

Search Engines and Directories

Search Engine-allows you to search a database of Web sites and files. Examples: Google, Yahoo, Bing

Search directories – allows you to search a directory of sites that have been registered by the site owners. Example: Yahoo was originally a directory. Most search sites also have a directory.

Meta-search engine-searches other search engines. Examples: Ixquick or ZapMeta

A good searching strategy is the key to successfully finding the information you need.

Searching tips

- Become familiar with more than one search engine or directory. Understand how it compiles its data
- Be as specific as possible in search term. Try to find unique words or phrases. i.e. the rock band Live might display thousands of unrelated words, and even typing in Live music or Live band would be massive. More specific would be to use band members names, hometown (York, PA) record label, song names.
- Use a niche portal or dedicated site to start your search, ie travel sites, book sellers, etc.
- Use Boolean operators in a meaningful manner (and, or, not, etc.)
- Pay attention to dates and source information on sites. More to come on this issue.
- Very information with multiple sources.
- Don't give up easily. The information is out there, you just have to find it.

Exercise:

You will be assigned one of the following pieces of information for which to search. Take 10 minutes to search the Web, making notes about your searching strategy, sites visited, successes or failures, challenges. Each person will describe to class their strategy and the information they found.

1. What are the names of all members of Wilco? Where are they from?
2. You're in the market for a new digital camera. How much will it cost and what are some of the features? What brand would you select?
3. The high temperature in Anchorage, Alaska that is forecasted for this Sunday.
4. Lowest airfare from Austin to Singapore
5. Who led for stolen bases in National League in Major League Baseball in 2002?
6. What is currently the #1 song in the UK now?
7. How old is Beyonce' sister, Solange Knowles, and when is her birthday?
8. What are the required courses for a journalism major at the University of Texas?
9. Suggest a book on finding the right pet.
10. How much does it cost to get high speed Internet service in the Austin area?
11. Suggest a good place to go hiking within 60 miles of Austin?
12. When did the TV show Twin Peaks go off the air?
13. What is the average price of a home in the Austin area?
14. Suggest a good Italian restaurant in the Austin area. What is the price range?
15. Find a hotel room in Manhattan near Times Square. What is the price range?
16. What were the Oscar nominees for Best Picture in the year that you were born?
17. Find one news event that happened on the exact day you were born?
18. What is currently the most powerful processor that you can get in an Apple iMac computer?
19. What are considered the top three MBA schools in the country right now?
20. Who is Lawrence Lessig?