

# How to Find U.S. Government Publications

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## Introduction

This guide is designed to assist you in locating publications produced by the U.S. federal government. The University of Pittsburgh's University Library System (ULS) participates in the U.S. Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) and has been a depository since 1910. U.S. paper publications are housed by Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) call number in the Government Publications Collection on the ground floor of Hillman Library. We receive U.S. government publications in many formats and their location depends on their format. A large number of publications are on microfiche (located on the ground floor) and CD-ROM/DVD-ROM, and the majority of recent government publications are available on the Internet – including free access services for which agencies charge a fee. The information below will assist you in finding U.S. government publications in Hillman Library and on the Internet.

*If you have any questions, please ask a librarian for help!  
<http://www.library.pitt.edu/reference/>*

**You can access the databases listed in this guide by going to the Find Articles, Books & More section of the library's homepage and choosing Databases A-Z (<http://www.library.pitt.edu>) or by going to Databases by Subject—Government Publications: <http://search2.webfeat.org/upittsubjectsearch.asp?cat=Government+Publications>**

## Step 1 -- Check PITTCat

U.S. government publications published from 1976 to the present are in the library's catalog. The PITTCat record will tell you where the document is located. If you need assistance searching PITTCat, you can use our guide or ask for help at the Reference Desk.

## Step 2 – Check the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications

If you don't find the publication you are looking for in PITTCat, check the following database: Catalog of U.S. Government Publications. Coverage is 1976 to the present. If the publication is in this database, you can check and see which library has it. There are several depository libraries in the Pittsburgh area (including the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh). Also, you can request the item through interlibrary loan.

## Step 3 – Search the Web

Many publications are available through various government agencies' Internet sites. Two good search engines for checking for the availability of government publications are

FirstGov at <http://www.firstgov.gov> and Google Uncle Sam at <http://www.google.com/unclesam> or check out our recommended resources by going to [http://www.library.pitt.edu/subject\\_guides/govtpublications/#internet](http://www.library.pitt.edu/subject_guides/govtpublications/#internet).

#### **Step 4 – Check NTIS**

Maybe the publication you are looking for is a technical report? NTIS (National Technical Information Service) database has coverage 1964 to the present and indexes technical reports from government agencies and government sponsored research. NTIS is located on the library's homepage Databases A-Z list.

If you can't find a government publication in the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications it is useful to check NTIS. Many government publications are produced as technical reports and most of these technical reports do not appear in the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications.

#### **Step 5 – Check other indexes that include U.S. government publications**

Sometimes agencies produce publications without sending them to the Government Printing Office or NTIS. Step 3 already recommended checking the Internet to catch some of those publications. The resources listed below will help you track down the publications. Check the library's homepage (<http://www.library.pitt.edu>) under the category Find Books, Articles & More -- Databases A-Z for the following resources:

Congressional (LexisNexis)  
Digital National Security Archive  
Government Periodicals Index (LexisNexis)  
GPO Access  
NTIS  
PAIS International  
Statistical (LexisNexis)  
WorldCat

**If you are looking for publications published before 1976 check out our tutorial to government publications or ask a librarian for help.**

[http://www.library.pitt.edu/subject\\_guides/govtpublications/tutorial/tutorial.html](http://www.library.pitt.edu/subject_guides/govtpublications/tutorial/tutorial.html).

