Welcome to this tutorial on the use of the Library Services website at Northwestern Oklahoma State University. I’m going to give you a quick tour of the website so you’ll be able to get started using our resources.

The Homepage

You probably recognize this as the homepage of the library at Northwestern. I want in particular to call your attention to the black navigation bar, which is what you’ll most typically use to get access to the different parts of the library website. In particular, notice the links labeled “Books, Articles & More,” “Databases,” “My Account,” and “Research Guides,” as these will be the links you’ll probably use most frequently. Although the library homepage looks like most of the other pages on the Northwestern Oklahoma State website, once you get past the homepage, things will start to look quite different.

That’s because most of our content is hosted by two organizations unaffiliated with the university: The first is a not-for-profit organization called the Online Computer Library Center, which runs WorldCat, a catalog system that contains information about all the books and other holdings not only in our library, but in libraries all over the world.

The second is a company called SpringShare, which hosts software called LibGuides. LibGuides is used by a lot of libraries to build web pages and create informational content. If you’ve ever used a blogging platform like WordPress,
LibGuides is similar. Most of the pages on our library website are actually LibGuides pages.

The main access points for WorldCat and LibGuides are on the navigation bar I previously mentioned. They are “Books, Articles & More,” and “Research Guides.”

**The Catalog**

If you click on “Books, Articles & More,” you’ll come to a page that looks like this. That big search box is for our catalog, and with it, you can find books, journals, articles, and most anything else we have in the library.

We’ll discuss how to use the catalog effectively in another tutorial. For now, just remember that the easy way to get to it is with that navigation bar, clicking the “Books, Articles & More” tab.

**The Research Guides**

Let’s go back to the main page, and now let’s look at “Research Guides.” When you click the link for “Research Guides,” you’ll come to a page that looks like this. This is the main page for our LibGuides site.

First thing to notice, there’s a header up at the top, and there’s that black navigation bar again, so you can easily jump to any of the major parts of our website. There’s also a search bar for the catalog, so you can search our books or other resources from any page that features this header.

Now, most of our research guides are designed for specific subjects or classes. They list resources and basic information for your use. But some of the guides are more general in nature: Probably the most important is this one, the “Welcome to Library Services” guide. If you open that one, you’ll see it looks like this. There are a lot of
options here to look at, and I won’t go through them all, as you can look at them on your own. But I recommend checking out the information on how to find books, newspapers, journal articles, and other sources; the about page that will tell you how to contact library staff; and this list of frequently asked questions.

**The Databases**

Back to the main page: Let’s look at the tab labeled “Databases.” In a library, a database is a resource to get all kinds of information sources like journal articles, magazines, books, videos, and anything else you can think of. When your professors want you to use peer-reviewed articles in your papers, the databases are where you’ll go to find them.

About two thirds of our databases are hosted by a company called the Elton B. Stephens Company, or EBSCO for short.

We’ll discuss the databases in more depth in a later tutorial, but for now, I want to point out a few things to get you started. First, the most important feature on the page is this A to Z database list. This is a drop-down menu. You can use it to see all the databases we have in alphabetical order. If this is too cumbersome, you can select this “See More Results” link that will take you to another page with the complete list of databases. To see which ones are right for your project, you can hover the mouse over their titles to read their descriptions.

**Your Accounts**

Back to the main page! Finally, let’s look at this link called “My Account.” This will take you to a page that will give you step-by-step instructions for setting up your accounts.
You might be thinking, well, you already have a RangerNet account with the university, so why do you need separate accounts with the library? Well, the reason is because, again, we are partnered with other organizations that have their own systems for maintaining accounts.

**WorldCat**

The most important account will be your WorldCat account. Once you have a WorldCat account, you will be able to see what books you have checked out and when they’re due back, and you’ll be able to make lists of important resources to assist you with your research projects.

**EBSCO**

You should also set up an account with EBSCO, as this will enable you to easily save articles or subscribe to journals.

**JSTOR**

And lastly, you should set up an account with JSTOR. JSTOR, or Journal Storage, is a database of full-text articles from numerous scholarly journals. Our university has unlimited access to JSTOR’s Life Sciences Collection, but if you set up a personal account, you can also read six free articles a month from outside that collection.

Thank you for joining me today. Now that this tutorial is finished, I strongly recommend that you take the time to set up your personal account on WorldCat if you haven’t already. You’ll be glad later that you did.