

# Search the Internet

## 1. Search the Internet

### 1.1 Welcome



#### Notes:

Welcome to *Search the Internet*.


## 1.2 Learning Objectives

**Learning Objectives**

Glossary1.2

By the end of this learning activity, you'll be able to:

- Differentiate between a search engine and a Web browser
- Perform Web searches to locate credible information, resources, and data found on the Internet
- Examine how using the Internet can be applied to personal, professional, and college situations



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## 1.3 Introduction

**Introduction**

Glossary1.3

Search engines return millions of Web pages every time you search a word, topic, or question. Today we're going to show you how to:

- Identify what a search engine is and how it works
- Identify credible Web sources
- Refine your search to find exactly what you're looking for

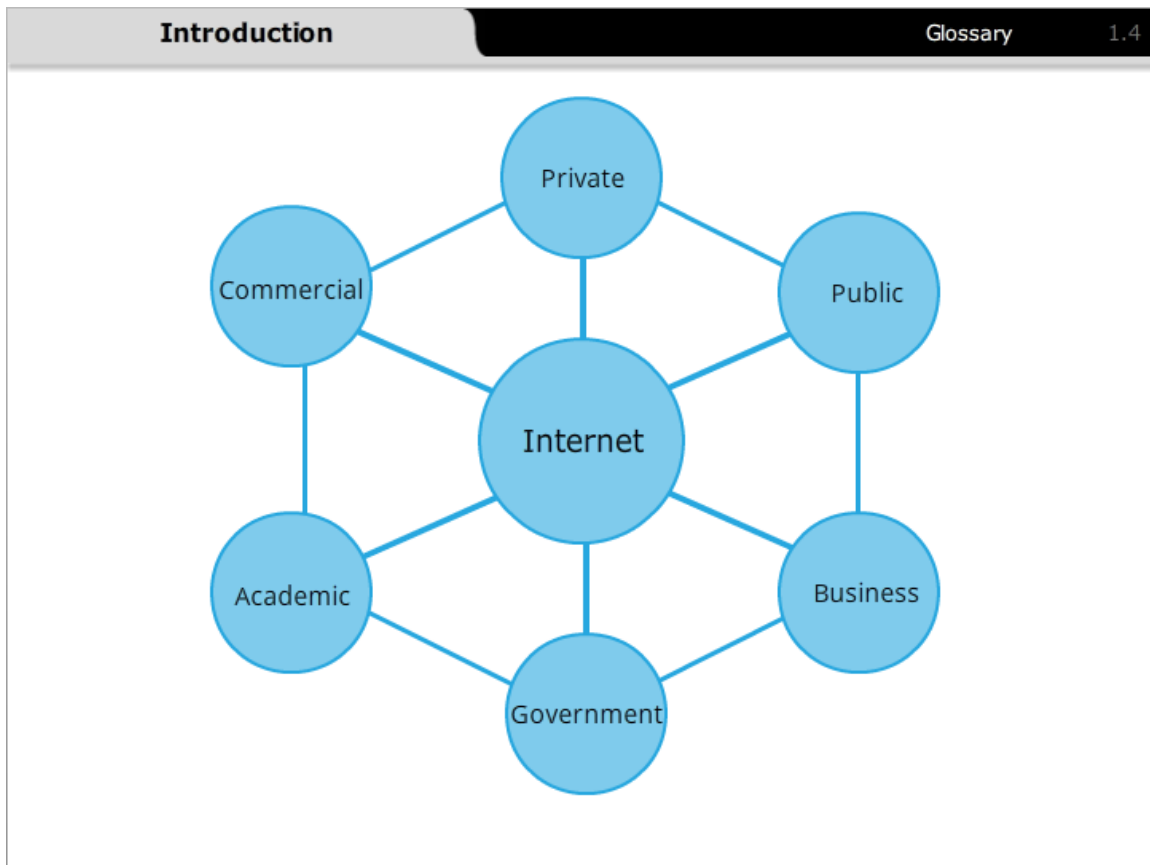


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## 1.4 Introduction

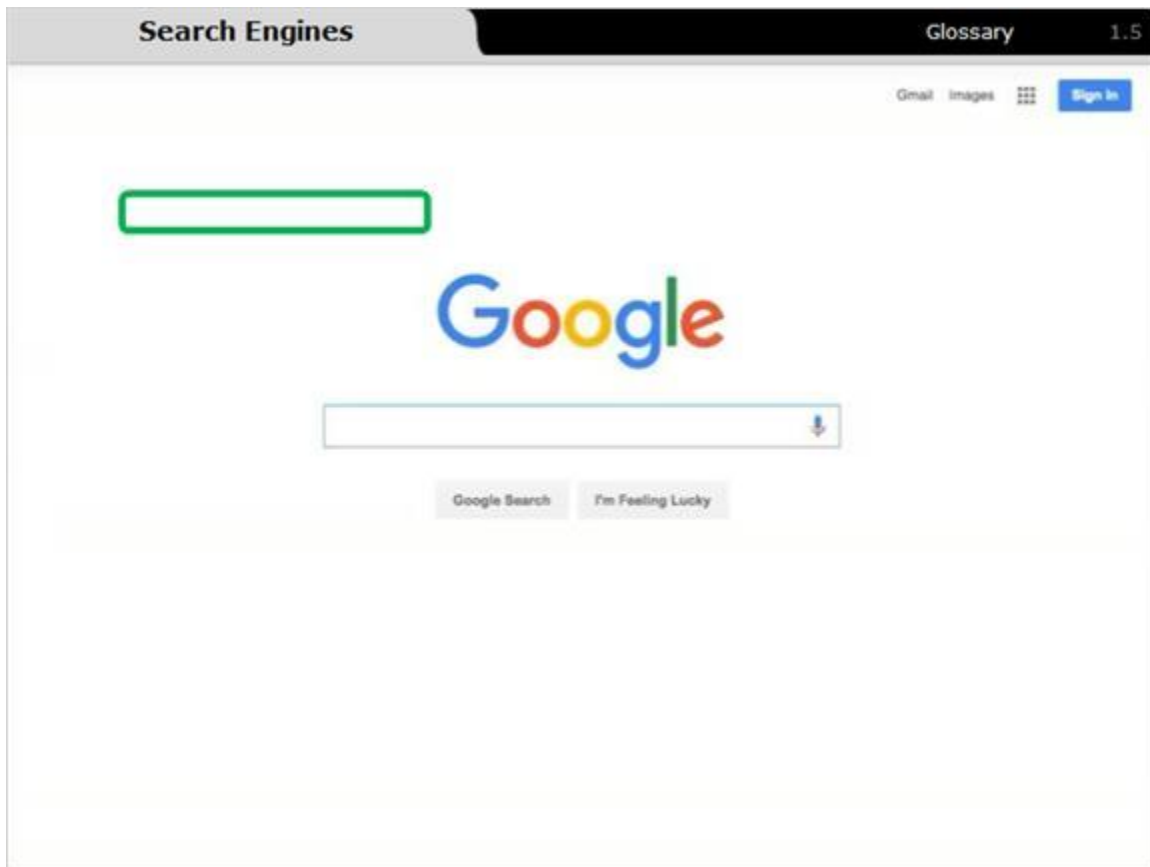


### Notes:

The *Internet* is a world-wide system of networked computers. It consists of several billion globally linked devices and networks including private and public, business and government, and academic and commercial.

The Internet contains billions of Web pages full of information and resources. You can find sources for school assignments, job postings, and tickets to the upcoming game when you know how to use the right search tools.

## 1.5 Search Engines



### Notes:

It's impossible to look at every Internet page to find exactly what you're looking for. Because the Internet is so vast, search engines were created to make finding answers easier.

A *search engine* is a specialized Web page that matches the search terms to Web pages. Unlike a Web browser, which provides access to the Internet, search engines allow you to actually find things on the Internet.

When using a search engine, you enter one or multiple key words and press enter. The search engine scans through every Web page and returns the appropriate results. Most searches return millions of Web pages as possible matches, so try and make your searches as specific as possible.

For example, searching for *study resources* returns 1,200,000,000 related Web pages. Narrowing the search to *study resources college English* returns 468,000,000 results. It's still a lot, but it's less than half the original number. We'll examine some techniques for refining a search later on in this module.

## 1.6 Performing a Search



### Notes:

The three most popular search engines are Google, Bing, and Yahoo!.

While each one has unique features, each one allows you to search in a similar fashion. Every search engine has a search bar and a search button. Keywords are typed into the *search bar* and the *search button* is pressed to start the search.

Because Google is the most popular search engine, we'll use it for our examples.

## 1.7 Practice

*(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)*

What is a search engine?

- ☐ A specialized Web page that matches your search terms to web pages
- ☐ Software that allows you to access the Internet
- ☐ A network of software that acts as a manager for the hardware and software
- ☐ Electronic program that provides the hardware with data and instructions

**Notes:**

What is a search engine?

## 1.8 Practice

*(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)*

Practice	Glossary	1.8
<p>What is a Web browser?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> Software that provides access to the Internet</li><li><input type="radio"/> A specialized Web page that matches your search terms to Web pages</li><li><input type="radio"/> A network of software that acts as a manager for hardware and software</li><li><input type="radio"/> Electronic program that provides data and instructions to the hardware</li></ul>		

### Notes:

What is a Web browser?



## 1.9 Practice

(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

**Practice****Glossary**1.9

What do all search engines have in common?

- ☐ A search bar and a search button
- ☐ A search bar and the news
- ☐ A search bar and the current trends
- ☐ A search bar and an *I'm Feeling Lucky* button

### Notes:

What do all search engines have in common?


## 2. Credible Information

### 2.1 Domain Extensions

Domain Extensions

Glossary2.1

The domain extension provides an insight into the website's purpose and it may also reveal any biases.



The screenshot shows the MIT OpenCourseWare Biology page. The browser address bar displays 'ocw.mit.edu/courses/biology/'. The page header includes the MIT OpenCourseWare logo and a navigation menu with 'Courses', 'About', 'Donate', and 'Featured Sites'. The main content area features a large image of a plant cell micrograph with the caption 'Stagnolia petals stained with methylene blue and shown at 100 times magnification. (Image courtesy of labrara on Flickr.)'. Below the image is a 'FEATURED COURSES' section. On the right side, there is a 'DEPARTMENT LINKS' section with links to 'Biology Web', 'Department', 'View Other L Courses', and 'GEN4'. A 'Donate' button is also visible.

#### Notes:

Anyone can create a website and post information. How do you as a user decide what information is credible and what is suspicious? A Web page's credibility is evaluated using its domain, date, and author, in addition to some critical evaluation questions.

Start by looking at the Web page's domain extension. It's the last three or four letters after the website's name. The common extensions you should be familiar with include:

- .com for commercial sites
- .org for organizations - typically non-profit or cause organizations
- .edu is used by colleges and universities
- .gov is used for every U.S. national and state government agency including national parks

- And international extensions such as .au for Australia, .ca for Canada, and .uk for the United Kingdom

The domain extension provides an insight into the website's purpose and it may also reveal any biases. For instance, a Study Resources article on a .com site may be trying to sell study resources. The same article on an .edu site may be written by a professor to help students learn the material.

## 2.2 Specific Search Engine

Specific Search Engine

Glossary2.2

### Notes:

In addition to looking at the website's domain extension, specific search engines can also be used to rule out less credible sites. Every school provides academic search engines such as EBSCOhost through their library or learning center.

EBSCOhost searches only academic journals, reviews, magazines, trade publications, and newspapers. Instead of being overwhelmed with .com, .net, and other suspicious sites, using a search engine like EBSCOhost restricts the results to credible sources.

Searching for *Japanese Philosophy* on EBSCOhost returns academic journals, associated press videos, and periodicals, all of which would be appropriate to reference for a class assignment or paper.

## 2.3 Dates



### Notes:

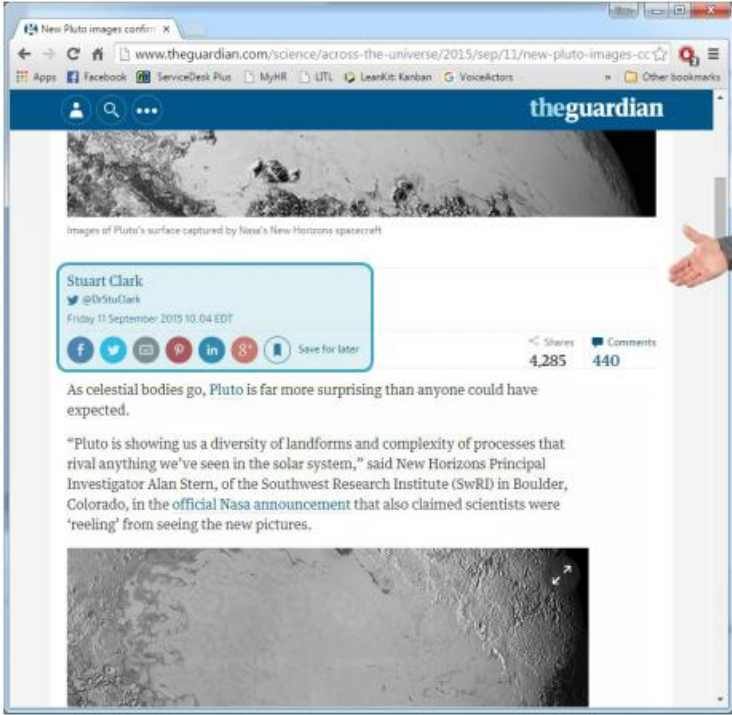
Double check the date of the article and the website. Using outdated information in an assignment may skew your conclusions. Using outdated information when looking for jobs may mean you apply for already filled positions and miss the latest postings.

If an article doesn't have a date, the Web page's copyright date can be found by scrolling down to the bottom of page. This Web page is copyright 2015, so it's current.

On the other hand, this Web page hasn't been updated since 2013, so it may be a good one to avoid.

## 2.4 The Author

**The Author**Glossary2.4



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [www.theguardian.com/science/across-the-universe/2015/sep/11/new-pluto-images-cc](http://www.theguardian.com/science/across-the-universe/2015/sep/11/new-pluto-images-cc). The article is titled "New Pluto images confirm..." and is by Stuart Clark. The article text includes: "As celestial bodies go, Pluto is far more surprising than anyone could have expected." and a quote from Alan Stern: "Pluto is showing us a diversity of landforms and complexity of processes that rival anything we've seen in the solar system," said New Horizons Principal Investigator Alan Stern, of the Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) in Boulder, Colorado, in the official Nasa announcement that also claimed scientists were 'reeling' from seeing the new pictures.

### Notes:

When reading an on-line article, look for the author's information. Reputable authors often provide links to their credentials, other articles they're written, contact information, or personal biographies.



Less credible articles may be written by authors with little to no information, or the article may be missing an author's name all together. Use any information provided to evaluate the author's ability to write the article.

This article, from *The Guardian* newspaper shows the date, the author's name, and his Twitter handle. Clicking on the author's name brings up his bio and other articles he's written for *The Guardian*. A link at the end redirects to the author's Web page, which lists his extensive list of credentials, including a PhD in astrophysics, and his publications.

Taken together, this information indicates the author and the article are credible and could be cited for an assignment.

## 2.5 Evaluation

**Evaluation**Glossary2.5



Articles containing multiple spelling and grammar mistakes probably weren't checked by an editor or a fact checker. This is usually a strong indicator of a less than credible source.

### Notes:

In addition to checking the domain extension, date, and author's information, it's good to evaluate the content and the website. Some questions to ask include:

- Is the information reliable?
- Who published this site?
- Are there any spelling or grammar mistakes?
- Is this published by an organization that has an obvious bias?

Using questions such as these provides an overall picture of the website's credibility.

Search for the same information on other sites. While not always a guarantee, reliable information is typically found on multiple sites and news outlets. If the site has an unknown domain and the information can't be found elsewhere, it may be suspicious.

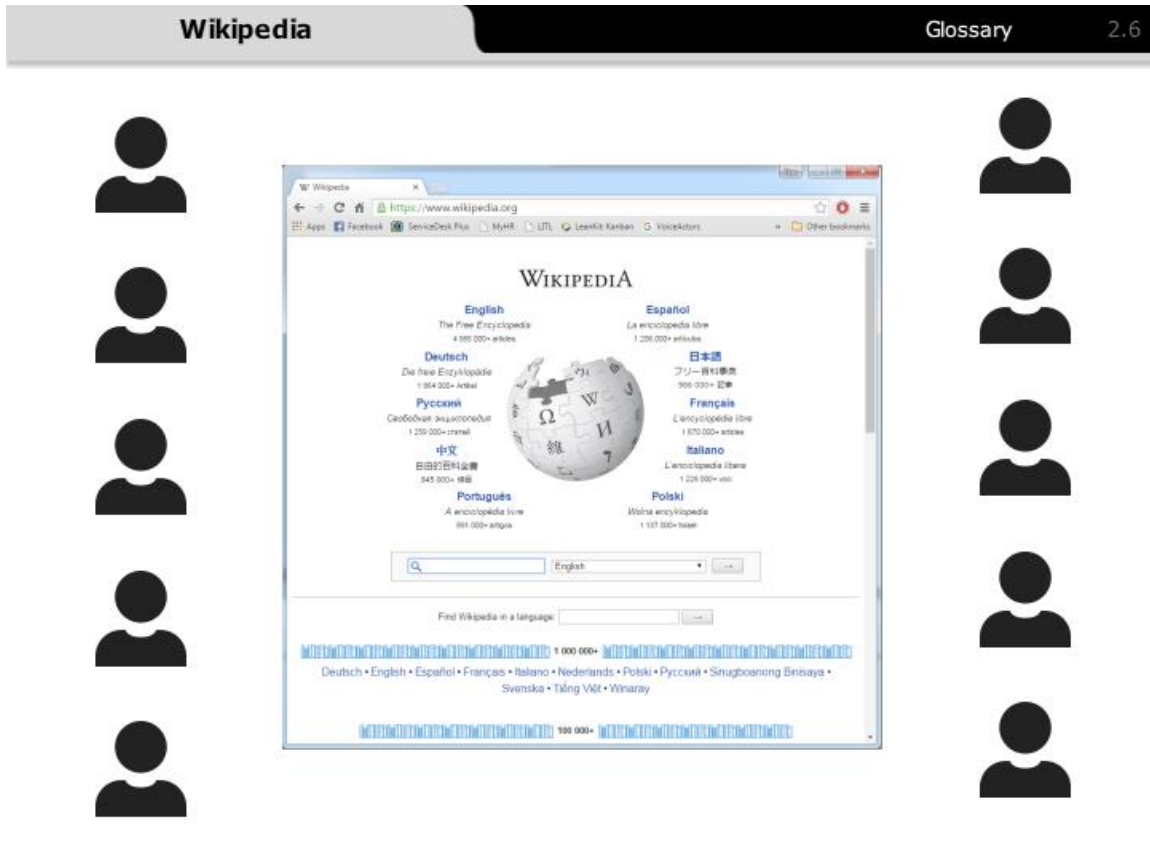
Articles containing multiple spelling and grammar mistakes probably weren't checked by an editor or a fact checker. This is usually a strong indicator of a less than credible source.

Check other articles on the Web page as well as any information in the “about us” section for potential biases. For instance, articles published on the NRA’s Web page have a bias toward gun ownership. Articles about dog food published on a pet supply website have a bias toward that company’s brand.

Use your best judgment when looking for credible articles, resources, and data online. Take time to evaluate where the information comes from, who wrote it, and what website hosts it.



## 2.6 Wikipedia



### Notes:

Of all the websites available, Wikipedia is one of the most popular and most viewed Web pages. It provides a free alternative to subscription encyclopedia and dictionary websites.

However, it's important to note that because Wikipedia's content can be changed by anyone, it doesn't meet the credibility standards set for acceptable research materials.

For instance, President George W. Bush's Wikipedia page has been revised approximately 45,000 times by different users. That's approximately three revisions for every word on the page. Wikipedia pages dedicated to Global Warming have been edited almost 20,000 times and President Obama's Wikipedia page has been revised 25,000 times. Once you analyze the sheer volume of edits made to these pages, you can quickly see why Wikipedia articles can't be cited in any assignment or paper.

Wikipedia is a great first place to look for information, but either use the cited links

at the bottom of the page or do additional research to find credible sources.

## 2.7 Practice

*(Pick Many, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)*

**Practice****Glossary**2.7

What do you use to evaluate a Web page's credibility?  
(Select all that apply.)

- ☐ It's domain extension
- ☐ The date
- ☐ The author
- ☐ The number of likes

### Notes:


What do you use to evaluate a Web page's credibility? (Select all that apply.)

## 2.8 Practice

(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

**Practice****Glossary**2.8

Based on this author's credentials and past articles, what is his area of expertise?



Click to enlarge the image

- ☐ Restaurant reviews
- ☐ Sports
- ☐ World news
- ☐ Economics

### Notes:

Based on this author's credentials and past articles, what is his area of expertise?

## 2.9 Practice

*(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)*

**Practice****Glossary**2.9

In a list of search results, what does .edu mean?

- ☐ The Web page is from a commercial site
- ☐ The Web Page is from a government site
- ☐ The Web page is from a college or university
- ☐ The Web Page is from a non-profit organization

### Notes:

In a list of search results, what does .edu mean?

## 3. Effective Searching

### 3.1 Guidelines

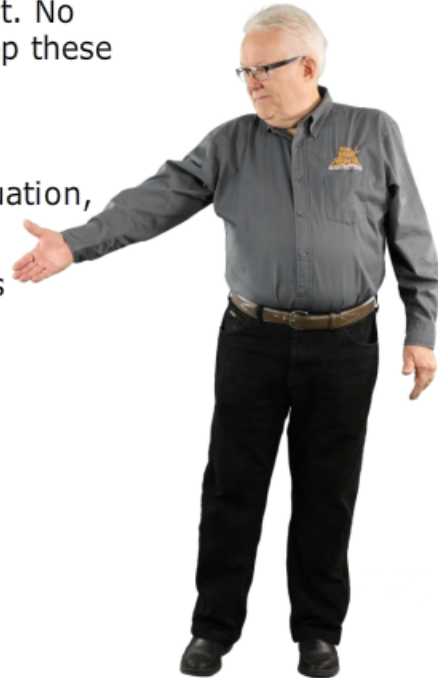
#### Guidelines

#### Glossary

3.1

Searching the Internet is easy. Quickly finding exactly what you're looking for is difficult. No matter which search engine you use, keep these search tips in mind:

- Use unique and specific terms
- Avoid using common words, punctuation, and capitalization
- Use quotation marks and conditions
- Set a time limit



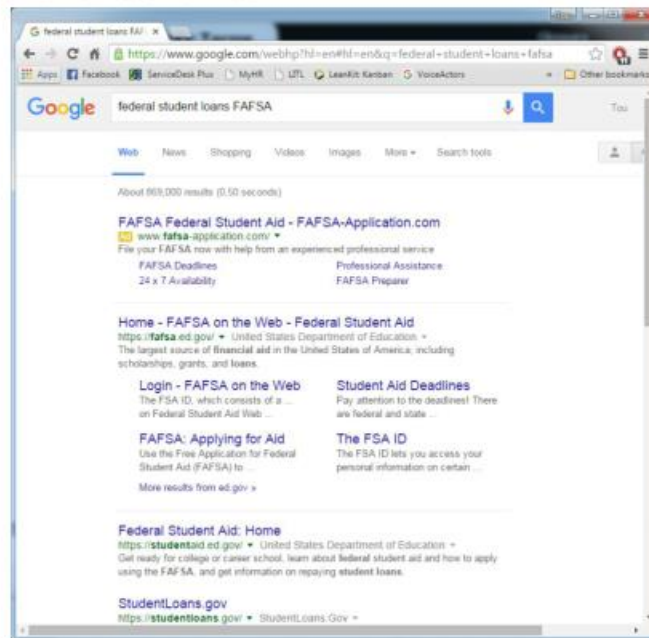
#### Notes:

Searching the Internet is easy. Quickly finding exactly what you're looking for is difficult. No matter which search engine you use, keep these search tips in mind:

- Use unique and specific terms
- Avoid using common words, punctuation, and capitalization
- Use quotation marks and conditions
- Set a time limit

## 3.2 Unique and Specific Terms

Using specific and unique search terms both narrows down the search results and increases the likelihood of the best page showing up at the top of the results list.



### Notes:

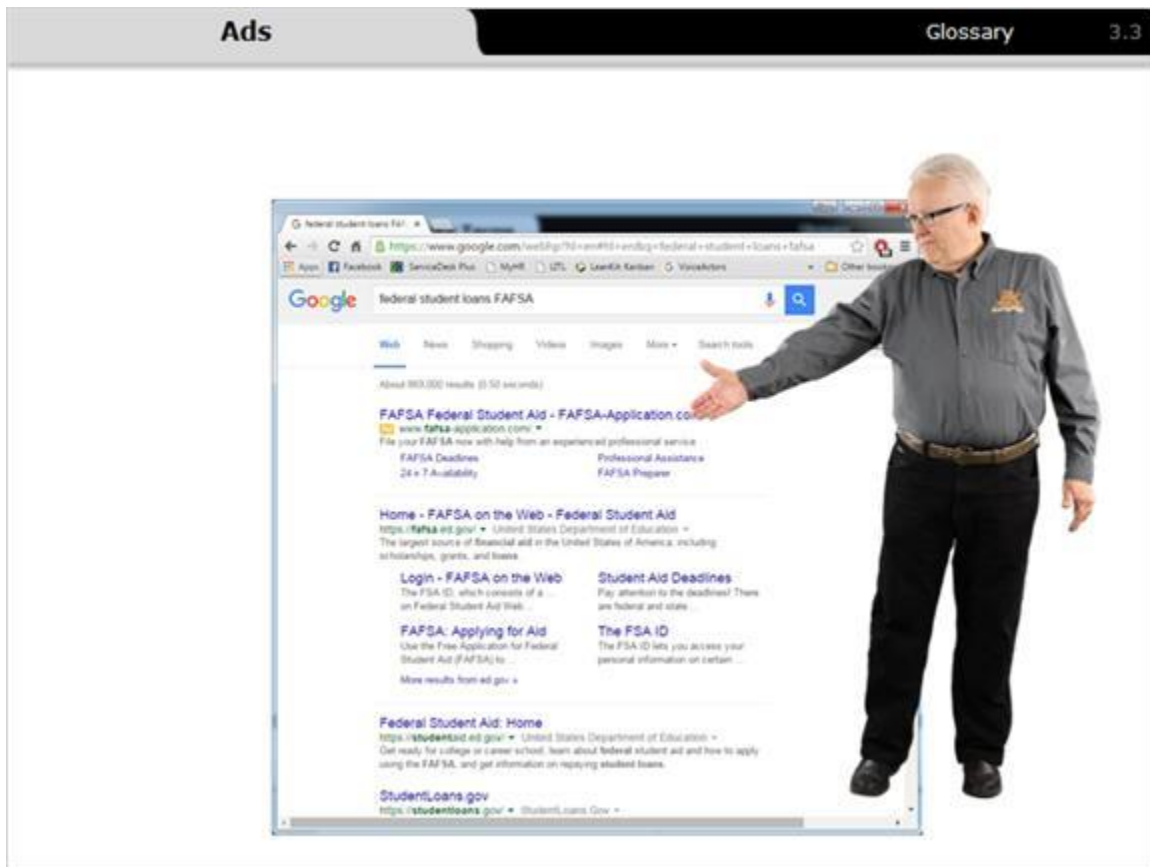
Use unique and specific search terms. The less generic and more specific the search terms are, the better the search results will be.

Let's say someone wants to learn more about student loans. Just searching for the term *loans* brings back 361,000,000 results and none of them are specifically related to higher education.

Searching for *student loans* brings back 40,300,000 results. Better, but still not great. Searching for *federal student loans FAFSA* brings back 869,000 results and the first link is for the FAFSA home page.

Using specific and unique search terms both narrows down the search results and increases the likelihood of the best page showing up at the top of the result's list.

### 3.3 Ads



#### Notes:

Be aware of Ads posing as *Top Results* in any list.

Some companies pay to have their website listed first in any search result list. Because these companies pay for better onscreen placement, they're marked as *Ads* by a yellow box before the Web address.

Ads may or may not be the best search result, but it's good to know how to distinguish them from other sites.

### 3.4 Practice

(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

What makes a good search keyword?

- ☐ It's specific and unique
- ☐ It's broad
- ☐ It's complicated
- ☐ It's easy to enter

**Notes:**

What makes a good search keyword?



### 3.5 Practice

**Practice****Glossary****3.5**

Click to identify the *Ad* on this page of search results.

#### Notes:

Click to identify the *Ad* on this page of search results.

### 3.6 Improved Keyword Search

**Improved Keyword Search**


Glossary3.6

Along the same lines, adding punctuation won't help refine search results because it's also left out of searches.

FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS

federal student loans

FeDeRaL StUdEnT IOaNs



#### Notes:

Avoid using common words, punctuation, and capitalization.

Typically, common articles are ignored by all search engines. Words like *a*, *and*, and *the*, are left out of search queries because they appear in so many titles.

However, when searching for a specific book or movie, leave these articles in. For instance, searching for *The American* brings back the movie, whereas searching only for *American* finds non-movie related results.

Along the same lines, adding punctuation won't help refine search results because it's also left out of searches.

Finally, search engines don't typically distinguish between sentence cases. Using all upper, all lower, or a mix of the two won't improve or change the search results.

### 3.7 Use Quotation Marks



#### Notes:

Use quotation marks to use multiple key words together instead of as two separate words. It forces the search engine to identify the words as a *phrase* so it searches for those words together and in the same order.

Searching using quotation marks limits the search results. For example, searching for *Pecan Cookies* returns 4,090,000 results. Searching for "*Pecan Cookies*" returns 294,000 results. The results have been narrowed down by 93 percent.

Using quotation marks significantly improves the chances of finding what the right website.

### 3.8 Practice

(Pick One, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

Why should you avoid using common words, punctuation, and capitalization?

- ☐ They're typically ignored by all search engines
- ☐ They're hard to get right when you're searching
- ☐ You actually should use them because they refine any search

**Notes:**


Why should you avoid using common words, punctuation, and capitalization?

### 3.9 Practice

Practice

Glossary3.9

Type to search for Homework Help as a phrase using quotation marks instead of as two separate keywords. Press the *Google Search* button when you've finished.



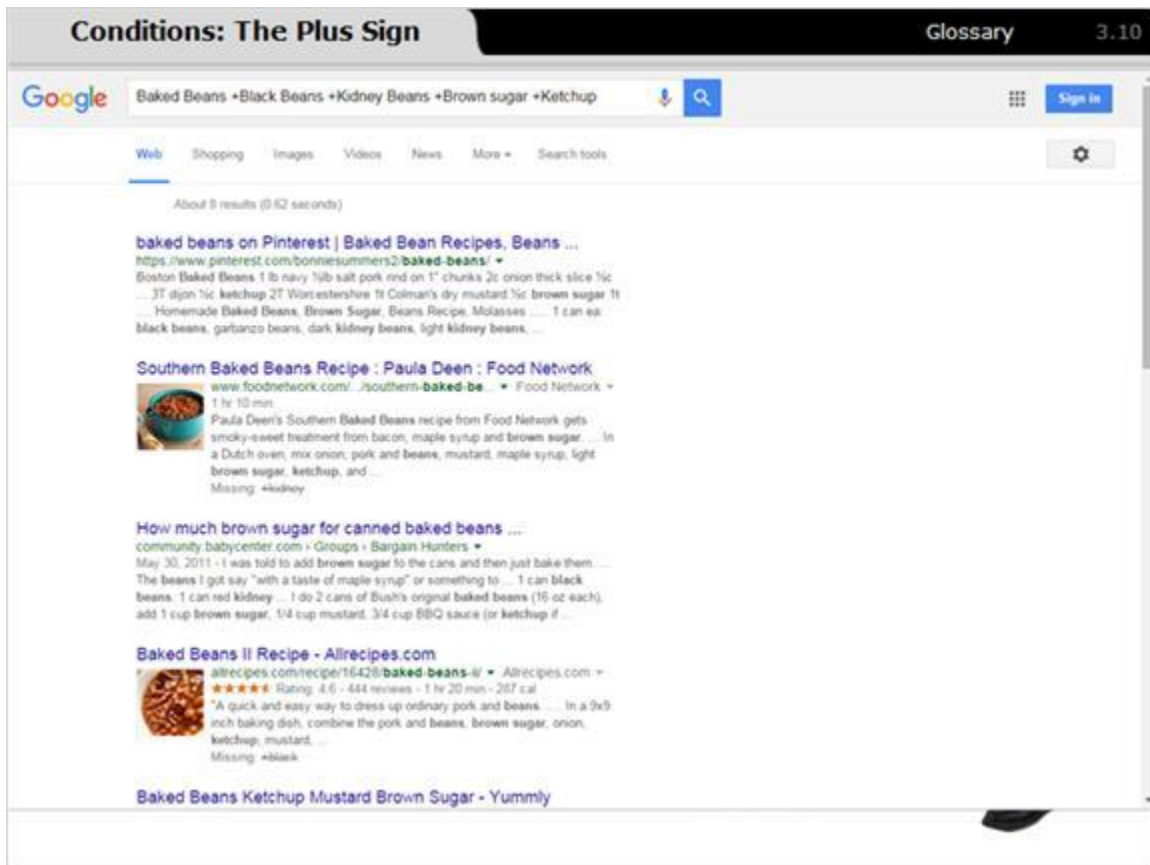
Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

**Notes:**

Type to search for Homework Help as a phrase using quotation marks instead of as two separate keywords. Press the *Google Search* button when you've finished.

### 3.10 Conditions: The Plus Sign



#### Notes:

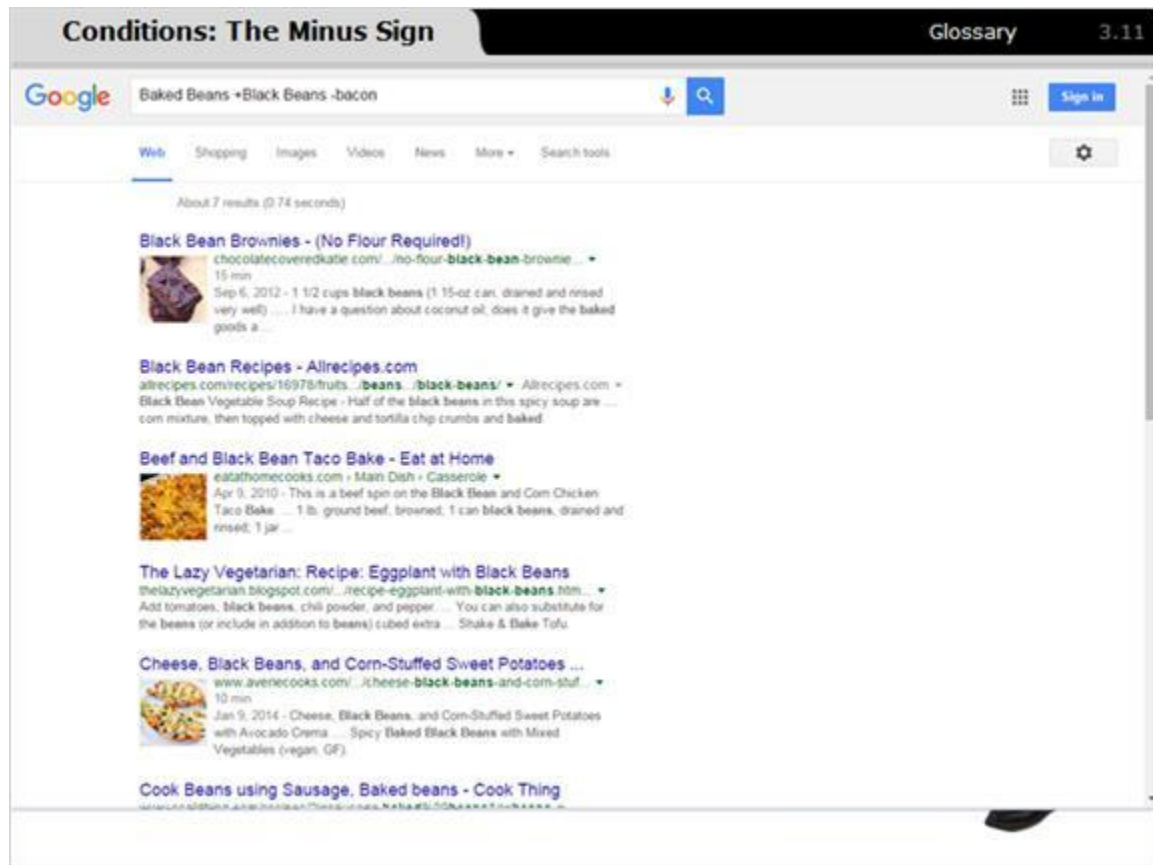
Searching using keywords can be further refined by adding a *condition*. While there are a number of conditions, we'll focus on the two most common: the plus and minus signs.

The *plus* sign adds keywords to the original search to narrow down the results. It must be used directly ahead of the added keyword.

Searching for *Baked Beans* returns 11,100,000 results. By using the plus sign, the search is refined to find all recipes containing kidney beans and black beans. *Baked Beans +Black Beans +Kidney Beans*.

Now the search engine's found 2,020 results. Further refinements to include brown sugar and ketchup bring the search results down to eight. Each of those eight recipes contains the ingredients we wanted to use.

### 3.11 Conditions: The Minus Sign



#### Notes:

Not only can keywords be added to a search, but they can also be removed from a search to eliminate unnecessary results. The minus symbol removes words from a search.

Just like using the plus sign, the minus sign must be used directly in front of the keyword without a space in between.

For instance, the baked bean recipe results have already been narrowed down by using the plus sign to add ingredients. Now, the results are narrowed down even further by removing ingredients from the search.

#### *BakedBean+BlackBeans-Bacon*

This results are down to seven and each one meets the ingredient requirements.


Using the plus and minus conditions are an easy way to find exactly what you're searching for.

### 3.12 Practice

Practice

Glossary3.12

Type in the conditions to refine this search for cheesecake recipes by including chocolate and excluding nuts. Press the *Google Search* button when you've finished.



Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

**Notes:**

Type in the conditions to refine this search for cheesecake recipes by including chocolate and excluding nuts. Press the *Google Search* button when you've finished.



### 3.13 Set a Time Limit

#### Set a Time Limit

Glossary

3.13

Set a time limit for the amount of time you'll spend searching for an answer.

When searching, start your internal clock and if you're not finding what you're after, change tactics.



#### Notes:

Set a time limit for the amount of time you'll spend searching for an answer. When searching, start your internal clock and if you're not finding what you're after, change tactics. Try using different keywords, conditions, and quotation marks.

Switch to a new search engine. If you're not seeing the results you wanted on Google, try Bing or Yahoo! instead. Use any library resources available to search through academic publications and journals.

Remember: Search engines are only as good as the information entered. By keeping the terms specific, unique, and by using quotation marks, multiple keywords, and conditions, you'll have a much better chance of finding the right Web page in the vast recesses of the Internet.

## 4. Check Your Knowledge

### 4.1 Review and Wrap-Up

**Review and Wrap-Up**Glossary4.1

Today we've covered how to search the Internet

You've learned:

- A *Web browser* gives you access to the Internet
- A *search engine* allows you to find things on the Internet
- The three most popular search engines are Google, Bing, and Yahoo!



While each one looks different from each other, they all offer the same search options.

#### Notes:

Today we've covered how to search the Internet. You've learned a *Web browser* gives you access to the Internet and a *search engine* allows you to find things on the Internet.

The three most popular search engines are Google, Bing, and Yahoo!. And while each one looks different from each other, they all offer the same search options.

## 4.2 Review and Wrap-Up


**Review and Wrap-Up**

Glossary4.2

Anyone can create a website and post information.

To decide if an on-line article is credible, you evaluate the Web page using its:

- 1. Domain**  
The domain extension tells you the type of website
- 2. Author**  
Have links to other articles they've written
- 3. Date**  
The date needs to be recent
- 4. Critical evaluation questions**  
Evaluate the content based on reliability, spelling and grammar mistakes, and any biases the website may have



### Notes:

Anyone can create a website and post information. To decide if an on-line article is credible, you evaluate the Web page using its domain, author, date, and a few critical evaluation questions.

The domain extension tells you the type of website, the author should have links to other articles they've written, and the date needs to be recent. Evaluate the content based on reliability, spelling and grammar mistakes, and any biases the website may have.

### 4.3 Review and Wrap-Up


**Review and Wrap-Up**

Glossary4.3

You learned how to refine a Web search using:

- Unique and specific keywords
- Quotation marks
- Conditions
- And to avoid using common articles like *a*, *and*, and *the*, text in all capital letters, and punctuation.

The Web is made up of billions of websites. Knowing how to refine your search using these tools lets you find exactly what you're looking for efficiently and effectively.



#### Notes:

You learned how to refine a Web search using:

- Unique and specific keywords
- Quotation marks
- Conditions
- And to avoid using common articles like *a*, *and*, and *the*, text in all capital letters, and punctuation.

The Web is made up of billions of websites. Knowing how to refine your search using these tools lets you find exactly what you're looking for efficiently and effectively.

Now let's check your understanding by answering the following questions.

## 5. Check your Knowlegde

### 5.1 True/False

*(Multiple Choice, 1 points, unlimited attempts permitted)*

**Check Your Knowledge**Glossary5.1

A search engine lets you find things on the Internet while a Web browser gives you access to the Internet.

☒ True

☐ False

**Notes:**

## 5.2 Multiple Choice

Check Your Knowledge

Glossary5.2

Determine if each of these is a search engine or a Web browser.

Google

bing

YAHOO!

Search Web

Submit


Notes:

### 5.3 Multiple Choice

(Multiple Response, 10 points, 3 attempts permitted)

**Check Your Knowledge****Glossary**5.3

What characteristics give this article credibility?  
(Select all that apply.)



Click to enlarge the image.

- ☒ Date
- ☒ Author's name
- ☐ Title of the article
- ☒ Author's biography
- ☒ Author's contact information
- ☐ Number of page views

**Submit**


## 5.4 Fill in the blank

*(Fill-in-the-Blank, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)*

Check Your Knowledge

Glossary5.4

Let's practice evaluating a Web search for credibility. You need to find information about the Tree Octopus. Start by typing: Tree Octopus into Google's search engine and press Google Search when you've finished.



Google Search




I'm Feeling Lucky



## 5.5 Identify

**Check Your Knowledge**Glossary5.5

Click on the first link to open the Web page.




[Web](#) [Images](#) [Videos](#) [Shopping](#) [Books](#) [More ▾](#) [Search tools](#)

About 1,760,000 results (0.57 seconds)

**Save The Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus - ZPI**  
zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/ ▾  
Mar 8, 1998 - Information about the endangered Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus and what you can do to save it.  
[Help](#) - [Sightings](#) - [FAQs](#) - [Links](#)

**Images for tree octopus** [Report images](#)




## 5.6 True/False

(Pick Many, 10 points, 3 attempts permitted)

**Check Your Knowledge**Glossary5.6

This is the first website listed. Evaluate the content to answer the following statements.



Click to enlarge the image.

The author is credible in this field.	<input type="radio"/> True	<input type="radio"/> False
The article is recent.	<input type="radio"/> True	<input type="radio"/> False
The article is free from spelling and grammar mistakes.	<input type="radio"/> True	<input type="radio"/> False
The website may be biased.	<input type="radio"/> True	<input type="radio"/> False
The article is credible.	<input type="radio"/> True	<input type="radio"/> False

Submit

## 5.7 Multiple Choice

(Multiple Response, 10 points, 1 attempt permitted)

**Check Your Knowledge**Glossary5.7

When typing your keywords into a search engine, what should you avoid?  
(Select all that apply.)

- ☒ Common articles -- a, and, the
- ☒ Punctuation
- ☒ Capitalization
- ☐ Using quotation marks
- ☐ Unique words



## 5.8 Fill in the blank

(Fill-in-the-Blank, 10 points, unlimited attempts permitted)

**Check Your Knowledge**Glossary5.8


You're searching for Technical Colleges. Using conditions, type to add Wisconsin and .edu to the search.


Press the blue search button when you're finished.




[Web](#) [Maps](#) [News](#) [Images](#) [Videos](#) [More ▾](#) [Search tools](#)

About 272,000,000 results (0.62 seconds)

**Technical College - ITT-Tech.edu**  
 [www.itt-tech.edu/Degrees](http://www.itt-tech.edu/Degrees) (844) 220-4358  
ssc & Bach Degree Programs Over 140 Locations. Apply Now!  
[Programs](#) [Apply Now](#)  
[Campuses](#) [Tuition Rate Freeze](#)

**Colleges in Appleton - rasmussen.edu**  
 [www.rasmussen.edu/Appleton](http://www.rasmussen.edu/Appleton) (888) 341-1023  
Earn Your Degree Online/On Campus. Regionally Accredited. Enroll Now.  
[Find Your Degree](#) - [Financial Aid](#) - [Rasmussen Appleton](#) - [Campus Locations](#)

**Technical Colleges - CompareTopSchools.com**



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## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Conclusion


**Conclusion**


Glossary

6.1

Congratulations.  
You have completed:


*Search the Internet*

Author: Kristal Davenport  
Music  [Jay Stulo](#)

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**Restart**

#### Notes:

Congratulations, You have completed *Search the Internet*.

Use your mouse to click on the restart button if you would like to repeat this module.