

19

Searching Finding What You Need

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Prerequisite

- “Getting Started on the Computer” lesson or familiarity with the Windows operating system.
- “Navigating the Web” lesson or familiarity with the Internet and navigating the Web using a Web browser.

Objectives

You will be able to:

- Limit a search by requiring or excluding terms, using filters, and searching for a phrase.
- Perform an advanced search using wildcards and search engine features.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Gather Supplies



- You will need a separate sheet of paper to write your answers to the review questions.
- ▶ ■ In order to save your work, you will need a floppy or Zip disk.

Photocopy Worksheets and Fact Sheets



▶ Worksheets and fact sheets are designed to be photocopied so that you can refer to them during the lesson, write directly on them, and take them home. If a lesson includes worksheets or fact sheets, you'll find them at the end of the lesson. Check now to see if this lesson includes any. Photocopy them before you start the lesson.

Copy Working Files to a Disk



▶ If a lesson includes an electronic working file, you'll find a printed copy at the end of the lesson to use as a reference. You will work directly in the electronic copy during the lesson. Check now to see if this lesson includes a working file. If it does, copy the electronic working file to a floppy or Zip disk. You can copy the working file from the desktop or download it from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Web site <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/libraries/uslibraryprogram/granteesupport/trainingcurricula/default1.htm>.

To Copy a Working File from the Desktop

1. Insert a floppy or Zip disk into the appropriate disk drive of the computer.
2. Double-click the **Computer Companion** folder on the desktop.
3. Double-click the folder of the lesson you want to use. The files in each lesson folder include the working files that are used with the lesson.
4. Click the working file you want to use.
5. Click **Edit** on the menu bar, and select **Copy**.
6. Click the downward-pointing arrow on the **Address** bar, and select **3½ Floppy** to save to a floppy disk or select **Removable Disk (E:)** to save to a Zip disk.
7. Click **Edit** on the menu bar, and select **Paste**. The file is copied onto the disk.
8. Double-click the file to open and begin using it.

Printing Your Work

You might or might not be able to print from the computer you are working on. Consult a staff member for instructions. None of the lessons require printing.

See the *Printing, Saving, and Opening Files Quick Guide* for more information.

You are free to copy or print any part of this book. Copies may not be sold or used for commercial purposes.

Introduction

Why is it sometimes difficult to find information on the Web? Just as one organization does not control the Internet, one organization does not establish an overall search mechanism leading to every site on the Web. Instead, there is a large array of search tools from which you can choose. Each tool is slightly different and is geared toward whatever group or niche its creators are trying to reach.

Using Keywords

A *keyword* specifically describes what you are looking for. For example, a search for *disease* in the search engine Google will return 9,260,000 pages; but a narrower search for the specific term *lupus* returns 550,000 pages. Be careful when using common terms—you will likely receive an overwhelming number of results, called *hits*. Some search engines ignore a preselected list of common terms, such as *the*, *as*, *of*, and *a*, called *stop words*. These words occur so frequently in the English language that the search engine will not stop to look for them in a Web page.

REVIEW QUESTION

(Use a blank sheet of paper to write down your answer. You can check your answer against the one provided at the end of the lesson.)

1. What is a keyword?

Narrowing Your Search

What does a kitchen strainer do? It acts as a filter, allowing some particles through and blocking others. Many search engines have built-in filters, providing you with options for refining your search. For example, you can:


- Search for sites within a specified time period.
- Search for sites in a specific language.
- Specify a term in the Web site's title.
- Search for a term in the Web address, such as a specific domain or country code.



SEARCH TIP

When you perform a search using AltaVista, the first two categories, *Featured Sites and Products and Services*, are advertisements. Scroll down the page to view the search results.

To Narrow Your Search

1. Double-click the **Internet Explorer** icon  on the desktop to start the program.
2. Type `www.altavista.com` in the **Address** bar, and press **ENTER**. The AltaVista Search engine home page is displayed.
3. Type `France` in the **Search for** box.



SEARCH TIP

Use lowercase letters in your keyword search because some search engines filter out keywords with capital letters.

4. Click the **Language** menu, and select **French**.
5. Click **Search**. The search results contain only pages written in French.

Expanding Your Search

If you do not receive the type of results that you wanted, you might want to expand your search to include synonyms of the keyword for which you initially searched. For instance, if you are researching dishes made in China in the 16th century, you could use any of the following keywords in your search: china, ceramics, pottery, porcelain, and chinese.

To Perform Advanced Searches

By conducting advanced searches, you can refine your search even further. *Wildcards* are used when there are spelling variations for a word. The variation can come from misspellings or from differences in how a word is spelled. For instance, if you were searching for the dalmatian dog, you might want to use a wildcard in place of the “a” at the end of the word, because many people misspell the word as *dalmation*. There are also spelling variations for words such as theater, color, and gray. The asterisk (*) is used as a wildcard character, much like a blank tile in the game Scrabble or the 8 card in the card game Crazy Eights. It can be placed anywhere in a word to signify any character.

1. Double-click the **Internet Explorer** icon on the desktop to start the program, and go to your favorite search engine. If you do not have a favorite, type `www.altavista.com` in the **Address** bar.
2. Type `librar*` in the **Search for** box.
3. Click **Search**. The returned results list any Web sites that have words beginning with *librar* in their text, so *library* and *libraries* appear in the results.

To Use the Advanced Search Page

Many search engines have a basic search page and an advanced search page that you can use to refine a search. If you use the advanced page, you can specify more criteria to narrow or expand your search.

1. Double-click the **Internet Explorer** icon on the desktop to start the program.
2. Type `www.google.com` in the **Address** bar.
3. Click the **Advanced Search** link. The Advanced Search window opens.
4. Type your search criteria in the **Find Results** boxes. If you want to do a search for Washington State, you could type `washington` in the **all of the words** box and `george` in the **without the words** box.

5. Select a date range in the **Date** list.
6. Click **Google Search**. Your results are displayed in the window.

To Use the Search Engine Help Feature

Because search engines use specific criteria when narrowing or expanding a search, you can use the search engine Help page to locate the criteria used in a specific search engine. Unfortunately, what works on one search engine, or even on different search tools on the same search engine, might not work on another. For instance, if you use the AltaVista basic search to perform a search, you use the + to add criteria, but if you use the AltaVista advanced search, you need to use **AND**. You can use the Help page on a search engine to determine the best way to perform a search for that particular engine.

1. Double-click the **Internet Explorer** icon on the desktop to start the program, and open your favorite search engine.
2. Look near the **Search** box or at the bottom of the page to locate a link for **Help** or a **How to Use This Site** link.
3. Click the link, and read the information.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

(Use a blank sheet of paper to write down your answers. You can check your answers against those provided at the end of the lesson.)

1. How do you use a wildcard?
2. Where can you find more information about a specific search engine?

Going on an Internet Scavenger Hunt



WORKSHEET: *Going on an Internet Scavenger Hunt*

(Photocopy the worksheet at the end of this lesson. You can write on your copy while you work.)

Practice your Internet-searching skills by completing the “Going on an Internet Scavenger Hunt” worksheet. Most of the questions don’t have specific answers, but if there is a specific answer to a question, it is listed at on the bottom of the worksheet.

Wrapping Up

Key Points to Remember

Explore the Help pages of a search engine for searching tips and techniques and information about the specific search criteria of the search engine.

Answers to Review Questions

USING KEYWORDS

1. A keyword is a word that specifically describes what you are looking for.

EXPANDING YOUR SEARCH

1. To use a wildcard, place the * character in a word at the place where the word could have multiple characters in its place.
2. To find out more information about a specific search engine, use the Help page on the search engine's Web site.

Additional Resources

- InfoPeople Guide to Search Tools
<http://www.infopeople.org/search>

Going on an Internet Scavenger Hunt

When you have completed the worksheet, return to the
“Wrapping Up” section of the lesson.

Answer the questions using your favorite search engine or one of the following, unless otherwise specified: Google (www.google.com), AltaVista (www.altavista.com), Fast Search (www.alltheweb.com), or HotBot (www.hotbot.lycos.com). Use advanced searching techniques if necessary. If there is a specific answer to a question, it is listed at the bottom of the page.

1. Use the Librarians' Index to the Internet (<http://www.lii.org>) to find a good site for mythology information.
2. Use Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) to find computer science courses at colleges in Kentucky.
3. Use Yahoo to find a newspaper in Honduras.
4. Use Ask Jeeves (www.askjeeves.com) to find out the current temperature in Boston.
5. Use AskJeeves to find a Web page for the governor of Montana.
6. Use Metacrawler (www.metacrawler.com) to find as many sites as you can about Decatur, Texas.
7. Locate information about the mortuary temple in the Pyramid of Khafre at Giza. Include multiple terms (using the plus sign, if necessary) in order to narrow this search.
8. Which Shakespeare play is the following quote from: “If music be the food of love, play on”?
9. What was the name of the movie in which Katharine Hepburn and Elizabeth Taylor starred and were nominated for an Oscar for Best Actress?
10. What is the name of the poem written by W. H. Auden that is read in the funeral scene in the movie *Four Weddings and a Funeral*?
11. Locate information about rebuilding a 1957 Ford Thunderbird.
12. Locate information about the constellation Aries, excluding astrology sites.
13. Locate information about Francis Bacon, the 16th-century writer and philosopher, not Francis Bacon, the 20th-century painter.
14. Locate the text of the Clean Air Act and the policies of the federal agency administering the act. Search only for government Web sites.

