

Google Searching Tips

Before you begin:

There are certain things you should to be aware of when you are searching Google.

1. Google searches are NOT case sensitive.

Searching [New York Times] will retrieve the same results as searching [new york times]. Do not waste your time with capitalizing letters.

2. Google automatically searches for synonyms.

Searching for [springfield il] will automatically retrieve results for [springfield illinois].

3. When searching Google, punctuation is ignored.

Search Tips:

These tips will help you create more **effective** queries and **save you time**.

1. KEEP IT SIMPLE!

A search engine is a program that matches words you enter with words on the webpage. Simple searches using **descriptive words** will retrieve the most relevant results.

Instead of [my head hurts] use [headache]

A search engine **cannot** answer questions.

Instead of [What are the symptoms of the swine flu?] use [swine flu symptoms] or [symptoms H1N1]

Use as **few** terms as possible.

Instead of [seven day weather report for springfield illinois] use [weather springfield il]

2. PHRASE SEARCH

Always put double quotes (“example”) around the words included in the phrase. This is especially useful when searching for people or titles.

If you search [water the fate of our most precious resource] the search engine will retrieve any webpage that contains the words water, fate, precious, and resource anywhere in the text of the webpage. If you search [“water the fate of

our most precious resource”] the search engine will retrieve any webpage that contains the entire phrase.

If you search [john smith] the search engine will retrieve any webpage that contains the words john and smith anywhere in the page. While this search will retrieve information about John Smith, it will also retrieve pages, for example, about John Williams and Mary Smith. Searching [“john smith”] will only retrieve pages that have the words john smith in that order. Always put double quotes around names of individuals.

3. GOOGLE SITE SEARCH

To search within a particular **site**, type [site:insertURL insertSearchTERM/S].

EXAMPLE – To search for information relating to healthcare within the National Public Radio website type [site:npr.org healthcare]. This search will only retrieve results from the website www.npr.org. Remember to put a space before your search term/s.

To search for webpages with a particular **domain**, type [site:insertDomain insertSearchTERM/S]

EXAMPLE – To search for information relating to healthcare from sites with the .gov domain, type [site:.gov healthcare]. This search will retrieve only .gov websites. Remember to put a space before your search term/s.

EXAMPLE – To search for information relating to healthcare from sites with the .gov domain or the .org domain, type [(site:.gov OR site:.edu) healthcare]. Remember to put a space before your search term/s.

4. OR OPERATOR

To search for two possible search terms use the OR operator.

EXAMPLE – To search for information about Super Bowl 2009 or Super Bowl 2010, type [super bowl 2009 OR 2010]. (The OR must be capitalized.)

EXAMPLE – To search for information about the Chicago Cubs or White Sox, type [chicago cubs OR “white sox”].

5. GOOGLE SCHOLAR

Check out Google Scholar. “Google Scholar provides a simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature. From one place, you can search across many disciplines and sources: peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles, from academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories, universities and other scholarly organizations. Google Scholar helps you identify the most relevant research across the world of scholarly research.”

– <http://scholar.google.com/intl/en/scholar/about.html>