Norlin E, Winters C. (2002) *Usability Testing For Library Websites : A Hands-On Guide*. Chicago: ALA Editions of the American Library Association.

Steps to performing a Usability Study:

1. What do you want to learn? Overall usability, DC usability, Electronic Resource Usability? What will be done with this information?
2. Forming a committee - who should be involved, who will want to be.
3. Establish committee goals and objectives
4. Develop the study - questions/tasks/script/procedure/test it
5. Find Participants - will they be compensated, how? Where will we find them? Who will they be - student, faculty, both?
6. Decide/coordinate test staffing/location/times
7. Give the test
8. Analyze the results
9. Make recommendations/revisions of Website
10. Retest

In developing the questions and tasks:

When developing tasks or questions you should make sure you develop goals and objectives first. Know the rationale behind each item to eliminate redundancy. Start with simple tasks or questions and slowly get more complex. If possible, use the usability test to educate the participants about your library Web site. Keep the number of questions under ten so they can be completed in an hour, or you run the risk of losing the participant's interest. Include summary questions such as "What did you like/not like?" to bring the process to a close.

In writing the script:

Have a script to explain to participants the why and how - why are we doing this, how will it proceed? It is crucial to set a disclaimer - The Web site and the design are what's being tested, not the person. If the participant cannot find the answer to the question or gets frustrated - Thanks for pointing out this obvious error on our part. Tell us how this could be plainer or simpler or what makes more sense.

Mitchell, E., West, B., & Johns-Masten, K. (2015). Revitalizing library services with usability data: testing 1, 2, 3. *Computers in Libraries*, (4). 11.

What actually gets used on the current library homepage?

Usage statistics from Google Analytics (google.com/analytics)

Heat maps from Crazy Egg (crazyegg.com).

Heat maps show where users actually click most.

What do students and librarians care about? What do they wish for on the library homepage?

Brief surveys for librarians and students to identify needs

How will we organize the page content?

Card-sorting exercise—Each index card represents a piece of content or a link that will go on the homepage. Students were asked to put index cards into categories that make sense to them.

Can students complete tasks that involve using the homepage?

First-click testing, in which you ask many students to complete a task as far as the first thing they would click on. Think-aloud testing, in which you observe a few students actually completing tasks while thinking out loud

Khan, M. T., Zahid, A., & Rafiq, M. (2014). Usability evaluation of University of Management and Technology Library, Lahore website: A survey of user satisfaction. *Pakistan Library & Information Science Journal*, *45*(4), 30-41.

a) General feelings of users evoked by website = Affect;

b) Website ability to achieve the goals = Efficiency;

c) Technical aspects = Helpfulness and Learnability

d) Demographic Information.

Cobus, L., Dent, V. F., & Ondrusek, A. (2005). How twenty-eight users helped redesign an academic library web site. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, *44*(3), 232-246.

One goal was to highlight the links on the Web site's navigation sidebar that seemed least informative to users as compared to those links that made sense to users, especially in terms of clarity of function. Second, the study served as a testing ground for proposed modifications to problematic pages. All users' commentary and dialog were audiotaped, and their search moves were recorded using Camtasia. and asked students to fill out exit questionnaires.

❖Two students reviewed rough versions of the search exercises, giving feedback only on the construction of the exercises. Using their comments, the exercises were revised.

❖Six students stepped through a "pilot study" in which they used the prototype Web site to carry out the ten search exercises under the supervision of a research assistant. Any lingering problems with the exercise sheets were corrected.

❖ Eight students participated in the first round of testing under the same circumstances as the pilot study group. Librarians used input from student responses in this round to modify

trouble spots in the prototype site and to adapt exercises so that students would receive more encouragement to talk.

❖ Fourteen students participated in the second round of testing using the modified exercises and prototype Web site.

Chow, A. S., Bridges, M., & Commander, P. (2014). The website design and usability of US academic and public libraries. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, *53*(3), 253-265.

The Library Website Usability Checklist (LWUC) is a website evaluation tool designed specifically for the study containing 67 questions divided into five discrete sections—site information, recommended website features, content, feature placement, and recommended information architecture and usability factors.

RQ1: What is a standard design layout for academic and public library websites?

- Main navigation that tends to be horizontal and located at the top center of the page or vertical on the left side of the page;
- library logos that are located at the top of the page, which are either centered or at the left top corner;
- contact and location information that is centered on the bottom of the page footer or on a left sidebar;
- and a search feature, when available, tends to be usually found at the top right of the page.
- uncluttered with clean graphics and no splash pages or unnecessary graphics;
- they tended to be organized in a logical, hierarchical fashion.
- The use of color was also effective as most sites had high contrasts between site backgrounds and texts and consistent use of font styles and text formatting for increased readability.
- They also were compatible with multiple browsers and had user-friendly headings, so it was easy to know where one was when navigating library websites.

RQ2: What are the common features and content academic and public library websites include?

- contact information
- directions
- hours of operation
- access to their OPAC
- access to patron
- circulation information
- library policies

- the ability to renew, reserve, or checkout books
- information on children/youth services
- access to electronic content
- Information about the library
- other branches
- library news
- general library services

Not so readily available:

- date of page creation or updates
- copyright notices,
- opportunities to provide feedback
- frequently asked questions (FAQs)
- information about special collections
- ready access to Web 2.0 tools and to social networking such as Facebook,Twitter, blogs, photos, RSS feeds, and libguides
- Information or availability of virtual reference services through email, instant messenger, and video

Becker, D. A., & Yannotta, L. (2013). Modeling a library website redesign process: Developing a user-centered website through usability testing. *Information Technology & Libraries*, *32*(1), 6-22.

Identified six core goals that we felt were the most important for all users of the library's website:

1. User should be able to locate high-level information within three clicks.
2. Eliminate library jargon from navigational system using concise language.
3. Improve readability of site.
4. Design a visually appealing site.
5. Create a site that was easily changeable and expandable.
6. Market the libraries' services and resources through the site.

Swanson, T. A., & Green, J. (2011). Why we are not Google: Lessons from a library web site usability study. *Journal Of Academic Librarianship*, *37*(3), 222-229.

First, in many cases searching has been placed front and center on the library homepage. Second, search features are increasingly utilizing meta-search tools that reach across databases and formats. These trends make it seem that librarians are learning lessons taught by Google. Search is central. Search interfaces must be simple.

Fry, A., & Rich, L. (2011). Usability testing for e-resource discovery: How students find and choose e-resources using library web sites. *The Journal Of Academic Librarianship*, *37*386-401. doi:10.1016/j.acalib.2011.06.003

The primary goal was to learn how students find and choose databases using the web pages generated by the library's III Electronic Resources Management System.

The session administrator tried to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the sessions, assuring participants that the web site, not the participant, was being evaluated. She reminded participants to take their time and, though they were in a controlled environment, try to behave as they would if they were doing research on their own.

In Part I of the study participants were given a paper copy of the library's home page and asked to highlight up to five links they had used before, writing on Post-It notes brief descriptions of where each goes or why they would follow it. On a second printout they were asked to highlight up to five links that they found confusing and to use Post-It notes to record where they thought each might lead.

In Part II participants were asked to complete five common tasks using the library's web site:

Part III was another print-based activity, designed to elicit open-ended feedback on the four types of web pages generated by the library's ERM and determine if students could understand the function of each.

In Part IV, students were shown examples of three types of librarian-created guides and asked to use a Likert scale to rate possible names for the link to these guides on the library's home page.

Finally, in Part V, the researchers asked for general comments on the library's home page and also about each student's habits when citing sources.