



## HOW GOOGLE WORKS

Google has its own way of examining and evaluating Web pages. Google's examination process reviews the entire content of a Web page, not only the page's meta-tags -- information that Web page designers maintain and manipulate -- but also all its text, headings, fonts, word location and neighboring Web pages. Google's evaluation process involves the weighted counting of links. Google says, "There is no human involvement or manipulation of results."

- Google's results must have all your search terms. Google automatically uses "AND"
- Therefore: the less you put in the more results you get; the more you put in the fewer you get.
- However, "sometimes Google includes pages in your search results that don't contain the word or phrase you searched for. The terms appear only in links pointing to the page."
- Make keywords as specific as possible, e.g., Albany instead of New York
- CapiTalizaTion doesn'T maTTER; speling may not mater
- The order of the words is important: e.g., halloween recipes vs. recipes halloween
- Links for definitions of individual words appear at the top of the results on the right
- Cached links: "Terms that match your query are highlighted on the cached version" Not the latest
- "Similar pages" link finds similar pages
- Google automatically searches word variations, e.g., "dietary" finds "diet," "diets" and "dietary"
- Use OR between words to search for synonyms you choose, e.g., vacation paris OR london
- Use ~ to search for synonyms Google chooses, e.g., food facts vs. ~food ~facts or ~wheelchair
- Use quotation marks to search phrases, e.g., "miserable failure" or "weapons of mass destruction"
- Google ignores common words like *how* and *where*. Use + to include a term, e.g., +how to ski
- You can also use " " to include a term, e.g., "how to ski"
- Use - to exclude a term, e.g., search *bass -music* for information on the fish
- Use define: to see definitions from the Web, e.g., define:java or define:murder
- Spellchecker: based on Web results, so it includes non-standard terms, like names & titles
- Limit by domain: Use site: or -site: to restrict results by type of site (.com, .edu, .gov)
- Blog search: search all blogs, not just Google's, and get updates
- Calculator: simple math (+, -, \*, /, ^, % of), conversions (100 km in miles), & constants (c)
- Co-op: use labels to rate and describe sites, like Netflix and Librarians' Internet Index
- Currency conversion: have to use special codes, e.g., 100 USD in GBP or 1 gbp to usd
- Finance: in beta, very big, covers North America, provides stocks & mutual funds, company details, news, charts, management profiles, track online portfolios, & moderated discussion groups
- Languages: Google is available in about 100 languages, including Pig Latin
- Local search: use *near* or *in* & a city or ZIP code, e.g., pizza near 13502 or pizza in utica, ny
- Movies: ratings, reviews, and times, e.g., movie:flushed away
- Music search: user reviews, song titles, and stores to purchase music, e.g., pixies
- Number searches: UPS, FedEx, USPS numbers; VIN numbers; patent numbers (patent 5123123)
- OneBox results: sometimes at the top of your results; usually include news, stocks, and weather
- Phonebook: Businesses -- search by business name, city & state or ZIP code or phone number  
People -- any part of the person's name & their location, or their phone number
- Q & A: "fact based queries," like population of japan [check out their source]
- SafeSearch: Google's adult-content filtering software; very useful when image searching



- Travel: search by airport code & airport (e.g., lax airport) or flight # (e.g., united 770)
- Translation: Google will translate into English Web pages in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, & Portuguese
- “View as html” allows you to see non-html pages without the risk of viral infection
- Weather: Search *weather 13502* for current conditions
- Watch out: Google can be manipulated, see “miserable failure”
- Google’s info pages -- under the “About Google” link -- contain a lot more information

## GOOGLE’S DIRECTORY

Mostly, you search Google by keyword. You can also search Google by subject, just like the library’s databases or book catalog, by searching its Directory, accessible under the “more >>” link. Google calls its subjects “Categories,” and these categories are like a super yellow pages, that is, an interactive hierarchy you can move through to get more specific results. The “Categories” don’t mean the sites are good. It just means the sites are supposed to be about that topic, so it’s kind of like Librarians’ Internet Index. Categories are organized by volunteers, and you can volunteer.

## OTHER GOOGLE SUBSETS

- Catalogs: A catalog of mail-order catalogs
- Book Search: “aims to help you discover books, not read them start to finish” and find reviews
  - Contains the whole book if it was published before 1922; newer books may have excerpts
  - Find nearby libraries that own the book and a link to buy the book (Google doesn’t profit)
- Checkout: 1 Google account vs. multiple vendor accounts; control spam, make & share wish lists
- Froogle: Comparison shop to find the best bargain, do local shopping, product reviews, seller ratings, make and share shopping and wish lists, available via cellphone
- Images: billions of images, with SafeSearch filters, search with only one or two terms
- Maps: draggable maps with 3 views (map, satellite, and combination); satellite images are current but not real-time, and you can get driving directions online or by cellphone
- News: Auto-generated every 15 minutes with a 30-day archive & you can set up Alerts
- Page Creator: create & edit Web pages easily without knowing technology; Google hosts the site
- Ride Finder: information is 5 minutes old or less; taxis, etc. in metro areas; via cellphone too
- Scholar: most useful for its “cited by” feature; only sometimes has the whole article
- SketchUp: make, edit and share 3-D models all online
- Writely Help Center: share, edit and publish documents online

## ADVANCED SEARCH

Google’s Advanced Search has seven ‘limiting’ options, including:

- Word choice (single word, exact phrase, OR/synonym searching, NOT/term exclusion) \*
- Language (over 30 languages, including Icelandic!)
- File format (PDF, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, WordPerfect and more) \* [very useful]
- Date updated (last 3 months, 6 months or year)
- Search for terms in the page’s title, text or URL
- Domain -- limit to or exclude from some domains (e.g., .com, .gov, .edu, .mil, .org) [very useful]

\* *Please note: Google’s spellcheck does not work on exact phrases in the Advanced Search if you limit your search by file format.*