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Google Search Tips
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Being able to effectively find the information you need on the Internet is valuable skill that I recommend everyone work at. You may oftentimes find it to be the quickest way to find the information and answers you need. Whether you need travel information, recommendations on a new product, or a solution to software or hardware problem, with practice you will learn to find much of what you need without the delay of waiting to talk to your favorite computer expert, email CUGG, or call your computer vendor.

The following content was the basis of my presentation on searching with Google at the September 2015 meeting of CUGG. This information is only a summary of useful tips and techniques. You may find more information by searching the Internet for a phrase such as "searching with Google." You will also find a few articles that I wrote about Google years ago here.

Narrow your search as much as possible

Using precise phrases can help you to quickly find the information you need, by weeding out irrelevant results. For instance, the word "windows" could be a reference to Microsoft operating system or the glass panes in your house. Searching for a movie such as "Star Wars" can produce more results than you need, that say searching for a specific movie such as "Star Wars Empire Strikes Back." The following are some suggestions.

- Use short phrases—three to five words if possible. Refine as necessary to home in on what you need.
- Refine your results with the links to Web, Images, Maps, Shopping, and More, which you will see at the top of the Google web page.
- Specify the software version, which may be important to finding a solution to a particular problem. An example would be to search for "Word 2010 cannot save file."
- Specify what you want to know about a company. For example, to find Hewlett-Packard's latest stock information, search for "HP stock quote."
- To find information about a song, such as the lyrics to "Yellow Submarine," search for "Yellow Submarine lyrics."
- To find information about the movie "Yellow Submarine," search for "Yellow Submarine movie."
- To find information about a product, specify the model number, as in "Canon PowerShot A710."
- When shopping for a product, using the word "shop", as in "shop Canon PowerShot A710."
- For a computer error message, enter the exact phrase, such as "page cannot be displayed," or "Windows Update error 0x800F081F."

Quick tips

Many times, in addition to a list of web links that match your search criteria, Google may also present a

quick snippet of information about your topic at the top of the page. The following are examples to try yourself to see what Google shows.

- Find the latest score of your favorite NFL team by searching for "Denver Broncos."
- A quick bio of your favorite celebrity is as simple as searching for "Sandra Bullock."
- Finding a quick summary about a country by searching for "Argentina."
- Finding a map of a country (or other place in the world) by searching for "Monaco map."
- You can find map directions to the executive mansion with "directions White House."
- Find information about your favorite animal with a phrase such as "red panda."
- Word definitions may be found with a phrase such as "define defenestration."
- Google can perform math computations such as (9 * 8) / 3. Searching for such a phrase will bring up a virtual calculator with more advanced functions including logarithmic and trigonometric functions.
- A currency conversion from dollars to yen is available by searching for "$100 in Yen."
- A units conversion from yards to meters is available by searching for "100 yards in meters."
- To search for numeric ranges—such as measurements, prices, or years—use a double period, as in: "10..35 lb," "$300..$500," "2010..2011"

Advanced Search

Google offers many advanced search capabilities, of which a few are illustrated below. You may take advantage of many advanced features by using Google's search form here.

- To limit results to a particular website such as www.cugg.org, you may use the "site" function as follows: "Windows site:cugg.org"
- To limit the search results to websites within a particular domain or region of the world, such as Australia, you may specify only the domain suffix as follows: "kangaroos site:.au"
- You may use + and - to include or omit words in the results. For example, to search for information about windows, but not in regards to Microsoft Windows, specify: "Windows -Microsoft"
- You may use OR to include multiple options, as when looking for information about two different universities: "admissions Yale OR Harvard."