

Google searches a lot of information. Which is good, because you can probably find what you're looking for. But it's not always easy to find what you need in all that information. Use smarter searching and you can find exactly what you need.

## Starting your search

### 1. Keep it simple

You don't have to type in lots of words. If you use too many words it can confuse Google or get you lots of irrelevant results. Just use the important words in your search. Instead of searching for *what is the best way to prepare for a job interview* just type *prepare for job interview*. Don't search for *how do I repair a flat tyre?* Search for *repair flat tyre*.

### 2. But don't be afraid to add words

Sometimes a simple search gets too many results and you need to narrow it down. For example:

First try: *job interview*

Second try: *preparing for job interview*

Third try: *how to prepare for job interview*

### 3. Choose the words the page will use

Try to use the kind of words that the page you're looking for will use. For example, don't search for *my head hurts*, search for *headache*. Replace *my tyre is flat* with *repair flat tyre*.

### 4. Use Google's tabs

Google has collection of tabs that show at the top of your search results. Use these to narrow down your search. E.g. if you want recent news articles, use the **News** tab or if you want the music video and not the song lyrics, use the **Video** tab (which searches more than just YouTube).

## Narrowing your search

### Punctuation and Search operators

-	Use a hyphen before a word to exclude it from your search. For example, if you want to know about the Jaguar (the car) you can stop getting results about the jaguar (the animal): search for <i>jaguar -animal</i> Make sure you don't put a space after the hyphen! NB: Choose your words carefully so you don't exclude sites that would have information you need.
" "	Put a word or a phrase in quotation marks and Google will only look for the words in that order and that spelling. Make sure you spell the word correctly! E.g. <i>"climate change"</i>
*	An asterisk can be used as a placeholder when you're not sure of a word. Especially helpful for song lyrics and proverbs. E.g. <i>smells like *spirit</i>
..	Use two periods (with no spaces) to search on a number range. e.g.: <i>chair \$100..\$150</i> e.g. <i>2010..2015</i>
site:	You can use this to search a specific website for your information. You can also search for a type of website. E.g. if you want to search government websites because you think they will have more trustworthy information: <i>diabetes site:govt.nz</i> Government sites: search <i>govt.nz</i> or <i>gov</i> Educational sites: search <i>ac.nz</i> or <i>edu</i> Non-profit sites: search <i>org</i>

OR	Search for either of several terms. Make sure the OR is in capital letters or Google will treat it as an ordinary word. E.g. <i>"cat food" OR "dog food"</i> . E.g. <i>car OR truck</i>
filetype:	Find a specific file type. If you know that the information you want is in a PDF or a powerpoint display, you can search for just that file type. Useful if you want to find an article as a PDF or you're looking for lecture powerpoints. E.g. <i>environmental consumerism filetype:pdf</i>
related:	If you find a great website, this will let you find more websites like it. e.g. <i>related:amazon.com</i>
define	Type "define" in front of a word and Google will bring up a definition. E.g. <i>define spoof</i>
time	Type "time" in front of a place name to find out what the current time is there. E.g. <i>time tokyo</i>

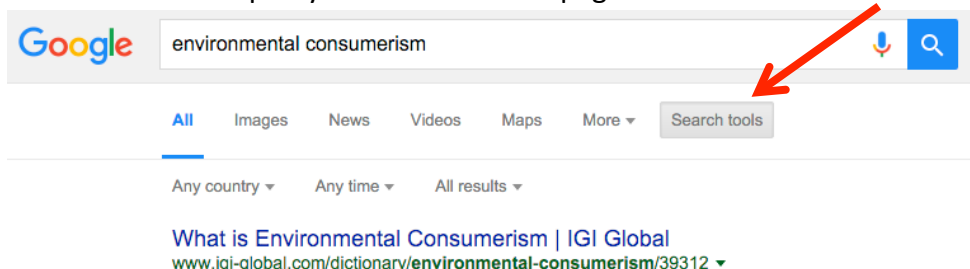
## Other tricks

**Maths:** Don't have a calculator handy? Google can do your maths for you.

**Spelling:** Google is good at guessing what you were trying to say if you misspell a word. It will also pull up related words (like "migrating" for "migrate") and even words with similar meaning (like "immigrant" for "migrate"). If you want it to only find exactly the word you type in, put the word in quotation marks.

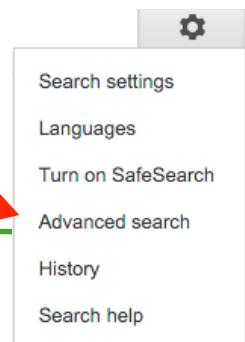
**Conversion:** Google can quickly convert a lot of measurements and currencies. E.g. *10 miles to km* will tell you how many kilometres are in 10 miles, and *10 NZD to yen* will tell you how many yen is \$10 in New Zealand money.

**Filter your results:** At the top of your search results page is a button called **Search tools**.



Click on it and you get some options to limit your search: Any country ▾ Any time ▾ All results ▾  
You can use these to find only local results or only recent results.

**Advanced search:** Click on the gear wheel at the right hand side of your results screen. One of your options is **Advanced search**. You can use this instead of having to remember all the tricks in the table above.



Need help? Contact us:

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