How to Search on the Internet

A successful Internet search can take several tries. But remember: it's estimated that there are between 200 and 800 million documents online - with no master system for organizing this information! No wonder effective searches take knowhow, patience and ingenuity.

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| 1. | Carefully choose the right **Key Words**   * Use nouns as keywords. * Don’t use unnecessary words such as "a," "the", "he", "it", "to", "from" * Use between 4 and 8 words | Important so that you don’t end up with too many or too few search results, or simply unable to locate the information that you want. |
| 2. | Use **phrases**, to be more exact   * You enter a phrase, such as “internet shopping” using quotation marks | Phrases are combinations of two or more words that must be found in the documents you're searching for in the **exact** order shown. |
| 3. | **Exclude** specific Key Words.   * To do this, simply use the "-" sign in front of the word you want to exclude, eg “internet shopping” -advertising | You can search for web pages that containing your key words but **not** those with the excluded word. |
| 4. | Use **Boolean** operators:   * AND means you only want web pages that contain **both words**  – eg London AND Victoria * OR means you want web pages that contain **either word**  – eg London OR Victoria | These can be used to narrow your search to a reasonable number of results, and increase the chance of those results being useful.  They are always written in CAPITAL letters |
| 5. | Select the **type** of information   * Choose from options, often shown at the top or side of the screen | Most search engines will let you choose to search for **only** web sites, maps, images, videos. |
| 6. | Restrict which parts of the Web are used   * Eg – only results from the UK | You may often only want information from web sites in the UK, for example when doing Internet shopping |

To get good search results takes skill and, as with most skills, practice makes perfect!