

## Search Strategies (Google)

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**And:** Google automatically “ands” your search terms. This means all terms used in the query must be found in the web page. For example, a search for *milwaukee restaurants* will retrieve web pages that have both search terms.

**Case:** Google searches are not case sensitive. For example, a search for Wisconsin, wisconsin, and WiScOnSiN will return the same results.

**Keywords:** Avoid using broad terms in your search query. Narrow your search by choosing more specific information. For example, a search for *twentieth century american women writers* will yield more relevant results than a search for *writers*. However, Google does limit queries to ten words.

**Stop Words:** Avoid using common words such as *how*, *where*, *a*, and *the* just to name a few. Google ignores them anyway.

**Text Phrase:** If you are searching for a phrase (e.g. Lake Michigan or chocolate chip cookies), include quotation marks around it. *Phrase searching* allows you to narrow your search.

**Spelling:** Watch out for spelling mistakes. However, if you make a common spelling error, Google will prompt you to search for the correctly spelled term(s).

- For more options and limiting features in Google, click the **Advanced Search** link. Features include limiting results by language, by date, and file format.
- For help using these features, click the **Advanced Search Tips** link at the top of the page.

The screenshot shows the Google Advanced Search page. At the top left is the Google logo. To its right is the text "Advanced Search" and two links: "Advanced Search Tips" and "About Google". Below this is a search bar with a "Google Search" button. To the left of the search bar are four radio button options for finding results: "with all of the words", "with the exact phrase", "with at least one of the words", and "without the words". Each option has a corresponding input field. To the right of the search bar is a dropdown menu for the number of results, currently set to "10 results". Below the search bar are several filter options: "Language" (Return pages written in any language), "File Format" (Only return results of the file format any format), "Date" (Return web pages updated in the anytime), "Numeric Range" (Return web pages containing numbers between two empty input fields), "Occurrences" (Return results where my terms occur anywhere in the page), "Domain" (Only return results from the site or domain, with an example "e.g. google.com, .org" and a "More info" link), and "SafeSearch" (No filtering selected, Filter using SafeSearch).

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Still not finding what you're looking for? Call the Ready Reference department at the Central library, 286-3011.

Librarians can help you narrow your search or help you select more specific search terms.