

“Internet Tips and Pitfalls”
SCAV Computer Club Class
October 13, 9:30-11:30 am.

1. Introduction
 - a. Our topic this morning is a little is, “Internet tips and pitfalls”. We’re going to be looking in particular at Internet search mastery
 - b. Personal Introduction of Jerry and Dan why we are interested in the subject
2. Some of the reasons people search the Internet are:
 - a. Looking for factoids — like, “What is the population of Abilene, Texas? Many of us use verbal search tools for this function. (Alexa uses Bing search engine and Siri uses Google’s search engine)
 - b. Product recommendations — getting information on the range and variation of items available in a certain product category, wristwatches, for instance, deciding what subgroup you are interested in, then choosing between alternative versions of the product in that subgroup.
 - c. Determining the accuracy of a statement —You read that the percentage of deaths from Covid in Sweden is lower than in the United States. Is that true?
 - d. Seeking amusement or entertainment
3. We want to start with some important definitions
 - a. Web Browsers and Search Engines are Not the Same Thing
 - b. Define/explain URL, Internet Resource Locator
 - c. Define “Internet Browser”
 - i. [What is a web browser?](#) 1:08
 - ii. [Web Browser vs Search Engine](#) [We Learn] 3:00
 - iii. [What’s the difference between a Web Browser and a Search Engine](#) [eHow] 2:40
 - d. URL box versus search engine box (there is a reason for confusing them)
 - e. Picking your search engine
 - f. Google versus other search engines
 - i. “Google it” is a generic term
 - ii. Google usually returns the greatest variety of results, and has by far the largest catalog of pages.
 - iii. Bing, however, has more extensive autocomplete results (where the search engine tries to narrow the search for you).
 - iv. Three other search engines are , [Ecosia](#), [Dogpile](#) and DuckDuckGo
 - v. [Searching with Google vs DuckDuckGo](#) [All Things Secured] 5:19 min
 - vi. You can perform more specific searches by using specialist search engines. [Google Scholar](#), for example, allows you to search for academic articles that might be hard to find in a general search. And [Wolfram Alpha](#) is useful when you need data and statistics.
 - g. Changing Your default browser and default Search Engine
 - h. Using a private window for security (AKA incognito mode)
 - i. Safari and Firefox calls it a private window, but
 - ii. Google Chrome calls it an incognito window
 - iii. Microsoft Edge calls it an InPrivate window
 - iv. A private browser should prevent your passwords, search history, and browsing history from being saved on that device. Shopping for gifts. Birthdays, holidays, or any occasion — if you're shopping for a gift for someone on your shared computer, make sure you go private.

- v. Incognito mode does not mask your online activity from network administrators, your internet service provider, or anyone else who may be snooping on your internet connection. If you're logged in to your online accounts and profiles while in incognito mode, you can still be identified, and your activities tracked.
- i. Be as specific as possible with the words you put into an internet search
 - i. As you search, look to refine and correct your search terms
- j. Simplify Your Search Terms
 - i. Some engines include stop words in their searches. These are frequently used words such as prepositions (in, of, on), conjunctions (and, but) and articles (a, the), which mean that you'll end up with more pages in your search results than you need.
 - ii. So, it's usually best to eliminate stop words from your internet searches. The main exception is if you're looking for a specific title or name that includes them.
 - iii. Also, use the simplest form of the keywords that you're looking for, by avoiding plurals and verb forms with suffixes such as -ing, -s or -ed. For example, you would improve the quality of your search results by searching for service rather than services, or finance rather than financed or financing.
- 4. In putting a string of words.
- 5. Google as a spell checker (sattlelight)
- 6. When and how to use quotes in a search
 - a. Enclosing a search term within quotation marks prompts the search engine to search for that specific word or phrase.
 - b. If the term is a single word, using quotation marks will cut out stemmed variations of it. For example, if you search for the word director, you'll likely receive a lot of results for direct, direction, directions, and so on, too. Typing "director" (with quotation marks), however, will ensure that you only get results for that stem word.
 - c. If the search term is a phrase, your search will be for that specific phrase, rather than for all the component words as individual items. So, for example, if you search for the phrase director of human resources, without quotation marks, your search will return results based on all of the words in the phrase (except of, which is a stop word.) Surrounding the term with quotation marks, however, will generate results that feature this specific term.
- 7. Remove Unhelpful Words
 - a. Inserting a hyphen/small dash/minus sign immediately before a word excludes it from a search.
 - b. So imagine, for example, that you're looking to find out more about marketing. However, you want to concentrate on traditional marketing techniques, whereas the internet appears to be full of references to digital and social media marketing, all of which are appearing in your search.
 - c. Typing in marketing -digital will exclude digital from the search, making it easier for you to find the information you're looking for. Typing marketing -digital -social would allow you to get rid of even more clutter.
 - d. Drop down guesses of where you want to go (illustrate with "abyass")
 - e. Spell checking built in
- 8. Avoid Search Pitfalls
 - a. When searching online, it's important to bear in mind that many companies now have staff who are dedicated to improving their visibility online. They constantly tweak the wording of their websites to match the most commonly used keywords – a process known as Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

- b. As a result, the sites listed at the top of your search results may have very good SEO, but it doesn't necessarily follow that they'll have the best content. So, even when you've put in the best search terms you can, it's often worth digging down through your search results to find the best information.
 - c. With [so much information](#) now at your disposal, you need to be savvy about what is authoritative, and what is merely opinionated. Some blogs, for example, rank highly without actually being written by accredited experts. So, check carefully that the author of any information you use is well-regarded, and preferably associated with an academic institution, a professional body, or a reputable news organization.
 - d. It's also worth being aware of paid advertisements, which can appear at the top of search engine listings because companies have paid for them to do so. These are simply designed to sell to you, which is fine if you're looking to buy, but can be a hindrance to general search.
9. Refine Your Search Using Operators
- a. Wildcard Searches: use the * symbol as a placeholder for another word. For example, searching for * man in the world returns results for the richest man in the world, the tallest, the oldest, and so on. Wildcard searches are also useful when, for example, you don't know the full text of a quote.
 - b. Combination Searches: the OR operator enables you to search for two or more terms simultaneously, and is most useful when those terms are very similar. Typing selling OR retailing, for example, will return pages where either of the terms is used, without both needing to be present.
 - c. Another way to combine searches is to use AND. This operator ensures that you receive only search results that include two or more terms. For example, the search "Smee Computers" AND "Devlin Corporation" would only deliver search results that include the names of both companies.
 - d. Search a Specific Site: when you type site: followed by the URL of the website that you wish to search and a search term, you limit your search to a single website. So, site:mindtools.com "human resources" will return all the pages from [MindTools.com](#) that feature the term "human resources."
 - e. Finding Related Sites: another useful operator is related: Typing this in front of a web address that you already know – as in related:xyz.com – your search results will deliver a range of websites that are similar to xyz.com.
 - f.
10. When restricting the post date of your search is important.
11. Why should I look at the 2nd or third page of search results?

Extra Link

[What Your Web Browser's Incognito Mode Really Does](#)

This tool can be useful as long as you understand its limitations

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