called *spiders* and *crawlers* to routinely scour the web to identify and index web pages. The software used by each search engine works a bit differently. The same search conducted with different search engines will yield different results. You may want to try your search in more than one search engine and compare results. Also, keep in mind that information on the web is very dynamic. There is a constant addition, update, and deletion of information. There is no guarantee that what you find today will be there tomorrow.

Why Use a Search Engine

If you are looking for information about an organization, place or anything.

You are looking for very specific or obscure information (dates, statistics, etc.)

If you are seeking information for personal uses. For example, how much is my 2015 Honda Accord worth?

Caution: Critically evaluate any information you use for academic assignments. More importantly, information found on the web. Examples of Search Engines:

Google

Yahoo Search

Live Search (MSN)

Ask