

Basic Web Search



#1: Search

Searching Google is simple. Enter one or more search terms into the search box and click "Google Search."

Web [Images](#) [Groups](#) [News](#) [Froogle](#) [Local](#) [Desktop](#) [more »](#)

[Advanced Search](#)
[Preferences](#)
[Language Tools](#)

Google quickly responds with a Results Page, a list of web pages that are related to the terms you searched for. This list is sort by relevancy, with the most relevant web page listed first.

[Oakland Raiders](#)

Official Web Site of the **Oakland Raiders**.

[www.raiders.com/](#) - 1k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Oakland Raiders](#)

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[www.raiders.com/default.jsp](#) - 20k - Jan 28, 2006 - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[NFL.com - Oakland Raiders Team News](#)

The **Oakland Raiders'** search for a new coach is in a holding pattern, perhaps until after the Super Bowl. Lofton interviews for **Raiders** job ...

[www.nfl.com/teams/news/OAK](#) - 67k - Jan 28, 2006 - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

[Sports : Oakland Raiders -- MercuryNews.com](#)

Contains a collection of **Raider** articles and links.

[www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/sports/football/nfl/oakland_raiders/](#) - 28k - Jan 29, 2006 - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

#2: Understanding Search Results

The image shows a screenshot of a Google search results page for the query 'picasso'. The page is annotated with letters A through K pointing to various elements:

- A**: Points to the search input field containing the text 'picasso'.
- B**: Points to the 'Search' button.
- C**: Points to the 'Advanced Search' and 'Preferences' links.
- D**: Points to the search statistics line: 'Results 1 - 10 of about 10,600,000 for picasso [definition]. (0.17 seconds)'.
- E**: Points to the first search result title: 'On-Line Picasso Project'.
- F**: Points to the description of the first result: 'Dedicated entirely to the Life and Works of the artist, including an extensive selection of his works, biographical and bibliographical references, news, ...'.
- G**: Points to the URL of the first result: 'www.tamu.edu/mocl/picasso/'.
- H**: Points to the second search result title: 'Pablo Picasso'.
- I**: Points to the description of the second result: 'Pablo Picasso, born in Spain, was a child prodigy who was recognized as such by ... The painting started as a self-portrait, but Picasso's features became ...'.
- J**: Points to the URL of the second result: 'www.archive.com/archive/P/picasso.html'.
- K**: Points to the navigation menu at the top: 'Web Images Groups News Froogle Local Desktop more »'.

A. Search Field

- Enter your search query here

B. Search Button

- Click to submit your search (or hit "Enter" key)

C. Advanced Search (Tip #32)

- Link to the Advanced Search Page

D. Statistics

- Description of statistics related to your search

Web Page Results

- **E. Page Title**
 - The title of a web page related to your search
- **F. Excerpt**
 - Excerpt from the page related to your search
- **G. Similar Pages (Tip #23)**
 - Link to pages similar to the web page listed
- **H. URL or Domain Name**
 - Web address of page related to your search
- **I. Size**
 - Size of text on page – implies loading time
- **J. Cached Link (Tip #13)**
 - Link to Google's saved version of the page

K. Google Search Applications (see Tips #49 - #56)

- Links to search for images, news, etc.

Web Search: Basic Tips & Tricks

Although searching Google is easy, searching Google effectively requires a bit more understanding of how Google works. This is why most Google users end up blindly following links in hope of finding what they are looking for. Below are some introductory tips on how to target your searches to be more effective:

Note: In the examples below, I will refer to search terms by putting text inside single quote marks. For example, searching Google for 'new haven weather' is the same as entering this search:

example:

#3: Selecting Search Terms

Selecting the correct search terms is essential to finding the information you are looking for. Begin with simple, direct terms – if you are looking for information on Picasso, search for 'Picasso'.

However, usually you will be using multiple search terms to narrow and target your search. If you are

searching for a 'Picasso print', you should search for Picasso print rather than simply 'Picasso' or 'print' by themselves. Searching for 'buy Picasso print' may deliver even better results.

The more specific and accurate your terms are, the better. For example, searching for 'art prints' will result in broad listings, whereas 'large picasso prints' will be more targeted.

#4: Capital Letters

Capitalization has no impact on your search terms because Google does not take it into account. All letters are interpreted as lower case, so PaRiS hilTON is the same as Paris Hilton or paris Hilton. All of these searches will end up with the same results.

#5: "And" or "Or"?

Google assumes that you are searching for web pages that include all of your search terms. For example, if you search for 'park city ski mountains', Google will locate web pages that include all four terms. This means that a page about ski mountains in the Rockies or Park City ski shops will likely not show up in the results.

In programming speak, this means Google is performing an "and" search, as opposed to an "or" search. As such, you never need to include 'and' in your search terms, unless you are looking for that word in particular.

#6: Common Words

By default, Google excludes commonly used words such as where, how and why, and single letters or digits, such as 'an' or '1'. When Google does exclude a search term, it displays which words were removed in the statistics bar.

If, for some reason, you want to make sure Google does NOT remove your common word, you can tell Google to include it. Simply put a '+' before the word, such as 'Calphalon Nonstick +II'. Make sure to have a space before the '+' symbol.

Alternatively, another way to include common words is to search for a phrase by enclosing your search in quotations – "Calphalon Nonstick II". This method is discussed below in What about Phrases?