There are a ton of web-based material resources, and they tend to fall into two categories: commercial resources, and institutional, academic resources.

I. Commercial and Industry Resources

Expect varying degrees of objectivity and authoritativeness. Privately developed resources and commercial databases often share information directly from product vendors and manufacturers without a peer review process. Sandow is a media company, so when their subsidiaries Material Bank or Material ConneXion feature LUUM upholstery, it's very similar to a LUUM ad running in the pages of Interior Design magazine.

Occasionally, these resources do include a research and peer-review component, particularly relating to health, safety, and environmental regulatory disclosures. A resource called Mindful Materials is well-known and uniquely transparent and authoritative.

These include:

- ARCAT
- Archello’s Product Selector
- Architonic’s Searchable Guide to Products and Materials
- Healthy Building Network Reports
- Healthy Building Network’s HomeFree Guides for Specifying
- International Living Future Institute’s Declare
- Interior Design magazine’s ProductFIND
- Material Bank
- MatterBuild

To access, you must create a free trial account.
Material ConneXion
Pratt has a subscription to this online database for innovative and emerging materials. Access this with your log-in information through the Pratt Institute Libraries website.

Material District
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) or Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are standardized documents that include occupational safety and health data for materials. Manufacturers, distributors, and importers are required by law to provide MSDSs or SDS to communicate hazardous materials in a consistent, user-friendly, 16-section format. These can be searched through a number of websites, including ChemicalSafety.com, Georgia Pacific, and USG.

MateriO

Mindful Materials

Perkins & Will’s Transparency Initiative

SpecSimple

II. Academic Resources
Secondly, there are the academic online material resources, which are generally more discursive. Not primarily motivated by business interests, these projects are peer-reviewed, and tend to be more transparent and authoritative than their commercial counterparts. Of these, we highlight Material Order, as we may have an opportunity to participate in this project in the future, if we believe students will make use of these tools for online research.

Of these academic materials resources, the tools we use most in the Material Lab at Pratt include:

Material Order
A material database that is the product of a consortium of the material libraries at Harvard, RISD, and Parsons; they have invested a lot of their funding and time to developing a schema for searching materials by form, composition, application, ecology or a range of properties, processes.

Donghia Healthy Materials Lab
The Material Lab Parsons; not a database per se, but has a lot of guides for material research, and programming throughout the year.
**Fisher Fine Arts Library Material Collection**
The University of Pennsylvania’s Material Library; they’ve created an interesting database using ArtStor

**Fleet Library’s Visual and Material Resource Center**
RISD’s Material Library

**For Health**
Harvard University’s Healthy Buildings project

**GSD Materials Collection**
Harvard’s Graduate School of Design’s Materials Collection

**Materials Lab**
The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture’s Materials Lab

**Pratt’s Own CSDS**
Maintains a materials wall, with research into the sustainability of new and noteworthy products

**Pratt’s Own Library Guide for Material Research**
Perhaps not super helpful at the moment as it’s intended to guide students who have physical access to the book stacks, but we include it nevertheless as a tool that can be helpful as soon as the campus can safely re-open!

**Transmaterial**
While it’s not technically based at an academic center, this resource is authored by an architect who is associate professor and director of graduate studies at the University of Minnesota School of Architecture, and pulls together research from his book series with Princeton Architectural Press