Google Web Search Help

Keyword Phrasing

Brainstorm the keywords needed to perform a good search. You may have to try many different keywords to find exactly what you need.

Phrase search (“” “”)

By putting double quotes around a set of words, you are telling Google to consider the exact words in that exact order without any change. Google already uses the order and the fact that the words are together as a very strong signal and will stray from it only for a good reason, so quotes are usually unnecessary.

Search within a specific website (site:)

Google allows you to specify that your search results MUST come from a given website. For example, let’s say you want to find information from CNN.com about Egypt so you would type in Egypt site:cnn.com

You can also specify the TYPE of sites that come up by typing in site: followed by the domain. For example, let’s say you want to find government websites over Kansas. The correct way to search would be to type in Kansas site:.gov

Terms you want to exclude (-)

Attaching a minus sign immediately BEFORE a word indicates that you do not want pages that contain that word to appear in your results. For example, in the query (anti-virus software), the minus sign is used as a hyphen and because there is no space between – and virus, google recognizes it as such. However, if you typed in)anti-virus –software), google will search for the words ‘anti-virus’ but exclude references to software. Another example would be jaguar –cars –football –os

Fill in the Blank (*)

The *, or wildcard, is a little-known feature that can be very powerful. If you include * within a query, it tells Google to try to treat the star as a placeholder for any unknown term(s) and then find the best matches. For example, the search (Google *) will give you results about many of Google’s products. The query (Kansas legislatures voted * on the * bill) will give you stories about different votes on different bills. Note that the operator works only on whole words, not parts of words.

Exceptions to the rule

Words that are commonly used, like ‘the,’ ‘a,’ and ‘for,’ are usually ignored (but even that can have exceptions like when you search for (The Who) – Google will bring up the band but when you search (Who), Google will bring up World Health Organization)

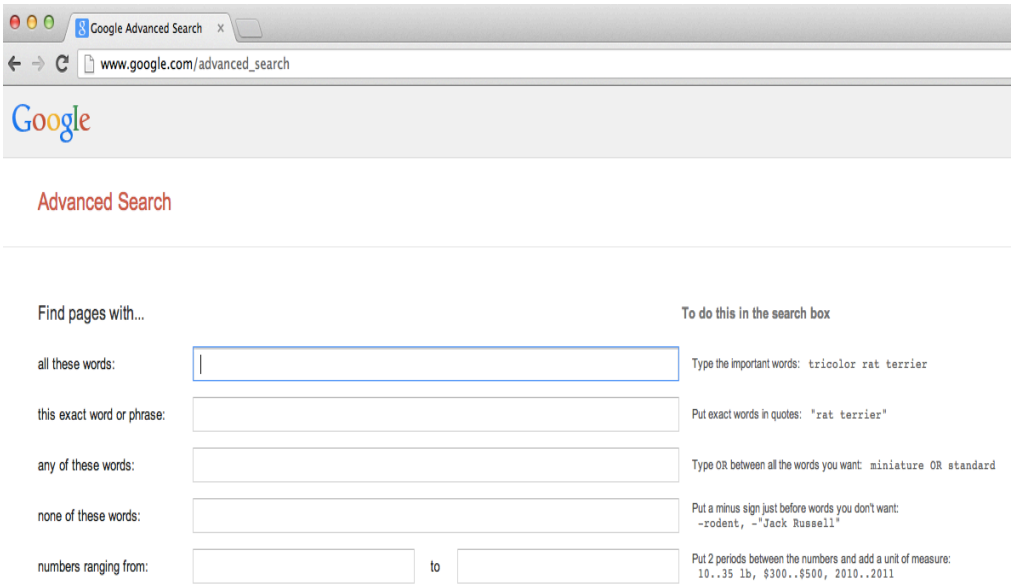
Some punctuation terms are not ignored such as C++ or $

The Underscore symbol _ is not ignored when it connects two words, e.g. LM_NET

Search Features To Try:

Google Advanced Search: To help limit your search results down to exactly what you need, use the Google Advanced Search Feature. After you have performed your search and hit enter, click on the gear icon located in the top right corner.

On the Advanced Search page, you can enter your search terms or numbers and then choose one or more filters to modify the results you see. These filters can help you find the most relevant information possible the first time you search.

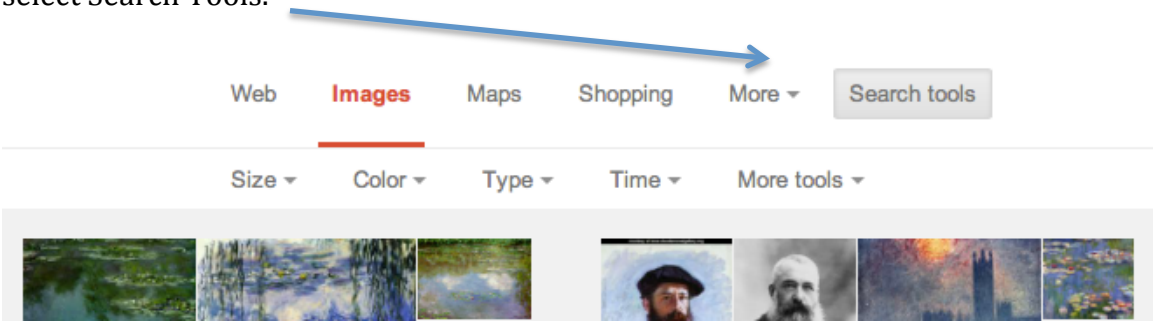


You can use one or more of the following filters when you visit the Advanced Search page. In bold are two features I use the most:

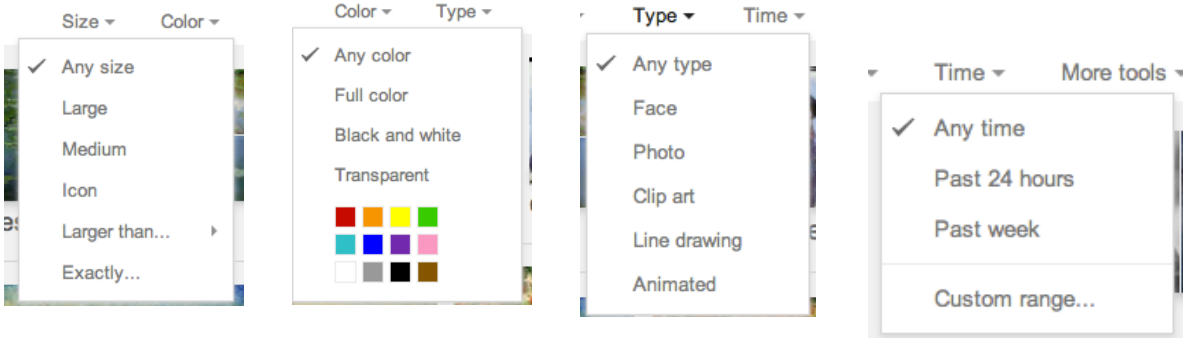
- Language
- Region
- **Last updated date** (use this to limit the websites to only those that have been recently updated to help find the most current information)
- Site or domain
- Where the search terms appear on the page
- SafeSearch filter turned on or off
- Reading level
- **File type** (use this to limit the information you find to a specific type such as only music files or PDF files).
- Usage rights

Advanced Image Searches

Google also lets you do advanced searching when you are looking for an image as well. Once you have typed in the search terms and select image, you can select Search Tools.



You now will have the option to narrow your search by the following criteria.



There is even more. Try one of these specialized search tools.

Soople : Soople at www.soople.com has all of the search tools as in Advanced Search but is displayed in a more graphic and easy to use format.

Google Books: Books.Google.com One of the latest search tools that Google is making available is e-books. Their goal is to scan in every book so that people can search and find the information just like on websites. You can purchase e-books from Google, often at a low price, and read them from any device that uses the internet. As an added bonus, there are over 4,000 titles that you can read for no charge at all.

Google Scholar: Google Scholar can be found at **Scholar.google.com** It is a place where you can find academic and professional resources for your scholarly papers and/or work. Many of the articles do require a fee to use but there are some that are free.