

### What can we help you with?

### The Essentials of Google Search

Doing a search on Google is easy. Simply type one or more search terms (the words or phrase that best describe the information you want to find) into the search box and hit the 'Enter' key or click on the Google Search button.

 

In response, Google produces a results page: a list of web pages related to your search terms, with the most relevant page appearing first, then the next, and so on.

Here are some basic tips to help you maximize the effectiveness of your search:

- [Choosing search terms](#)
- [Capitalization](#)
- [Automatic "and" queries](#)
- [Optional & excluded words](#)
- [Alternate words](#)
- [Phrase searches](#)
- [Negative terms](#)
- [I'm Feeling Lucky](#)

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#### Choosing search terms

Choosing the right search terms is the key to finding the information you need.

Start with the obvious – if you're looking for general information on Hawaii, try **Hawaii**.

But it's often advisable to use multiple search terms; if you're planning a Hawaiian vacation, you'll do better with **vacation Hawaii** than with either **vacation** or **Hawaii** by themselves. And **vacation Hawaii golf** may produce even better (or, depending on your perspective, worse) results.

 

You might also ask yourself if your search terms are sufficiently specific. It's better to search on **luxury hotels Maui** than on **tropical island hotels**. But choose your search terms carefully; Google looks for the search terms you chose, so **luxury hotels Maui** will probably deliver better results than **really nice places to spend the night in Maui**.

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#### Capitalization

Google searches are **NOT** case sensitive. All letters, regardless of how you type them, will be understood as lower case. For example, searches for **george washington**, **George Washington**, and **gEoRgE wAsHiNgToN** will all return the same results.

## Automatic "and" queries

By default, Google only returns pages that include all of your search terms. There is no need to include "and" between terms. Keep in mind that the order in which the terms are typed will affect the search results. To restrict a search further, just include more terms. For example, to plan a vacation to Hawaii, simply type ***vacation hawaii***.

## Optional and automatically excluded words

Google usually returns pages that use all of the words you search for. However, if some of the words in your search don't appear on the best pages we find, we'll also consider pages that don't include them. For example, when you search for recipe for ***a cheese souffle***, we might return recipes that don't happen to include the words "for" or "a."

Very common words (often called "stopwords"), such as "the," "and," or "of," are usually dropped from searches because they typically don't convey much information compared to the other words in a search. We might also treat words as optional if they're redundant given the other words in your search. For example, in ***UV sun protective swimwear***, requiring "UV" to appear might exclude high quality pages, so we may exclude "UV" in compiling your results.

Even when words are treated as optional, they're still taken into account in assessing how relevant a page is to your query. For example, Google shows different results for ***University of Pennsylvania*** than we do for ***University in Pennsylvania***.

Generally, excluding common words allows us to return better search results. If one of these words is important to your search, you can precede it with a plus sign "+" to ensure that Google requires it to appear in every search result. So, for example, a search for ***+The Red Violin*** will return only results that include the word "the."

## Alternate words

Google usually returns pages that use all of the words you included in your search. Sometimes, however, we'll consider other words as substitutes if we think that doing so will improve the results we show you. For example, if you search for ***dance marathons***, Google's results might include pages that talk about a ***dance marathon***. On the result pages, we'll highlight occurrences of both the original and alternate search terms that appear in titles and snippets.

There are several ways Google identifies alternate words:

- **Stemming** finds alternate forms of a word, such as singular or plural variations.
- **Synonyms** can help someone searching for ***UC Berkeley law school*** find pages that mention ***Boalt law school***.
- **Abbreviations** expand search terms so that ***rc model airplanes*** might also find pages about ***radio control model airplanes***.
- Words might be **combined or split** so that we return pages about ***organic dog food*** when you enter ***organic dogfood***.
- Because it's often easier to type words without accents, a search for a ***coup d'etat*** might return pages that talk about a ***coup d'état***.

Usually, the alternate words we add to your results will help your search, but we understand that in some cases you want to restrict your search to precisely the terms you enter. In that case, you can precede a

word with a plus sign "+" to tell Google you're looking for that exact term. So, for example, if you search for ***dance +marathons***, we'll only return pages that are talking about more than one.

### Phrase searches

Sometimes you'll only want results that include an exact phrase. In this case, simply put quotation marks around your search terms.

 

Phrase searches are particularly effective if you're searching for proper names ("***George Washington***"), lyrics ("***the long and winding road***"), or other famous phrases ("***This was their finest hour***").

### Negative terms

If your search term has more than one meaning (***bass***, for example, could refer to fishing or music) you can focus your search by putting a minus sign ("-") in front of words related to the meaning you want to avoid.

For example, here's how you'd find pages about bass-heavy lakes, but not bass-heavy music:

 

Note: when you include a negative term in your search, be sure to include a space before the minus sign.

### And finally... "I'm Feeling Lucky"

After you've entered your search terms, you might want to try the "I'm Feeling Lucky" button, which takes you straight to the most relevant website that Google found for your query. You won't see the search results page at all, but if you did, the "I'm Feeling Lucky" site would be listed on top.

For example, if you're looking for the Stanford University homepage, just enter ***Stanford*** and click "I'm Feeling Lucky" instead of the Google Search button. Google will take you directly to "www.stanford.edu."

  

## Advanced Search Made Easy

Once you know the basics of Google search, you might want to try Advanced Search, which offers numerous options for making your searches more precise and getting more useful results.

You can reach this page by clicking (no surprise) the "[Advanced Search](#)" link on the Google home page.

Here's what the Advanced Search page looks like:

Google **Advanced Search** [Advanced Search Tips](#) | [About Google](#)

Use the form below and your advanced search will appear here

**Find web pages that have...**

all these words:

this exact wording or phrase:  [tip](#)

one or more of these words:  OR  OR  [tip](#)

**But don't show pages that have...**

any of these unwanted words:  [tip](#)

**Need more tools?**

Results per page:

Language:

File type:

Search within a site or domain:   
(e.g. youtube.com, .edu)

**+** [Date, usage rights, numeric range, and more](#)

Date: (how recent the page is)

[Usage rights:](#)

Where your keywords show up:

Region:

Numeric range:  ..   
(e.g. \$1500..\$3000)

[SafeSearch:](#)  Off  On

**Page-specific tools:**

Find pages similar to the page:

Find pages that link to the page:

**Topic-specific search engines from Google:**

[Google Book Search](#) [Apple Macintosh](#) [U.S. Government](#)  
[Google Code Search](#) [New!](#) [BSD Unix](#) [Universities](#)  
[Google Scholar](#) [Linux](#)  
[Google News archive search](#) [Microsoft](#)

Click the plus box to expand this section

You can do a lot more with Google search than just typing in search terms. With Advanced Search, you can search only for pages:

- that contain ALL the search terms you type in
- that contain the exact phrase you type in
- that contain at least one of the words you type in
- that do NOT contain any of the words you type in
- written in a certain language
- created in a certain file format
- that have been updated within a certain period of time
- that contain numbers within a certain range
- within a certain domain, or website
- that don't contain "adult" material

You can also improve your searches by adding "operators" to your search terms in the Google search box, or selecting them from the [Advanced Search page](#).

**Advanced search operators include:**

- Include Search
- Synonym Search
- OR Search
- Domain Search
- Numrange Search
- Other Advanced Search Features

[Complete list of advanced operators](#)  
[Print-and-save Google Cheat Sheet](#)

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### "+" search

Google may return some search results that include variations of your search words, such as synonyms and plurals. We may also omit common words and characters such as *a*, *the*, *how*, and other digits and letters which may slow down your search without improving the results. We'll indicate if a word has been excluded or modified by displaying details on the results page below the search box.

If a word is essential to getting the results you want, or if you want to ensure a word is included exactly as you enter it, add a "+" sign immediately in front of it in the search box. (Be sure to also include a space between the "+" sign and any other words in your search.)

For example, here's how to ensure that Google includes the "I" in a search for **Star Wars, Episode I**:

Star Wars Episode +I	Google Search
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### Synonym search

If you want to search not only for your search term but also for its synonyms, place the tilde sign ("~") immediately in front of your search term.

For example, here's how to search for food facts and nutrition and cooking information:

~food ~facts	Google Search
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### "OR" search

To find pages that include either of two search terms, add an uppercase OR between the terms.

For example, here's how to search for a vacation in either London or Paris:

vacation london OR paris	Google Search
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### Domain search

You can use Google to search only within one specific website by entering the search terms you're looking for, followed by the word "site" and a colon followed by the domain name.

For example, here's how you'd find admission information on the Stanford University site:

admission site:w w w .stanford.edu	Google Search
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### Numrange search

Feel like a number? Numrange searches for results containing numbers in a given range. Just add two numbers, separated by two periods, with no spaces, into the search box along with your search terms. You can use Numrange to set ranges for everything from dates ( **Willie Mays 1950..1960**) to weights ( **5000..10000 kg truck**). But be sure to specify a unit of measurement or some other indicator of what the number range represents.

For example, here's how you'd search for a DVD player that costs between \$50 and \$100:

DVD player \$50..\$100	Google Search
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### Other advanced search features

- **Google Local:** Find products and services in a specific U.S. town or zip code.
- **Language:** specify in which language you'd like your results.
- **Technology Search:** find information related to Apple Macintosh, BSD Unix, Linux or Microsoft.
- **Date:** restrict your results to the past three, six, or twelve month periods.
- **Occurrences:** specify where your search terms occur on the page - anywhere on the page, in the title, or in the url.
- **Domains:** search only a specific website, or exclude that site from your search.
- **SafeSearch:** Eliminates adult sites from search results. [ [Learn more.](#) ]

# Search Results Page

Your search results page is packed with information. Here's a quick guide to decoding it.

Each underlined item is a search result that the Google search engine found for your search terms. The first item is the most relevant match we found, the second is the next-most relevant, and so on down the list. Clicking any underlined item will take you to the related web page.

Here's a sample search results page, along with brief explanations of the various types of information about your results that you can find there.

The image shows a screenshot of a Google search results page for the query "beach". The page is annotated with green letters and lines pointing to specific features:

- A**: Points to the navigation tabs (Web, Images, Video, News, Maps, Gmail, more).
- B**: Points to the search input field containing the text "beach".
- C**: Points to the "Search" button.
- D**: Points to the "Advanced Search" and "Preferences" links.
- E**: Points to the search results summary bar showing "Results 1 - 10 of about 318,000,000 for beach [definition]. (0.12 seconds)".
- F**: Points to the "Image results for beach" section.
- G**: Points to the navigation tabs (Web, Images, Groups, Video, Maps) in the results section.
- H**: Points to the three image thumbnails displayed under "Image results for beach".
- I**: Points to the first search result: "Beach - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia".
- J**: Points to the snippet of text for the first Wikipedia result.
- K**: Points to the second search result: "The Beach (2000/I)".
- L**, **M**, and **N**: Point to the snippet of text for the second result.
- O**: Points to the "More results from en.wikipedia.org" link.
- P**: Points to the "The Beach (2000/I)" result.
- Q**: Points to the third search result: "Welcome! - The Beach Waterpark, a regional attraction located in ...".
- R**: Points to the "Searches related to: beach" section.

The search results include:

- Image results for beach (three thumbnails).
- Beach - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. A beach, or strand, is a geological formation consisting of loose rock particles such as sand, gravel, shingle, pebbles, cobble, or even shell along the ...
- The Beach (2000/I) - IMDb. The Beach on IMDb: Movies, TV, Celebs, and more...
- Welcome! - The Beach Waterpark, a regional attraction located in ... The Beach Waterpark located in Greater Cincinnati Ohio is 35 acres filled with 2 million gallons of water fun, 40000 square feet of white sand, ...
- Searches related to: beach (beach pictures, beach camera, beach photos, beach waterpark, beach items, beach decor, beach clip art, cancun).

- A. Google navigation bar**  
Click the link for the Google service you want to use. You can search the web, browse for images, news, maps and videos, and navigate to Gmail and other Google products.
- B. Search field**  
To do a search on Google, just type in a few descriptive search terms, then hit "Enter" or click the "Search" button.
- C. Search button**  
Click this button to submit a search query. You can also submit your query by hitting the 'Enter' key.
- D. Advanced search**  
This links to a page on which you can do more precise searches. [ [Learn more about Advanced Search](#) ]
- E. Preferences**  
This links to a page that lets you set your personal search preferences, including your language, the number of results you'd like to see per page, and whether you want your search results screened by our SafeSearch filter to avoid seeing adult material.
- F. Search statistics**  
This line describes your search and indicates the total number of results, as well as how long the search took to complete.
- G. Top contextual navigation links**  
These dynamic links suggest content types that are most relevant to your search term. You can click any of these links in order to see more results of a particular content type.
- H. Integrated results**  
Google's search technology searches across all types of content and ranks the results that are most relevant to your search. Your results may be from multiple content types, including images, news, books, maps and videos.
- I. Page title**  
The first line of any search result item is the title of the web page that we found. If you see a URL instead of a title, then either the page has no title or we haven't yet indexed that page's full content, but its place in our index still tells us that it's a good match for your query.
- J. Text below the title**  
This is an excerpt from the results page with your query terms bolded. If we expanded the range of your search using stemming technology, the variations of your search terms that we searched for will also be bolded.
- K. URL of result**  
This is the web address of the returned result.
- L. Size**  
This number is the size of the text portion of the web page, and gives you some idea of how quickly it might display. You won't see a size figure for sites that we haven't yet indexed.
- M. Cached**  
Clicking this link will show you the contents of the web page when we last indexed it. If for some reason the site link doesn't connect you to the current page, you might still find the information you need in the cached version.
- N. Similar pages**  
When you select the Similar Pages link for a particular result, Google automatically scouts the web for pages that are related to this result.
- O. Indented result**  
When Google finds multiple results from the same website, the most relevant result is listed first, with other relevant pages from that site indented below it.
- P. More results**  
If we find more than two results from the same site, the remaining results can be accessed by clicking



on the "More results from..." link.

**Q. Plus Box results**

Clicking the "plus box" icon reveals additional info about your search result. You'll see this feature for pages related to publicly traded U.S. stocks, local businesses, and Google and YouTube videos.

**R. Related search terms**

Sometimes the best search terms for what you're looking for are related to the ones you actually entered. Click these related search terms to see alternate search results.

## Search Preferences

We want your web search to be exactly the way you want it. Here's a quick review of the search options you can set (and, of course, revise whenever you like) on your [Google Preferences](#) page.

- [SafeSearch filtering](#)
- [Language options](#)
- [Number of results](#)
- [New results window](#)

### SafeSearch filtering

Many users prefer not to have adult sites included in search results (especially if their kids use the same computer). Google's SafeSearch screens for sites that contain explicit sexual content and deletes them from your search results. No filter is 100% accurate, but SafeSearch should eliminate most inappropriate material.

You can choose from among three SafeSearch settings:

- **Moderate filtering** excludes most explicit images from Google Image Search results but doesn't filter ordinary web search results. This is your default SafeSearch setting; you'll receive moderate filtering unless you change it.
- **Strict filtering** applies SafeSearch filtering to all your search results (i.e., both image search and ordinary web search).

And finally...

- **No Filtering**, as you've probably figured out, turns off SafeSearch filtering completely.

You can also adjust your SafeSearch settings on the [Advanced Search](#) or the [Advanced Image Search](#) pages on a per search basis.

We do our best to keep SafeSearch as up-to-date and comprehensive as possible, but inappropriate sites will sometimes slip through the cracks. If you have SafeSearch activated and still find websites containing offensive content in your results, please [contact us](#) and we'll investigate it.

For more pointers on keeping your family safe on the web, please read [Google's Tips for Online Safety](#).

### Language options

The value of search is universal, but when it comes to languages, universality means getting specific. Our language search feature lets you search for web pages in the language that you choose. Because these searches only see part of the Web, we suggest using "Search Web pages written in any language" as your default option. Specifying a language can be useful, however, when you want to find content in a particular tongue.

You can also set your preferences to show you the Google homepage, site messages and buttons in a specific language. Below you'll find the current list of "interface languages" that we offer. If your own preferred language isn't listed, we encourage you to help us add it to Google by joining our [volunteer translator program](#).

Finally, this isn't on the preferences page, but while we're talking languages, we thought we'd mention that our translation software can translate sites published in Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Portuguese into English. Interested? Check out our [Language Tools](#).

- [Afrikaans](#)
- [Albanian](#)
- [Amharic](#)
- [Arabic](#)
- [Filipino](#)
- [Finnish](#)
- [French](#)
- [Frisian](#)
- [Laothian](#)
- [Latin](#)
- [Latvian](#)
- [Lithuanian](#)
- [Sesotho](#)
- [Sindhi](#)
- [Sinhalese](#)
- [Slovak](#)

- [Armenian](#)
- [Azerbaijani](#)
- [Basque](#)
- [Belarusian](#)
- [Bengali](#)
- [Bihari](#)
- [Bork, bork, bork!](#)
- [Bosnian](#)
- [Breton](#)
- [Bulgarian](#)
- [Catalan](#)
- [Chinese \(Simplified\)](#)
- [Chinese \(Traditional\)](#)
- [Croatian](#)
- [Czech](#)
- [Danish](#)
- [Dutch](#)
- [Elmer Fudd](#)
- [English](#)
- [Esperanto](#)
- [Estonian](#)
- [Faroese](#)
- [Galician](#)
- [Georgian](#)
- [German](#)
- [Greek](#)
- [Guarani](#)
- [Gujarati](#)
- [Hacker](#)
- [Hebrew](#)
- [Hindi](#)
- [Hungarian](#)
- [Icelandic](#)
- [Indonesian](#)
- [Interlingua](#)
- [Irish](#)
- [Italian](#)
- [Japanese](#)
- [Javanese](#)
- [Kannada](#)
- [Klingon](#)
- [Korean](#)
- [Kurdish](#)
- [Kyrgyz](#)
- [Macedonian](#)
- [Malay](#)
- [Malayalam](#)
- [Maltese](#)
- [Marathi](#)
- [Mongolian](#)
- [Nepali](#)
- [Norwegian](#)
- [Norwegian \(Nynorsk\)](#)
- [Occitan](#)
- [Oriya](#)
- [Persian](#)
- [Pig Latin](#)
- [Polish](#)
- [Portuguese \(Brazil\)](#)
- [Portuguese \(Portugal\)](#)
- [Punjabi](#)
- [Romanian](#)
- [Russian](#)
- [Scots Gaelic](#)
- [Serbian](#)
- [Serbo-Croatian](#)
- [Slovenian](#)
- [Somali](#)
- [Spanish](#)
- [Sundanese](#)
- [Swahili](#)
- [Swedish](#)
- [Tamil](#)
- [Telugu](#)
- [Thai](#)
- [Tigrinya](#)
- [Turkish](#)
- [Turkmen](#)
- [Twi](#)
- [Uighur](#)
- [Ukrainian](#)
- [Urdu](#)
- [Uzbek](#)
- [Vietnamese](#)
- [Welsh](#)
- [Xhosa](#)
- [Yiddish](#)
- [Zulu](#)

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### Number of results

Unless you change this preference, you'll see 10 search results per page. We set it this way because this produces the fastest response time. But if you want to see more results per page, you can increase the number to 20, 30, 50 or 100.

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### New results window

Ordinarily, when you search with Google, your search page is replaced by a search results page. If you'd prefer to keep your main search page open, you can set this preference option to open your search results in a new browser window.

Save your preferences when finished and **return to search**.

Save Preferences

## Global Preferences

(changes apply to all Google services)

### Interface Language

Display Google tips and messages in:

If you do not find your native language in the pulldown above, you can help Google create it through our [Google in Your Language program](#).

### Search Language

Search for pages written in any language ([Recommended](#)).

Prefer pages written in these language(s):

- |  |                                    |                                     |                                     |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic                | <input type="checkbox"/> English   | <input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian | <input type="checkbox"/> Russian    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian              | <input type="checkbox"/> Esperanto | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian    | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbian    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Belarusian            | <input type="checkbox"/> Estonian  | <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese   | <input type="checkbox"/> Slovak     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgarian             | <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino  | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean     | <input type="checkbox"/> Slovenian  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catalan               | <input type="checkbox"/> Finnish   | <input type="checkbox"/> Latvian    | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese (Simplified)  | <input type="checkbox"/> French    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lithuanian | <input type="checkbox"/> Swedish    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese (Traditional) | <input type="checkbox"/> German    | <input type="checkbox"/> Norwegian  | <input type="checkbox"/> Thai       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Croatian              | <input type="checkbox"/> Greek     | <input type="checkbox"/> Persian    | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Czech                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Hebrew    | <input type="checkbox"/> Polish     | <input type="checkbox"/> Ukrainian  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Danish                | <input type="checkbox"/> Hungarian | <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dutch                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Icelandic | <input type="checkbox"/> Romanian   |                                     |

### SafeSearch Filtering

[Google's SafeSearch](#) blocks web pages containing explicit sexual content from appearing in search results.

- Use strict filtering (Filter both explicit text and explicit images)
- Use moderate filtering (Filter explicit images only - default behavior)
- Do not filter my search results.

Google's default (10 results) provides the fastest results.

Display  results per page.

## Number of Results

## Results Window

Open search results in a new browser window.

## Subscribed Links

You must have a Google Account to use Subscribed Links. [Sign in](#) to your Google Account to get started, or create one if you don't already have one.

**Save** your preferences when finished and **return to search**.

[Save Preferences](#)

(Note: Setting preferences will not work if you have disabled cookies in your browser.)

