

How to find what you're looking for – online...

Strategic Searching


Students learn that to conduct effective and efficient online searches, they must use a variety of searching strategies rather than relying on a single source. They learn a five-step method for planning and carrying out an online search. Students then apply what they have learned to a scenario in which they pretend they are employees in a workplace, searching for information for their job.

Learning Objectives:

Understand the importance of using a variety of search strategies.

Master new strategies for effective and efficient online searches.

Learn to create and execute a five-step plan for conducting an online search.

Key Vocabulary	<i>How do you find something online? What kinds of things do you search for?</i>
<p>effective: achieving a desired goal or result</p> <p>efficient: doing something in a way that saves you time and energy</p> <p>strategy: a course of action designed to help you reach a specific goal or result</p>	

effective: achieving a desired goal or result

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary terms **effective** and **efficient**.

EXPLAIN to students that an effective online search is one that yields the precise results they are looking for.

An efficient search does so without a lot of wasted time or energy – for example, having to scroll through a lot of search results that don't relate to their desired topic.

DEFINE the Key Vocabulary term **strategy**, and point out to students that search strategies can help them search effectively and efficiently.

efficient: doing something in a way that saves you time and energy

strategy: a course of action designed to help you reach a specific goal or result

Know-Want-Learn Chart

What search strategies do I KNOW?	What do I WANT to know about strategic searching?	What did I LEARN about strategic searching?
Use quotes around words or phrases you want to find Use specific words Check out multiple search results – don't just use Wikipedia!	How to keep from getting a lot of results I don't need What to do when a search term can mean two different things How to search for two different things at once	Answer Coming Soon!

CREATE a KWL (Know|Want|Learn) chart with three columns on the chalkboard or chart paper, or project it from your computer screen. Explain to students that they will use these columns to track what they know, and what they want to know, about strategic searching.

ASK:

What are some strategies you have used to search for information online?

Guide students to think specifically about searching for information more than sorting or evaluating the information.

Write responses in the first column.

What do you need to know to make your searches more effective and efficient?

Encourage students to think about problems they encounter when searching and would like to solve. Write responses in the second column.

TELL students that you will be leaving the final column blank for now, but you'll return to it later in the lesson.

Explain that they are going to learn about search strategies, some of which may answer questions in the "What do I WANT to know about strategic searching?" column

Searching Strategies:

1. Use multiple, specific, descriptive keywords for narrower results.
2. If at first you don't succeed, try Synonyms.

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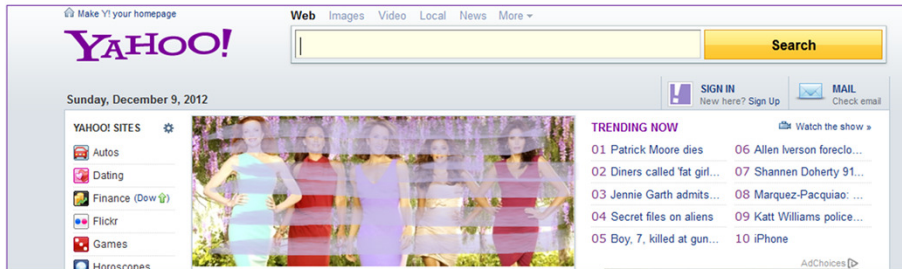
Example: Searching for *concerts* will lead to a variety of musical events, ticket purchasing opportunities, and tour dates. Searching for *underground hip-hop shows Bay Area* will lead to narrower, location-based results.

2. If at first you don't succeed, try Synonyms.

Example: If you've tried searching for *rare cats* but haven't found what you are looking for, try searching for *exotic cats*, *rare felines*, or *exotic felines*.

Example

Searching for *concerts* will lead to a variety of musical events, ticket purchasing opportunities, and tour dates. Searching for *underground hip-hop shows Bay Area* will lead to narrower, location-based results.



Credit: <http://yahoo.com>

Searching Strategies:

3. Place quotation marks around specific words or specific phrases you're looking for.

4. Add a minus sign before a word to show you don't want that term included.

5. Look for two words at once by placing OR between them.

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Example: If you want information on the president's residence, search on "White House" rather than *white house*.

4. Add a minus sign before a word to show you don't want that term included.

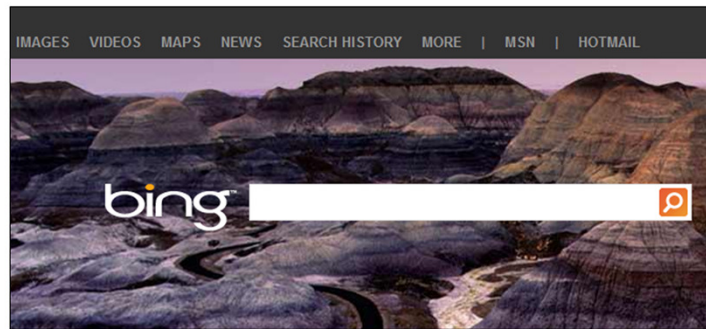
Example: If you are searching for *mullet* but you want the fish and not the hairstyle, you would enter: *mullet -hair*

5. Look for two words at once by placing OR between them.

Example: If you want information on Cornell but you're not sure whether it's a college or a university, search on *Cornell College OR University*. (Note: the OR has to be capitalized!)

Example

If you want information on the president's residence, search on "*White House*" rather than *white house*.



<http://bing.com>

Searching Strategies

- 6. Search for and pay attention to URL domain types.
- 7. Specify the format of the information you're looking for.

6. Search for and pay attention to URL domain types.

.com = company

.gov = government website

.edu = educational institution

.org = organization (Often NON-Profit)

Example: If you are searching for *parks* and you include .gov as a keyword, you should receive government websites in your results. If you are searching for *parks* and you include .com as a keyword, you should receive results that are companies related to parks.

7. Specify the format of the information you're looking for.

Many search engines will allow you to search exclusively for images, videos, news, blogs, or even scholarly articles. Different types of information will help you in different ways.

Example: If you search for *military service*, the following information will tell you different things:

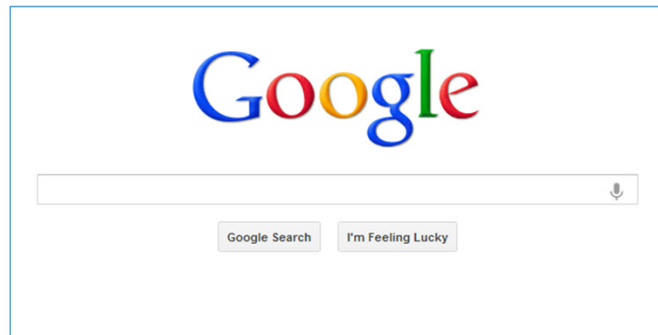
Blogs: People's opinions about military service.

Video: Videos related to military service. Some might be made uploaded by anyone, while others might be created by news outlets, organizations, or the government.

News: The latest news articles and stories related to military service.

Example:

If you are searching for *parcs* and you include .gov as a keyword, you should receive government websites in your results.



<http://google.com>

Searching Strategies

- 8. Use advanced search options on a search engine.
- 9. Once you have your search results, use them!

8. Use advanced search options on a search engine.

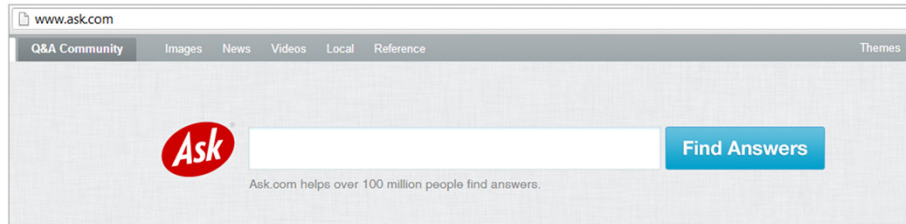
You can often specify dates, exact words you're looking for, or even languages you want in your results in search engines such as Google, Yahoo!, or Bing.

9. Once you have your search results, use them!

Searches enable you to access the huge store of information on the Web, so take some time to see what's out there! Don't just look at the first results, and don't rely only on familiar sources like Wikipedia or About.com.

Example:

You can often specify dates, exact words you're looking for, or even languages you want in your results in search engines such as Google, Yahoo!, or Bing.



<http://ask.com>

Activity: Strategic Searching

- Choose a large city in another state. - Let's say Tacoma Washington
- Imagine that you work at a company located in that city. Each year, your company has a yearly "employee appreciation" gathering.
- How would you search online to plan this gathering?

Comment on how this is also part of travel, event planning, marketing, economic development careers.

SEARCH

- Use these steps to plan and execute your search:
 - **S**elect research questions.
 - **E**xtract keywords and terms.
 - **A**pply search strategies.
 - **R**un your search.
 - **CH**art your search.

SELECT research questions and search tools.

(Explain to students that they should have one or more questions that get to the core of what they want to find out in their search. They should also choose search engines and tools that are most relevant to what they are looking for.)

EXTRACT keywords and terms.

(Students should understand that they can find effective keywords by highlighting the key terms from their research questions.)

APPLY search strategies.

(Students should apply some of the search strategies they learned – for example, adding quotation marks or a minus sign, or specifying what type of information they need.)

RUN your search.

(Students should run a search on the terms they have chosen and review the results. Remind students that they should check out multiple sources.)

CHART your search.

(Student can avoid repeating work they have already done by jotting down what they've searched for and where they've searched for it.)

How did you do?

- City you chose:
- Name of park you chose:
- URL of park:
- What other opportunities will you have to use these strategies?

This is a self-evaluation for students/parents, if in a group, encourage groups or families to compare answers and explain personal preferences that may have guided search. Compare and/or chart most popular keywords for this search among participants, encourage identification of synonyms and advanced techniques. Ask students to evaluate effectiveness and hypothesize more/less effective terms and techniques. Compare/contrast with methods commonly used before this training;

Time to Review:

- Go back to your KWL Chart, fill it in!

What search strategies do I KNOW?	What do I WANT to know about strategic searching?	What did I LEARN about strategic searching?
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These are some suggestions!

Have students go back to the KWL chart from the lesson introduction and invite them to share what they've

learned about how to make their searches more effective and efficient. Add their responses to the third column

of the chart. (Students should be able to name several search strategies, as well as understand how to make and carry out a search plan.)

You also can use these questions to assess your students' understanding of the lesson objectives. You may want to

ask students to reflect in writing on one of the questions, using a journal or an online blog/wiki.

What are two search strategies you learned about that you plan to use in the future?

Refer to the **Tips for Strategic Searching**

Student Handout.

What are the five steps of a search plan? Students should recall the following five steps:

SELECT research questions

EXTRACT keywords and terms

APPLY search strategies

RUN your search

CHART your search

Why is it important to have a search plan? Students should realize that thinking through their

search before they begin should lead to a more effective and efficient search.

Ready to Test Your Knowledge?

- Visit <http://AGoogleADay.com>
- Or complete paper assessment available on website <http://ccis.ccsdtitle1.org/strategic-searching-quiz.html>

May use Visit <http://AGoogleADay.com> as self-assessment or class activity.

Thank you!

Please take the session evaluation survey.
The title of this lesson is: **Strategic Searching**

Did you:
Understand the importance of using a variety of search strategies?

Master new strategies for effective and efficient online searches?

Learn to create and execute a five-step plan for conducting an online search?

Survey Website link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3NTBP9V>
Participate in lessons on other topics at <http://CCIS.CCSDTitle1.org>

Lesson Plan adapted from and used with permission from Common Sense Media @ <http://commonsensemedia.org>

Strategic Searching Survey Embed:

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<div id="surveyMonkeyInfo"><div><script  
src="http://www.surveymonkey.com/jsEmbed.aspx?sm=Mt9obJe5txETDFpWpQ95fw_3d_3  
d"> </script></div>Create your <a href="http://www.surveymonkey.com/">free online  
surveys</a> with SurveyMonkey, the world's leading questionnaire tool.</div>
```

Link for strategic Searching: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3NTBP9V>