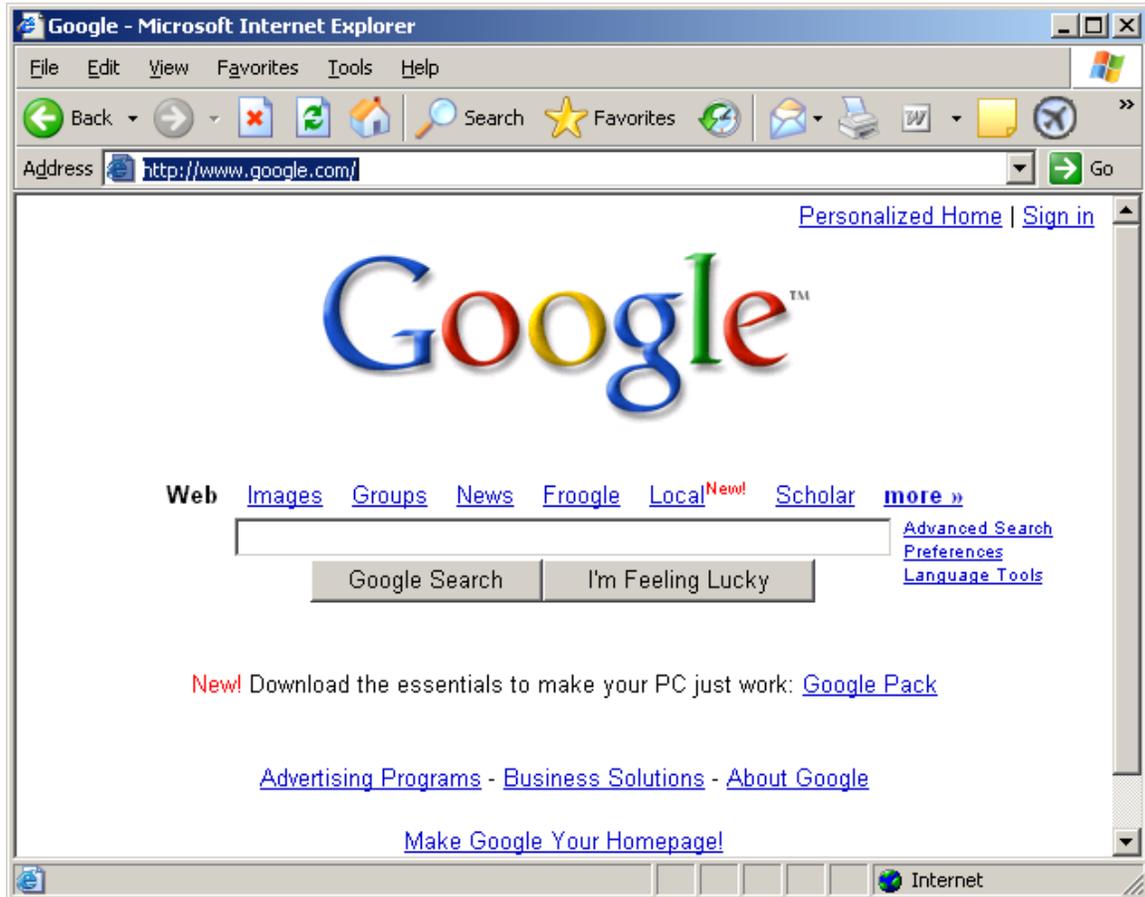


# Search Engine Tips & Techniques

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## What does "Google" mean?

The name "Google" is a play on the word "googol," which was coined by Milton Sirota, nephew of American mathematician Edward Kasner. A googol refers to the number represented by a 1 followed by 100 zeros. A googol is a very large number. There isn't a googol of anything in the universe -- not stars, not dust particles, not atoms. Google's use of the term reflects our mission to organize the world's immense (and seemingly infinite) amount of information and make it universally accessible and useful.

More information about Google can be found at <http://www.google.com/corporate/history.html>

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## Terms

**Search Engines:** Designed to retrieve information from URL's (Uniform Resource Locator's), and web page content, and make this information searchable in an indexed format.

**Boolean searching:** allows for advanced searching by using the words AND, NOT, OR, or in some cases the symbols +/-.

**Truncation:** advanced searching which allows the substitution of a symbol to broaden search hits: impression\* = impression, impressionists, impressionism, etc., Also called wild cards.

**Phrase searching:** allows searching for exact or bound phrases, usually involving quotation marks or parentheses surrounding the phrase.

There are several *search engines* available, via the **Search** option on web browsers such as Safari, Firefox, or Internet Explorer, to help locate information on the web. These search engines may vary each day, and in fact, new search engines are emerging regularly, each offering a slightly different style of searching. Search engines may also vary in the number of web sites indexed, how often they are updated, and how sophisticated a search they allow the user to construct. Most search engines have either a *help*, or *about* option, which will explain how the search engine is updated, and what kinds of searches it can perform.

## **Search Engines & Directories**

There is a subtle difference between a search engine and a directory on the web. **Yahoo** has one of the oldest directories available on the web. As a directory, **Yahoo** chooses specific web sites, which are then presented in topical indexes such as the Yahoo Arts Index. When you search on Yahoo, you are searching pre-selected sites, not the entire World Wide Web. This limitation is in fact what makes Yahoo a great starting point. Since many new web users are overwhelmed by the amount of non-relevant information they find, Yahoo provides them with pre-selected sites, organized topically, not unlike a library. In fact, if you don't find what you need in Yahoo's directories, and you choose to search the web, you are actually searching the web with the search engine designed by AltaVista.

*\*Note that many university and library sites have excellent mini directories, and research Guides. The Dartmouth College Library site includes a directory of [Research Guides](http://libguides.dartmouth.edu/guides).*

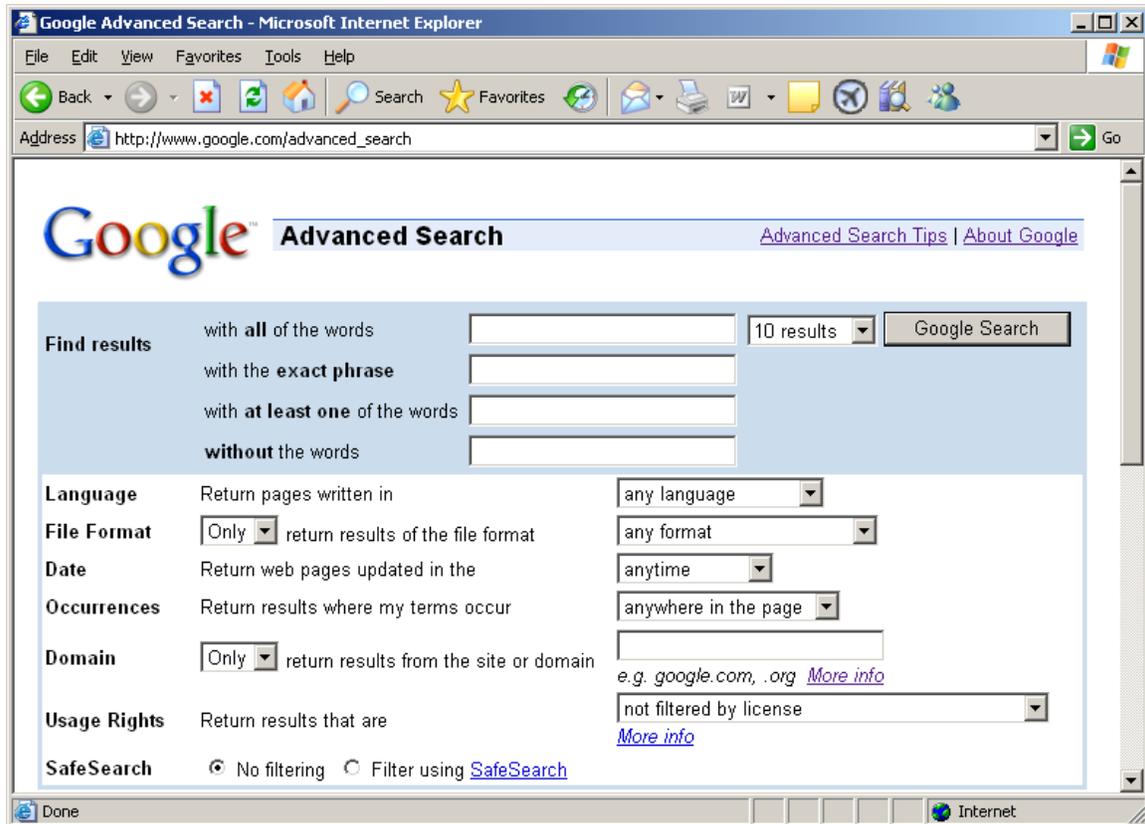
*In addition there is a [database finder](http://libcat.dartmouth.edu/search/y).*

*<http://libcat.dartmouth.edu/search/y>*



[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

- acts as a search engine
- can serve as your customized desk top organizer
- allows Boolean searching (and/not/or), defaults to search with **and**. Can eliminate terms with the – symbol before a word, or includes with the +, useful for including necessary stop words, although you could also use quotes  
*Bass –music, for fish not instruments*
- skips stop words, such as; the, and , at, etc.
- not case sensitive
- uses “”for phrase searching
- automatically stems or truncates words and allows wildcard searching with the \*
- Web directory
- See who links to your site  
*Link:www.dartmouth.edu*
- Domain search with the term **site**,  
*Admission site:www.dartmouth.edu*  
*Music site:uk*
- Can search ranges of numbers and dates  
*DVD player \$50..\$100*
  - You can find currency exchange amounts – *200 USD in GBP*
- Allows you to set preferences for language, site filters, and search result displays
- Offers several Advanced search features



- Offers specialized search features, such as:
  - Froogle – for shopping
  - Local – for information from your region
  - News – from around the world
  - Directory – categorized listings, similar to Yahoo or a library catalog
  - Scholar – searches scholarly publications online (remember to set your preferences)
  - Images – finds images from a variety of sources
  - Specialized Searches – includes US government sites
  - Google Alerts – set up an email alert to receive breaking news on a topic or news story
  - Weather – find the weather for any US location
  - Book Search
  - Movie Search
  - .... and many more options!



www.yahoo.com

- more of a subject directory than a search engine
- includes an Arts Index - <http://dir.yahoo.com/Arts/>  
& has many other user friendly features like Mail Search, and TV, etc.

- allows Boolean searching
- uses \* for truncation
- uses uppercase for exact match
- uses “” for phrase searching
- allows URL searching

### **Additional Search Engines**

Meta Search Engines such as **MetaCrawler** <http://www.metacrawler.com/>

- searches multiple search engines at once.

Bing, <http://www.bing.com>, is another popular search option from Microsoft.

Search engines should have a **help** option that will detail search strategies and any commands needed. They should also have an information option that tells you how many sites they index etc. Most search engines support simple keyword searching as a starting point. Keep in mind that what works in one search engine may not work in another.