

Google / Google Scholar Search Tips

Getting started

- **Decide what you're looking for.**
- **Choose as many descriptive words as needed; include as many synonyms as you can think of.**
 - Too few words may give poor results.
 - The Google search box accepts up to 32 words.
 - Select distinctive words; avoid [stop words](#) (unnecessary words that can skew your search).
- Explore [Search Settings](#) to set your Google preferences.

Google search conventions

- **Search words are not case-sensitive**
 - Enter keywords in upper or lower case, or both: *Circles, circles, CIRCLES*
 - **Exception:** Boolean operator **OR**
 - Find apartments in Bethlehem or Allentown:
apartments bethlehem OR allentown (**OR** must be in caps)
- **Boolean operator AND is assumed**
 - If no operators are entered, results will contain all words entered
 - Find apartments in Bethlehem and Allentown:
apartments bethlehem allentown
 - Find information about Si Lewen's painting series *Eva*:
si lewen eva
- **Word order matters**
 - Google ranks the first word slightly higher than the first, the second over the third, etc.
 - *offender parole* (results are slightly different from *parole offender*)
- **Google ignores most punctuation and symbols. Exceptions:**
 - Dollar sign when used to indicate price
 - *hp \$300* gives different results than *hp 300*
 - Underscore or hyphen when used to connect words
 - *mother-in-law*
 - *do_not_resuscitate*
 - Symbols when used to convey meaning, as in a programming language (C++), musical terms (F#), etc.

Search Operators

Operator	Description	Examples
“ ”	Exact phrase search <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Search for words in order entered○ Use double quotes at beginning and end of phrase	<i>“family group conference”</i> <i>“9 affects”</i> <i>“dreaming of a new reality”</i>

Operator	Description	Examples
-	<p>Exclude words from results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type a minus sign before the word or phrase to eliminate Same as Boolean NOT 	<p><i>"restorative practices" -dentistry</i></p> <p><i>books wachtel -baruch</i></p>
site:	<p>Restrict search to specific domain or website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search top-level domains: <i>.edu, .org, .com, .gov, net</i>, etc. Search within a specific country's domain. List of country codes 	<p>Find volunteer opportunities in Philadelphia at non-profit organizations:</p> <p><i>volunteering Philadelphia site:org</i></p> <p>Information about graduate certificates from IIRP</p> <p><i>"graduate certificate" site:iirp.edu</i></p> <p>Restorative practices related to indigenous communities in Canada</p> <p><i>restorative "indigenous communities" site:.ca</i></p>
*	<p>Whole word wildcard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Searches for missing word in a phrase search 	<p><i>"joseph * biden"</i> retrieves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joseph Biden Joseph R. Biden Joseph Robinette Biden <p><i>"president * signed the executive order"</i></p>
...	<p>Numeric range search</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> number...number 	<p>Find tablet devices that cost \$100 to \$300</p> <p><i>tablets \$100...\$300</i></p>
allintext:	<p>Search for multiple words in the body of the search result</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricts results to pages that have all query words in body of the document Use with individual words only; for phrases, use <i>intext:</i> 	<p>Find information on email fraud in Microsoft Outlook</p> <p><i>allintext:outlook email fraud</i></p>
intext:	<p>Search for single word or phrase in body of the search result</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricts results to pages that have the query word or phrase in body of the document 	<p>Learn about grants to criminal justice programs given by the Macarthur Foundation</p> <p><i>allintext:grants criminal intext:"macarthur foundation"</i></p>

Operator	Description	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use double quotes to enclose multi-word phrases 	
allintitle:	<p>Search for multiple words in the title of the search result</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restricts results to pages that have all query words in title of the page ○ Use with individual words only; for phrases, use <i>intitle:</i> <p>Hint: Searching for words/phrases in titles can help maximize the relevance of your search</p>	<p>Find information on discrimination against LGBTQ youth</p> <p><i>allintitle:lgbtq youth discrimination</i></p>
intitle:	<p>Search for single word or phrase in title of the search result</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restricts results to pages that have the query word or phrase in title of the document ○ Use double quotes to enclose multi-word phrases <p>Hint: Searching for words/phrases in titles can help maximize the relevance of your search</p>	<p>Find information on using narrative therapy in working with traumatized children</p> <p><i>children trauma intitle:"narrative therapy"</i></p>
define:	<p>Search for definitions of terms from various web sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use operator with or without colon ○ With colon: Results are restricted to a list of definitions ○ Without colon: Results are broadened to include dictionary definitions plus other relevant pages 	<p><i>define:civil society</i></p> <p><i>define affect theory</i></p>
filetype:	<p>Restrict your search to a specific file type</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No space between filetype: and the following extension ○ List of filetypes returned in Google searches 	<p>Find handbooks in PDF format on facilitating circles</p> <p><i>Handbook facilitating circles filetype:pdf</i></p>
movie:	<p>Searches for showtimes by location or specific movie</p>	<p>What's playing in Center Valley, PA?</p> <p><i>movie:18034</i></p> <p>Find showtimes and reviews for <i>Justice League</i> near Freehold, NJ</p>

Operator	Description	Examples
		<i>movie:07728 movie:justice league</i>