

# Things You Pay For That Your Library Has For Free

Reprinted by I Love Libraries: ALA's Advocacy Website for the Public,  
<http://ilovelibraries.org/news/topstories/13thingsforfree.cfm>

Originally appeared June 22, 2011 by Investopedia.com.

## 1. **Listen for Free**

Music CDs from classical to rock and roll are waiting. If you need music for a children's party, wedding, anniversary or just listening while relaxing you can find it here. If you prefer your music downloadable, libraries offer MP3 downloads with a limited loan period. *The average cost of a music CD is \$10.99*

You can also check out audio books on every subject for your commute to work, for waiting on your kids at various sports practices or to listen to while you walk. *The average cost of an audio book is \$21.99*

## 2. **Free Periodical Searches**

If you are a high school or college student, you will be required to cite sources, footnote your thesis, or find some obscure fact for a class. If you find you need an article that appeared in Time Magazine on global warming from 2004, the library will have it on a database. The only cost would be for print/copies. Here's a quick look: [EBSCO Periodical Search](#).

## 3. **Internet and Wi-Fi**

You can have free internet access and Wi-Fi, all you need is a library card. Be aware that most libraries utilize "censoring" programs for juvenile users, and parental consent may be required to use the Internet. *The average cost of internet service is \$22.00 monthly.*

## 4. **Watch Movies for Free**

Libraries offer children's movies like "Sponge Bob," "The Magic School Bus" and Disney movies to informational DVDs from National Geographic and the Travel Channel, to How-To instructional videos as well as major motion pictures. *The cost of an average movie DVD is \$12.99, and \$3.99 for a DVD rental.*

## 5. **Learn a Foreign Language - Free**

Traveling abroad on business or vacation than check out the free foreign language learning databases. Using a service from [BYKI](#), patrons can choose to learn over 70 languages. Their interactive learning site offers individual learning, flash cards, and words of the day.

## 6. **Job Preparation for Free**

[Learning Express](#) enables you to study for hundreds of tests including civil service, military entrance exams and preparation tests for SAT/ACT, MSAT, LSAT and dozens of others. You will find practice tests at all levels. You can practice, save your test, see your results and try again all for free.

## 7. **Find Your Family History for Free**

For family genealogists, libraries offer free access to search programs such as [Ancestry.com](#), and [HeritageQuest.com](#). These databases usually require you to search in the library, but occasionally some libraries will allow you to search from home after logging in with your library card number. Some libraries also have research librarians and genealogists on staff to assist with your search. *The cost of an online genealogy membership is \$25.00 (monthly).*

## 8. **Free Books for Parents**

The library is a significant resource to parents. Where else could your children find a free summer program that encourages reading, allows them to take home armloads of books free and usually gives them prizes for encouragement? Throughout many summer programs, authors, wildlife experts and a myriad of others drop by bringing their special knowledge to share.

## 9. **Free Auto Repair and other Databases**

For those who don't like to read for recreation, there are practical free databases in auto and truck repair provided by [ARRC](#), reference databases such a Kelly Blue Book, Antiques Weekly and Standard & Poor.