

Search Tools: Summary and Comparison of Commands

The table below summarises and compares a selection of the advanced search commands that are available in Google, Bing and DuckDuckGo.

A list of Google's advanced search operators compiled by Dan Russell (works at Google) can be found at

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ydVaJJeL1EYbWtlfj9TPfBTE5IBADkQfZrQaBZxqXGs/>.

There is a list of Bing's commands at <https://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ff795620.aspx> but it is not updated and several of the commands that are listed no longer work.

DuckDuckGo's syntax is at <https://duck.co/help/results/syntax> .

	Google www.google.com	Bing www.bing.com	DuckDuckGo http://duckduckgo.com/
Default search	Automatically looks for synonyms and variations on your terms. Drops words from your search if the number of results is low or zero.	Automatically looks for synonyms and variations on your term. Drops words from your search if the number of results is low or zero.	All of your words.
Wild card or truncation	Not user specified. Google automatically looks for variations and synonyms. (But see Proximity and asterisk below).	Not user specified. Automatically looks for synonyms and variations.	No
Alternative terms or variations	Use OR for example <code>oil OR petroleum</code>	Use OR for example <code>oil OR petroleum</code>	Use OR for example <code>oil OR petroleum</code>
Suggests other search strategies and related terms	Suggests searches as you type. Also offers related searches at the bottom of your results page.	Suggests searches as you type in your search. 'Related Searches' at the bottom or to the right of your results page.	Suggests searches as you type but very limited
Phrases	"..." for example <code>"climate change"</code>	"..." for example <code>"climate change"</code>	"..." for example <code>"climate change"</code>
Proximity	Use the asterisk to stand in for one or more words in a phrase for example <code>solar * panels</code>	<code>near:n</code> listed in Bing's documentation but no longer seems to work.	No
Exclude pages with a word	Precede words with a minus sign (-) For example <code>cabbage -red</code>	Precede words with a minus sign (-) or use NOT For example <code>cabbage -red</code> <code>cabbage NOT red</code>	Precede words with a minus sign (-) For example <code>cabbage -red</code>
Boost importance of a term	Repeat the term 2 or more times in your search. Also changes the order of the results.	Repeat the term 2 or more times in your search. Also changes the order of the results.	
Word in URL:	<code>inurl:</code> for example <code>inurl:chocolate</code>	No	No
Word in title	<code>intitle:</code> for example <code>intitle:petroleum</code>	<code>intitle:</code> for example <code>intitle:petroleum</code>	<code>intitle:</code> or <code>t:</code> for example <code>intitle:petroleum</code>

	Google www.google.com	Bing www.bing.com	DuckDuckGo http://duckduckgo.com/
Word in the text	<code>intext:</code> ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page for example <code>intext:penryn</code>	<code>inbody:</code> ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page. For example <code>inbody:penryn</code>	<code>inbody:</code> or <code>b:</code> ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page. For example <code>inbody:penryn</code>
Specify part of domain or limit by web site	<code>site:</code> looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example <code>UK carbon emissions site:www.gov.uk</code>	<code>site:</code> looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example <code>UK carbon emissions site:www.gov.uk</code>	<code>site:</code> looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example <code>UK carbon emissions site:www.gov.uk</code>
Similar pages	<code>related:</code> looks for pages or sites that are similar in content. For example <code>related:http://www.cilip.org.uk/</code>	No	No
File type or format	<code>filetype:</code> Looks for files in the specified format. For example <code>fracking licences filetype:pdf</code>	<code>filetype:</code> Looks for files in the specified format. For example <code>frackinglicences filetype:pdf</code>	<code>filetype:</code> Looks for files in the specified format. For example <code>fracking licences filetype:pdf</code>
Search by date	On the results page click on 'Tools' in the menu above the results, then 'Any time' and select a time period or specify a custom range.	Top of the results page 'Any time' option.	'Any Time' option above the search results. Only goes up to the past month.
Definitions	<code>define</code> finds definitions and synonyms of words, for example <code>define dialectic</code> . Also provides information on the origin of a word, use over time and translations. (No colon is required after 'define'.)	<code>define</code> finds definitions and synonyms of words, for example <code>define dialectic</code> . Also provides information on the origin of a word and translations. (No colon is required after 'define'.)	<code>define</code> finds definitions of words or phrases, for example <code>define dialectic</code>
Limit by geography	Country versions of Google but now has to be done via Settings, Advanced Search. Scroll down to "Then narrow your results by..." You may need to change to the relevant language as well. Alternatively append <code>&cr=countryXX</code> to the URL of your search, where XX is the 2 letter country code	<code>loc:</code> followed by two letter country code for example <code>loc:de</code>	<code>region:</code> or <code>r:</code> followed by two letter country code for example <code>region:de</code> or use the drop down menu on the left above the results.
Boolean	OR	Boolean sometimes works but more often does not. Do not rely on it.	AND, OR and parentheses ().
Cached copy	Click on the green arrow next to the URL of a page in the results list and select 'Cached', or search using <code>cache:</code> for example <code>cache:rba.co.uk</code>	Click on the green arrow next to the URL of a page in the results list and select 'Cached'	No

	Google www.google.com	Bing www.bing.com	DuckDuckGo http://duckduckgo.com/
Unique features	<p>Numeric range search for example electric vehicle production forecast 2020..2030</p> <p>Additional search options in the menus at the top of the results pages.</p>	<p><i>feed:</i> looks for an RSS or Atom feed related to your search term for example <i>feed:</i>gardening</p> <p>Additional search options in the menus at the top of the results pages.</p>	<p>No tracking, no personalisation or “filter bubble”</p>