

You probably use Google frequently for everyday searches, right? But you may not have explored some of the things you can do beyond just typing in a few words. So here are some tips.

By default, Google doesn't sort results with the newest items first. But you can change that.

Let's say that you're looking for information about using some software you just got called Scrivener. You type in "using scrivener for academic writing." Scrolling down you see some results from a few years ago. For technology topics it's often good to find the newest information. So scroll to the top, choose Tools, then change the menu to "past year" or "past month." Now you can see results that are very current.

Now let's look at Google's advanced search. From the google home page, click on settings, then advanced search. Let's look at a few things you can do here.

Have you ever been frustrated by seeing a different meaning of your keywords in your search results? You can use the "none of these words" filter to remove those non-relevant results.

Here's an example. Let's say I'm looking for information about a bridge called Riverside Bridge. Some of the results that show up are about the card game Bridge, like this one for Riverside Bridge Club. So on the advanced search screen I type "riverside bridge" in the first box, and in "none of these words" I type games, club. Now I'm finding results only about bridges, not about Bridge the card game. You can probably think of other situations where this would be useful.

You can also limit by language. This is useful when you just want to get a different language for certain search results, and you don't want to change all of Google to another language. Type in your search, then choose limit and select your language.

Another useful way to limit is by site or domain. As you can imagine, you'll get fairly different results from dot com versus dot edu domains. Let's try it. I'm searching for the term "great resignation." If I don't limit at all (just a basic search), I see results from dot orgs, dot coms, and dot gov. Let's go to Advanced search and try limiting to only dot coms. Now I see some results from fairly mainstream media outlets like the New York Times and CNBC. Let's try limiting to .edu. Now I see results from several different .edu domains. It will be interesting to compare these results.

Now let's search within a specific site. Going back to my first page of results about "great resignation" where I didn't limit at all, I see something interesting from Pew Research. Maybe they have other useful articles on this topic. So I go to Advanced Search and limit to pewresearch.org. Now you can see that every result is from that site, and they have written about this topic quite a bit. Of course you could use the search feature on their own site, but it's still useful to know that you can do it from Google. Some sites don't offer a very robust search

engine of their own, or their search is broken, slow, or hard to find. You can use this Google search instead.

Another useful limit is "where terms appear." If you're getting results that mention your words in passing, but aren't mainly about the topic, try limiting to "in title." Because if the words are in the title, it's very likely to be about the topic.

One final tip is to limit by file type. Let's say you're looking for trend reports about artificial intelligence. Many organizations publish free trend reports as PDFs. So type "artificial intelligence trends" in the first box, and limit to the file type, PDF. Now you'll see lots of PDF trend reports that might be just what you're looking for.

If you do these advanced searches regularly, here's a tip. After you put in your search on the Advanced screen, look at what's in the search box on top of your results. You'll see the operator that Google uses, like "allintitle:" or "filetype:pdf." You can use those operators again for future searches on the main google screen.

To remember these features and get more tips, you can bookmark our guide called Google Search Techniques.

See part two of this series for tips about your google search settings and how to protect your privacy. We also have another tutorial you might find useful called Using Google Scholar. Good luck with your Google searches!