

Subject Indexes

REVIEW Page

Below is the entire module on one page. When you are ready to take your post test, scroll to the bottom of the page and press Continue>>



What is a Subject Index?

A subject index (also known as a subject directory, web directory or just a directory) is the online equivalent of an organized file cabinet. Subject Index information has been thoughtfully organized by human editors into top-level subject areas. Subdirectories of related information are created by professional editors. The selection, classification, and evaluating of information is done by human beings who are content area experts. Contrast this with general results developed by search engine robots and you will see that Subject Indexes are an efficient way to find quality resources. .

How do Subject Index's Work?

Subject indexes follow a file within a file strategy. Human editors organize information by subject categories and create a hypertext linked format that structures a path from general to specific information. Patrons can use menus to browse their way into more specific subject indexes. Descriptive topic headings are briefly described on a main page, allowing the user to understand the contents of a subject category without clicking into it. In most subject indexes, you can also key word search the entire directory or from within a subcategory. Using a keyword search in a subject index does not search the entire web; instead your search is focused on just the files compiled by the editors of the subject index. Some subject indexes provide cross-referencing between categories that broadens your search.

The image shows two screenshots of the LII.ORG website. The top screenshot shows the main navigation menu with categories like 'Arts, Crafts, & Humanities', 'Business, Finance, & Jobs', and 'Education & Libraries'. The 'Education & Libraries' category is circled in red. The bottom screenshot shows the 'Education & Libraries' page, which is also circled in red. It features a search bar, a navigation menu, and two columns of 'Popular Topics' under 'All Education Topics' and 'All Librarianship Topics'.

Librarians' Index to the Internet **lii.org**
Information You Can Trust
A Program of The Library of California.

SEARCH LII.ORG Advanced Search

Arts, Crafts, & Humanities
[Arts](#), [History](#), [Literature](#), [Music](#),
[More...](#)

Business, Finance, & Jobs
[Investing](#), [Job Listings](#), [Money](#),
[Small Business](#), [More...](#)

Education & Libraries
[College](#), [Find a Library](#), [K-12](#),
[Librarianship](#), [More...](#)

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SEARCH LII.ORG Advanced Search

Education & Libraries

All Education Topics **All Librarianship Topics**

Popular Topics: **Popular Topics:**

- [Bilingual](#)
- [Distance Education](#)
- [English as a Second Language \(ESL\)](#)

- [Automation & Technical Services](#)
- [Children's Services](#)
- [Classification](#)

Potential drawbacks associated with a Subject Index include

Infrequent Updates: The information in a subject index may not be reviewed and updated as frequently as the results retrieved from a search engine. Editors may not be able to stay on top of changes quickly simply because they are humans rather than robots.

Fewer Records: The number of records in a subject index database will be much smaller than the total number of pages available to a search engine. Humans add subject index records to the database. Search engines rely on robotic software that can index thousands of pages a minute.

Inconsistent Quality: Since human editors craft subject indexes, the quality of the information is tied to the editor's expertise and abilities. You should expect a variation in the quality of the resources.

Bias: When you depend on another person to select materials, the possibility of bias increases. This is particularly true in controversial subject areas such as the middle-east or presidential politics. One way to test the quality of information in a subject index is to browse a topic you are very familiar with and judge the quality of the links in the category.

When should I use a Subject Index?



Use a subject index when you have a general idea of what you are looking for, but need to develop more specific information. You'll be able to narrow the focus of your idea quickly by browsing in the right subject category. Once you find the right subcategories, the selection of information will help you decide on what you are really looking for. (If you were to enter a supermarket to shop for salad ingredients, you wouldn't go to the soft drink section to browse for dressings and croutons.)

Use subject indexes when you're not sure what you are looking for, but would recognize it when you see it. If you have a broad topic in mind like popular culture, music, product information, current events subject indexes are a good place to start your search. By browsing a subject index created by a knowledgeable editor you become more familiar with the details of a subject and better able to focus on specifics.

Browsing a subject index will teach you the specialized vocabulary of a subject. This is an excellent way to find keywords and search phrases for a specific query on a search engine. Indeed, veteran searchers will first turn to reliable subject indexes to develop their key word strategies before they begin using search engines.

When should I use a Search Engine Instead of a Subject Index?

The more specific and limited your area of investigation, the better it will be to use a search engine. Subject indexes help you go from broad categories of information to more specific ones. Search engines allow you use queries to find highly specific information. If you already understand the unique vocabulary needed to form a good query you might be better off with a search engine. Additionally, if you need timely information a search engine is more likely to produce up to the minute results.

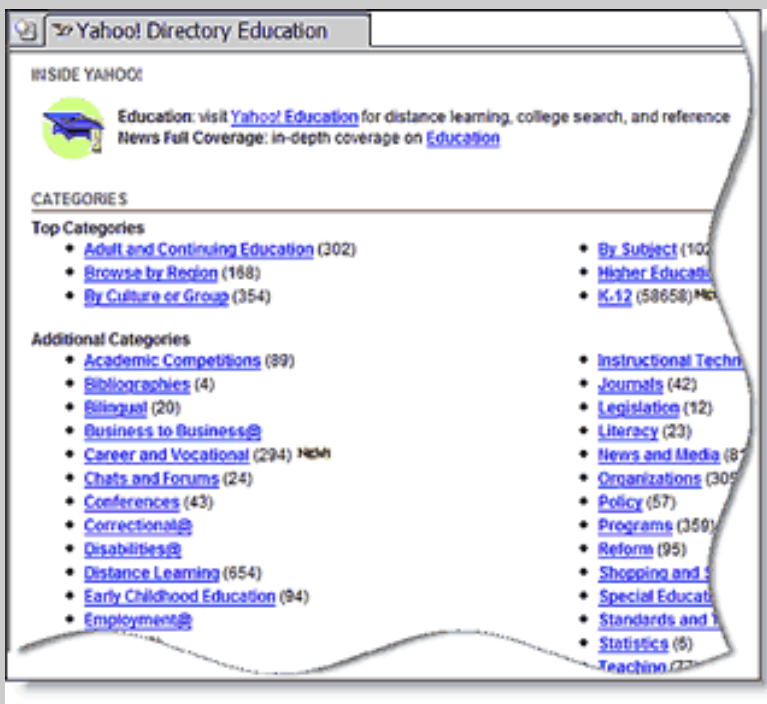
What is the difference between a closed model and open model directory?



Closed directories like Yahoo! and LookSmart hire professional editors with subject matter expertise to make the decisions about categories and information organization. There's likely to be less variation in quality in a closed directory system.

Volunteer editors produce open directories. The abilities and expertise of volunteer editors will vary widely. Some may be exceptionally qualified, others inconsistent. It is reasonable to expect that the quality of information in an open director will vary accordingly. The Open Directory Project uses volunteer editors. The ODP supplies subject indexes to Google, Teoma, Alltheweb, Hotbot, AOL, and Lycos.

What are Some Popular Subject Indexes?



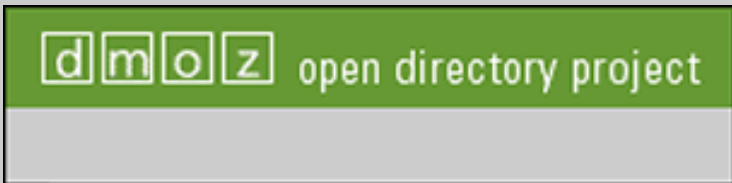
Yahoo! <http://www.yahoo.com>

Yahoo! an acronym for **Y**et **A**nother **H**ierarchical **O**fficious **O**racle was one of the first and most popular subject indexes. Yahoo's subject index is divided into 14 main categories. Each of these categories is further divided into subcategories. As the information grows, so do the categories. Paid Yahoo editors search out appropriate information, categorize it and publish it for general use. In Yahoo's directories, the "@" sign next to a category indicates a cross reference.



The Librarians' Index to the Internet <http://www.lii.org>

This site, subtitled Information You Can Trust, is a program of the State Library of California. The Librarians' Index to the Internet (lii.org) is a searchable, annotated subject directory of more than 11,000 Internet resources selected and evaluated by librarians. Every site entered in the lii.org database is reviewed at least twice--sometimes three or four times--before it goes "live."



The Open Directory Project <http://www.dmoz.org>

Also known as the ODP or DMOZ, this site is the premier open subject index on the net. The Open Directory Project claims to be ".the largest human-edited directory on the web." Major search engines like Google, Teoma, HotBot, and Lycos, contract with the Open Directory Project to provide directory services.



LookSmart <http://www.looksmart.com>

LookSmart is a closed directory that pays professional editors to provide high quality resources. LookSmart provides directory services to Altavista.com, MSN, and About.com among others. They also recognize the community building power of working with volunteer editors and support Zeal open directory project. <http://zeal.com>

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
About

Guide of the Day
It's American Diabetes Month. Diabetes Guide Paula Ford-Martin rounds up About's coverage.

PC Tips
Focus on Windows Guide Douglas Ludens has some great tips for computer newbies.

Five Card Poker
Board / Card Games Guide Erik Arneson isn't bluffing when he explains all of the different poker hands.

Find it Now:

Resources: [Auto Buying](#) | [Free Newsletters](#) | [ResultsAbout](#)

Partners: [Address Book](#) | [Casino Games](#) | [Free Downloads](#) | [Verizon SuperPages.com](#)

Site Index: [A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

Arts & Entertainment Books, movies, music...	Hobbies & Games Crafts, video games, collecting...	People & Relationships Dating, seniors, gay/lesbian...
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Cities & Towns New York, Chicago, Houston...	House & Home Gardening, pets, real estate...	Shopping & Style Online/offline, bargains...
Computing & Technology Hardware, software, gadgets...	Industry & Business Trends, statistics, suppliers...	Small Business B2B resources, start-ups...
Education Adult ed, teachers, college...	Jobs & Careers Resumes, interviews, tips...	Sports & Recreation Gear, training, teams...
Food & Drink Recipes, wine, world cuisine...	Money Stocks, credit, financial planning...	Teens Cool sites, school help...
Health & Fitness Diseases, medicine...	News & Issues Top stories, politics, law...	Travel Destinations, vacations...
Parenting & Family Toddlers, pregnancy, parenting...	About Japan Japan travel, culture...	

About.com <http://www.about.com>

This site employs expert guides to develop and moderate information and interaction in 23 'channels'. The About network claims to have human edited information on more than ". 50,000 subjects with over 1 million links to the best resources on the Net and the fastest-growing archive of high quality original content." One draw back to the About Network is the number of commercial services and their aggressive add placement policies.

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- Business & Economics
- Cultural Diversity
- Ejournals
- Government Info
- Maps & GIS
- PhysSci, Engr, CS & Math
- SocSci & Humanities
- Visual & Performing Arts

INFOMINE : Scholarly Internet Resource Collections <http://infomine.ucr.edu>

INFOMINE is a virtual library of Internet resources relevant to faculty, students, and research staff at the university level. It contains useful Internet resources such as databases, electronic journals, electronic books, bulletin boards, mailing lists, online library card catalogs, articles, directories of researchers, and many other types of information. INFOMINE is librarian built. Librarians from The University of California, Wake Forest University, California State University, The University of Detroit - Mercy, and other universities and colleges have contributed to building INFOMINE.

How Can I Find Highly Specific Subject Indexes?

There are thousands of subject indexes available through the WWW and you can use any of the major search engines to find them. Many subject indexes are highly specialized and may just fit your individual needs. Use these terms as keywords: "subject index", "web directory", directory, and search with the powerful **intitle:** operator.

Example: grants intitle:"subject index"

The image shows a screenshot of a Google search page. At the top, the Google logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'Advanced Search', 'Preferences', 'Language Tools', and 'Search Tips' are on the right. A search input field contains the text 'grants intitle:"subject index"', which is circled in red. To the right of the input field is a 'Google Search' button. Below the search bar, there are tabs for 'Web', 'Images', 'Groups', 'Directory', and 'News'. A blue banner below the tabs reads 'Searched the web for grants intitle:"subject index"'. Below the banner is a tip: 'Tip: In most browsers you can just hit the return key instead of clicking on the search button.' The search results are listed below, each with a blue underlined title, a brief description, and a URL with file size, cache status, and similar pages link.

Subject Index
Subject Index. Conservation. About EPA R2. FOIA. Human Health. News & Speeches. Information Sources. Kids & Teachers. Programs Air Compliance Grants Pesticides ...
www.epa.gov/region02/indtext.htm - 35k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

Grants Web Subject Index
... getting grants, tips on doing business with the government, and pointers and checklists to help with writing grants and RFPs. - lor LII. RETURN TO SUBJECT INDEX.
www.brockport.edu/~library5/wgrants.htm - 3k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

Meta Subject Index to Government Information, relocation - ...
Meta-Subject Index to. Government Information. (Subjects RELOCATION - RWANDA). Subject, URL for Subject Pages. ... RESEARCH GRANTS, University of Idaho Library -Regional. ...
www.isu.edu/library/docs/subjects/r1.htm - 89k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

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