Best Apps for Academics

A guide to the best apps for education and research

Nicole Hennig
Pam Nicholas

This is a sample from ***Best Apps for Academics***.

Purchase the full ebook at **bestappsforacademics.com**

Best Apps for Academics

A Guide to the Best Apps for Education and Research

by Nicole Hennig and Pam Nicholas

Version 1.2, October 2014

© **2014**, Nicole Hennig and Pam Nicholas

BestAppsforAcademics.com

Table of Contents

6 **Introduction**

Who this book is for

The authors

How this book came to be

Acknowledgments

Subject areas and examples

A word about platforms

Resource guide

Companion website

Feedback

11 **Chapter 1 – Productivity**

Manage files in the cloud

Manage and generate secure passwords

To-do lists

Calendars

Journaling

Other useful productivity apps

26 **Chapter 2 – Reading & Annotating**

Reading and annotating documents

Reading ebooks

Managing citations

Reading news via RSS

Reading news with smart recommendations

Saving web pages to read later

49 **Chapter 3 – Research & Reference**

Specialized search engines

Wikipedia client

Dictionary

Private search engine

Unit conversions

Subscription database content provided by your library

Finding open access articles and publications

Special exhibit apps from libraries and archives

Table of Contents

68 **Chapter 4 – Taking Notes, Writing & Studying**

Best full-featured notes app

Taking notes by handwriting and sketching

Recording audio notes

Speech recognition

Scanning documents

Text editor

Documents, spreadsheets, and slides

Create beautifully formatted documents and work with Microsoft Office documents

Flashcards for studying

Mind mapping

More useful apps for note-taking, writing, or studying

Recommended accessories

104 **Chapter 5 – Collaboration & Sharing**

Full-featured social media app

Shared whiteboard

Collaborate with mapping tools

Distance meetings and presentations

121 **Chapter 6 - Presenting, Lecturing & Publishing**

Edit and present slide decks

Create simple, beautiful presentations

Wirelessly mirror an iPad's display with a projector or large display

Create interactive ebooks

Table of Contents

136 Chapter 7 – Discipline-Specific Examples & Guides

Examples:

Language and literature

Digital humanities

Art

Journalism

Social science research

Biology

Geology

Medicine

Computer science and engineering

Math

App guides:

Art, Engineering, Geology, Journalism, Language learning, Math, Medicine, Multiple subjects, Science, Social sciences

145 Further Resources

Books

Apps and websites about apps

Blogs

Other books and courses by Nicole Hennig

154 Updates & Feedback

Specialized search engines

Wolfram Alpha

Wolfram Alpha uses a knowledge base of curated, structured data to provide direct answers to fact-based questions. Rather than returning a list of documents that might contain your answer, as traditional search engines do, Wolfram Alpha gives you some of the tools of a data scientist and makes it easy to work with data.

Wolfram Alpha works best for scholars who need to quickly find contextual data. Topics covered include mathematics, statistics, physics, chemistry, engineering, astronomy, earth sciences, life sciences, units & measures, dates & times, weather, places & geography, people & history, culture & media, music, words & linguistics, sports & games, colors, shopping, health & medicine, and more.

Some highlights:

- Uses natural language input. For example, you can enter phrases like "What is the population of Los Angeles, CA?"
- Built on Wolfram's earlier product, Mathematica, so you can input mathematical equations and get answers.

Developer: Wolfram Alpha, LLC

Runs on: Android, iOS (universal)

Price: Free, Premium version $2.99

Developer's website:
products.wolframalpha.com/iphone

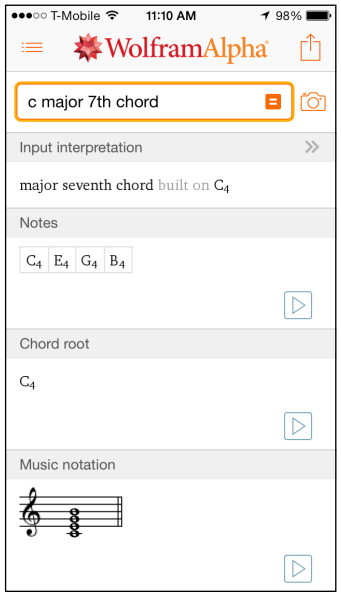
- Includes hundreds of datasets, such as "all current and historical weather."
- Searches data from external sources, such as the FAA for flight paths.
- Integrates with Apple's Siri (and Iris for Android) to query when you ask a question.
- Includes: currency converter, stock analysis, almanac, and high-end graphing calculator.

Example: A musician can look up "C major 7th chord," and it shows the names of the notes, chord root, music notation, keyboard display, guitar chord voicings, intervals, and much more. Tap the "play" button next to the chord and hear what it sounds like.

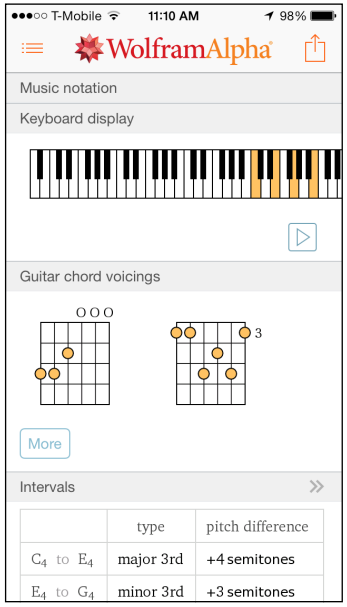
More examples of search terms:

"characters in a Midsummer Night's Dream"
"oscar for best actress 1958"
"Harriet Tubman"
compare things: "salary mathematician, physicist, chemist"

The pro version launched in early 2012: For $4.95 per month ($2.95 for students), you can input your own data for analysis. It takes up to 60 different data formats, such as raw tabular data, images, XML, audio, and dozens of specialized formats.



Tap the play button next to a chord to hear it.



More information about the C Major 7th chord.

Examples

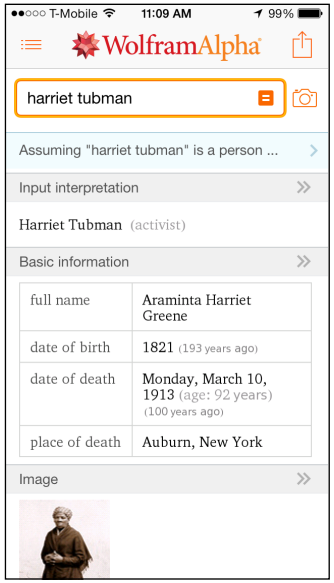
John Erickson, assistant professor of mathematics and computer sciences at Chicago State University, uses Wolfram Alpha in his math courses to illustrate real-world applications. He describes it in this YouTube video, "**Teaching College Math With Wolfram Alpha**":

> *I've been able to have my students download data and perform regressions and actually do various types of data-fitting, all inside Wolfram Alpha. And I was really pleasantly surprised that this was even possible.*

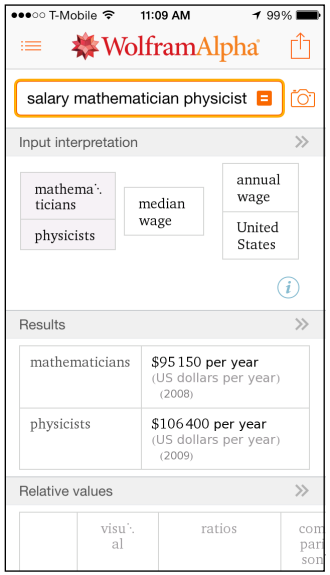
For many useful search tips, see **Become a Wolfram Alpha Expert with These Useful Search Techniques**.

> *If you're a writer or an academic, I'm sure there are lots of times when you find yourself sitting there, stuck in your work simply because you don't know some small, specific piece of information. Well, the Wolf can fetch that small fact in an instant. Things like the death rate in California, the birth rate in Canada, or the unemployment rate in Houston, Texas.*

Another useful resource is this slide deck by Josh Murdock, a.k.a "Professor Josh," at Valencia College: **Howl at Engagement with Wolfram Alpha**.

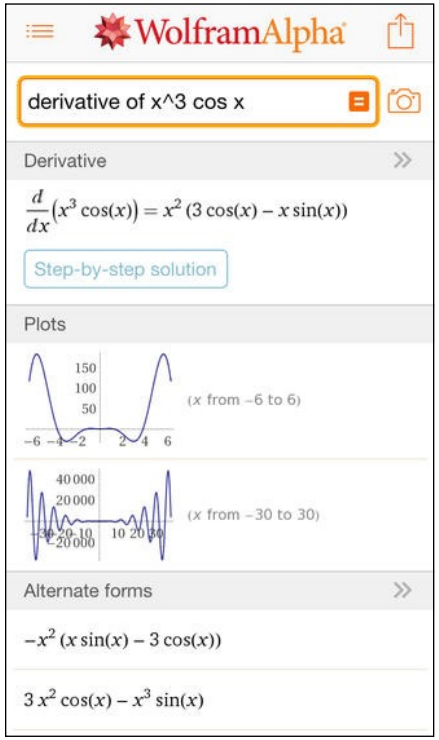


Biographical information.

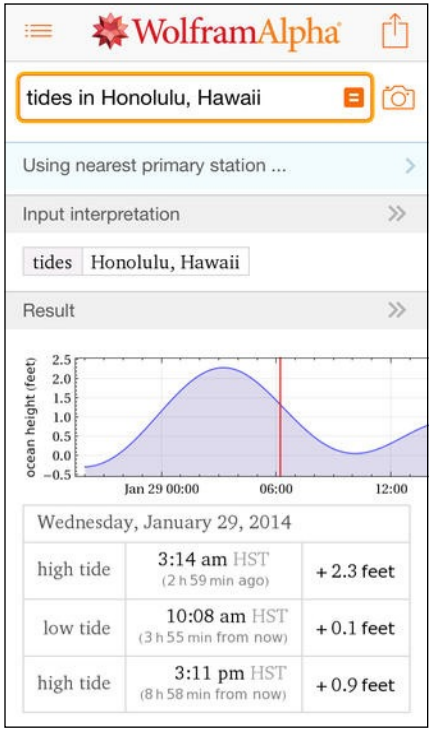


Comparing salary data.

Many other apps use Wolfram Alpha to power their data. For more examples, see **Course Assistant apps for Algebra, Calculus, or Music Theory**.



Math calculations.



Tides.

Statistical info.

This is a sample from ***Best Apps for Academics***.

Purchase the full ebook at **bestappsforacademics.com**