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Patron Services Website Analysis

[Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library](#)

Part 1: Website

The Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library is a part of the Yale University Libraries. On their main [homepage](#), the search bar catches the eye. Underneath the 'quick search' search bar, there are additional search tools/limiters which include articles, archival collections, Orbis, databases, digital collections, and journals. I got curious about what Orbis is, and it seems to be a special database developed and run by Ex Libris.



The homepage has a formal and organized vibe which is made apparent by using geometric shapes and rigid photo/text alignment. The section underneath is titled "Welcome to Yale Library" and includes photos from the different libraries on campus, which provides a pleasant color contrast. These photos can be clicked on to reveal working hours and information on how to contact someone to make an appointment.

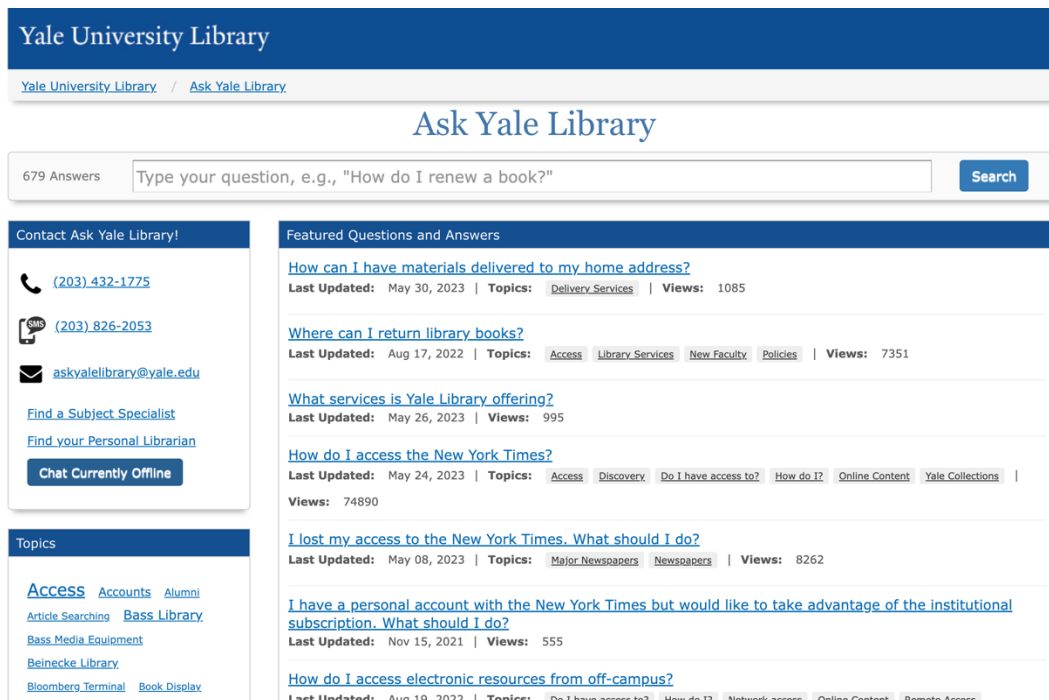
Welcome to Yale Library



It seems that the goal is to encourage visitors to explore the different libraries and special collections. The very first heading on the navigation bar is “Find, Request, and Use” which contains all the links necessary to search the website, request an item, or find information on using the collections in person or electronically.

Part 2: Reference

On the homepage, on the upper right-hand side is the “Chat with Us” tab. When clicked on, it prompts the user to ask a question. During the hours that chat is unavailable, there is a link that takes the user to a searchable [FAQ page](#) (see below photo) that also contains additional contact information, by phone, text, or e-mail. Though this information is helpful, I was surprised that a university of its standing does not invest in a 24/7 chat service. As a huge fan of topic tags, I was happy to see that implemented.



After a certain amount of time (while the chat function is active), a window pops up and asks if you have a question which you can decline if you are just browsing. Also included on the FAQ page is a link to an organized list of subject specialists and personal librarians. There's no indication or explanation of how long it will take to answer the reference question once submitted. Back on the homepage, there is a section specifically for reference services under the "Help and Research Support" heading. Here a user can request a consultation, browse specific LibGuides, and search for a subject specialist or personal librarian.



There is also a link to the Accessibility Services that are offered which includes library and reference assistance for persons with disabilities, which of the libraries have wheelchair access, and what service animals are allowed in the libraries (in this case only dogs and miniature horses are allowed). Proxy cards are also available so those disabled persons can have a specified friend or attendant borrow materials on their behalf.

Yale University Library

Your Library Account
Ask Yale Library
Reserve Rooms
Places to Study

RESEARCH ▾
SERVICES ▾
LIBRARIES & COLLECTIONS ▾
INFORMATION & POLICIES ▾

Accessibility Services

[Request Materials via Eli Express](#)
[HathiTrust Access for Yale Users with Print Disabilities](#)
[Library Assistance for Persons with Disabilities](#)
[Physical Accessibility Information](#)
[Other Resources Available on Campus](#)
[Contact the Library](#)

Library Assistance for Persons with Disabilities

The Yale University Library serves as an important research and educational resource for the students, faculty, and staff of the Yale community. In order to ensure all users equitable access to the library's collections, public services, and web resources, the library has developed a program of services that enable users with disabilities to take full advantage of its offerings.

The following services will be available to persons with disabilities upon request:

Finding and Using Library Materials

- Assistance to facilitate the use of finding aids (online and physical)
- Paging of books from stacks and shelf areas (may be on a delayed basis)
- Assistance in ascertaining the availability of books and periodicals housed in Yale libraries
- Extension of reserves or loan periods or modification of other lending rules on an individual basis when possible
- Telephone assistance with finding out the status of an item on Orbis, the online catalog. On an individual basis, library staff will check to see if an item is on the shelf (may be on a delayed basis)
- Ensuring of access to microform readers, computers, and other pieces of information technology
- Assistance with photocopying of a limited number of pages from books and journals (may be on a delayed basis)

Reference Assistance

- Advice about access to specialized online information sources
- Explanations and descriptions of sources of specialized information
- Help with numerous bibliographic citations
- Instruction on how to use available library technologies located at adaptive workstations

The overall presentation of the website and services seem very much geared toward students. The navigation bar heading titles consist of simple, straightforward language so users can quickly find what resources they need. The link to the different library hours is highlighted by a square of color that contrasts the background which draws the eye. The FAQ page (Ask Yale Library) can also be accessed through a link at the very top of the homepage next to the library account login and social media icon links. There is also an icon of a clock next to these links that can be clicked on to reveal the different libraries, their hours, and if they are closed or open at that moment in time.



Part 3: Reading Room Expectations

According to the website, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library is one of the world's largest buildings devoted to rare books and manuscripts. When a user clicks on the Beinecke Rare Book [link](#) under the "Visit and Study" heading on the homepage navigation bar, it takes them to a well-organized page, full of information. Here the hours of operation are posted, and there's a Google Map location along with a telephone number and email. Accessibility and access are discussed as well as items provided during the visit (computers, cell phone service, outlets, etc.). On the top left side of the page, under the photo of the library, is a link to their main website.



Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library is one of the world's largest buildings devoted entirely to rare books and manuscripts and is Yale's principal repository for literary archives, early manuscripts, and rare books. The Beinecke Library's robust collections are used to create new scholarship by researchers from around the world.

HOURS								
« Previous	Next »	Jun 18 Sunday	Jun 19 Monday	Jun 20 Tuesday	Jun 21 Wednesday	Jun 22 Thursday	Jun 23 Friday	Jun 24 Saturday
Beinecke		Closed	Closed Juneteenth	9am – 4:30pm	10am – 4:30pm	9am – 4:30pm	9am – 4:30pm	Closed
Exhibition Gallery		12pm – 5pm	Closed Juneteenth	9am – 7pm	10am – 7pm	9am – 7pm	9am – 5pm	12pm – 5pm
Reading Room		Closed	Closed Juneteenth	9am – 4:30pm	10am – 4:30pm	9am – 4:30pm	9am – 4:30pm	Closed

LIBRARY WEBSITE

LOCATION



121 Wall Street
New Haven, CT 06511
beinecke.library@yale.edu
203-432-2972

Accessibility

There is an accessible entrance on the side of the building facing Wall Street. This entrance is normally locked but is in sight view of the front desk attendant. The elevator is located near the main desk. Research areas and public exhibition spaces are accessible to the handicapped via elevator. Accessible men's and women's bathrooms are located on the bottom floor. Researchers requiring special accommodations are encouraged to email beinecke.library@yale.edu prior to their visit. Metered parking for the handicapped is available on High St. between Wall St. and Grove St.

Access

The Beinecke exhibition hall is open to members of the public in compliance with University vaccination requirements. The reading room is open to non-Yale researchers who have completed the University vaccination attestation process in advance of their visit.

All visitors must comply with [Yale COVID-19 visitor policies](#). For more details on reading room access, see [COVID-19 Library Updates](#).

Directions

The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library is located in the Beinecke Plaza or Hewitt Quadrangle. To enter the building, use the revolving door entrance across from Woolsey Hall.

What's Available:

Public Computer
Natural Light
Individual Tables
Large Tables
Tech/Media Equipment Loans
Chalk Board/White Board
Cell Phone Service
Electrical Outlets
Couches

On the library's main website, the design is much more contemporary. Upcoming and current exhibitions are displayed, reading room hours are shown, collection items are highlighted, and related news articles are provided. Under the "Research & Teaching" heading is a subheading titled "[Doing research at the Beinecke Library](#)". This takes the user to a page that expands upon how to use the reading room and the rules that need to be followed. It is stated that the reading room is open to Yale University students, staff, and faculty who are authorized to be on campus. Even then, visitors must register to access and use the reading room on the court level. This leads one to assume that there are different levels of access depending on registration. Considering the number of rare books and manuscripts held in the collection, this level of security is warranted. Researchers outside of the University are welcome but must also register and be vaccinated. The public is welcome in the exhibition hall and a link to those hours is provided.

Doing Research at the Beinecke Library



RELATED CONTENT

How to Register
How to Request Items
Ask a Librarian
Searching our Collections
Ordering Reproductions
Research Services
Rules of Engagement and Policies
Closed Collections Schedule
Linear Footage Calculator
Introduction to the Yale Papyrus Collection

Other important information is provided including how to search the collection online, internet access (especially for guests), photography policy, and even parking tips. On the right side of the page, there are several related links, one being the [Rules of Engagement and Policies](#). This page goes into more detail about using the reading room. No personal belongings are allowed except for books, paper, and yellow pencils. Users must request items online by using the Aeon system and no materials may leave the room. They state that no marks should be added or erased including tracings or rubbings. Specific weights will be provided to hold books open. Digital materials should not be emailed, transferred, or copied. There is a high expectation of respect for the materials from the visitors.

Overall, the web presentation of the services is inclusive and welcoming to a degree, however, the focus seems to be on security and preservation. Access is close behind in importance, seeing the number of digitized materials and ease of searching the digital collection. The web pages are well organized making it easy to use and locate information.

