

# TOP 10 TIPS FOR SEARCHING THE INTERNET



## **TIP 1: Bookmark and use multiple search engines.**

- Although Google is the most comprehensive search engine to date, valuable information can be gained by utilizing multiple search engines (Dodge, 2008; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).
- The type of information you are seeking helps determine which search engine you should utilize (Dodge, 2006; Noodle Tools Inc., 2009).
  - o See:  
<http://www.noodletools.com/debbie/literacies/information/5locate/adviceengine.html> or <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/searching/specialized.html>
- According to SEO Consultants (2009), the top five search engines in the U.S. are: Google, Yahoo!, Bing, Ask, and AOL Search. Google received 70.46% of hits (SEO Consultants, 2009).

## **TIP 2: Create a word web prior to a search.**

- List the search topic and then brainstorm words and ideas related to it. This will help create a broad list of related search terms that can yield more results (Google, 2009; UC Berkeley, 2009; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).

## **TIP 3: Use BOOLEAN logic to narrow or broaden your search.**

- Boolean logic is a system designed to produce more precise searches by including the operators AND, OR, and NOT between search terms. It was created by and named after a British mathematician named George Boole in the 1800s (ABC, 2009; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).
- When putting Boolean operators AND, OR, or NOT between two search terms always capitalize them. Some search engines require Boolean operators to be capitalized (ABC, 2009; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).
- Use AND or NOT to narrow a search. You can substitute the – sign for NOT and the + sign for AND if desired. Use OR to broaden a search (ABC 2009; UC Berkeley, 2009; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).

## **TIP 4: Use only the lower case and singular form of words.**

- While Google is not case sensitive, other search engines may be. Get into the habit of using lower case letters when searching to avoid this issue (Dodge, 2001; Google, 2009; SearchforAncestors.com, 2009).
- Making a search plural means you will only find the plural version. Using the singular version will list singular and plural results (SearchforAncestors.com, 2009).

**TIP 5: Put quotations around multiple words and phrases.**

- Putting quotations around multiple words and phrases will ensure that the search looks for sources with the words exactly how they appear within the quotations (Dodge, 2001; Google, 2009; UC Berkeley, 2009).

**TIP 6: Use an asterisk (\*) as a wildcard.**

- An asterisk in a word represents missing letters. By shortening a search term and adding an asterisk, the search engine will retrieve hits with variations of the term. For example, *librar\** will return results with *library*, *libraries*, and *librarian* in them (Dodge, 2001; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).

**TIP 7: Use a title tag to search for key words in just the title.**

- Add *title:* prior to your search terms to search within just the titles of web sites (Dodge, 2001; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).

**TIP 8: Use a link tag to search the web sites that are linked to a site.**

- Add *link:* and then the site's URL. Add the URL directly after the colon. Do not leave a space (November Learning, 2009; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).
- Altavista is a better search engine for this command, but Google works too (November Learning, 2009).

**TIP 9: Use a host or site tag to narrow results.**

- Add *host:* or *site:* before or after search terms to locate sites that are in a specific computer, server, or location (November learning, 2009; USC Beaufort Library, 2009).
- For example, *library + host:edu* will retrieve only library web sites from institutions of higher education.
  - o *Host:* does NOT work in Google
- For example, *library + site:uk* will retrieve only library web sites from the United Kingdom.
- Go to the following web site for a complete list of domain extensions:  
[http://goes.gsfc.nasa.gov/text/web\\_country\\_codes.html](http://goes.gsfc.nasa.gov/text/web_country_codes.html)

**TIP 10: If you find a dead link, go to <http://www.archive.org>**

- In the Way Back Machine enter or paste the URL to locate prior versions of a web page (Internet Archive, n. d.; November Learning, 2009).

## References

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