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Resources for Work & Play: Gems from the Internet Archive

Rachel S. Evans

University of Georgia School of Law, rsevans@uga.edu

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[Home](#) > [Posts](#) > Resources for Work & Play: Gems from the Internet Archive

Resources for Work & Play: Gems from the Internet Archive

[Rachel Evans](#) Posted on [May 7, 2020](#) Posted in [Posts](#)



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Who doesn't love the [Internet Archive](#)? As one of the longest running vehicles for capturing content generated online, it also serves as one of the primary databases for Public Domain and Creative Commons licensed media. Founded in 1996, the vast archive includes more than 430 billion web pages, but the fun doesn't stop with the web. As a non-profit library, it also presents a broad spectrum of collections, from live audio to feature films, ebooks to software, and even patents and other government documents. In this post I wanted to share some favorites from the archive I've enjoyed recently, both for work and entertainment.

[Deutscher Bundestag](#) This unofficial mirror of official documents of the German parliament contains nearly 150,000 items (so far). It is automatically updated using the open source (AGPLv3) pdok-mirror software and the internetarchive python library. While working virtual reference at UGA Law Library I was recently lucky enough to have a question involving locating an official government document related to Energiewende. My colleague Anne Burnett, Foreign & International Law Librarian, helped to locate exactly what I was searching for – and she found it in this collection!

[United States Patent and Trademark Documents & Gov Docs](#) Contributed by Think Computer Foundation, this collection of US patents and trademarks includes more than 400,000 applications. Portions are a part of the [GovDocs collection](#) (which includes more than 80,000 and are sortable by date).

[Ebooks & Audio Books](#) With over 20,000,000 freely downloadable books and texts, this section of the archive is a treasure chest overflowing with wonderful content. From the collection homepage you can easily sort by libraries from a particular country or by categories like [Fringe and Off-Center](#). There is something for everyone! A portion of this collection includes [1.3 million modern eBooks](#) that may be borrowed by anyone with a free archive.org account. Related collections like the [13,000 free audio books](#) are also available.

[The VHS Vault](#) For lovers of obsolete formats like myself, the archive is packed with digitized media captured from formats that are becoming more and more outdated. The VHS vault is a perfect example of this! One colleague recently shared the [1981-1989 collection of MTV VHS recordings](#) that are a part of the VHS vault. In addition to shows recorded to video by home viewers, you'll find trailers, commercials, music videos, experimental films, and more.

[Software Library: MS-DOS Games](#) This collection of software for MS-DOS machines includes games of action, strategy, adventure and other unique genres of entertainment software. The programs found here are bootable and playable thanks to the EM-DOSBOX in-browser emulator. With more than 2,500 games there are tons of options. (Thanks to colleague TJ Striepe, AD for Research Services, for sharing this Games and the MTV 80's links!)

[Music, including Sound Effects & Live Performance Libraries](#) From the popular [sound effects library](#) to collections of your favorite band's [live shows](#). [Radio station archives](#) are there, and nearly 230,000 [78 RPMs and Cylinder Recordings](#). Looking for content to use in your own work or project? Search the archives various collections by file types and their rights. Among the gems, [fans of the Grateful Dead](#) (like my colleague David Rutland, Collection Services Manager who first shared this set with me) can find enough to listen to all day, everyday.

[Images, Video and Feature Films](#) There are also vast collections of more than 3 million [images](#), more than 5 million [moving images](#) (including more than [6,000 feature films](#)). Many [silent films](#) that have entered the public domain can be found in the Internet Archive. You can also find collections of [sci-fi and horror](#), [comedy](#), [television shows](#), and [animation and cartoons](#). Not everything is entertainment – [NASA has impressive sets of media](#) including [short, relevant educational video segments](#) they hope will “inspire and engage students”.

This blog post could go on endlessly sharing millions of items from the Internet Archive. What is your favorite item or collection at archive.org? We encourage you to explore the database and discover something new. If you know exactly what you are searching for, try out their sophisticated [advanced search](#) which feels like it was made just for librarians!

About [Rachel Evans](#)

Metadata Services Librarian at UGA Law Library

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