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Prepped for Departure: Sources of Information for Aviators

Heidi Blackburn

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While some may jokingly state the only information a pilot needs to know is which way is up and which way is down, the information needs of the aviator are easily equal to the most advanced scholar, doctor, or lawyer. Much has been written about communication between pilots, crew, and air traffic control but little has been written about information needs once the pilot is on the ground. Professional organizations, government entities, and corporate vendors have a wealth of information to share with aviators, just as in any other professional field and keeping up with a highly evolving industry is important through product reviews, news briefs, and government regulation updates. Pilots may obtain information from six general categories; (a) publishers; (b) textbooks, handbooks and manuals; (c) scholarly journals; (d) databases and indexes; (e) websites and listservs; and (f) air shows and conferences. With a variety of information sources to choose from, making it simple for aviation instructors and students to find the resources they need to produce scholarship is important, especially since most of the information they are familiar with comes from online sources. Subject guides offering links to government and professional websites, as well as professional journals, bridge the information gap from trade magazines to scholarly sources for aviation professors and students. Academic librarians often create such subject guides as quick starting points as a way to align the pilot with the research runway before he takes off, so to speak. Heidi Blackburn, undergraduate services librarian, prepared the following aviation resources guide with the consultation services of Capt. Mitchell Edwards, Civil Air Patrol, Air Force Auxiliary and Thomas Karcz, Assistant Professor, Department of Aviation, Kansas State University.

Library Databases

LexisNexis Academic (Citations, Abstracts, and Full-Text)
LexisNexis Academic is a full-text database focusing primarily on business, legal and news resources. Included in the database are law reports, company filings, journal and newspaper articles, broadcast transcripts, etc.

ProQuest Research Library (Citations, Abstracts, and Full-Text)
This is a good starting point for finding journal articles on almost any topic. Over 150 academic subject areas are covered, and many articles are full-text. Searches can be limited to scholarly, peer-reviewed journals.

Expanded Academic ASAP (Citations, Abstracts & Full-Text)
Includes many American Chemical Society journal references with abstracts. Keyword searching is recommended.

ABI/INFORM Trade & Industry (Full-Text)
Provides full text documents, as well as scholarly journals including peer reviewed. Subject areas are: Accounting & Tax, Business/Dateline, Business/Global and Business/Trade & Industry. Enter subject, select one of four databases and go to search. Currency includes 7 days to one year. Also includes area for specific dates.

OneFile (Citations, Abstracts, and Full-Text)
A one-stop source for news and periodical articles on a wide range of topics: business, computers, current events, economics, education, environmental issues, law, politics, science, social sciences, technology, and many general interest topics.

IEEE Electronic Library Online (Citations, Abstracts and Full-Text)
Contains full-text of journal articles, conference papers, and technical standards from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE).
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Compendex (Citations and Abstracts)
The electronic version of Engineering Index, Compendex is the most comprehensive bibliographic database of engineering research available today, containing over eight million references and abstracts taken from over 5,000 engineering journals, conferences and technical reports dating back to 1969.

Internet Databases
Air University Library Index to Military Periodicals (AULIMP)
The Air University Library's Index to Military Periodicals provides citations and abstracts to articles, news items, and editorials from military and aeronautical periodicals covering all branches of the military. A few links are provided to full-text.

Department of Transportation Digital Special Collections
The DOT library has digitized numerous collections relating to airlines, trains, and other modes of transportation.

TRIS Online: Bureau of Transportation Statistics
TRIS Online provides access to almost 450,000 records of published transportation research. Over 470 serial publications are regularly indexed and abstracted for the database, and TRIS also provides links to over 9,000 full text public-domain documents.

National Technical Information Service (NTIS)
NTIS Database is the preeminent resource for accessing the latest research sponsored by the United States and select foreign governments.

ATA SmartBrief Newsletters
This website gives brief subject paragraphs on news that affect aviation, specifically commercial aviation. These paragraphs have links that can send you to the specific newspaper article. User must sign up to have newsletter delivered via email.

Web Resources

Airplane Manufacturers

Airbus
Boeing Company
Bombardier Aerospace
Cirrus aircraft
Cessna Aircraft Company
Diamond Aircraft
Embraer
Grob Aircraft Company
Mooney Airplane Company
Piper Aircraft
Flight Planning
NavMonster
FliPlan
AOPA Flight Plan

AC-U-KWIK
AirNav
CSC DUATS
DTC DUAT
Aviation Weather
AFSS
Pilot Brief
Aviation Digital Data Service (ADDS)
NOAA Aviation Weather Center
Aviation/Aeronautics/Aerospace Jobs
Aerospace Online
AeroIndustryJobs
Avjobs.com
Aviation News
Aviation Now
http://www.aviationnow.com/avnow/
AVweb
http://www.avweb.com/
Aviation Week
http://www.aviationweek.com/avnow/
Aviation Today
http://www.aviationtoday.com/
Aviation International News
http://www.ainonline.com/index.html
Aviation News
http://www.aviationnews.net/index.html
FAA News
Landings
http://www.landings.com/
Plane News
http://www.planenews.com/
Aviation/Aeronautics Organizations and Associations

Regulatory and other government agencies:
CAAC (Civil Aviation Authority China)
Eurocontrol (European ATC)
FAA (Federal Aviation Administration)
JAA (European Joint Aviation Authorities)
NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board)
NWS (National Weather Service)
National and International Organizations:
AAAI (Aviation Accreditation Board International)
AIAA (American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics)
ALPA (Air Line Pilots Association)
AOPA (Aircraft Owner Pilot Association)
ASF (AOPA’s Air Safety Foundation)
ATA (Air Transport Association)
CJP (Citation Jet Pilots) Owner Pilot Association
EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association)
HAI (Helicopter Association International)
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1. Define exactly what you are searching for before beginning.

2. Select the keywords in your topic.

3. Be specific when determining keywords and terms to search.

4. Use the advanced interface of electronic databases and Internet search engines to help narrow your search.

5. Take notes during your research to keep track of where you have been, keywords searched, what worked and what did not.

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**Evaluation Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility</th>
<th>Is an author listed? What are the author's credentials? Does the author provide contact information? Has the author taken care to check for misspelling, poor grammar, etc.?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Is the date of the site current? Is the information complete and not too vague? Does the author acknowledge all views?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasonableness</td>
<td>Is the author fair and objective? Is the author concerned with the truth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Are the sources listed? Are there other resources with similar information?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Robert Harris, [http://www.virtualsalt.com/evalu8it.htm](http://www.virtualsalt.com/evalu8it.htm)
**Example Terminology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civilian/Database Term</th>
<th>Pilot/Aviation Term</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air Pilots, Aviators</td>
<td>Pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardess</td>
<td>Flight Attendant, Crew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airplane parking lot</td>
<td>Ramp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jet Lag</td>
<td>Aviation Medicine, Human Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Computer</td>
<td>Auto pilot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing strip</td>
<td>Runway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Map</td>
<td>Sectionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane</td>
<td>Flight deck, Cockpit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tower,</td>
<td>Air Traffic Control Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow</td>
<td>Aircraft nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheels</td>
<td>Landing gear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Taxiway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garage</td>
<td>Hangar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Scraper</td>
<td>De-Ice equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face mask</td>
<td>Oxygen mask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure suit</td>
<td>G-Suit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private/Private Aviation</td>
<td>General Aviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight Show</td>
<td>Air Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>Captain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rough weather</td>
<td>Turbulence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmanned Aerial Systems</td>
<td>UAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmanned Aerial Vehicle</td>
<td>UAV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Aviation Administration</td>
<td>FAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Aviation Regulations/Aeronautical Information Manual</td>
<td>FAR/AIM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Push</td>
<td>Thrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling</td>
<td>Stall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear wheel airplane</td>
<td>Tail Dragger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tail</td>
<td>Empanage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hood, engine cover</td>
<td>Nacell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tail Fin</td>
<td>Vertical Stabilizer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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Heidi Blackburn holds a Masters of Library Science, and is a third-year Ph.D. student at the School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University. She currently serves as the undergraduate services librarian for Kansas State University – Salina, where she teaches information literacy and research skills to students and faculty in the professional pilot, aviation maintenance, avionics and unmanned aerial systems programs. She served as a faculty representative for the Kansas State University Honor and Integrity Council, and as a member of the advisory board for Kappa Sigma Alpha. She recently received the Beginning Professional Award from the College and University Library Section of the Kansas Library Association.