



Google is the largest and most popular search engine. It provides access to over 8 billion web pages and documents in a variety of formats, including text documents, presentations and page images.

In addition to its web search function, Google also offers specialized services such as Scholar, Book Search, Image Search, News Search, Maps, Directory, and Answers



Introduction

This handout illustrates how you can use the Google search engine (www.google.ca) effectively to find information on the World Wide Web.

Points to Remember:

1. No single search engine searches the entire Web. For the best results, try your search in more than one search engine.
2. Many scholarly journal articles cannot be found by search engines. To find and access scholarly journal articles reliably, try the library's databases, <http://www.smu.ca/library/journals.html>.
3. Websites often lack the quality controls that are used in publishing other types of resources (e.g., scholarly journals), so you should always evaluate Internet resources for their quality and appropriateness for your research. To learn more about evaluating Internet resources, see: <http://www.smu.ca/library/evaluation.html>.

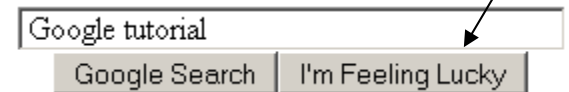
Other Recommended Search Tools

Although this pamphlet focuses only the Google search engine, there are many other useful search tools available on the Web. For an annotated list of search engines, meta-search engines and subject directories see the Patrick Power Library's **Recommended Internet Sources** page at: <http://www.smu.ca/administration/library/websites.html>

Basic Search

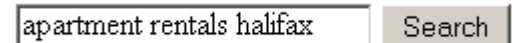
To perform a search on Google, enter keywords into the search box, then click the **Google Search** button (or hit **Enter**).

Note: To be taken directly to the first result retrieved by Google, click the **I'm Feeling Lucky** button.



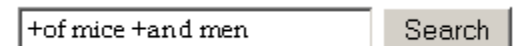
When choosing search terms:

- **Be specific** and try to **include at least 2 keywords** that best describe what you are trying to find. For example, if you are interested in finding apartments for rent in Halifax, you could search:



- **Avoid common words** such as "the", "of", "where", and "how", because these **stop words** will automatically be excluded from your search.

Note: To include stop words in your search, place a "+" sign in front of each stop word. For example, if you were researching John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, you would type:



Writing a Search Query

When searching, it helps to understand how Google interprets what you enter:

- Google automatically searches for pages that contain all of your search terms, so there is no need to use AND.
- Google searches are not case sensitive.
- Google automatically searches for variations of some search terms, e.g., “knit”, “knits”, “knitting”, etc.
- Google searches for pages that contain your search terms in the order that you type them, so place the most important terms first.

Basic Search Operators	
OR e.g., canine OR dog	Finds pages that contain <u>any</u> of your search terms.
- e.g., titanic -movie	Finds pages that <u>do not</u> contain the specified term.
“ ” e.g., “life of pi”	Finds pages that contain the phrase exactly as it is typed.
~ e.g., ~travel china	Finds pages that contain the search term and synonyms of the search term.

Refining Your Search

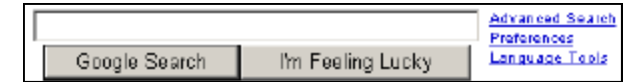
If your searches are retrieving too many irrelevant hits, use these special operators to increase the relevancy of your results:

Special Search Operators	
intitle:	Restrict your results to documents with a specified search term in the title, e.g., forensics intitle:university
allintitle:	Restrict your results to documents with <u>all</u> of your search terms in the title, e.g., allintitle:google tutorial
site:	Restrict your results to documents within a specified website or domain, e.g., chemistry site:www.smu.ca e.g., chemistry site:.ca
inurl:	Restrict your results to documents with a specified search term in the url, e.g., book review inurl:library
define:	Restrict your results to definitions of words or phrases found on the web e.g., define:world wide web

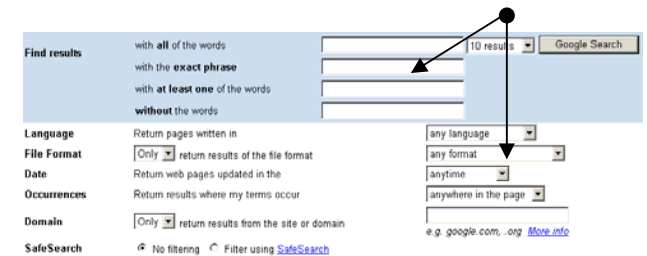
Note: When using special operators, you should not place a space after the colon.

Advanced Search

Click the **Advanced Search** link next to the search box, to create a very focused search.



Type your search terms into the search boxes, then refine your search by selecting one or more limit options listed below the search boxes.



Limit options include:

- **Language** (restrict your results to pages written in a specified language)
- **File Format** (restrict your results to pages published in a specified format, e.g., .pdf, .doc, .ppt., etc.)
- **Date** (restrict your results to pages updated in the past 3, 6, or 12 months)
- **Occurrences** (restrict your results to pages in which your search term occurs in the title, text, URL, or links to the page).

Some of the Many Services Google Offers

To access these services and more click on the **more** link above the Google search box, then click on the service you are interested in.

Scholar

Google Scholar displays a list of article citations, with the most relevant articles first. Due to the way Google calculates relevance, older articles may show up first. If the article titles are underlined, click on the titles to view the article abstract or full-text. If the full text of an article is not available, search the Novanet catalogue (<http://aleph1.novanet.ns.ca/>) for the journal title to see if the library subscribes to the journal.

Book Search

This feature allows you to search the full text of books. Click on a book title and similar to a library catalogue, you will see basic information about the book. You may also see a few snippets of text from the book showing your search term in context. If the book is out of copyright, you'll be able to page through the entire book! If it is not, Google suggests in which bookstore or library to look for it. You can check Novanet for available copies, too.

Image Search

This feature allows you to search for images throughout the web. Enter keywords into the search box and if Google finds any matches to your query, it will display thumbnail pictures of the matches. Click on the thumbnails to view the full sized pictures.

News Search

On the homepage, Google displays its top news stories in various categories, e.g., Canada, Health, etc. To view more stories, click on the links on the left side of the screen. You can also use Google News Alerts to keep updated on news related to your research topic.

Maps

This feature provides you with maps and directions to various locations, e.g., cities, streets, or restaurants. It also provides global satellite imagery. Also be sure to try out their related service: **Google Earth**.

Directory

Google Directory consists of about 4 million web pages selected by the **Open Directory Project** and enhanced by the Google Search.

The Open Directory Project is the largest, most comprehensive human-edited directory of the Web. It is constructed and maintained by a global community of volunteer editors.

Answers

Google Answers is a way to get help from Researchers with expertise in online searching. When you post a question to Google Answers, you specify how much you're willing to pay for an answer. A Researcher will search for the information you want. When they find it, they will post it to Google Answers, and you will be notified via email. You will only be charged for your question if and when an answer is posted to it.