How to Do Online Research & Verify Sources ● Search Engine Tips

1. Start with the basics
Start with simple searches, and then add descriptive words if necessary.
- Where's the closest library?
- Bakery Detroit

2. Choose words carefully
Choose words that are likely to appear on the *a website*.
- "Headache" instead of "my head hurts"

3. Capitalization & spelling do not matter
Google spellcheck will automatically correct your words.
- No difference between "Wall Street Journal" and "wall street journal"

4. Remove words
Add a dash before a word to exclude it from your search.
- "jaguar speed -car" – This would exclude references to the speed of the car brand.

5. Connect words
Add a dash in between multiple words, *with no spaces in-between*, and Google will know the words are strongly connected.
- Ten-year-old boy

6. Quotation marks (" ")
Put a word or phrase in quotation marks and the results will only include pages with the *same words in the same order.*
- "imagine all the people"

7. Asterisk (*)
Put an asterisk in place of any unknown words (and use quotation marks to find variations of the phrase)
- "one man's * is another man's *"

8. Two periods (..)
Separate numbers with ".." to see results within a range. This can be used for dates, prices, and measurements.
- $50..$100

How to Do Online Research & Verify Sources ● Narrowing Search Results

Just plain Googling something can leave you with thousands and thousands of results. It can be overwhelming weeding out the good, from the bad, from the irrelevant. So, how can you narrow down your results?

The answer is simple: search operators. Using search operators can help you limit results in a variety of ways, so you can get the most relevant results.

Operator	When do you use it?	Example
Site	*To get results from certain cites or domains*	To find all mentions of Olympics on the NBC website: "Olympics site:nbc.com"
Link	*To find pages that link to a certain site/page.* **This can be used in the verification process described on page 4*	To find all the pages that link to Google: "link:google.com"
Related	*To find sites that are similar to a URL you already know*	To find sites related to Time: "related:time.com"
Or	*To find pages that have one of several words (Google will search for pages that have all the words you search on them)*	"Olympic location 2008 or 2012"
Info	*To get information about a URL including the cached version of the page, similar pages, and pages that link to the site*	To find this about Google's website: "info:google.com"
Cache	*To see what a page looked like the last time Google crawled the site*	"cahce:Washington.edu"

How to Do Online Research & Verify Sources ● Google Scholar Tips

What Is Google Scholar?

Google Schoolar is an online, freely accessible search engine that lets users look for both physical and digital copies of articles. It searches a wide variety of sources, including academic publishers, universities, and preprint depositories. It looks and works just like the Google you use every day.

Just go to scholar.google.com!

Below are some tips to help you organize your Google Scholar search results

How do I find more recent papers?

On the left sidebar:
1. Click "Since Year" to show only recently published papers, sorted by relevance;
2. Click "Sort by date" to show the new additions, sorted by date;
3. Click the envelope icon to have new results periodically delivered by email.

How do I locate the full text of an article?

1. Click a library link to the right of the search result;
2. Click a link labeled [PDF] to the right of the search result;
3. Click "All versions" under the search result and check out alternative sources;
4. Click "Related articles" or "Cited by" under the search result to explore similar articles.

Important note: Check with your school or local library about the best way to access their online articles and subscriptions. With this access, you can see full articles, journal entries, etc. from your Google Scholar results, instead of just the abstract.

How to Do Online Research & Verify Sources ● Verifying Sources

Can I trust all of the information I find from my research?

Not exactly. The Internet today allows for anyone with a computer to publish information, even if the information is incorrect or unreliable.

So, how do I verify my online sources? How can I tell the difference between a reliable and unreliable source?

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. **Is there a clear author identified? What are the author's credentials?**

   Make sure the author and/or organizations affiliated with the site are reliable and knowledgeable. If you are unsure, use a search engine to look up the person or organization.

2. **When was the last time the site was updated/copyrighted?**

   Up-to-date information is particularly important in medicine and health sciences.

3. **What is the purpose of the site?**

   The purpose of the site will give you clues to determine the validity of the site and bias from the author.

4. **What links connect to the site?**

   Use the link search trick listed on page 2 (link:website.com). Look at the sites linking to the one your using and evaluate if they are reputable and reliable.

5. **What is the site's domain?**

   You might have heard your teacher mention something about this to you. Sites ending in ".gov" or ".edu" are almost always reliable. ".org" are usually (not always) reliable. ".com" and ".net" can be reliable. However, never evaluate a site by the domain alone, use other criteria as well.

   Extra verification tip: when using a search engine, you can remove websites you know are not credible by using the dash technique. For example, if you include "-site:wikipedia.org" in your search, this will not show you any pages on the Wikipedia site.

6. **Where is the site getting its information?**

Check that the site contains outside reference, citations and other sites as the source of its information. Be sure that those are reliable, too.

How to Do Online Research & Verify Sources ● Common Core Anchor Standards

"How to Do Online Research & Verify Sources" meets the following Common Core Anchor Standards:

CCSS. ELA-Literacy.CCRA. W.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact wand collaborate with others.

CCSS. ELA-Literacy.CCRA. W.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, asses the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCSS. ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Sources:

Google:

> Google Tips & Tricks
>
> How to Search on Google
>
> Punctuation, Symbols, & Operators in Search
>
> Search Google Scholar

University of St. Augustine:

> Determining Website Validity

LD SBC Library:

> Determining Website Validity