

EFFECTIVE INTERNET SEARCHING

Search Engines

Try other search engines apart from Google eg. search.yahoo.com

www.bing.com

www.ask.com

If you just type in one word you will receive too many references to sites and they may not be exactly what you need.

We need to learn to design effective searches tailor made to give us exactly what we require.

Be as specific as possible when typing in your search otherwise you will get too much information which is not relevant.

Eg. Sports – too much information

“sports coaching” – less information which is more meaningful.

Carefully work out what your keywords should be. Think of words relevant to the topic and alternate terms

Eg. “climate change”, “global warming”, “greenhouse effect”

Use the plus and minus signs

- Use a plus sign to specify that all documents have that word, or use a minus sign to specify that none of the documents have that word:

eg +carrot +cake: the word **cake** must be in any document found by the search

+banks–river: the word **river** must not be in any document found by the search.

Use double quotes for phrases

- Enclose phrases in double quotes

Eg. “Prime Ministers of Australia”

This will help you weed out unnecessary references. In the example above you should not get pages about ministers of religion or prime numbers

Here are some examples of good searches using double quotes and the plus and minus signs.

- A search for +swimming +“Australian team” +statistics will return more useful sites than just swimming Australia
- “John Howard” +actor –“prime minister” will bring up articles on the actor only.
- Diabetes +children +Australia should not return articles about adults with diabetes who live overseas.



Use the wildcard * to broaden your search

*eg: Gold * will find gold, goldfish, goldfinger and golden*



Other tips

- Leave out common words such as the, in and at
- Many search tools look for word variations eg. Tasmania will match to Tasmanian, Tasmania's and Tasmanians
- In Google if you type define word eg. define garrulous: it will look up definitions for you

Using Advanced search features

Use the Boolean terms AND, OR, NOT in your search

AND - only those resources containing both terms are located. Eg cooking AND fish will locate pages that have both cooking and fish on them

OR - finds those resources containing either of the terms or both cooking OR fish will locate pages containing just cooking or pages containing just fish or pages containing both fish and cooking.

NOT - finds pages that include the first term and not the second cooking NOT fish gives pages with cooking on them but excludes pages that also have fish on them

