

Tips for Searching Google

When conducting research, you will generally find that using Library resources makes searching much simpler. Our subscription services are paid for in part by your tuition, and these insure that the articles, books, and other information you find is credible, and easier to cite!

Sometimes, however, you will need or want to search online. For those instances, here are some Google tips and tricks.

Search Government/Educational Websites

You will sometimes need information from government websites, such as geographical or census data, statistics, or medical information. You may also search college or university sites for information, but please note that these can sometimes contain student-created pages, which may not always be factually correct or objective.

To search a particular domain, use Google's advanced search:

1. Select "Advanced Search" at the bottom of any search results page, or go directly to [google.com/advanced_search](https://www.google.com/advanced_search).
2. In the middle of the page, look for "Search within a site or domain."
3. In this box, type `.gov` for government sites, or `.edu` for educational pages.
4. Hit search. Notice how your search appears with the command `site:.gov` (for example). You can also type this shortcut directly into the search box!

This also works for searching whole sites. For example, try searching for your topic in *nytimes.com* for newspaper articles.

dog ownership statistics site:.gov

"Michael Phelps" site:nytimes.com

library site:greatbay.edu

Dictionary

To quickly bring up the definition for a word, search *define* followed by the word you're looking up.

define agnostic

Calculate/Convert

Google will perform calculations or conversions for you. To calculate, simply type the problem.

16 / 4

(4 x 8) + 3

To convert measurements or currency, type *X [unit] in [other unit]*.

12 USD in GBP

2 cups in ounces

Weather and Movies

You can find results specific to your area with these tools. Simply search *weather* or *movies* followed by your zip code.

weather 03801

movies 03801

Phrase/Exact Search

If you're looking for a phrase (more than one word), and want to rule out results with each word found separately on the page, put your phrase in quotation marks.

In addition to this, Google will do a fuzzy search on words that are commonly misspelled or typed differently. For example, searching *excersize* will turn up results with *exercise*, and searching *child care* will show results including *childcare*. To avoid this, and search for an exact spelling of a word, put quotation marks around the word.

"stem cell research"

"child care"

"semple"

Ignore Words

To eliminate certain words from you search, try putting a minus sign (-) in front of the undesired word.

cats -dogs

Find Device Manuals

Need to change a setting on your camera? Fix your DVD player or blender? If your electronics are malfunctioning and the manual is missing, try finding the instructions you need online, using Google to search Amazon.

1. Type in the following search: *PRODUCT filetype:pdf site:images-amazon.com*
2. Replace *PRODUCT* with the name of your product (eg. Canon Rebel camera, Sony DVD player, KitchenAid blender). Be specific if you know the model.

3. Click on a result to view, save & print the PDF.

kitchenaid mixer filetype:pdf site:images-amazon.com

Other Tips

Some other things you should keep in mind are:

- For the most part, Google does not recognize certain common words in searches—such as *the*, *and*, *or*, and *a*. You can leave these out of your search. If you want to search for a common word, put it in quotation marks.
- This is also the case for most punctuation, with the exception of dollar signs (\$) and hyphens (-).

Good luck and happy Google searching!