Search form

The Google search form (**Figure 6.3**) consists of a box for entering queries along with your choice of two buttons to send them off for processing:

- `Google Search`. This is the one you'll use most of the time. It works just like you'd expect—processing your query and producing a list of results.
- `I'm Feeling Lucky`. This button automatically takes you to the first Web page in your search results, instead of displaying the list—an interesting idea, but not all that necessary. Google returns search results with such blinding speed (usually a half second or less) that skipping the results list doesn't save that much time.

Google defaults to doing an AND search, looking for *all* the words that you type in the search box, so plus signs (+) aren't necessary. The only Boolean operator that's recognized by Google is OR, which must be typed in full caps: `genetics OR genome`.

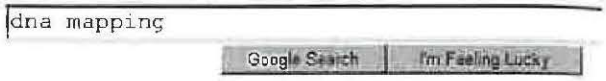


Figure 6.3 Google gives you two choices for submitting a query: `Google Search` to display a list of results and `I'm Feeling Lucky` to go directly to the first item on the list.



Figure 6.4 Google's Advanced Search option gives you access to some additional features not available on the home page.

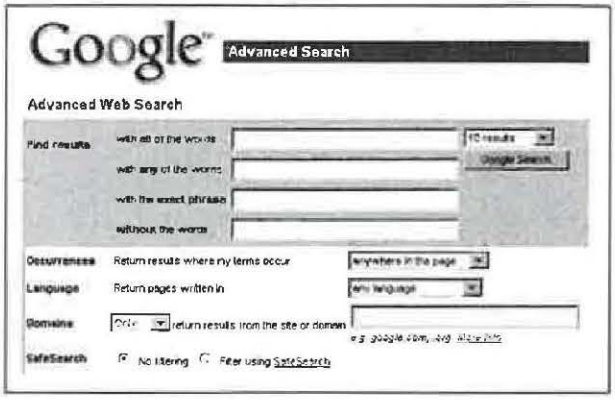


Figure 6.5 Using this form on the Advanced Search page, you can create more complex queries and exercise some control over how your results are presented.

Advanced Search option

The `Advanced Search` link (**Figure 6.4**) on the Google home page takes you to a fill-in-the-blanks form that you can use for somewhat more sophisticated queries (**Figure 6.5**). You can limit your search to specific Web page fields (titles, URLs, domains, and links) or to pages written in a particular language.

The Advanced Search form also allows you to display more search results per page (up to 100) and gives you access to several topic-specific search tools: Apple Macintosh, BSD Unix, Linux, U.S. government, and universities.

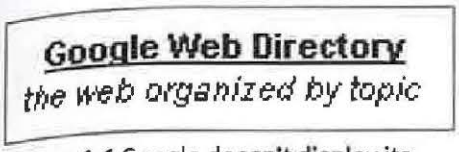


Figure 6.6 Google doesn't display its Web directory on the home page. You have to click this link to display it.

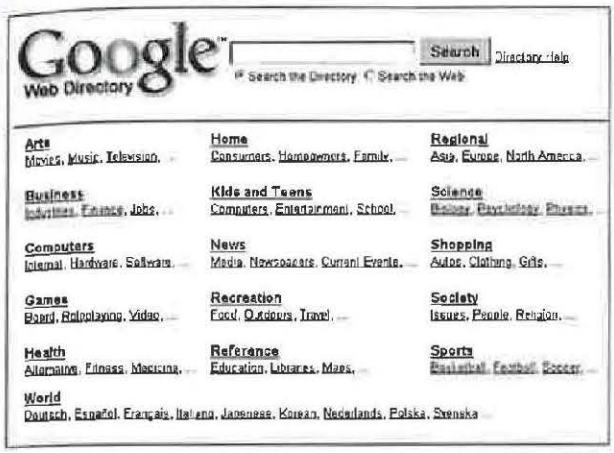


Figure 6.7 Once you're on the Google Web Directory page, you can search the directory or "drill down" through its many categories and subcategories.

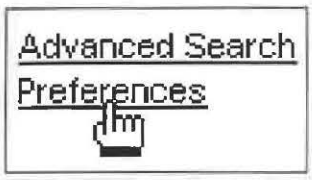


Figure 6.8 You can customize a handful of Google search options using the Preferences link.



Figure 6.9 To get back to the Google home page from anywhere within the site, click the company logo.

Google Web Directory option

The Google Web Directory link (**Figure 6.6**) takes you to a hierarchical guide to the Web, organized into 16 major topic categories and dozens of subcategories (**Figure 6.7**). Like a number of leading search engines, Google gets its Web directory from the Open Directory Project (dmoz.org), a volunteer effort to identify and catalog the best Web sites, based on the judgments of human beings rather than automated spider programs.

When you enter a query using the Google search form, your results automatically include matching categories and sites from the Web directory. But on occasion, you may want to browse the directory or do a search of its contents, instead of searching the entire Web. That's what the Google Web Directory link is for.

✔ Tips

- The Preferences link (**Figure 6.8**) on the Google home page gives you access to several useful customization options. You can set language preferences, increase the number of results per page from 10 to 100, specify that your results be displayed in a new browser window, and turn on content filtering. For more on Google preferences, see "Customizing Google" later in this chapter.
- To make Google your default home page, follow the instructions for "Customizing Your Web Browser" in Chapter 4.
- You can get back to the Google home page at any time by clicking the Google logo (**Figure 6.9**) at the top of every page within the site.

Searching with Google

Doing a search from the Google home page is pretty straightforward. There are no drop-down menus or radio buttons to consider. Just type several unique words or phrases in the search box and click Google Search to submit your query. Chances are, you'll get pretty good results most of the time.

If you decide to make Google your primary search engine, however, there are a few basic things you should know about entering and combining keywords that can help you search with more precision. To refine your queries even further, you can include field-search terms to zero in on Web page titles, URLs, domain names, and links.

To enter a query:

1. Go to the Google home page (www.google.com) and type several descriptive words, or a phrase in quotes, in the search box (**Figure 6.10**).

   By default, Google does an AND search, looking for *all* the words, so there's no need to put plus signs (+) in front of required words. In fact, if you do use plus signs, Google typically ignores them.

   The only time you need to use a plus sign is when you are searching for a very common word (or *stopword*), like *about* or *for* or *with* (**Figure 6.11**). In that case, the plus sign signals Google that the word should *not* be treated as a stopword: +about guides, for example, to search for information on the company that creates the About guides to the Internet (www.about.com).

2. To tell Google that you want to do an OR search, type your search words separated by OR in full caps: hilary OR hillary, for example, to look for either spelling of the name (**Figure 6.12**). You *must* use full caps for OR so that Google knows to treat it as a Boolean operator.

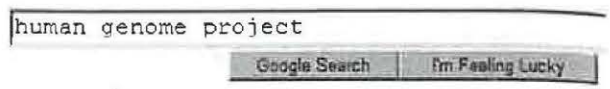


Figure 6.10 When you type multiple words in the search box, Google assumes you want to find *all* the words. There's no need to link them with AND or put plus signs (+) in front of them.



Figure 6.11 Plus signs are only required for very common words, which Google typically ignores. A search like this tells Google not to ignore the word *about*.



Figure 6.12 Use the Boolean operator OR in full caps to tell Google that you want to look for one word *or* the other.

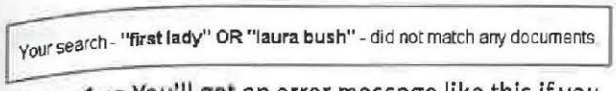


Figure 6.13 You'll get an error message like this if you use quotation marks in an OR search. The same query without quotes (`first lady OR laura bush`) works fine.

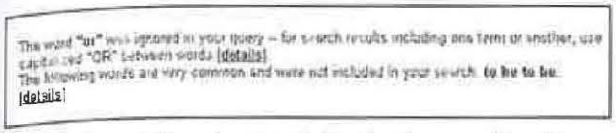


Figure 6.14 A Google search for the famous line "`to be or not to be`" from Hamlet turns up empty, even when the words are enclosed in double quotes.

To look for phrases with `OR`, type them *without* quotes: `first lady OR laura bush`. Otherwise you'll get a "no results found" message (**Figure 6.13**).

3. If you want to exclude a certain word or phrase from your search results, use a minus sign (-) directly in front of it: `Portobello -mushrooms`, for example, if you're looking for a restaurant named Portobello rather than the fungus.

✔ Tips

- Except for the OR operator, Google isn't sensitive to case. You can type search words and phrases in uppercase, lowercase, or a combination and you'll get the same results.
- With most of the leading search engines, you can search for a phrase—even one that's composed almost entirely of stop-words—by enclosing the phrase in double quotes. Not so with Google. Try searching for "`to be or not to be`" and you'll be advised that *to*, *be*, and *or* have all been ignored because they are so common (**Figure 6.14**).

  When that happens, you can redo your Google search, putting plus signs in front of the words that were ignored the first time around. (Don't put plus signs in front of all the words, though, or you'll be back to square one.)

  Alternatively, try another search engine. Lycos (`www.lycos.com`) is an especially good choice, because it will *not* ignore common words that are part of a phrase enclosed in double quotes.

To view your search results:

1. Click Google Search (or hit Enter) to display your results, 10 to a page, with your search terms highlighted in bold and presented with a few words of surrounding text from the Web page. Google "clusters" results and presents only two Web pages from any given site—one indented below the other—in order to give you more variety in your search results (**Figure 6.15**).
2. To "uncluster" the results and view additional pages from a particular Web site, click the More results from link (**Figure 6.16**).
3. In some cases, Google also gives you the option of clicking a Cached link (**Figure 6.17**) to display a copy of the Web page at the time it was indexed by the Google spider. If you have a problem linking to the current version of the Web page (because the site is down, for example), try retrieving the cached version.
4. Your search results may include items that begin with a [PDF] label (**Figure 6.18**). Google is in the process of indexing the full text of Adobe PDF (Portable Document Format) files that are available on the Web. If you have the Adobe Acrobat Reader installed, you can download and view these items by clicking the link next to the [PDF] label. If not, click Text version to view the document as a text file.



Figure 6.15 Google puts your search terms in bold to make them easy to spot and presents only two Web pages from any given site, one indented below the other.

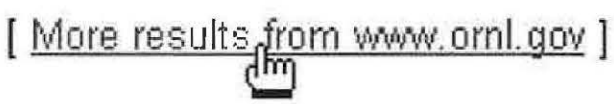


Figure 6.16 To "uncluster" your results and view more Web pages from a given site, click the More results from link.

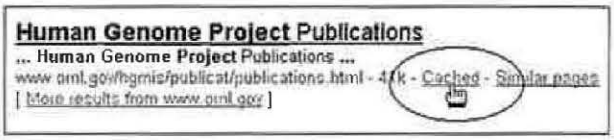


Figure 6.17 If you have trouble connecting to a Web site listed in your search results, click Cached to display a copy of the page as it looked when last visited by the Google spider.

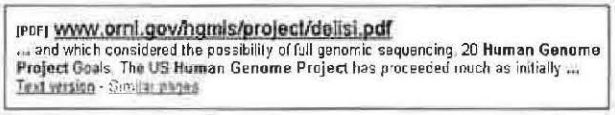


Figure 6.18 You have two options with PDF files: click the link following the [PDF] label to view the file with the Adobe Acrobat Reader, or click Text version to view it as a text file.

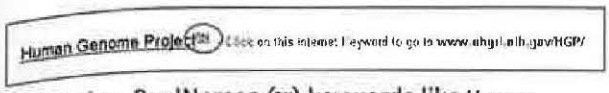


Figure 6.19 RealNames (RN) keywords like Human Genome Project shown here can be typed in the Internet Explorer Address box in place of a complicated Web address.

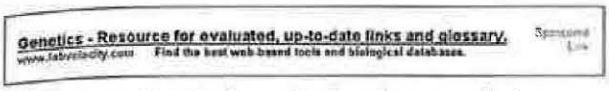


Figure 6.20 Google doesn't allow banner ads, but your search results may include a Sponsored Link in a shaded area like this (or in a small box on the right side of the screen).

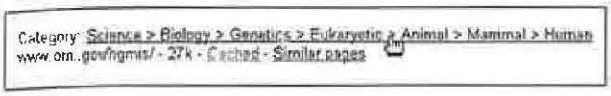


Figure 6.21 Category links, labeled as such and easily recognizable by the greater-than (>) symbols separating the various subtopics, can help you find Web pages with related content.



Figure 6.22 In addition to finding out how many search results were located (and how quickly), you can use the statistics bar to get a definition for any search word or phrase that's underlined.

✔ Tips

- The RN designation next to an item on the search results page (**Figure 6.19**) means that the word you have searched for is a brand, product, service, or company name that has been registered as an Internet keyword with RealNames (`www.realnames.com`). Companies pay $100 a year or more for the right to "own" a particular RealNames keyword, which can be entered directly into the Internet Explorer Address box in place of the URL. (Microsoft owns a 20 percent stake in RealNames.)

  You'll typically find RealNames results (if any) at the top of the Google results list, along with Sponsored Links—discrete text advertisements related to your search request (**Figure 6.20**).

- Each item on the Google search results page includes a `Similar pages` link that's intended to help you find other sites that might be of interest. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

  A more consistently effective way to find related sites is to click the `Category` link (**Figure 6.21**), if there is one. That will take you to the appropriate spot in the Google Web directory, where you will find "related sites" that have been chosen by human beings, not an automated "scout" program.

- The statistics bar (**Figure 6.22**) at the top of the search results page displays your query and tells you how many results were found and how long the search took. If one of your search terms is underlined, you can click on it for an instant definition.

To refine a Google query:

1. Try adding another unique word to the search box at the top of the search results page (**Figure 6.23**) and submitting your query again. Since Google looks for *all* the words in your query, this has the effect of searching *within* your original results (also known as *set searching*). It's faster than scrolling to the bottom of the page and using the `Search within results` option.

2. As you may recall from our discussion of keywords in Chapter 2, one of the best ways to narrow the focus of a search is to zero in on Web page *titles*. With Google, you can use `allintitle:` followed directly (no space after the colon) by a phrase in quotes or multiple words that you'd like to find in Web page titles: `allintitle:human genome project history` (**Figure 6.24**).

   To do an OR search of words in titles, use `intitle:` followed directly by two or more words separated by spaces: `intitle:genome DNA mapping`.

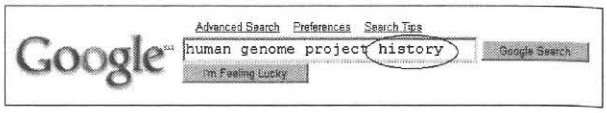


Figure 6.23 You can refine a Google search by simply adding another word to your query and running the search again.

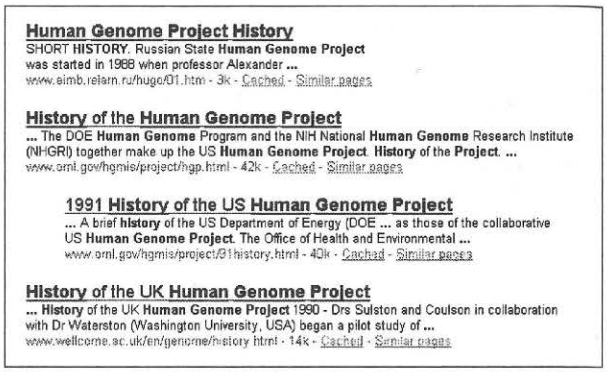


Figure 6.24 To produce these results, we searched for `allintitle:human genome project history`. Note that all of our search terms appear in bold in the Web page titles.

✔ Tips

- You can also use URL, domain, and link field-search terms in your Google queries. For examples, see the Google Quick Reference (**Table 6.1**).
- For even easier field searching, click `Advanced Search` and use the fill-in-the-blanks form and drop-down menus to focus on Web page titles, URLs, domain names, and links.
- Google's search tips and help information are splendid—written in plain English and covering just about any question you might have about how to construct a query and interpret the results. You'll find a `Search Tips` link on every search results page or by clicking `All About Google`.

Table 6.1

Google Quick Reference

FOR THIS TYPE OF SEARCH:	DO THIS:	EXAMPLES:
Plain-English Question	Simply type a phrase or question that expresses the idea or concept, using as many words as necessary.	`Who invented the steam engine?`
Phrase Search	Type the phrase surrounded by **double quotes**. (Common words will be ignored, even with quotes.)	`"industrial revolution"`
AND Search (multiple words and phrases, each of which must be present)	Type the words (or phrases in quotes) separated by a space, without any special punctuation.	`Edison "light bulb"`
	Use a **plus sign (+)** only if one of the words in your query is a very common word (or *stopword*). The second example would help you find guides at the popular About.com Web site dealing with history.	`+about guides history`
OR Search (multiple words and phrases, any one of which may be present)	Type words or phrases (no quotes allowed) separated by **OR** (full caps required).	`phonograph OR speaking machine`
NOT Search (to exclude a word or phrase)	Use a **minus sign (–)** directly in front of the word or phrase you want to exclude.	`Lincoln –"town car"`
Case-Sensitive Search	Not available.	
Date Search	Not available.	
Field Search	Type the field-search term followed by a colon and the search word or phrase. Note that there is no space after the colon. (For fill-in-the-blanks field searching, use Advanced Search.)	
	Titles: Use `allintitle:` or `intitle:` with one or more search words. The first example would look for *both* words in page titles, the second *either* word.	`allintitle:inventions inventors` `intitle:inventions inventors`
	URLs. Use `allinurl:` or `inurl:` with one or more words you want to find in the URL. The first example would look for *both* words, the second *either* word.	`allinurl:pdf 1099` `inurl:patents trademarks`
	Domains. Use `site:` followed by a domain name or type (com, edu, gov, etc.), along with the search word or phrase you want to find at that site or domain type. The first example would find pages at the National Geographic Web site that include the word *inventions*. The second would find government (gov) Web sites that include the word *patents*.	`site:nationalgeographic.com inventions` `site:gov patents`
	Links. Use `link:` with a specific Web address to find all pages that link to that address. The example would find pages that link to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (www.uspto.gov).	`link:www.uspto.gov`
	Note: You *cannot* combine a `link:` search term with another search word or phrase.	
Nested Search	Not available.	
Proximity Search	Not available.	
Wildcard Search	Not available.	

Using Advanced Search

Many diehard Google fans never avail themselves of the offerings on the Advanced Search page (**Figure 6.25**). In most cases, that's because searching from the Google home page produces such consistently good results. Why bother mastering advanced techniques when typing a few unique words and phrases gets the job done so effectively?

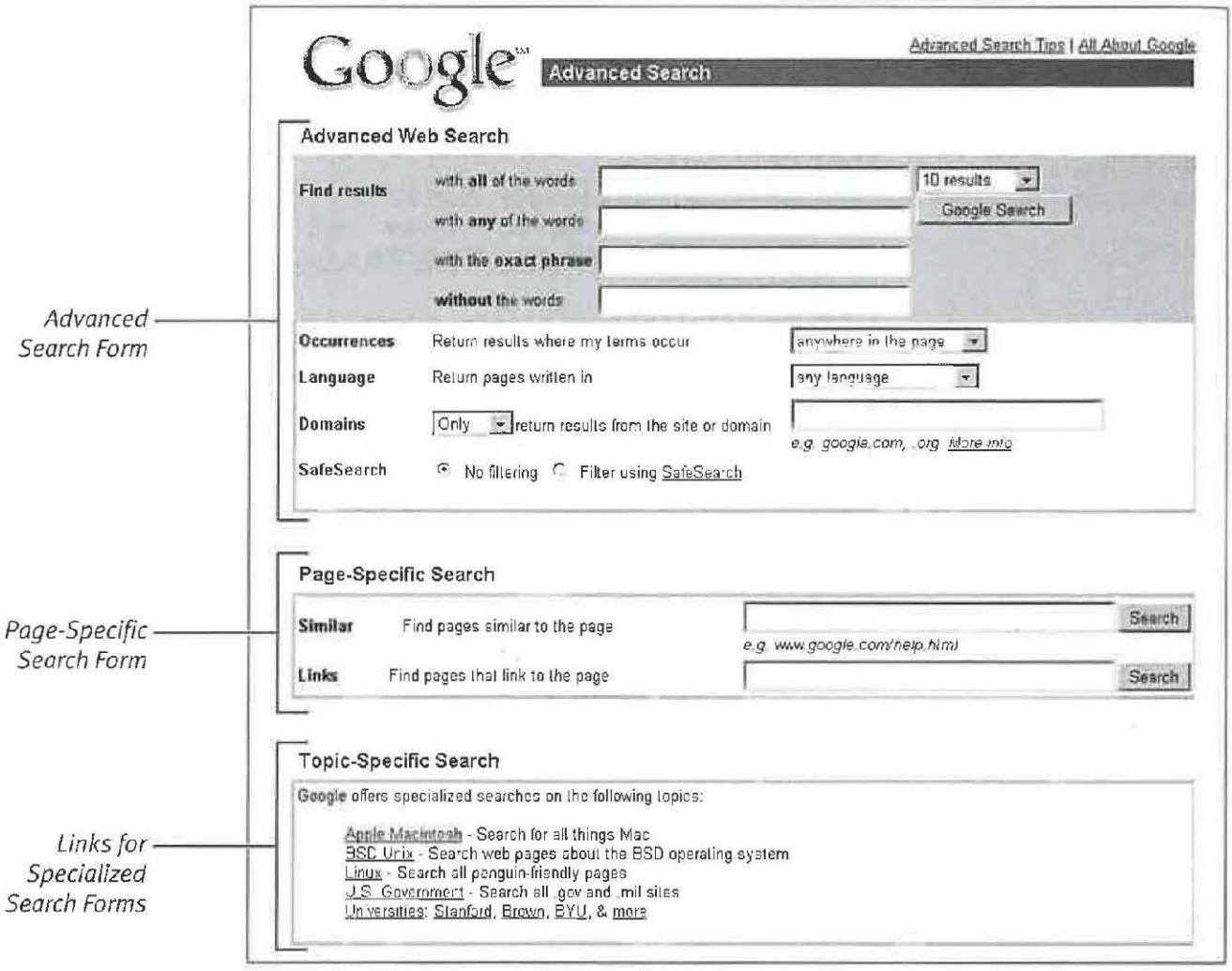


Figure 6.25 Google's Advanced Search page lets you create more complicated queries using fill-in-the-blanks forms and drop-down menus.

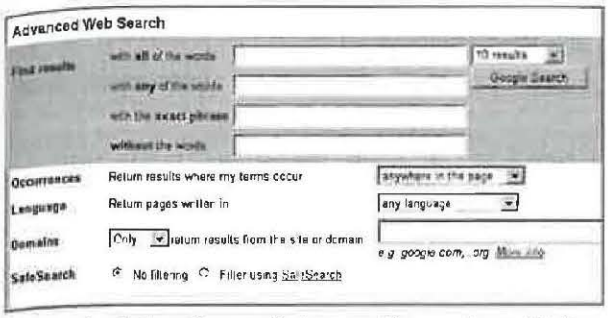


Figure 6.26 Creating an "advanced" search couldn't be easier. You're prompted for each of the available options.

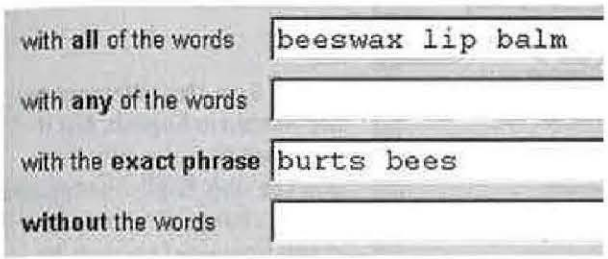


Figure 6.27 You can type words in one or more of these four search boxes to tell Google you want to do an AND, OR, phrase, or NOT search.

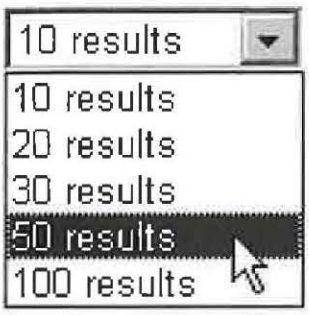


Figure 6.28 If you like being able to scroll quickly through 20 or more search results, you can boost the number presented on each page to a maximum of 100.

Well, the fact is, *Advanced Search* is actually a bit of a misnomer for this page. *Power-Assisted Search* comes closer to describing what you'll find here. For certain types of queries, you can save keystrokes and avoid having to remember (and correctly type) special search terms and punctuation. Just fill in the blanks and choose options from the appropriate drop-down menus and away you go!

The Advanced Search page also lets you control certain aspects of how your search results are presented, with options for increasing the number of results per page, choosing your preferred language, and filtering out content that you may find offensive.

To enter an Advanced Search query:

1. Click Advanced Search on the Google home page and use the fill-in-the-blanks form at the top of the page (**Figure 6.26**) to construct your query. Start by entering your search words or phrases in the appropriate search boxes, depending on whether you want to look for *any* of the words, *all* the words, the *exact phrase*, pages *without* a certain word, or a combination (**Figure 6.27**).

   There's no need to use any punctuation, as long as you enter your search terms in the right boxes. To look for a phrase, for example, type it in the "exact phrase" box without quotation marks. To do a NOT search, type *just* the word you want to exclude (no minus sign) in the box labeled "without the words."

   Searches are *not* case sensitive, so you'll get the same results using uppercase, lowercase, or a mix of the two.

2. If you prefer to see more than the standard 10 results per page (so that you can scroll through them more quickly), use the drop-down menu (**Figure 6.28**) to boost the number as high as 100.

continues on next page

3. To limit your search to Web page titles or URLs, make a selection from the Occurrences menu (**Figure 6.29**). This has the same effect as using one of Google's field-search terms (`allintitle:`, `intitle:`, `allinurl:`, `inurl:`) in your query.

4. If you'd like to restrict your search to Web pages written in English or some other language, use the Language menu (**Figure 6.30**). Google's default setting is any `language`.

5. Use the Domains option to limit your search to a specific domain name or type (`com`, `edu`, `gov`, `org`, `net`, etc.). This is similar to using Google's `site:` field-search term.

   For example, type `npr.org` in the Domains search box to tell Google to look for your search words only at the NPR Web site (**Figure 6.31**). Or type `org` if you want to focus on all sites that are classified as non-profit organizations.

   To specifically avoid the NPR site, change the "return results from" drop-down menu in the Domains section from `Only` to `Don't`.

6. When you're ready to submit your query, click `Google Search`. (Hitting Enter doesn't work here.)

✔ Tips

- Google presents search results the same way, whether you do your search from the Google home page or the Advanced Search page. For details, see "Searching with Google" earlier in this chapter.
- You can permanently change your settings for language, number of search results per page, and content filtering using Google's Preferences feature. For details, see "Customizing Google" later in this chapter.

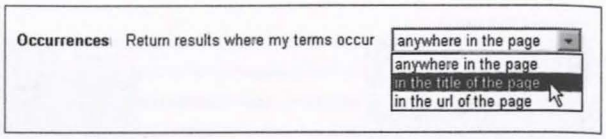


Figure 6.29 The Occurrences menu lets you focus your search on Web page titles or URLs.



Figure 6.30 Most Web pages are written in English, but if you want to make sure that you see *only* English-language pages, change the Language menu from any `language` to `English`.

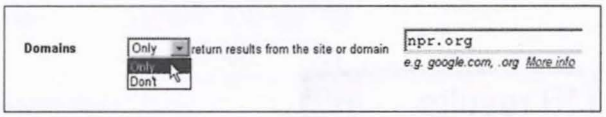


Figure 6.31 The Domains section makes it easy to limit your search to a specific Web site, in this case `npr.org`.

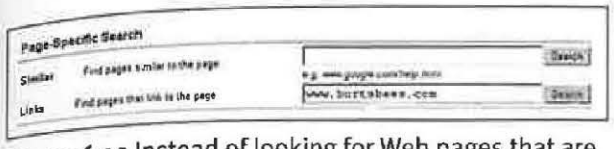


Figure 6.32 Instead of looking for Web pages that are similar to `www.burtsbees.com`, we've specified that we want to locate all the pages that link to it.

To search for similar pages or links:

1. Scroll down to the Page-Specific Search area of the Advanced Search page and enter a Web address in either the Similar or Links box (**Figure 6.32**).
2. Type a Web address in the Similar box to find other Web pages with content that is similar or related, based on information collected and analyzed by Google's automated "scout" program. Then click `Search` to submit your query.
3. Alternatively, type a Web address in the Links box and click `Search` to find pages that link to that site. (This produces the same results as using a `link:` field-search term in a Google query.)

✔ Tips

- Of the two Page-Specific Search options, you'll probably find Links to be the most useful. Webmasters and Web site creators often do link searches to get a handle on a site's popularity—the more links, the more popular the site.
- Link searches can also be quite effective in tracking down similar or related Web sites. If you're a fan of Burt's Bees, for example, a link search for `www.burtsbees.com` could help you locate other Web sites that offer beeswax products.

To do specialized searches:

1. Scroll down to the Topic-Specific Search area (**Figure 6.33**) of the Advanced Search page and click one of the links for Google's specialized search tools. Options include: `Apple Macintosh`, `BSD Unix`, `Linux`, `U.S. Government`, and `Universities`.

2. Choose `Apple Macintosh`, for example, and you'll be presented with a special Google search form (**Figure 6.34**) that you can use to search for "all things Mac"—without including the words *apple* or *macintosh* in your queries.

✔ Tip

- Just for fun, we tried searching for `pie` using the Apple Macintosh search form, expecting that we might get a "no results found" message. Instead, the first two pages of search results were dominated by Web pages offering apple pie recipes! Clearly, these specialized tools are works in progress.

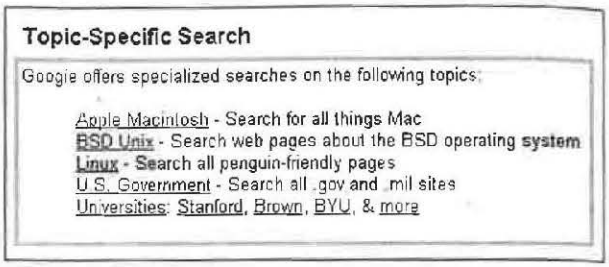


Figure 6.33 Each of these links leads to a special Google search page.



Figure 6.34 Search for `web search tools` on the Apple Macintosh search form shown here and Google will know that you don't want to see PC/Windows tools.



Figure 6.35 The Preferences page lets you change Google's default language settings and control certain aspects of how your results are displayed.



Figure 6.36 Google "speaks" more than a dozen languages, which you can choose from the Interface Language menu.



Figure 6.37 With the Interface Language menu set to French, Google's `I'm Feeling Lucky` button is now `J'ai de la chance`!

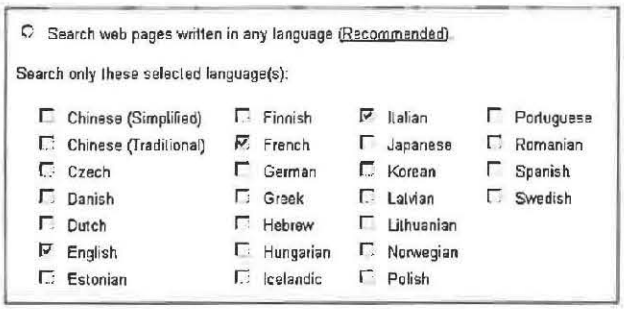


Figure 6.38 The Search Language area of the Preferences page lets you limit your Google searches to Web pages written in one or more languages.

Customizing Google

Google doesn't currently offer much in the way of customization features. You can't change the content and layout of the home page, for example, nor can you save Google searches to be run again periodically.

What you *can* do is control the language that Google uses to communicate with you as you do your searches. You can also make a couple of adjustments in the way your results are presented, and turn on Google's SafeSearch content filter if you wish.

The customization process only takes a minute—there's no sign-up requirement or membership form to fill out and only a few options to consider. It's certainly worth doing if you decide to make Google your primary search engine.

To customize Google:

1. Go to the Google home page (`www.google.com`) and click `Preferences` to access the page that allows you to customize your search settings (**Figure 6.35**).
2. The first two settings have to do with language preferences. If English isn't your native tongue, you can use the Interface Language menu (**Figure 6.36**) to change Google's tips and messages to another language (**Figure 6.37**).

   Then, if you want make sure that your Google results never include Web pages written in languages you don't understand, use the Search Language area (**Figure 6.38**) to limit your results to specific languages. (You can click as many boxes as you wish.)
3. The next two settings give you a small measure of control over how your search results are presented (**Figure 6.39**).

continues on next page

Many Web searchers prefer to boost the Number of Results setting from the default of 10 results per page to as many as 50 or 100. (It makes it easier and faster to scroll through a large number of results, or to search them with your browser's Find feature.)

The Results Window option lets you specify that whenever you click an item on your Google search results page, a new browser window will be opened to display it. Like the number of results per page, this is a personal preference that may or may not be important to you.

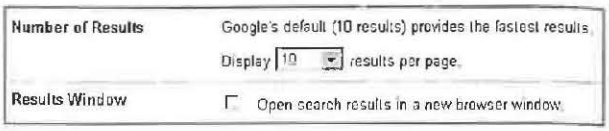


Figure 6.39 These settings let you increase the number of items displayed on each page of your Google results, and specify that you want to open search results in a new browser window.

4. The last option on the Preferences page lets you turn SafeSearch content filtering on and off (**Figure 6.40**). With SafeSearch turned on, most Web pages containing pornography and explicit sexual content are blocked from your search results.



Figure 6.40 You can automatically filter out most sexually explicit material by turning on Google's SafeSearch content filter.

5. When you're finished customizing Google, click Save Preferences (**Figure 6.41**).



Figure 6.41 Be sure to save your settings before leaving the Preferences page.

✔ Tips

- Your Google Preferences settings apply to searches from both the Google home page and the Advanced Search page.
- If you decide to make Google your primary search engine, you may want to customize your Web browser so that it takes you to Google automatically whenever you go online, and whenever you hit your browser's Home button. You can tell your browser to use either the Google home page or the Advanced Search page as its default home-page location, using these addresses:

  `http://www.google.com`
  (Google home page)

  `http://www.google.com/advanced_search`
  (Advanced Search page)

  If you're not sure how to set your Web browser's home-page location, see "Customizing Your Web Browser" in Chapter 4.

7

HotBot



Good to Know

- HotBot rivals AltaVista in the breadth and sophistication of its search offerings, including search customization features.
- Powered by Inktomi, one of the largest and most frequently updated search engine databases, HotBot is a top choice of professional searchers.
- Because of its easy-to-use interface, with drop-down menus and radio buttons that allow you to create complex and precisely targeted queries, it's also extremely popular with less-experienced searchers.
- Launched in 1996 by Wired Digital, HotBot was acquired in 1998 by the company that owns and operates the Lycos search engine.

HotBot was launched in 1996 as a joint venture between Wired Digital (creators of *Wired* magazine) and Inktomi, a company that makes high-end computer workstations. The *Wired* connection helps explain the site's bilious lime-green color scheme. (If you've ever read—or *tried* to read—the magazine, you know what we mean.) Inktomi's role was to create the search engine software for HotBot—most notably *Slurp*, the spider responsible for crawling the Web and assembling documents into a searchable database.

Now owned by Terra Lycos (which also operates the Lycos search engine), HotBot is very popular with technically savvy Web searchers, who appreciate the ease and speed with which it allows you to search the Web. But it doesn't get nearly as much traffic (or press attention) as rival search sites AltaVista, Google, and Yahoo. That's a shame, because for all of its speed and sophistication, HotBot is also an excellent search engine for inexperienced searchers.

The HotBot search form accepts special punctuation marks and Boolean operators for those who want to use them in their queries. But the form also offers drop-down menus and radio-button selections that allow you to essentially point and click your way through even the most complex searches.

Within about a second, you'll have your results, sorted according to how well they match your search criteria. If you don't find exactly what you're looking for, you can easily refine your query by adding more terms or limiting the search by date, location, or media type. You can also do *set searching*, limiting a follow-on search to just those Web pages that were returned the first time around.

For those occasions when you want to browse or search the Web by topic, the HotBot home page includes a subject guide provided by the Open Directory Project. It's certainly worth getting to know, especially if you plan to do most of your searching with HotBot.

Just keep in mind that HotBot's main focus is its lightning-fast search capability. For sheer speed, comprehensiveness, and ease of use, HotBot is a real winner.

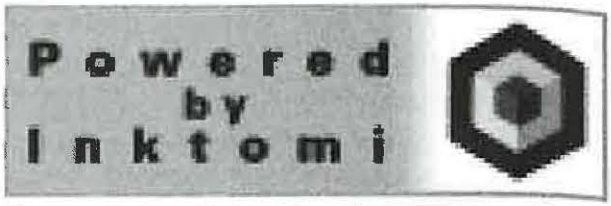


Figure 7.1 Inktomi helped launch HotBot some years ago and now provides the search engine software and database for a number of sites on the Net.

✔ Tips

- The name *Inktomi* (pronounced "**INK**-teh-me") comes from a Lakota Indian legend about a resourceful spider known for its ability to defeat its enemies through wit and cunning.
- Inktomi and its Web-crawling associate Slurp are obviously doing something right. As you may recall from our discussion of search engines in Chapter 1, Inktomi's GEN3 database of Web pages is among the largest of all the major search engines.
- HotBot, AOL Search, and MSN Search (as well as a number of other search engines) are all "powered by Inktomi" (**Figure 7.1**). But at this writing, HotBot is one of the few to offer Inktomi's GEN3 database. Both AOL Search and MSN Search use a version of the Inktomi database that's roughly one-quarter the size of GEN3.
- To read more about the technology behind Slurp, visit the Inktomi Web site (`www.inktomi.com`) and click on `About Inktomi`.

Contact Information

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A Division of Terra Lycos
San Francisco, California
415-276-8400 (voice)
415-276-8499 (fax)
www.hotbot.com

The HotBot Home Page

Unlike many of its rivals, the HotBot home page (**Figure 7.2**), with its distinctive lime-green and navy-blue color scheme, is designed primarily for searching. Advertising banners and promotional offers are kept to a minimum, and traditional "portal features" like news headlines, stock quotes, and shopping services are relegated to underlying pages.

Furthermore, if you find that the default search settings on the home page don't meet all of your day-to-day requirements, you can customize the page in a variety of ways, adding the features you need and removing those that you rarely use.

Let's take a look at the HotBot home page and its most important search-related features.

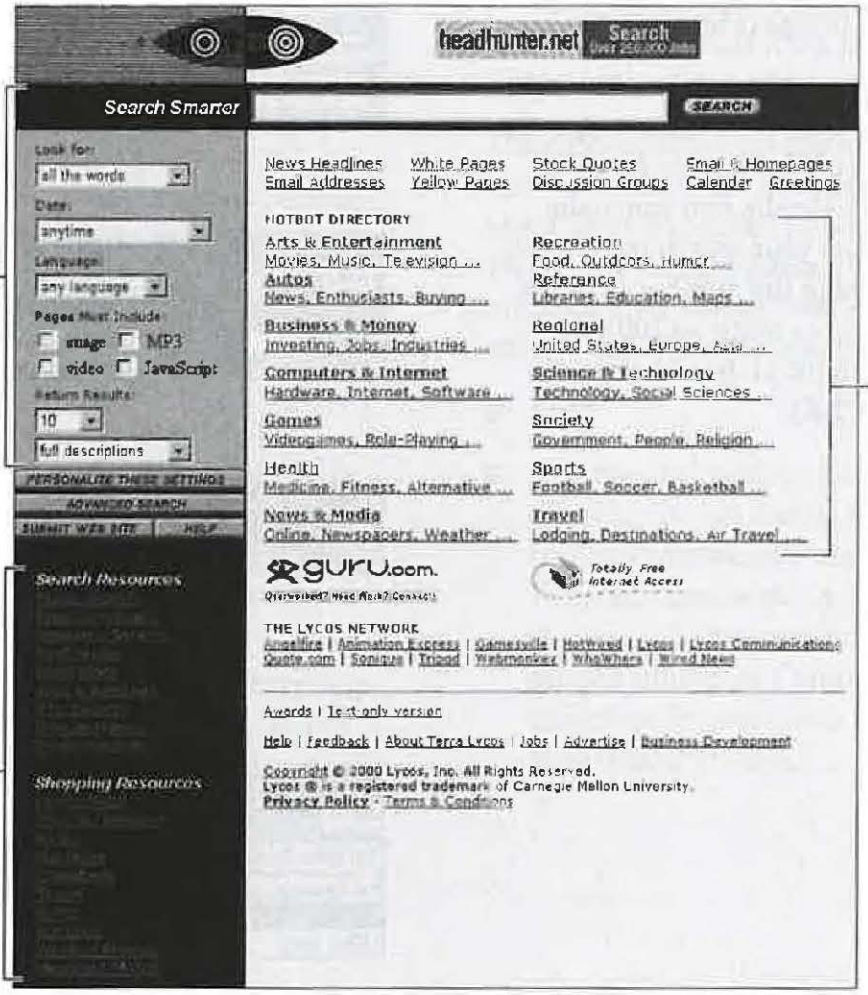


Figure 7.2 The HotBot home page.

Search form

Using the HotBot search form (**Figure 7.3**) couldn't be easier—whether you're an accomplished search professional or a first-timer. For the professionals, the form allows the use of plus and minus signs to include (+) or exclude (-) words and phrases, as well as the Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT. For less experienced searchers, simply typing several unique keywords (or even a question in plain English) will typically produce excellent results.



Figure 7.3 Typing a few unique keywords in the HotBot search form is the first step in performing a search.

Tools for refining a search

Novice and professional searchers alike will appreciate the tools HotBot offers on its home page for refining a search (**Figure 7.4**). Using drop-down menus, you can specify whether you want to search for `all` the words, the default setting (similar to a Boolean AND search), or one of the other options (**Figure 7.5**).

You can also limit your search by date and language (**Figure 7.6**). And you can specify that certain types of files appear on the page (**Figure 7.7**). Finally, you can make adjustments in how your search results are presented, increasing the number of items per page from 10 to as many as 100 and specifying the amount of detail to be included (**Figure 7.8**).



Figure 7.4 This part of the search form makes it easy to refine your query. Just use the drop-down menus to tell HotBot what and how you want to search.

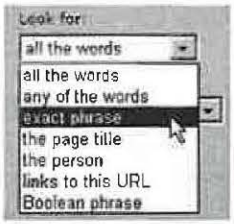


Figure 7.5 The Look For menu's default setting tells HotBot to do an `all` the words search. But if you've typed a phrase in the search box, you'll get better results with exact phrase.

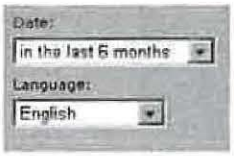


Figure 7.6 Here, we've set the Date and Language options to focus on recently updated Web pages that are presented in English.

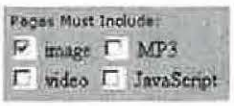


Figure 7.7 Searching for special file types is relatively easy with HotBot, since you can specify right on the search form that your results must include a certain type of file.

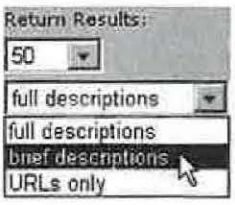


Figure 7.8 HotBot lets you decide how your results are presented—the number per page (increased here from 10 to 50) and the amount of detail for each listing.

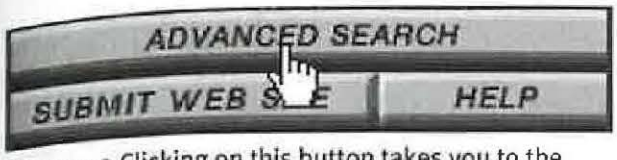


Figure 7.9 Clicking on this button takes you to the Advanced Search page, which offers even more options for refining your HotBot queries.



Figure 7.10 HotBot leads the pack when it comes to search customization options. To see for yourself, click on this button.

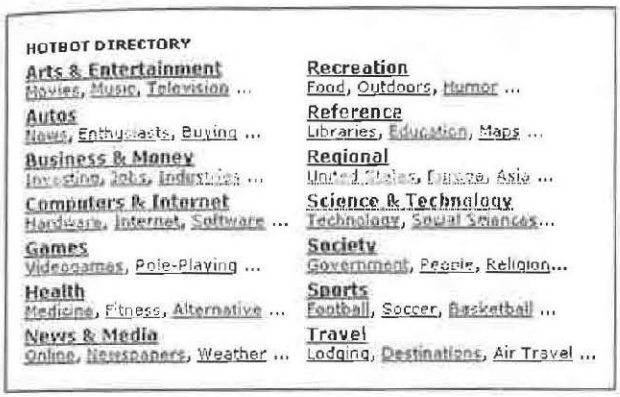


Figure 7.11 The Web directory on the HotBot home page is created and maintained by thousands of volunteer editors under the auspices of the Open Directory Project.

- Once you've found the right topic in the HotBot directory, your next hurdle is to figure out what the rules are for entering a search. Here again, HotBot falls short, offering no guidance whatsoever.

  It took a visit to the Open Directory help page (`dmoz.org/searchguide.html`) to clarify that you can use plus and minus signs, phrases in quotes, and the Boolean operators AND, OR, and ANDNOT (no space) in your directory queries.

✔ Tips

- For even more search options, click on Advanced Search (**Figure 7.9**).
- If you find yourself frequently changing HotBot's default settings, or going to the Advanced Search page to use the features offered there, you should definitely consider using the Personalize These Settings option (**Figure 7.10**). It allows you to change the defaults and add (or remove) features on the search form. For details, see "Customizing HotBot" later in this chapter.

Web directory

HotBot's Web directory (**Figure 7.11**) provides an alternative method for finding information on the Internet. Instead of searching a vast database of Web pages for the information you're after, you can browse or search a much smaller collection of sites, organized into 14 subject categories and dozens of subcategories.

The content and organization of the directory are the work of the Open Directory Project (`dmoz.org`), a volunteer effort to catalog the Web. As you might guess, the directory is modeled after Yahoo (`www.yahoo.com`) and offers many of the same features and functions.

✔ Tips

- One big drawback to HotBot's Web directory is that there's no way to *search* (rather than *browse*) the entire directory. Your only choice is to pick a topic and then search that specific topic and its related subtopics. (Yahoo and the Open Directory Project's own Web site don't have this limitation.)

Other search-related tools

You'll find three sets of links on the HotBot home page for specialized search tools. The one right below the search form (**Figure 7.12**) gives you one-click access to searches for News Headlines, Email Addresses, White Pages, Yellow Pages, and Stock Quotes. There's also a link for Discussion Groups that you can use to search Usenet newsgroups.

A second set of links under the heading "Search Resources" (**Figure 7.13**) takes you to a variety of search services, some of them free, some not. Click on Road Maps, for example, and you'll find yourself at the MapQuest Web site (www.mapquest.com), where you can do a free search for maps and driving directions. Click on Research Service, on the other hand, and you'll be taken to Electric Library (www.elibrary.com), a subscription-only service that offers a 30-day free trial but then charges $60 per year (or $10 per month) for unlimited searching.

Finally, under "Shopping Resources" (**Figure 7.14**), you'll find links to various searchable shopping services offered by Lycos (one of HotBot's sister companies) and its advertising partners—AutoTrader for new and used car information, Barnes & Noble for books, Trip.com for travel, and so forth.

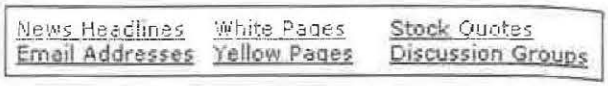


Figure 7.12 These links right below the HotBot search form give you quick access to current news articles, phone numbers, addresses, stock quotes, and newsgroups.



Figure 7.13 HotBot's Search Resources menu gives you one-click access to some the Net's best special-purpose search tools.



Figure 7.14 These links take you to shopping sites run by Lycos and other online merchants who have paid to "own" a particular link.

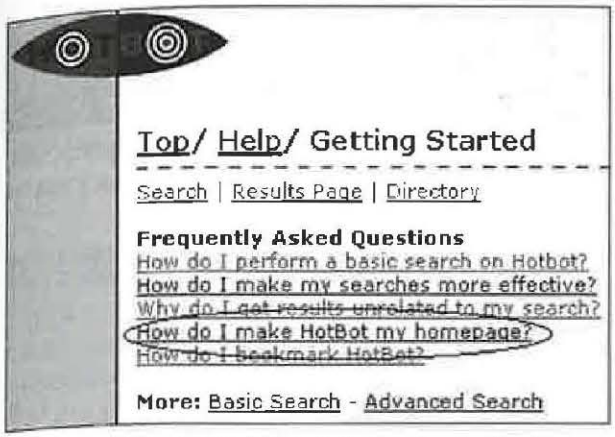


Figure 7.15 The HotBot Help information is nicely organized and provides answers to frequently asked questions.

✔ Tips

- HotBot's `Discussion Groups` link gives you limited access to Deja (formerly Deja News), a search service that specializes in Usenet newsgroups, among other things. To take full advantage of Deja's newsgroup-search capabilities (covered in Chapter 15), use the Deja Web site (`www.deja.com`).
- The exact lineup in the Search Resources and Shopping Resources menus may change from time to time as search engine partners come and go. But you can count on the fact that this part of the HotBot home page will always offer some excellent tools to complement your HotBot Web searches.
- For instructions on making HotBot your default home page (**Figure 7.15**), click on `Help` and then on `Getting Started`. Or follow the instructions for "Customizing Your Web Browser" in Chapter 4.
- You can return to the HotBot home page at any time by clicking on the HotBot logo at the top of the page.

Searching with HotBot

Having covered the basic elements of the HotBot home page, let's do some actual searching and see how HotBot presents the results.



Figure 7.16 Type this query and by default HotBot will look for *all the words*, even though you haven't used plus signs or Boolean ANDs.

To enter a HotBot query:

1. Go to the HotBot home page (`www.hotbot.com`) and type several unique keywords, a phrase in quotes, or a combination of words and phrases in the search form (**Figure 7.16**). You can use plus and minus signs to require (+) and exclude (-) search terms, although plus signs aren't really necessary if you leave the Look For menu set to `all the words`.

2. By default, HotBot performs an AND search, looking for Web pages that contain `all the words` in your query. To change that, use the Look For menu (**Figure 7.17**) to select one of the other options:
   - `any of the words`
     Similar to a Boolean OR search.
   - `exact phrase`
     No need to enclose the phrase in quotation marks if you use this option. You'll typically get the same results with or without quotes.
   - `the page title`
     To look for your search terms in the *titles* of Web pages.
   - `the person`
     To tell HotBot to look for *near matches* to your query. Typing `Lee Iacocca` and selecting `the person`, for example, will find references to that exact name as well as *Iacocca, Lee* and *Lee A. Iacocca*.
   - `links to this URL`
     To find Web pages that include hyperlinks to a specific URL—a technique often used by Web site creators to get a measure of their sites' popularity. To work properly, your search must include the Web site's *complete* URL.

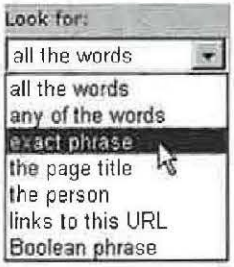


Figure 7.17 You can easily change the default search setting to one of several other options on the Look For menu.

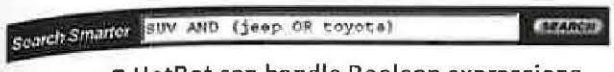


Figure 7.18 HotBot can handle Boolean expressions like this. Just be sure to select Boolean phrase on the Look For menu.

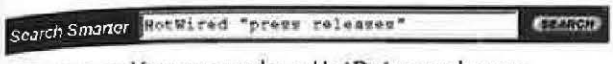


Figure 7.19 You can make a HotBot search case sensitive by using the exact combination of uppercase and lowercase letters that you want to find in a particular word.

For example, to find Web pages that link to MapQuest, you would need to type `http://www.mapquest.com` in the HotBot search form.

- Boolean phrase
  To tell HotBot that you've typed a Boolean expression in the search form (**Figure 7.18**). You can use AND, OR, NOT, phrases in quotes, and parentheses in constructing a Boolean query. The Boolean operators can be typed in either uppercase or lowercase.

To make your search case-sensitive:

1. The first thing you need to know is that when you type a search word in lowercase, HotBot assumes that you want to search for *all* combinations of lowercase and uppercase. Type `jeep` in the search form, for example, and HotBot will look for *Jeep* and *JEEP* as well as *jeep*.
2. To limit your search to an exact combination of uppercase and lowercase letters (for example, to find the company names *HotWired* or *NeXT*), type the words using the specific combination of uppercase and lowercase letters that you want to find (**Figure 7.19**).

✔ Tips

- Case-sensitive searching comes in handy when you're looking for the name of a person or place, which will almost always be presented with initial caps. Company names, on the other hand, can trip you up, since they often use unexpected combinations of uppercase and lowercase (as in the examples above). If you're not sure how a company name is likely to be presented on a Web page, try searching first with all lowercase.
- Remember that if you use even a *single* uppercase letter in a search term, HotBot will assume that you want to do a case-sensitive search.

To do a wildcard search:

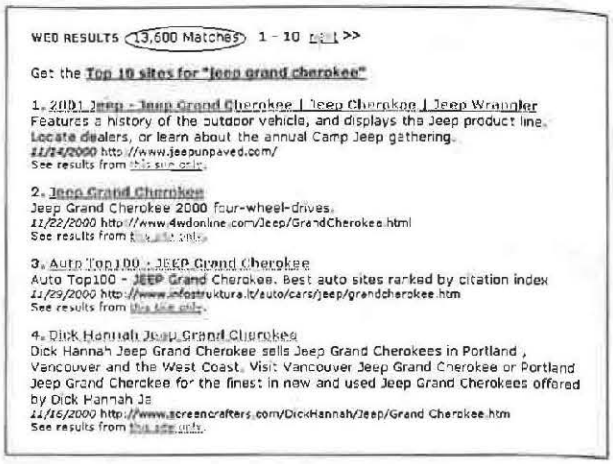
1. Use an asterisk (*) or a question mark (?) along with at least two adjacent characters in your search term.
2. An asterisk matches *zero or more characters* anywhere in a word or string of characters (beginning, middle, or end). For example, a search for `realt*` would match both *realty* and *realtor*.
3. A question mark matches a *single* character anywhere in a word or string of words. The search term `alumn?` would find both *alumna* and *alumni* but not *alumnus* or *alumnae*.

✔ Tip

- HotBot's wildcard capability is temperamental. Sometimes it works; sometimes it returns a "no results found" message. As a fallback, you can, of course, simply do an `any of the words` (Boolean OR) search for the word variations you had hoped to find with the wildcard character.

To view your search results:

1. Once you've entered your query, click on `Search` to submit it. Your results will be presented 10 to a page, along with the total number of matches found (**Figure 7.20**). As you may recall, these results come from the Inktomi database.
2. Each listing will include what HotBot calls "full descriptions"—Web page title, one to four lines of text, date created or modified, and URL (**Figure 7.21**).
3. HotBot "clusters" results, meaning that if your query matches multiple pages at a single Web site, only one page from that site will be listed. To see all the matching pages from a particular site, click on the link telling HotBot to show you the results for `this site only` (**Figure 7.22**).


WEB RESULTS (13,600 Matches) 1 - 10 next >>

Get the Top 10 sites for "jeep grand cherokee"

1. 2001 Jeep - Jeep Grand Cherokee | Jeep Cherokee | Jeep Wrangler
Features a history of the outdoor vehicle, and displays the Jeep product line. Locate dealers, or learn about the annual Camp Jeep gathering.
11/14/2000 http://www.jeepunpaved.com/
See results from this site only.

2. Jeep Grand Cherokee
Jeep Grand Cherokee 2000 four-wheel-drives.
11/22/2000 http://www.4wdonline.com/Jeep/GrandCherokee.html
See results from this site only.

3. Auto Top100 - JEEP Grand Cherokee
Auto Top100 - JEEP Grand Cherokee. Best auto sites ranked by citation index
11/29/2000 http://www.infostruktura.lt/auto/cars/jeep/grandcherokee.htm
See results from this site only.

4. Dick Hannah Jeep Grand Cherokee
Dick Hannah Jeep Grand Cherokee sells Jeep Grand Cherokees in Portland , Vancouver and the West Coast. Visit Vancouver Jeep Grand Cherokee or Portland Jeep Grand Cherokee for the finest in new and used Jeep Grand Cherokees offered by Dick Hannah Je
11/16/2000 http://www.screencrafters.com/DickHannah/Jeep/Grand Cherokee.htm
See results from this site only.

Figure 7.20 Here's an example of HotBot search results. Note that the first line tells you the total number of matches in the Inktomi database.

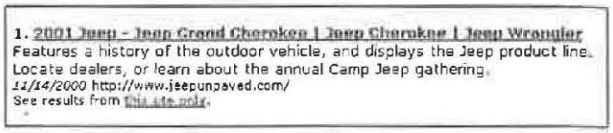

1. 2001 Jeep - Jeep Grand Cherokee | Jeep Cherokee | Jeep Wrangler
Features a history of the outdoor vehicle, and displays the Jeep product line. Locate dealers, or learn about the annual Camp Jeep gathering.
11/14/2000 http://www.jeepunpaved.com/
See results from this site only.

Figure 7.21 The "full description" of a Web site in HotBot's search results includes page title, a few lines of text, date, and URL.

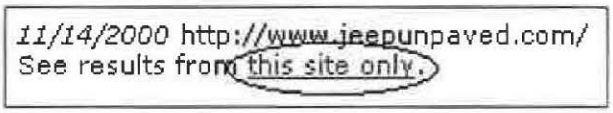

11/14/2000 http://www.jeepunpaved.com/
See results from this site only.

Figure 7.22 HotBot shows you only one matching page per Web site, but you display the rest by clicking on this link.

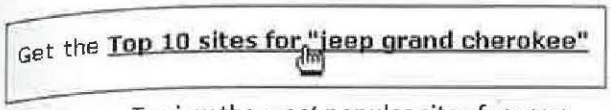


Figure 7.23 To view the most popular sites for your query, click on this link. The information comes from a service called Direct Hit.

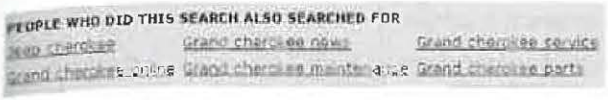


Figure 7.24 HotBot sometimes offers suggestions of other search terms that might help you refine your search.

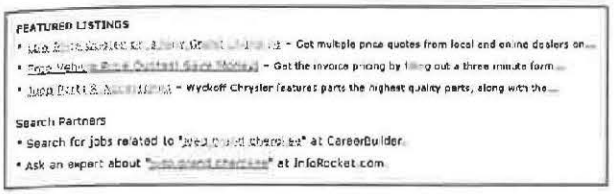


Figure 7.25 Advertisers pay for the privilege of being featured like this on the HotBot search results page.

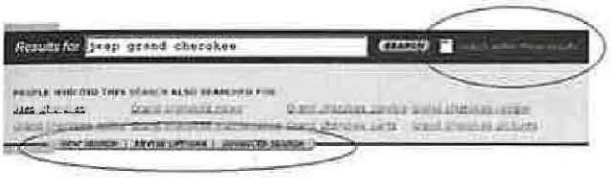


Figure 7.26 HotBot offers several options for doing a follow-on search. Your best bet is often to search again *within* your original results.

4. The first page of results will often include a section labeled "Top 10 Matches" or a link you can click on to view the "Top 10 sites" for your query (**Figure 7.23**). These results come from a service called Direct Hit, a "popularity engine" that ranks Web sites based on how often they are clicked on by users of Direct Hit's own Web site (`www.directhit.com`).

5. Your results may also include suggestions for refining your search (**Figure 7.24**) and "featured listings" from HotBot and Lycos advertising partners (**Figure 7.25**).

6. If you don't see exactly what you're looking for in the first couple of pages of your HotBot search results, you have several options (**Figure 7.26**):

   Search within these results. Entering a modified query and clicking on the box next to this option allows you to do a *set search*—that is, to search again *within* your original results.

   New Search. Clicking on this tab takes you back to the HotBot home page, where you can enter an entirely new query.

   Revise Options. Clicking here takes you back to the home page, where you'll find your original query ready and waiting to be modified.

   Advanced Search. Clicking on this tab takes you to the Advanced Search page and automatically enters your original query in the search form.

7. If you're still not satisfied, you can automatically send your query to the Lycos search engine for a "second opinion."

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✔ Tips

- For best results with HotBot, use at least two or three search terms and be as specific as possible.
- To limit your results to Web pages written in English, use the search form's Language menu.
- If you prefer to see more results per page, use the Return Results area of the search form to increase the number (up to 100). You can also control the amount of detail presented for each listing by choosing `brief descriptions` (to eliminate the date and URL) or `URLs only`.
- To permanently change your Return Results settings, click on `Personalize These Settings`. The Personalize page also allows you to turn off Web page "clustering," which it refers to as "disabling the 'Best Page Only' filter" (**Figure 7.27**).
- For additional search tips and techniques, click on `Help` on the HotBot home page. You'll also find a summary of HotBot search features and syntax in the HotBot Quick Reference (**Table 7.1**).



Figure 7.27 You can turn off Web page "clustering" by disabling this option on the Personalize page.

Table 7.1

HotBot Quick Reference

FOR THIS TYPE OF SEARCH:	DO THIS:
Plain-English Question	Simply type the question in the search form and select `all the words` from the search form's Look For menu.
Phrase Search	Type the phrase with or without quotes and select `exact phrase` on the Look For menu. To look for multiple phrases, or a phrase and a single word, put the phrase in quotes and select `all the words` from the Look For menu.
AND Search (multiple words and phrases, each of which *must* be present)	Type words and/or phrases and select `all the words` from the Look For menu. You can use a **plus sign (+)** in front of each word or phrase, but it's not really necessary with an `all the words` search. You can also combine words and phrases with **AND** and select `Boolean phrase` from the menu.
OR Search (multiple words and phrases, any one of which may be present)	Type words or phrases separated by spaces and select `any of the words` from the menu. Alternatively, combine words and phrases with **OR** and choose `Boolean phrase` from the menu.
NOT Search (to exclude a word or phrase)	Use a **minus sign (-)** in front of a word or phrase you want to exclude from the results. Or use **NOT** in front of the word or phrase and specify `Boolean phrase`.
Case-Sensitive Search	Use lowercase to find *any combination* of uppercase and lowercase. Use capital letters (initial caps or a combination of uppercase and lowercase) to force an *exact match* of your search term.
Date Search	Use the Date menu on the HotBot home page to select a timeframe (one week to two years). Alternatively, you can use the Date meta words **`after:`**, **`before:`**, or **`within:`** in your query. For examples, see the HotBot Meta Words Quick Reference (**Table 7.2**). For point-and-click date searching, use `Advanced Search`.
Field Search (Web page titles)	Use the Look For menu on the HotBot home page to specify that you want to search `the page title`. Or you can use the HotBot meta word **`title:`** in your query. (See **Table 7.2** for examples.)
Field Search (geography, domain, or domain type)	Use the HotBot meta word **`domain:`**. For example, use `domain:jp` to look for sites in Japan. Use `domain:com` to look for commercial sites in North America. For more examples, see **Table 7.2.** Alternatively, you can click on `Advanced Search` and use the Location/Domain section to focus your search on a particular geographic region, country, domain, or domain type (`com`, `edu`, `gov`, etc.).
Field Search (multimedia)	Use the Pages Must Include section on the HotBot home page to look for image, video, MP3, or JavaScript files. For an expanded list of multimedia options, click on `Advanced Search`. Alternatively, you can use **`feature:`** meta words in your queries on the HotBot home page to find plug-ins, embedded scripts, Java applets, audio and video files, etc. (See **Table 7.2** for a complete list.)
Nested Search	Combine search terms with parentheses and select `Boolean phrase` from the Look For menu.
Proximity Search	Not available.
Wildcard Search	Use an **asterisk (*)** with at least two adjacent characters to search for zero or more characters anywhere in a word or string of characters (beginning, middle, or end). Use a **question mark (?)** with at least two adjacent characters to search for a single character. For example, `car*` would match *cars*, *cart*, *carrot*, and *cardiovascular*. But `car?` would only match *cars*, *cart*, and other four-letter words.

Improving Results with Field Search

As you may recall from our discussion of the HotBot home page, you can easily limit your queries to certain specific Web page elements (or *fields*) using the search form's drop-down menus and radio buttons (**Figure 7.28**):

- To focus on *titles* of Web page, use the `page title` option on the Look For menu.
- To look for Web pages created or modified within a certain *timeframe*, use the Date menu.
- To find *image*, *video*, *MP3*, and *JavaScript* files, click on the appropriate radio button in the Pages Must Include section.

But these options are but a fraction of HotBot's field-search capabilities. To take full advantage of the entire range of options, you need to know about *Advanced Search* and HotBot *meta words*. Of the two, Advanced Search offers by far the easier method for doing field searches, so let's start with it.



Figure 7.28 We've changed the search form's default settings to zero in on specific Web page elements—title, date, and file type.

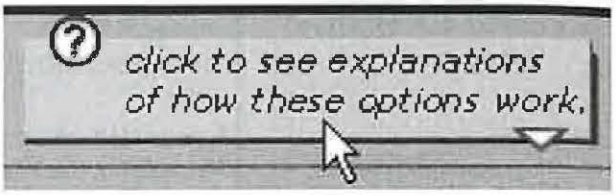


Figure 7.29 If this is your first visit to the Advanced Search page, be sure to click here to display brief explanations of all the options.

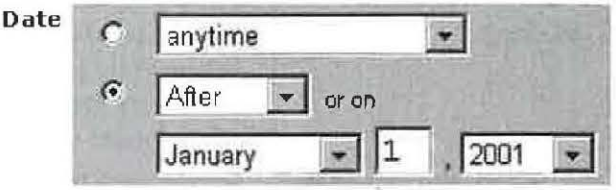


Figure 7.30 The Date section lets you focus on very recent (or very old) Web pages.

To do field searching with Advanced Search:

1. Click on `Advanced Search` on the HotBot home page. When the Advanced Search page appears, click on the special button (**Figure 7.29**) located directly below the search form to display explanations of all the options.
2. Type your query in the search form and make your selection on the Look For menu, just as you would on the HotBot home page.
3. The Date section (**Figure 7.30**) expands on the date-searching capabilities of the main search form. In addition to looking for Web pages created or modified within a certain timeframe, you can fill in a precise date and specify `Before` or `After`.



Figure 7.31 The Pages Must Include section helps locate sites offering special types of files. You can click on as many items as you wish, and specify one or more file extensions as well.

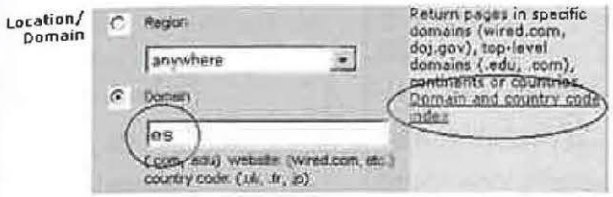


Figure 7.32 We used the link to HotBot's domain and country code Index to find the code for Spain (es).

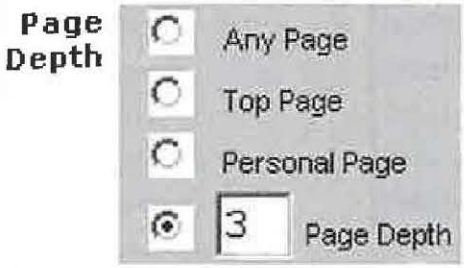


Figure 7.33 How deep into a Web site do you want HotBot to search? You can use Page Depth to specify the number of pages.



Figure 7.34 A search like this would limit your query to Web pages that include the phrase *Jeep Grand Cherokee* in the title.

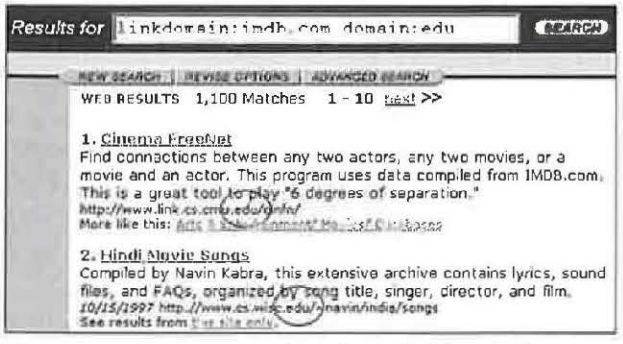


Figure 7.35 Here we combined two field-search terms to locate education (edu) Web sites that link to the Internet Movie Database (`imdb.com`).

4. The Pages Must Include section (**Figure 7.31**) gives you additional options for locating multimedia files, Java applets, and other special file types. You can also look for a specific file extension (GIF, JPEG, TIFF, etc.) You can even click on multiple entries if you like.

5. The Location/Domain section (**Figure 7.32**) lets you focus your search on a particular continent, country, domain name, or type of domain (`com`, `edu`, `gov`, etc.).

   To target a particular country, you'll need the country's two-letter Internet code (`cl` for Chile, `es` for Spain, etc.). For a list, click on `Domain and country code index` or see Appendix B.

6. Finally, the Page Depth section (**Figure 7.33**) gives you control over how deep into the Web site your search will go. If you want to search only top-level pages (typically a Web site's home page), choose `Top Page`. Otherwise, specify a number and click on the `Page Depth` radio button.

To do field searching with meta words:

1. You can incorporate one or more of HotBot's field-search terms, called *meta words*, right into your queries.

   For example, instead of using the Look For menu's the page `title` option to search for the phrase *Jeep Grand Cherokee* in the titles of Web pages, you can type `title:"Jeep Grand Cherokee"` in the HotBot search form (**Figure 7.34**).

2. Similarly, you can use the `domain:` field-search term to look for specific domain names or types of domains, and `linkdomain:` to find Web pages that link to specific sites. You might even combine these two field-search terms to look for, say, education (edu) domains that link to a particular Web site (**Figure 7.35**).

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3. You can search for a veritable laundry list of special Web page elements and multimedia files (audio and video files, scripts, Java applets, etc.) using the `feature:` meta word. To look for images of Jeeps (**Figure 7.36**), try a HotBot search for `feature:image` Jeep.

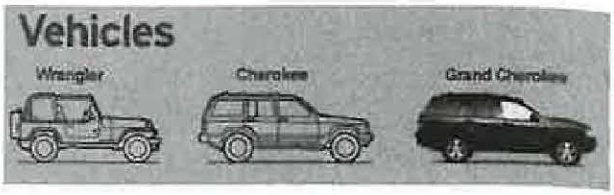


Figure 7.36 Use the HotBot meta word `feature:image` along with another unique keyword (in this case Jeep) to locate sites that include graphics like this.

4. The Date meta words `after:`, `before:`, and `within:` are designed to allow more precise searching than the Date menu on the main search form. You could, for example, use both `after:` and `before:` in a Boolean expression to search for Web pages created or modified within a specific time period.

   HotBot cautions, however, that the Date meta words work correctly only if used as part of a Boolean expression. You cannot use them with plus (+) and minus (-) signs.

   So `jeep AND within:3/months` should produce good results.

   But `+jeep +within:3/months` will result in an error message.

✔ Tips

- For the most part, HotBot's meta words duplicate the search capabilities provided on the main search form and the Advanced Search page. Unless you're a power searcher, you'll probably find it easier to use the point-and-click approach rather than incorporating meta words into Boolean expressions.
- The Date meta words (`after:`, `before:`, and `within:`) are great in theory, but they don't always work as promised. We've had trouble with them from time to time, and the HotBot technical support group has been unable to explain or duplicate the problem.
- For a summary of meta words, along with search examples, see the HotBot Meta Words Quick Reference (**Table 7.2**).
- For more advice on using HotBot meta words, including a current list of the ones that are available, click on `Help` on the HotBot home page and then on Advanced Search.

Table 7.2

HotBot Meta Words Quick Reference*

Meta Word Format	What It Does
`title:`*word or phrase*	Searches Web page titles for the word or phrase you specify. For example, `title:Edmund's` or `title:"car guides"`.
`domain:`*name*	Restricts search to the domain name selected. Domains can be specified up to three levels: `domain:com`, `domain:ford.com`, `domain:www.ford.com`.
`linkdomain:`*name*	Restricts search to pages containing links to the domain you specify. For example, `linkdomain:edmunds.com` finds pages that point to the Edmund's Car Guides Web site.
`outgoingurlext:`*extension*	Restricts search to pages containing embedded files with a particular extension. For example, `outgoingurlext:ra` finds pages containing RealAudio (RA) files.
`depth:`*number*	Limits how deep within a Web site your search goes. To go three pages deep, use `depth:3`.
`feature:acrobat`	Detects Acrobat files.
`feature:applet`	Detects embedded Java applets.
`feature:activex`	Detects ActiveX controls or layouts.
`feature:audio`	Detects audio formats.
`feature:embed`	Detects plug-ins.
`feature:flash`	Detects Flash plug-in HTML.
`feature:form`	Detects forms in HTML documents.
`feature:frame`	Detects frames in HTML documents.
`feature:image`	Detects image files (GIF, JPEG, etc.).
`feature:script`	Detects embedded scripts.
`feature:shockwave`	Detects Shockwave files.
`feature:table`	Detects tables in HTML documents.
`feature:video`	Detects video formats.
`feature:vrml`	Detects VRML files.
`scriptlanguage:javascript`	Allows you to search for pages containing JavaScript. (Note that lowercase is required for `javascript`.)
`scriptlanguage:vbscript`	Allows you to search for pages containing VBScript. (Note that lowercase is required for `vbscript`.)
`after:`*dd/mm/yy*	Use in a Boolean expression to restrict search to pages created or modified *after* the specified date: `Explorer AND after:31/12/00`. (Note that date format is day/month/year.)
`before:`*dd/mm/yy*	Use in a Boolean expression to restrict search to pages created or modified *before* the specified date: `Corvette AND before:30/6/99`. (Note that date format is day/month/year.)
`within:`*number/unit*	Use in a Boolean expression to search for pages created or modified within a specified time period. Units can be expressed in days, months, or years: `(Jeep Cherokee OR "Grand Cherokee") AND within:3/months`.

Note: The words shown in italics are variables. You'll find examples of the terms you can use for each of these variables in the column labeled "What It Does."

Customizing HotBot

The overall content and layout of the HotBot home page are essentially a take-it-or-leave-it affair. You can't eliminate the Web directory, for example, or move it to a different location on the page, as you can with, say, AltaVista and Yahoo. Nor can you change the color scheme or add features for tracking your stocks or monitoring the weather, as you can with most search engines that double as "portal" pages.

What you *can* do, however, is tailor the search form to your particular style of searching. You can pick and choose from a long list of search options, select the settings you use most often, and arrange to have your chosen settings appear automatically whenever you do a HotBot search.

If you decide to make HotBot your primary (or backup) search engine, you'll definitely want to take advantage of its search-form customization features. It's easy to do and will save you time in the long run.

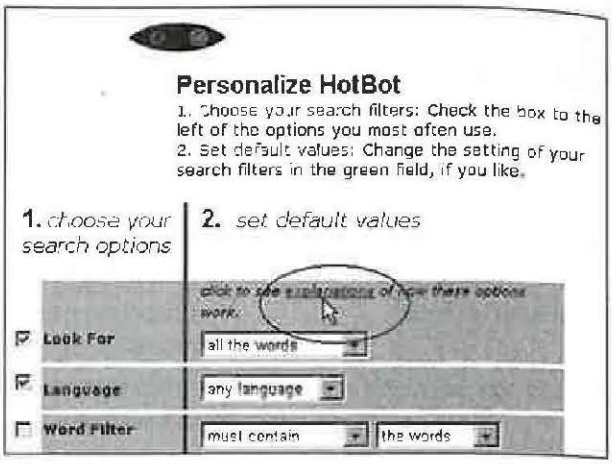


Figure 7.37 The Personalize HotBot page walks you through the process of customizing the search form.

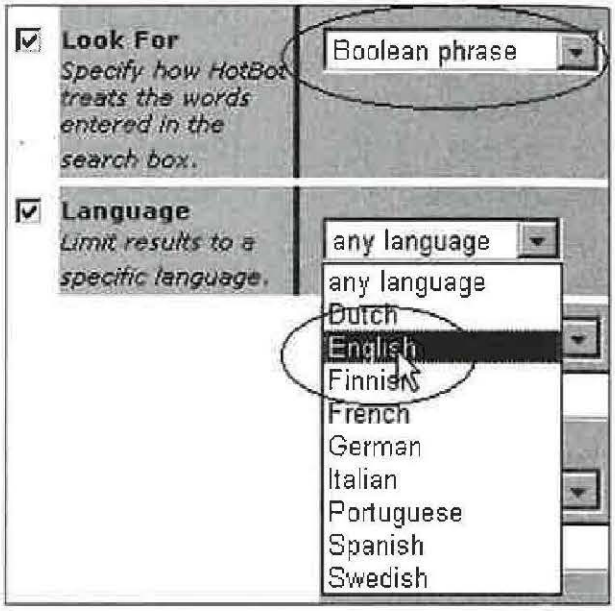


Figure 7.38 We've made Boolean phrase and English the default settings for the Look For and Language menus respectively.

To customize HotBot's search form:

1. Go to the HotBot home page (`www.hotbot.com`) and click on `Personalize These Settings` to access the Personalize HotBot page (**Figure 7.37**). For helpful tips on what each setting does, click on the `explanations` link.
2. Search options that currently appear on the HotBot home page will have a check mark next to them. To add or remove an option, click on the box to make the check mark appear or disappear.
3. Use the drop-down menu next to each option to change its default setting (**Figure 7.38**). If you typically change the Look For menu to `Boolean phrase`, for example, make that the default. Similarly, if you want to avoid pages written in foreign languages, change the Language menu to `English`.

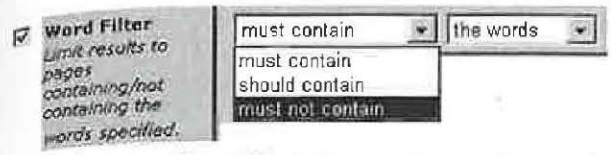


Figure 7.39 Putting a Word Filter section on the search form gives you another method for requiring or excluding search terms.

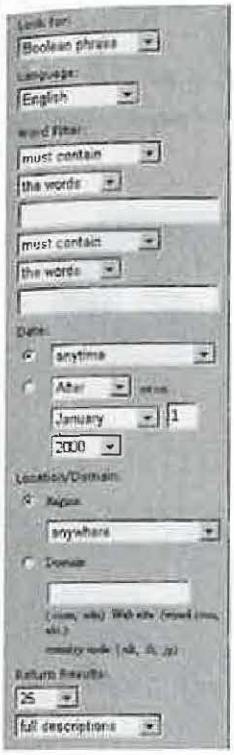


Figure 7.40 Here's our customized version of the settings on the HotBot search form.

4. Adding a Word Filter option (**Figure 7.39**) to the search form lets you specify words or phrases that *must*, *should*, or *must not* appear in your search results.

5. Once you've made all the changes, click on Okay to get back to the HotBot home page, where you'll find your customized search settings all ready for your next search (**Figure 7.40**).

6. To change your default settings at any time, just return to the Personalize HotBot page, make your new selections, and click on Okay. To get back to HotBot's original settings, click on `reset defaults`.

✔ Tips

- The Personalize HotBot page gives you the option of turning on a feature called *word stemming*. With this feature enabled, HotBot automatically searches for variations of certain terms. Type `thought`, for example, and HotBot will look for that word as well as *think* and *thinking*.

  It's an interesting notion. But since there's no way of knowing for sure what word variations HotBot can handle automatically, we prefer to make our own decisions about the search terms to be included in our queries.

- HotBot's customization feature uses *cookie* technology to remember your settings. If you've disabled cookies in your Web browser, your settings can't be saved.

  For step-by-step instructions on enabling cookies using Internet Explorer or Netscape, go to the HotBot home page and click on Help and then on Advanced Search.

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- What about saving a complex search, along with your search settings, so that you can run it again from time to time? HotBot doesn't currently offer a Saved Searches feature, but here's a technique that works:

  Type your query in the search form on the HotBot home page, select your settings, and click on Advanced Search. Then add the resulting page to your Bookmarks or Favorites list and choose a descriptive name, like HotBot Search: Glossbrenner Book Reviews. (By default, it will be called HotBot: SuperSearch.) To run the search, just select it from your Bookmarks or Favorites list and click on the Search button.

8

Lycos



Good to Know

- Developed in 1994 at Carnegie Mellon University, Lycos is now owned by Terra Lycos, a Spanish company that also owns HotBot and a number of other popular Web sites.
- The highly acclaimed Lycos spider is still used for building certain specialty databases, but the site is now powered by the FAST search engine.
- The Lycos Web directory comes from the Open Directory Project.
- Lycos ignores all Boolean operators, so you can't search with much precision. But it's a good choice for doing multimedia searches, and for finding phrases that include common stopwords.

One of the oldest Internet search engines, Lycos was developed in 1994 by artificial-intelligence expert Michael "Fuzzy" Mauldin at Carnegie Mellon University. The name comes from the Latin for *wolf spider*, a creature Mauldin has long admired for its tenacity at searching for and finding its prey.

Now a commercial enterprise, Lycos is owned by Terra Lycos, a Spanish conglomerate whose mission is "to be the most visited online destination in the world." In pursuit of that goal, Terra Lycos also owns and operates rival search engine HotBot (`www.hotbot.com`) and a number of other popular Web sites, including MatchMaker (`www.matchmaker.com`), Quote.com (`www.quote.com`), and WhoWhere? (`www.whowhere.com`).

Under the new ownership, the highly acclaimed Lycos spider has been relieved of many of its former duties. Most Lycos search results now come from FAST, a relatively new but increasingly formidable contender among the leading search technologies. (The FAST database currently ranks second—behind Google (`www.google.com`)—in the ongoing competition for the largest collection of Web pages.)

The job of creating and maintaining the Lycos Web directory has been farmed out as well. It's currently provided by the Open Directory Project (dmoz.org).

One thing that hasn't changed at Lycos is the emphasis on making multimedia searches as easy as possible. You can use a special search form to locate images, audio files, and video files by simply clicking the appropriate radio button. With a properly equipped Web browser, you can even view or listen to the files as they are being downloaded to your computer. A separate MP3 search option gives you access to the FAST database of more than one million music files in the popular MP3 format.

The major drawback to searching with Lycos is that you're limited to fairly basic queries. You can search for phrases in quotes and use plus and minus signs to require (+) or exclude (-) words and phrases. But try using Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT, NEAR, ADJ, etc.) in your queries—as the help information says you can do using the Advanced Search form—and you'll find that Lycos treats them like any other search term, looking for every occurrence of *AND*, for example, and presenting it in bold in your search results.

Contact Information

Lycos, Inc.
A Division of Terra Lycos
Waltham, Massachusetts
781-370-2700
www.lycos.com

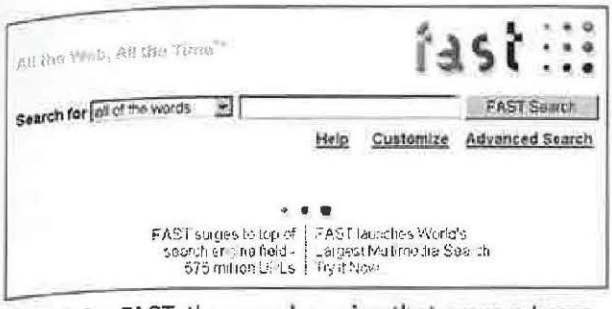


Figure 8.1 FAST, the search engine that powers Lycos, maintains a fairly low profile. The company uses its home page (`www.alltheweb.com`) to demonstrate its search technology.

✔ Tips

- If you're interested in Internet history, pay a visit to Michael Mauldin's Lazy Toad Ranch Web site (`www.lazytd.com`) and click on `Fuzzy and then professional web page`. Once there, you can read the original patent for the Lycos spider and listen to several RealAudio interviews with Mauldin.
- FAST (short for FAst Search and Transfer) was launched in 1999 by a Norwegian company. You can search FAST directly—without the Lycos interface—by going to the company's demonstration Web site at `www.alltheweb.com` (**Figure 8.1**). The site doesn't get much publicity because, instead of competing head-on with the leading search engines, FAST concentrates on selling its search technology to other companies.
- For more information about the company behind Lycos—recent press releases, the management team, how to invest in the company—click on `About Terra Lycos` at the bottom of the Lycos home page.

The Lycos Home Page

Before doing any real searching, let's take a look at how the Lycos home page (**Figure 8.2**) is organized. The key features to zero in on are the Basic Search form, the Advanced Search option, the Web directory, and links for accessing other search-related tools.

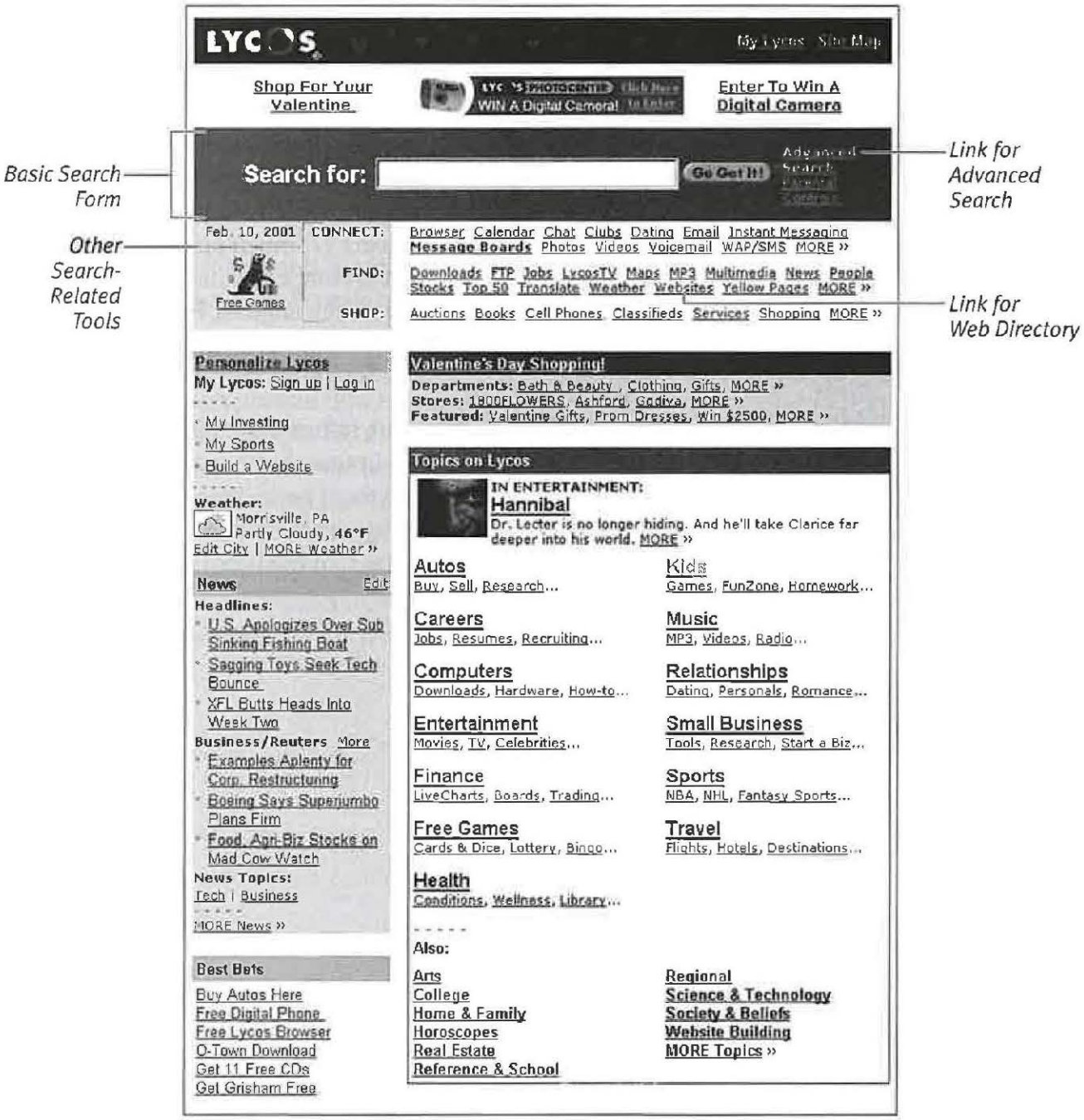


Figure 8.2 The Lycos home page includes the Basic Search form and links for a variety of other search-related tools. To display the Web directory, you have to click the `Websites` link.

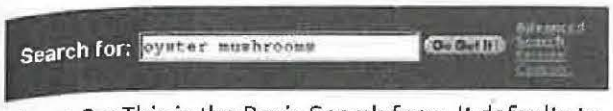


Figure 8.3 This is the Basic Search form. It defaults to an AND search, so a query like the one shown here would find pages that include both *oyster* and *mushrooms*.



Figure 8.4 Use this link for Advanced Search, which gives you access to a number of options not available with the Basic Search form on the Lycos home page.

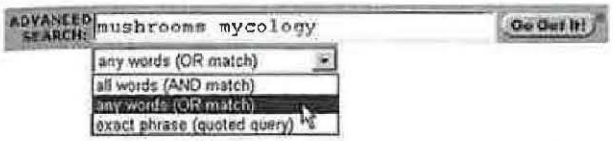


Figure 8.5 This drop-down menu on the Advanced Search form lets you specify whether you want to do an AND, OR, or phrase search.

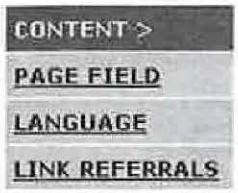


Figure 8.6 Select one of these options on the Advanced Search form to limit your search by content, do field searches, find pages written in a specific language, or locate embedded links.

✔ Tip

- The Lycos help information includes a wonderful section on using Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT, NEAR, ADJ, etc.) on the Advanced Search form. Trouble is, none of them work. Search for **Bush NEAR Cheney**, for example, and Lycos will return Web pages that contain the words *Bush*, *near*, and *Cheney*, all of which will be presented in bold in the search results.

Basic Search form

The search form on the Lycos home page—which we'll refer to as the Basic Search form to distinguish it from the one on the Advanced Search page—consists of a search box and a Go Get It! button for submitting your query (**Figure 8.3**). No drop-down menus or special options of any kind. This is basic searching with a capital *B*!

Just type several words (or a phrase in quotes) and click Go Get It!. Lycos performs an AND search by default, looking for *all* the words and phrases that you type in the search box. So it's not even necessary to use plus signs.

Advanced Search option

For more control over your Lycos searches, click on the link for Advanced Search (**Figure 8.4**) to the right of the Go Get It! button. With Advanced Search, also known as Lycos Pro, you can use a drop-down menu to specify that you want to do an AND, OR, or phrase search (**Figure 8.5**).

You can also limit your search in a variety of ways by selecting radio buttons or filling in the blanks for one of four search options (**Figure 8.6**):

Content. To look for information in one of 15 broad categories from Autos to Weather. Three of the 15 categories are devoted to finding multimedia and MP3 music files.

Page Field. To focus your search on Web page titles, or to limit your query to a specific Web address or domain name.

Language. To search for Web pages in languages other than English.

Link Referrals. To find all the Web pages that link to a specific site.

Web directory

Like its sister company HotBot, Lycos gets its Web directory from the Open Directory Project (dmoz.org), a volunteer effort to catalog the Web using an approach similar to Yahoo (www.yahoo.com). But instead of letting you browse and search the Web directory from its home page, Lycos makes you work a bit:

- **To Browse the Directory.** Click on Websites (**Figure 8.7**) on the Lycos home page. You can then "drill down" through the Web directory's 15 topic categories (**Figure 8.8**) and dozens of subcategories.
- **To Search the Directory.** Click on Advanced Search on the Lycos home page, type a word or phrase in the search box, and use the drop-down menu to specify whether you want to do an AND, OR, or phrase search. Then select the Open Directory radio button and click Go Get It! to display your results (**Figure 8.9**).

✔ Tips

- The section of the Lycos home page called Topics on Lycos (shown in Figure 8.2) looks like a traditional Web directory. But it's actually a set of pointers to other Lycos services. Click Finance, for example, and you'll be taken to Quote.com (www.quote.com), a Lycos subsidiary that offers stock quotes and investment information. Careers leads to a special Lycos page devoted to job-search and resume-posting services and information.
- You can create your own "personalized" version of the Lycos home page that includes the Web directory. To learn how, see "Customizing Lycos" later in this chapter.



Figure 8.7 Instead of featuring its Web directory on the home page, Lycos makes you click the Websites link to display it.

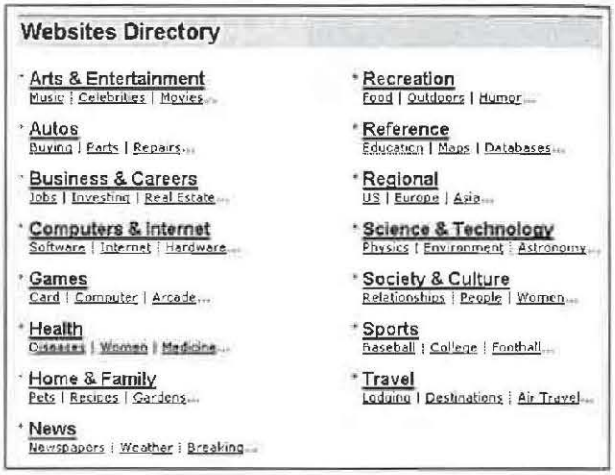


Figure 8.8 The Lycos Web directory, organized into the 15 major categories shown here, is provided by the Open Directory Project.

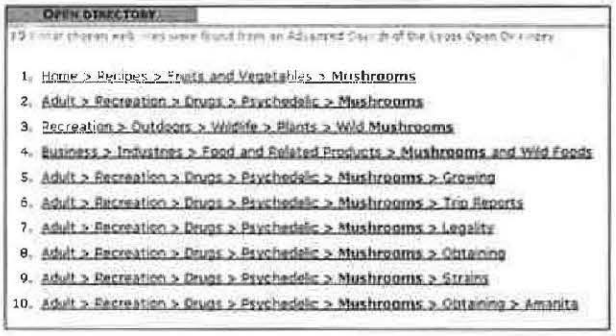


Figure 8.9 A Web directory search for mushrooms turned up Web sites in a number of categories and subcategories, designated with greater-than (>) symbols.

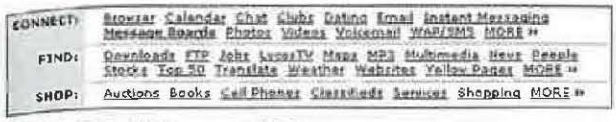


Figure 8.10 Links for other Lycos search tools are organized into three categories: Connect, Find, and Shop. Additional tools are available by clicking MORE.



Figure 8.11 The Site Map's Find menu presents most of the home page's Connect, Find, and Shop tools into a single list, organized alphabetically.



Figure 8.12 Use these links at the bottom of the Lycos home page to access country-specific versions of the search engine.

Other search-related tools

Like all good general-purpose search engines, Lycos offers a number of other search tools for handling some of the most common day-to-day questions and concerns. What's the weather forecast for this weekend? Where is the nearest one-hour photo lab and what's the best route to take to drive there? Is tonight's episode of *The West Wing* a new show or a repeat?

You'll find links for many of these special-purpose tools—`Maps`, `Weather`, `Yellow Pages`, and more (**Figure 8.10**)—right below the Basic Search form. For a complete list, organized alphabetically (**Figure 8.11**), click on one of the `MORE` links. They all lead to the same place—a page that features the Lycos Site Map.

✔ Tips

- The Site Map serves as a master directory for the Lycos site. You can access the Site Map at any time by clicking the `Site Map` link at the top the page.
- Lycos offers several country-specific editions of its search service, accessible from a set of links at the bottom of the home page (**Figure 8.12**). If you live in one of these countries, or simply want to practice searching in a language other than English, give the non-U.S. versions of Lycos a try.

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- If you're a parent with young children, be sure to check out Lycos Zone (**Figure 8.13**), a special version of the search service designed for kids. You can go directly to the Web site (`www.lycoszone.com`) or click on `Kids` in the Topics on Lycos section of the home page.

  You might also want to use the SearchGuard feature to filter the text and images that are presented at the main Lycos Web site. To set up filters, click `Parental Controls` on the Basic or Advanced Search form.

- To make Lycos your default home page, follow the instructions for "Customizing Your Web Browser" in Chapter 4.

- You can get back to the Lycos home page from anywhere in the site by clicking on the `Lycos Home` link at the top of the page.



Figure 8.13 Lycos Zone offers search tools, homework helpers, online stories, reading lists, and games for pre-school and school-age children.

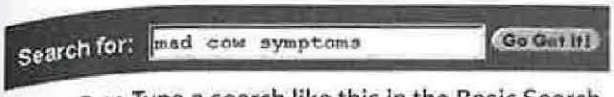


Figure 8.14 Type a search like this in the Basic Search form and Lycos will assume that you want to find pages that include references to all three terms. You don't have to use plus signs or AND.

Searching with Lycos

Having learned your way around the Lycos home page, the next step is to do some searches using the Basic Search form. Your options here are fairly limited, but with the right choice of keywords and phrases, you may very well find what you're looking for.

If not, you can always try the Advanced Search form, which gives you more options for targeting your query. Or you can submit your search to HotBot (Lycos's sister company) for a "second opinion."

To enter a Basic Search query:

1. Go to the Lycos home page (`www.lycos.com`) and type two or three search terms, a phrase in quotes, or a plain-English question in the search box (**Figure 8.14**).

2. You can put a plus sign (+) directly in front of a word or phrase to require that it be included in your search results: `+"mad cow" +symptoms`. Lycos automatically performs an AND search, however, looking for *all the words* you specify. Consequently, you don't have to use plus signs in front of required search terms. You'll get the same results with or without them.

3. To do an OR search, looking for *any of the words* you type in the search box, enclose the words in parentheses: `("mad cow" BSE)`, for example, to find Web pages that include references to either *mad cow* or *BSE* (the acronym for the disease's official medical name). This technique isn't documented by Lycos, but it works!

4. Use a minus sign (-) directly in front of a word or phrase to exclude it from your results: `"mad cow" -humor`, for example, to avoid turning up a lot of joke pages in your search.

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✔ Tips

- As with most search engines, it's a good idea to use two or three search terms and to be as specific as possible. To find information on identifying mushrooms that are safe to eat, for example, don't just type `mushrooms` in the search box. Instead, try `mushrooms edible poisonous`.

  If you don't find what you're looking for in the first couple of pages, refine your query with Advanced Search, or try another search engine.

- Lycos searches are *not* case-sensitive. You'll get the same results whether you use uppercase, lowercase, or a combination.

- Unlike some search engines that ignore common words (often referred to as *stopwords*) in phrases, Lycos will look for *every* word you include in a phrase search. We take advantage of that capability for tracking reviews of one of our recent books, *About the Author*.

  A Lycos search for `"About the Author" Glossbrenner` produces excellent results. The same search on Google returns a message advising us that "*about* is a very common word and was not included in your search."

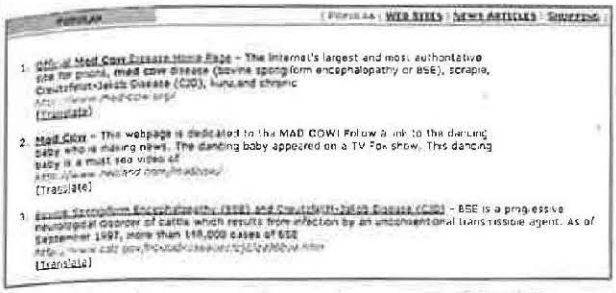


Figure 8.15 Lycos search results are organized into as many as four sections. The section name (in this case *Popular*), appears in a shaded box, followed by the results for that section.



Figure 8.16 You can jump to any section on the search results page by clicking on its link.

To view your search results:

1. Click Go Get It! to submit your query. Your results (**Figure 8.15**) will be organized into as many as four sections: Popular, Web Sites, News Articles, and Shopping.

2. You can scroll down the page or jump directly to any section by clicking on its link (**Figure 8.16**):

   Popular results (usually no more than three or four Web sites) come from one of two sources. Lycos editors may have selected them as the most relevant sites for a particular search. Or the Direct Hit "popularity engine" may have identified them as being the top choices, based on user activity at Direct Hit's own Web site (www.directhit.com). Your Lycos search results may or may not include this section.

   Web Sites results include topic categories and Web sites found in the Open Directory Project's Web directory, as well as Web sites from the FAST search engine and the Lycos spider. The topic categories (if any) will be presented first, followed by a numbered list of Web sites. To view additional sites, 10 to a page, click on More Web Sites.

   News Articles results come from several leading news wires and include stories related to your search that have appeared within the past week. Your results may or may not include this section.

   Shopping results (if any) come from Lycos Shop (shop.lycos.com), an online shopping service sponsored by Lycos to help buyers and sellers find each other.

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3. Scan the Web page title and description (**Figure 8.17**) for results that appear on the first couple of pages. If the description is presented in a foreign language, click `Translate` to convert it to English, compliments of Systran Software (`www.systransoft.com`). Don't expect perfection, but it may be worth a shot if you're looking for some obscure piece of information that's not available elsewhere.

4. Lycos gives you the option of doing a follow-on search, focusing on the results of your original query. (This is often referred to as *set searching*.) To do that, type a word or phrase in the search box. You can leave or delete what's already there—you'll get the same results either way. Then click the `Search these results` box (**Figure 8.18**) and submit your query with `Go Get It!`.

5. If your follow-on search isn't successful, you can automatically submit your query to HotBot by clicking the `Second opinion?` link at the bottom of the search results page (**Figure 8.19**).

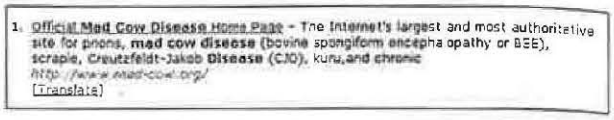


Figure 8.17 Individual entries on the search results page include Web page title (underlined), brief description, Web address, and a `Translate` link that you can use if the information in presented in a language you don't understand.



Figure 8.18 As a follow-up to our search for mad cow symptoms, we've specified that we want to search our original results for pages that include the word .

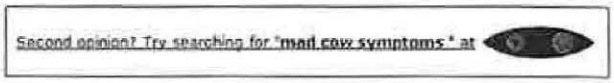


Figure 8.19 Lycos makes it easy to get a "second opinion" from HotBot, which, as you may recall, is owned by the same company.

✔ Tips

- As you may recall from our discussion of field searches in Chapter 2, one excellent way to refine a search is to look for words in the *titles* of Web pages.

  If you get too many irrelevant hits with a search for `mad cow symptoms`, for example, you could do a follow-on search of just those results by typing `title:"mad cow"` in the search box. Then click `Search these results` and `Go Get It!` for a more precisely focused set of results.

  Additional field-search options are available on the Lycos Advanced Search form, covered in the next section of this chapter.

- Unfortunately, Lycos doesn't give you any control over how your search results are displayed. You can't change the number of results per page, for example, or modify the order in which they are listed.

- For a summary of Lycos search terms and syntax, see the Lycos Quick Reference (**Table 8.1**). To access the Lycos help information, click the `Help` link at the bottom of the Lycos home page.

Table 8.1

Lycos Basic Search Quick Reference*

FOR THIS TYPE OF SEARCH:	DO THIS:	EXAMPLES:
Plain-English Question	Simply type a phrase or question that expresses the idea or concept, using as many words as necessary.	Are oyster mushrooms poisonous?
Phrase Search	Enclose the phrase in **double quotes.**	"edible mushrooms"
AND Search (multiple words and phrases, each of which *must* be present)	Type words or phrases separated by a space, without any special punctuation. By default, Lycos searches for *all* the words in your query, so even though **plus signs (+)** are allowed, you'll get the same results without them. The two examples shown here would return identical results: Web pages that contain both the phrase *oyster mushrooms* and the word *recipes*.	"oyster mushrooms" recipes +"oyster mushrooms" +recipes
OR Search (multiple words and phrases, any one of which may be present)	Enclose the words or phrases in **parentheses**. The example would find Web pages that include references to either *edible mushrooms* or *mycology*.	("edible mushrooms" mycology)
NOT Search (to exclude a word or phrase)	Use a **minus sign (-)** in front of a word or phrase you want to exclude from your results.	mushrooms -recipes
Case-Sensitive Search	Not available.	
Date Search	Not available.	
Field Search	To search titles of Web page documents, use `title:` directly in front of a word or phrase. (Note that there's no space between the colon and the search term.) For URL and Host/Domain, and Link Referral field searches, use Advanced Search.	title:mushrooms title:"mushroom gardening"
Nested Search	Not available.	
Proximity Search	Not available.	
Wildcard Search	Not available.	

** Note: This table applies to searches using the form on the Lycos home page. For Advanced Search, see* ***Table 8.2.***

Using Advanced Search

The first thing you need to know about the Lycos Advanced Search form (**Figure 8.20**) is that it's really not all that advanced.

Power searchers who are familiar with earlier versions of Advanced Search (also known as Lycos Pro) will be disappointed to discover that Boolean operators no longer work. The Lycos help information goes into great detail about using AND, OR, NOT, NEAR, and other Boolean operators in Advanced Search queries. But somewhere along the way, Lycos has lost the ability to recognize these terms as having special meanings, and it treats them like any other search term in your query.

So why use Advanced Search? There are several features that you may find yourself needing from time to time that are not offered on the Lycos Basic Search form:

- Focusing your search on specific *types* of information—multimedia files, for example, or recent news articles, or personal home pages.
- Looking for words in Web page *URLs* (short for Uniform Resource Locators, the technical term for Web addresses) or just the *domain name* portion of the Web address. (You can also search Web page *titles* using a fill-in-the-blank approach instead of the `title:` field-search term that's required on the Basic Search form.)
- Limiting your search to a specific *language*.
- Finding Web pages that *link* to a particular site.

You may also prefer the method used on the Advanced Search form for specifying AND, OR, and phrase searches using a drop-down menu (**Figure 8.21**).

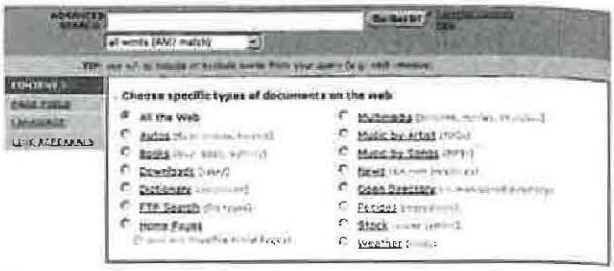


Figure 8.20 The Advanced Search form, while not really all that advanced, provides several features not available when you search from the Lycos home page.

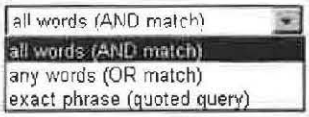


Figure 8.21 The Advanced Search form defaults to an AND search, but you can specify an OR or phrase search using this drop-down menu.

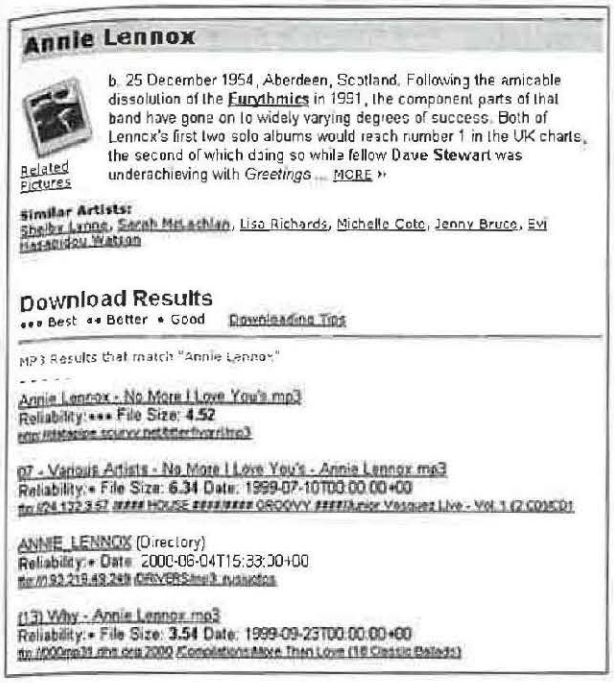


Figure 8.22 MP3 files by a particular singer are a snap to find using the `Music by Artist` radio button in the Content section of the Advanced Search form.



Figure 8.23 The Content section's `Multimedia` radio button lets you search a vast database of audio and video files as well as images, like this one of Vermeer's famous painting, "The Milkmaid."



Figure 8.24 Using this special Multimedia search form, you can specify one of three types of files—`Pictures`, `Audio`, or `Video`—instead of looking for all three at once.

To search for specific types of information:

1. Enter your query in the Advanced Search form and make a selection from the Content section to focus on one of 15 broad categories of information, instead of searching the entire Web.

   Options include `Autos`, `Books`, `Downloads`, `Dictionary`, `FTP Search`, `Home Pages`, `Multimedia`, `Music by Artist`, `Music by Songs`, `News`, `Open Directory`, `Recipes`, `Stock`, and `Weather`.

2. To find MP3 files of Annie Lennox songs (**Figure 8.22**), for example, type "`Annie Lennox`" in the search form and click the `Music by Artist` radio button before submitting your query with `Go Get It!`.

3. To locate images of Vermeer's painting of "The Milkmaid," type `Vermeer Milkmaid` in the search box, click the `Multimedia` radio button, and then click `Go Get It!` to find several examples like the one in **Figure 8.23**.

✔ Tips

- If you click a category's link (instead of its radio button), you'll be taken to a special search page customized for that category.

  Click `Multimedia`, for example, to access the Lycos search form for finding images, audio files, and video files (**Figure 8.24**).

  Click `Open Directory` to display the Lycos Web directory (provided by the Open Directory Project).

- Lycos ignores case on both the Basic and Advanced Search forms, so you can use any combination of uppercase and lowercase and you'll get the same results.

To look for words in Web page titles, URLs, or domain names:

- Click Page Field and use the form presented there (**Figure 8.25**) to narrow your focus by typing a search word in the Title, URL, or Host/Domain search boxes. Let's step through for an example for each of these options:

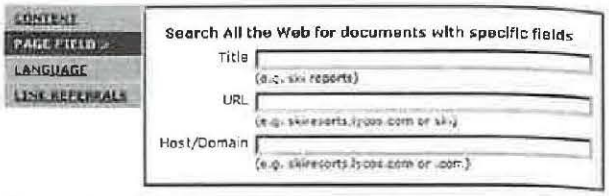


Figure 8.25 The Page Field options let you focus your search on Web page titles, URLs, and domain names.

- **Title**. If you're looking for information about a particular California wine called Sequoia Grove, type "Sequoia Grove" in the primary search box on the Advanced Search form and type California wines in the Title search box. Then click Go Get It!. By limiting your search to Web sites that include the phrase *California wines* in their titles, you're much more likely to find sites that *feature* (as opposed to simply *mentioning*) wines produced in California.
- **URL**. To limit your search for Sequoia Grove to the Wine.com Web site, type "Sequoia Grove" in the primary search box and wine.com in the URL search box, Click Go Get It! to submit your query.
- **Host/Domain**. To find education sites dealing with French wines, type "French wines" in the primary search box and edu in the Host/Domain box. Submit your query by clicking Go Get It!. (For a list of other Internet domains, see Appendix B).

✔ Tips

- For best results, avoid using quotation marks and other punctuation in the Title, URL, and Host/Domain search boxes.
- You're not required to enter a search term in the primary search box when you do a Page Field search. You could, for example, leave the primary search box empty and type French wines in the Title box to find all Web sites that have the words *French wines* in their titles.



Figure 8.26 You can limit your results to pages written in a specific language—English or two dozen other choices—by clicking the appropriate radio button on this list.

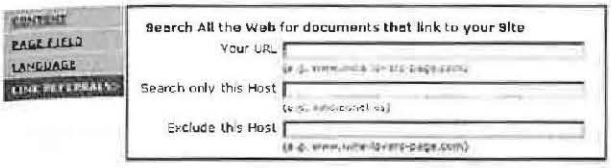


Figure 8.27 With Link Referrals, you can track down Web sites similar to one you like, or get a measure of a specific site's popularity, as indicated by the number of other sites that link to it.

To limit a search by language:

- Click Language to display the list of languages that are available on Lycos (**Figure 8.26**). Then simply type your query in the search box and click the radio button for the language of your choice.

  For example, type `"Chianti"` in the search form, select the `Italian` radio button, and click `Go Get It!`. Your search results will be limited to Web pages presented in Italian.

To find Web pages that link to a specific site:

- Click `Link Referrals` and type the URL for the site you'd like to find out about in the Your URL box (**Figure 8.27**).

  If you're a fan of *The Wall Street Journal's* Wine site, for example, and want to find Web sites that link to it—in hopes of discovering some new sites that might be of interest to you as well—type `wine.wsj.com` in the URL box and click `Go Get It!`.

✔ Tips

- If your search results include a lot of links from *within* the Web site that you entered in the Your URL box, type the *same* URL in the Exclude this Host box and run the search again.
- Webmasters and Web site creators often use link referrals as a rough measure of a site's popularity. Try it with your own Web site if you have one.

MILLS COLLEGE
LIBRARY

Table 8.2

Lycos Advanced Search Quick Reference

FOR THIS TYPE OF SEARCH:	DO THIS:	EXAMPLES:
Plain-English Question	Simply type a phrase or question that expresses the idea or concept, using as many words as necessary. Leave the drop-down menu set to `all words (AND match)`.	`What are the best French table wines?`
Phrase Search	Type the phrase without any special punctuation and choose `exact phrase (quoted query)` from the drop-down menu. Alternatively, you can type the phrase in **double quotes** and leave the drop-down menu set to `all words (AND match)`.	`French table wines` `"French table wines"`
AND Search (multiple words and phrases, each of which *must* be present)	Type the words (or phrases in quotes) in the search form and leave the drop-down menu set to `all words (AND match)`.	`California "Cabernet Sauvignon"`
OR Search (multiple words and phrases, any one of which may be present)	Type the words (or phrases in quotes) in the search form and choose `any words (OR match)` from the drop-down menu.	`"sparkling wine" Champagne`
NOT Search (to exclude a word or phrase)	Use a **minus sign (-)** in front of a word or phrase you want to exclude from the results.	`Chardonnay -California`
Case-Sensitive Search	Not available.	
Date Search	Not available.	
Field Search	Click `Page Field` and use the fill-in-the-blanks form to search Web page Title, URL, and Host/Domain fields. (For best results, avoid using quotation marks and other punctuation when using the Page Field option.) Click `Link Referrals` and use the fill-in-the-blanks form to look for links to a specific Web page. For examples, see "Using Advanced Search" on pages 130–133.	
Nested Search	Not available.	
Proximity Search	Not available.	
Wildcard Search	Not available.	

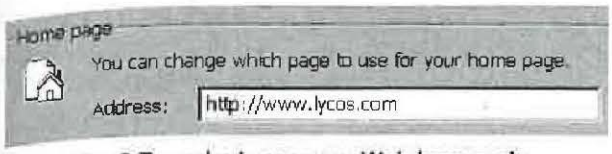


Figure 8.28 To make Lycos your Web browser's default home page, type `http://www.lycos.com` in Internet Explorer's home page Address box as shown here (or Netscape's home-page Location box).

Customizing Lycos

If you decide to make Lycos your primary search engine, you may want to think about customizing it to reflect the way you search and the types of information that are of particular interest.

There are two options for you to consider:

- **Basic or Advanced Search as Browser Home Page**. If the search form on the Lycos home page works for you most of the time, fine. But if instead you find yourself doing most of your searches using the Advanced Search form, you can make it your Web browser's default home-page location.
- **Standard or Personalized Lycos**. If you decide to stay with the Basic Search form on the Lycos home page, you have another decision to make: Do you want to stick with the default settings for content and layout or "personalize the page"?

To make Lycos your home page:

1. Decide which of the two search forms you want to use on a regular basis—Basic or Advanced.
2. Access your Web browser's home-page setup feature and type the complete Web address for the page containing the search form you prefer into the home page Address or Location box (**Figure 8.28**):

   `http://www.lycos.com` (if you prefer to do most of your searches using the Basic Search form).

   `http://lycospro.lycos.com` (if you prefer the Advanced Search form).

✔ Tip

- If you're not sure how to access your Web browser's home-page setup feature, see the section in Chapter 4 called "Customizing Your Web Browser."

To personalize the Lycos home page:

1. Click Sign up (**Figure 8.29**) in the Personalize Lycos section of the Lycos home page to display the membership form for new users
2. Complete the form and then click the Sign Me Up! button at the bottom of the page to submit it. (Pay careful attention to the Special Offers section to avoid inadvertently signing yourself up for lots of junk mail.)
3. Once your membership has been accepted (it only takes a few seconds), you can use the My Page Setup feature (**Figure 8.30**) to pick and choose the information you want to have on your page.

   For example, to display the Lycos Web directory on your home page, click the My Page Setup Add link. Then click the Lycos Directories radio button in the Resources & Search section of the Add/Remove Boxes page (**Figure 8.31**).
4. Once you've chosen the sections you want on your page, some of them—like stock reports, TV listings, weather forecasts, and so forth—can be further tailored using Edit links (**Figure 8.32**).



Figure 8.29 You'll find this link for personalizing Lycos on the left side of the Lycos home page.



Figure 8.30 My Page Setup lets you add and remove Lycos features, move and resize them on the page, and choose your own color scheme.

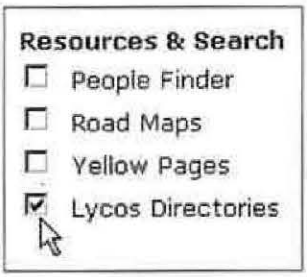


Figure 8.31 You can display the Lycos Web directory on your personalized Lycos page by clicking Add in My Page Setup and then selecting the Lycos Directories radio button.



Figure 8.32 Some features that you add to your personalized Lycos page can be customized to your liking using an Edit link.



Figure 8.33 You can have Lycos "track a search" and send you e-mail notices when it finds new information. But you have to set up a special e-mail account to take advantage of the service.

✔ Tips

- You can easily switch back and forth between the standard Lycos home page and your personalized page, using the links for Lycos Home (to get back to standard Lycos from your personalized page) and My Lycos (to get to your personal page from the Lycos home page).
- Lycos offers a Track this Search option (**Figure 8.33**) for queries made using the Basic Search form. Unfortunately, no details are provided, other than a vaguely worded statement that you'll be notified by e-mail of "changes to your search." Worse still, you have to set up a special Lycos e-mail account in order to receive the notices.

  If you need a feature like this, try Northern Light (www.northernlight.com) instead. Their Search Alert Service is well documented, easy to set up, and works with your regular e-mail account. (See Chapter 9 for more on Northern Light.)

9

NORTHERN LIGHT



Good to Know

- Launched in 1997, Northern Light handles plain-English queries and complex Boolean expressions equally well.
- What sets it apart from its rivals is that it lets you *simultaneously* search both the Web and a database of some 25 million full-text documents from 7,100 other sources—making it an especially good choice for researching news stories and business information.
- Northern Light also has a unique approach to organizing search results into "folders" of related information, so that you can find what you're looking for more quickly.
- Its Search Alert Service, providing e-mail notification of updates to saved searches, is the best of all the leading search engines.

Housed in an old mill building in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Northern Light was launched in 1997 by a small team of librarians, information industry professionals, and software engineers. For almost two years they had labored to create a service that would address the shortcomings of conventional search engines—most notably the difficulty of finding quality information and the total lack of organization. "The Web is the ultimate expression of the problem of too much data and not enough information," says company CEO David Seuss.

When Northern Light came on the scene—joining well-established rivals like AltaVista, Excite, HotBot, Lycos, and Yahoo—the search community embraced it immediately, recognizing that it was indeed a search engine with a difference. Billed as a "research engine," Northern Light made headlines not only for the size of its database, but also because of two unique features that address the problems of information quality and organization.

continues on next page

- **Special Collection**. The best information on a particular topic may or may not exist on the Web, so Northern Light lets you simultaneously search both Web pages and its Special Collection database of full-text journals, books, magazines, newswires, and reference sources. The database includes more than 25 million documents dating back to 1995, from over 7,100 sources.

  You can search and view summaries of articles for free and then buy the full text for a small fee (typically $1 to $4) charged to a major credit card. Northern Light is so confident you'll be satisfied, they offer a money-back guarantee.

- **Custom Search Folders**. To address the organization problem, Northern Light offers a unique approach to presenting your search results—sorting them into "folders" that it creates on the fly based on subject, source, type of document, and sometimes language.

  Search for `chocolat`, for example, and your results might be organized into folders labeled *Movies* (because of the award-winning Miramax film), *Food & Beverages Industry*, *Recipes*, and *Documents in French*, among others.

  Custom Search Folders are Northern Light's way of asking, "Is this what you mean?" and helping you move quickly to the right set of information.

Northern Light is designed to handle both plain-English queries and complex Boolean expressions equally well, making it a good choice for searchers of all experience levels.

And once you've developed a particularly effective query on a subject that you want to stay on top of, you can take advantage of the free Search Alert Service. All it takes is a single click, and you'll be notified by e-mail whenever Northern Light finds new information on the Web or in the Special Collection database.

Contact Information

Northern Light Technology, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts
617-621-5100 (voice)
617-621-3459 (fax)
cs@northernlight.com
www.northernlight.com

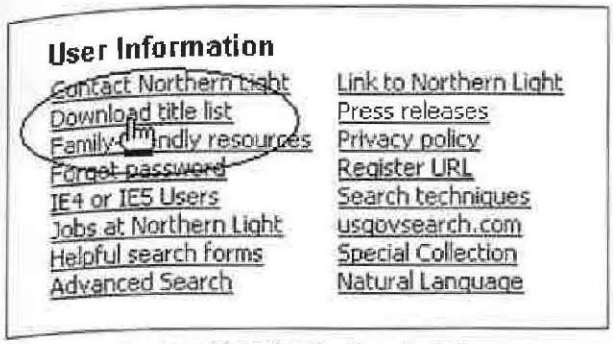


Figure 9.1 You can download a list of all the publications represented in the Special Collection database by clicking this link.

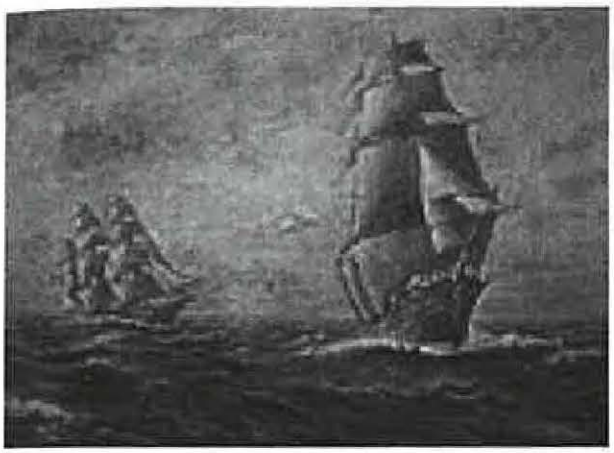


Figure 9.2 A painting of the clipper ship *Northern Light* hangs in the lobby at the company's headquarters.



Figure 9.3 To learn more about Northern Light's history, management team, and awards, click the About link.

✔ Tips

- Knowing that serious searchers will want to know exactly what sources are represented in the Special Collection, Northern Light makes the complete list available. Just click `Download title list` in the User Information area of the home page (**Figure 9.1**).
- The company's name and logo were inspired by the clipper ship *Northern Light* (**Figure 9.2**), built in Boston in 1851. Based on a radical new design, the ship became known for its speed and groundbreaking technology.
- For more information on Northern Light—company history, industry awards, customer comments, and so forth—click `About` (**Figure 9.3**) on the home page.

The Northern Light Home Page

In keeping with its research orientation, the Northern Light home page (**Figure 9.4**) includes both a basic search form, called Simple Search, as well as links for Power Search and several specialized search options. The only portal-type services you'll find on the home page are the day's news headlines and a small space devoted to the Dow Jones Industrial Average.

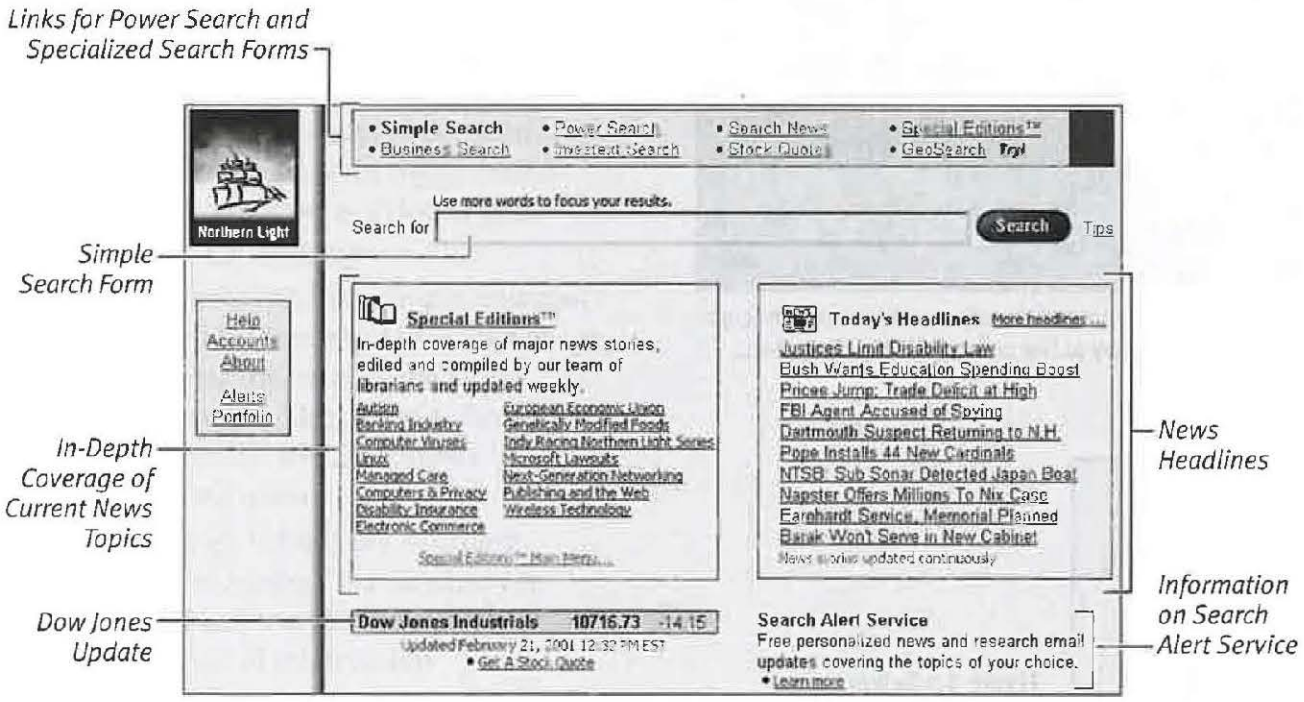


Figure 9.4 The Northern Light home page.



Figure 9.5 A plain-English question like this works fine with Northern Light.



Figure 9.6 This set of links on the Northern Light home page gives you access to Power Search and several other specialized search forms.

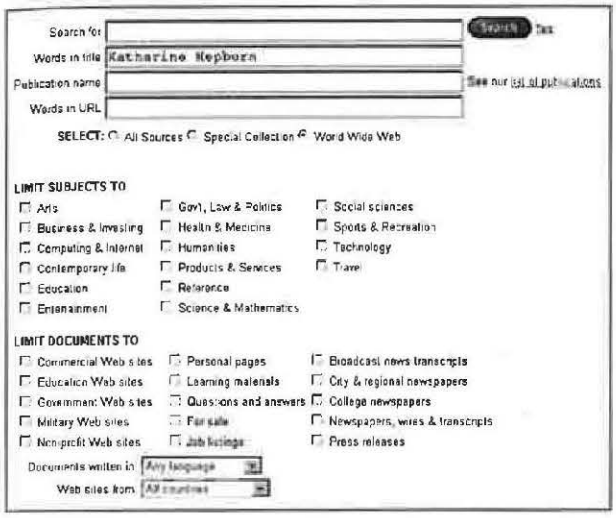


Figure 9.7 The Power Search form makes it easy to create a complex query by simply filling in the blanks and choosing radio buttons and menu options.

Simple Search form

The Simple Search form (**Figure 9.5**) lets you simultaneously search both the Web and Northern Light's Special Collection database of documents from non-Web sources. You can enter a query as a plain-English question: `What companies are included in the dow jones industrial average?`. Or you can type a complex Boolean expression: `(DJIA OR "dow jones industrial average) AND companies AND list`. Either way, you'll typically get excellent results.

Northern Light automatically searches for *all* the words in your query, so it's not necessary to use plus signs (+) or AND to require that a word or phrase appear in your search results.

Power Search option

Clicking Power Search in the set of links (**Figure 9.6**) at the top of the Northern Light home page takes you to a form that helps you search with more precision by focusing on specific subjects, sources (Special Collection or World Wide Web), document types, and dates (**Figure 9.7**).

You can also do a variety of field searches (title, URL, publication name, domain type), look for documents written in a particular language, and sort your results by date—all using a fill-in-the-blanks form.

Other search options

In addition to Power Search, the links at the top of the Northern Light home page give you access to several more narrowly focused search forms:

- Search News lets you search a two-week archive of articles and press releases from dozens of newswires, including AP Online, UPI, and PR Newswire (**Figure 9.8**). You can limit your results by timeframe and topic and sort results by relevance or date.
- Business Search gives you access to a form designed for serious business researchers (**Figure 9.9**). Special features include the ability to limit your search to a specific company, industry, market research firm, or business publication.
- Investext Search allows you to search or browse thousands of investment research reports written by analysts at brokerage houses, investment banks, and research firms throughout the world. Searches and report summaries are free. Full-text reports range in price from ten dollars to several hundred dollars
- Stock Quotes takes you to a form that lets you search for stock symbols, stock quotes, company news and financial information, and SEC filings.
- GeoSearch is a relatively new search offering that helps you locate Web sites offering products and services in a particular geographic area. You can search within a specified distance (up to 100 miles) from a street address, city, or Zip code.

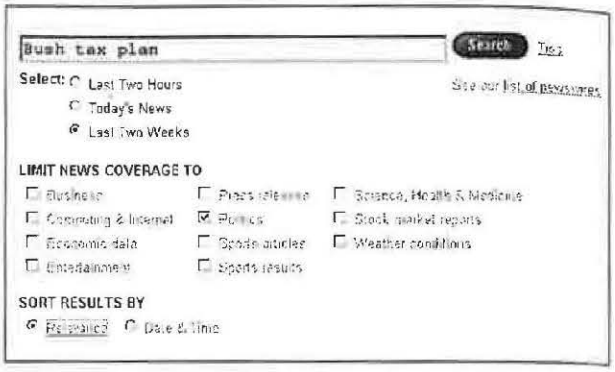


Figure 9.8 The Search News form is optimized for finding press releases and news articles that have appeared in the last two weeks.

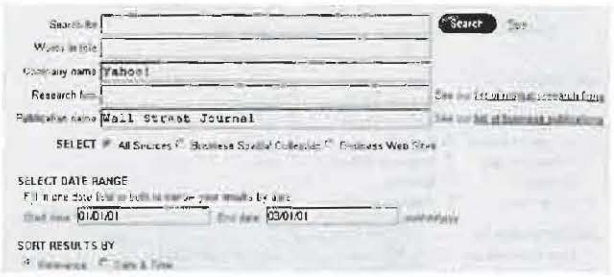


Figure 9.9 The Business Search form is your best bet for locating information on a specific company.

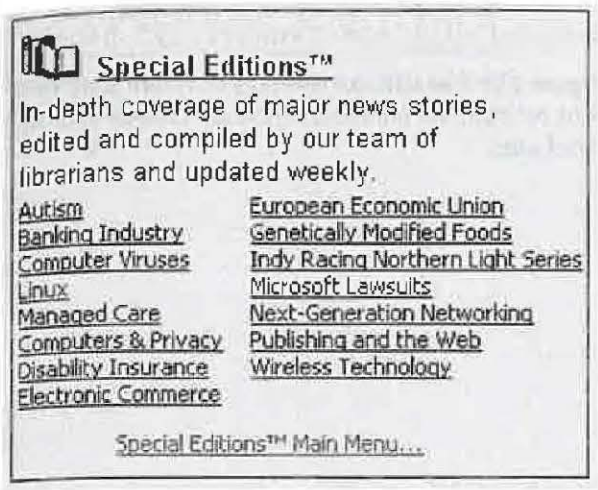


Figure 9.10 Northern Light librarians and information specialists update this area of the home page each week to reflect major news stories.

✔ Tips

- An area of the Northern Light home page called Special Editions (**Figure 9.10**) features several current news stories, with information compiled and edited by staff librarians and information specialists. For the complete list of stories, click Special Editions Main Menu.
- You'll find explanations of each of the Northern Light search forms and tips for using them on the Search Help page. To get there, click Help on the Northern Light home page and then click Search Help. Or click Tips next to the Search button on any search form.
- To make Northern Light your browser's default home page, see "Customizing Your Web Browser" in Chapter 4.
- To return to the Northern Light home page, click Simple Search or the company logo that appears at the top of most pages within the site.

Searching with Northern Light

You'll probably do most of your Northern Light searches using the Simple Search form on the home page, so that's what we'll focus on here.

Once you've learned to enter a Simple Search query and work with the results, using Northern Light's other search forms will be a snap. The same basic rules apply throughout the site, and searches that require complicated Boolean expressions and field-search terms on the Simple Search form can be accomplished by filling in the blanks with Power Search and the specialized Business and Investext forms.

To enter a Simple Search query:

1. Go to the Northern Light home page (`www.northernlight.com`) and type a question, several descriptive words, a phrase in quotes, or a Boolean expression in the search box (**Figure 9.11**).

   Northern Light automatically searches for *all* the words, so you don't have to use the Boolean operator AND or put plus signs (+) in front of required words.

2. To tell Northern Light to look for *any* of the words, use the Boolean operator OR: `wireless OR "mobile commerce"`.

3. If you want to specifically exclude a certain word or phrase from your results, put a minus sign (-) directly in front of it: `wireless -paging`. Or use the Boolean operator NOT: `wireless NOT paging`.



Figure 9.11 A search like this tells Northern Light to look for both the phrase *wireless technology* and the word *jobs*.

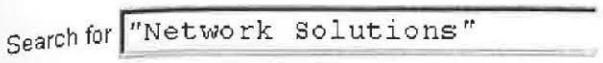


Figure 9.12 To find the company called Network Solutions, it's a good idea to type the name with initial caps.

✔ Tips

- The Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT can be typed in uppercase or lowercase.
- Strictly speaking, Northern Light searches are *not* case sensitive. You'll get the same *set* of results whether you use uppercase, lowercase, or a mix of the two. However, if you're looking for a proper name, it's a good idea to type it exactly as you'd expect it to appear in a document (**Figure 9.12**). When you use initial caps (or any mix of uppercase and lowercase), *exact* case matches will appear higher in the results list, making them easier to find.
- Northern Light automatically looks for both the singular and plural forms of your search terms. Type `technology`, for example, and it looks for *technology* and *technologies*.
- For other types of word variations, you can use an asterisk (*) as a wildcard to look for multiple characters within or at the end of a word. For example, `technolog*` would find *technology*, *technologies*, *technological*, and *technologist*. Just be sure to use at least four other characters preceding the asterisk.

  To look for a *single* character, use a percent sign (%) as the wildcard: `adapt%r` to find references to *adapter* and *adaptor*.
- Unlike some search engines, Northern Light will *not* ignore common words (*stopwords*) in phrases, so a search for a phrase like `"to be or not to be"` is never a problem.

To view your search results:

1. Click Search (or hit Enter) to display your results, 10 to a page, with your search terms highlighted in bold and presented along with a few words of surrounding text or a brief description of the Web page or document. The total number of items found is also displayed, along with your original query (**Figure 9.13**).

   For Web sites (**Figure 9.14**), Northern Light gives you an indication of the type of information you'll find there (articles and general information, company background, directories and lists, and so forth), the date the site was last updated, and the type of site (commercial, non-profit, government, etc.).

   For Special Collection documents (**Figure 9.15**), you're provided with the document type (article, press release, industry overview, etc.), publication date, and source.

2. To view a specific item on the list, click its title. For Special Collection documents, you'll be shown an abstract and given an opportunity to purchase the document for a small fee (**Figure 9.16**).

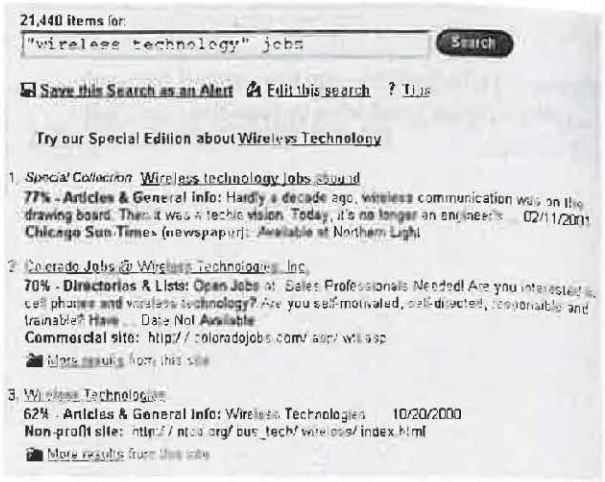


Figure 9.13 Your search results will typically include both Web pages and documents from the Special Collection database.

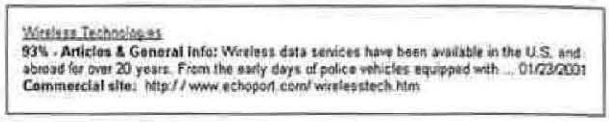


Figure 9.14 Here's an example of how Web site information is presented on the Northern Light results page.

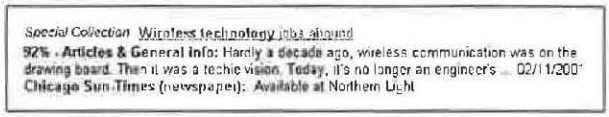


Figure 9.15 Items from the Special Collection database are clearly identified as such, and include the publication name and date.

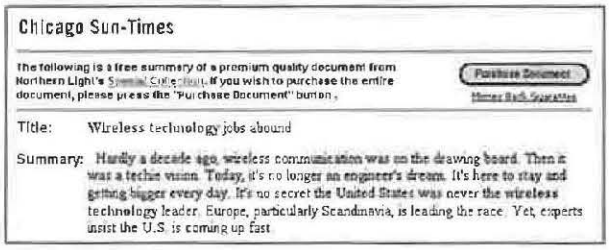


Figure 9.16 Article summaries like the one shown here are free, but you have a to pay a small fee to purchase the full text.

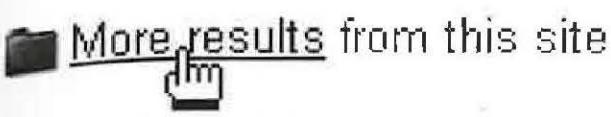


Figure 9.17 Click this link to "uncluster" search results and view additional pages from a particular Web site or Special Collection document.

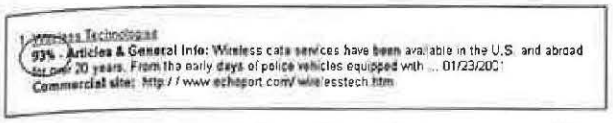


Figure 9.18 The percentage figure that appears with each item on the search results page gives you an indication of how well the item matches your query.



Figure 9.19 Northern Light organized the results from our search for "wireless technology" jobs into the Custom Search Folders shown here.



Figure 9.20 The Careers & Occupations folder was further broken down into these subfolders.

3. Northern Light "clusters" results and presents only one page from any given Web site or document. To view additional pages, go back to the search results page and click the item's `More results` link (**Figure 9.17**).

✔ Tips

- Your Northern Light search results are displayed in order based on how well they match your search terms. Each item's *relevance rating*, expressed as a percentage, is included in your results (**Figure 9.18**).
- You can override the relevance ratings and sort your results by date (from newest to oldest) by adding `sort:date` to your query and submitting it again.

To refine a Northern Light query:

1. The easiest (and often most effective) technique is to simply add another unique search word or phrase to the search box at the top of the page and submit your query again. Northern Light looks for *all* the words in your query, so this has the effect of searching *within* your original results (also known as *set searching*).
2. Another excellent way to refine a Northern Light search is to take advantage of the Custom Search Folders feature. Review the list of folders for your query (**Figure 9.19**) and identify the one that comes closest to the type of information you're looking for. Click on it to display a further breakdown of your results within that folder (**Figure 9.20**).

continues on next page

✔ Tips

- Northern Light only produces Custom Search Folders for queries that result in a large number of hits.
- Keep in mind that Custom Search Folders are created by Northern Light software. They are a neat innovation and work quite well for many types of searches. But they are no match for human-compiled directories and subject guides.
- Since Northern Light doesn't offer its own Web directory, try one of these sites when you want to explore the Web by topic, with guidance from human beings:

  About, The Human Internet Guide
  www.about.com

  Argus Clearinghouse
  www.clearinghouse.net

  Open Directory Project
  dmoz.org

  Yahoo
  www.yahoo.com

To save a query and get e-mail alerts:

1. Click Save this Search as an Alert (**Figure 9.21**) on the results page for the search you want to save.
2. On the Search Alert Service page (**Figure 9.22**), enter a descriptive name for your Alert. (The name will be displayed in the subject line of e-mail messages that are sent to you.). You also have the option of limiting the Alert to documents dated in the last 90 days, and creating an additional Alert for news articles.
3. When you're finished, click the Save Alert button. From that point forward, whenever Northern Light discovers new information relating to your query, you'll be notified by e-mail.



Figure 9.21 Once you've developed a query that produces good results, you can save it by clicking this link on the search results page.



Figure 9.22 Be sure to give your Alert a descriptive name, since that's what will appear in the subject line of e-mail messages notifying you of new information relating to your query.

✔ Tips

- Northern Light's Search Alert Service is the best we've encountered among the leading Web search engines.
- For a summary of the search rules presented in this section, see the Northern Light Quick Reference (**Table 9.1**).
- For assistance with all aspects of Northern Light, click Help on the home page. You'll find that, in line with its emphasis on searching, the company has anticipated virtually any question you might have about the service.

Table 9.1

Northern Light Quick Reference

FOR THIS TYPE OF SEARCH:	DO THIS:	EXAMPLES:
Plain-English Question	Simply type a phrase or question that expresses the idea or concept, using as many words as necessary.	Where can I find information about study abroad programs in France?
Phrase Search	Type phrase surrounded by **double quotes.**	"youth hostel"
AND Search (multiple words and phrases, each of which must be present)	Type words (or phrases in quotes) separated by a space. You can also use **plus signs (+)** or **AND** operator if you're accustomed to doing so. All three examples would produce the same results.	Princeton "financial aid" +Princeton +"financial aid" Princeton AND "financial aid"
OR Search (multiple words and phrases, any one of which may be present)	Type words or phrases separated by **OR** (in uppercase or lowercase).	scholarship OR "student loan" OR grant
NOT Search (to exclude a word or phrase)	Use a **minus sign (-)** directly in front of the word or phrase you want to exclude. Alternatively, you can use **NOT** (uppercase or lowercase).	booksellers -Amazon.com booksellers NOT Amazon.com
Case-Sensitive Search	Strictly speaking, not available. Northern Light returns the same set of results regardless of case. But if you use mixed case, hits that make an *exact* case match will appear higher on the results list.	"Scholastic Aptitude Test"
Date Search	Not available with Simple Search form. Use Power Search or Business Search.	
Field Search	Type field-search term followed by a colon and the search word or phrase.	
	For Web pages and Special Collection documents:	
	`title:` (to look for words in Web page or document titles)	title:"Favorite Poem Project"
	`url:` (to look for words in Web page URLs)	url:booktv
	`link:` (to find Web pages or documents that include links to a specific site)	link:abouttheauthor.com
	`text:` (used with another field-search term to look for words in the *text* of Web pages or documents)	url:npr.org text:"Car Talk"
	For Special Collection documents only:	
	`company:` (to find documents by company name)	company:ebay
	`ticker:` (to find documents by ticker symbol)	ticker:MSO
	`pub:` (to find documents in specific publication)	pub:business week
	`recid:` (to find document based on ID number from Northern Light article summary page)	recid:AA20010207020001236
	Note: For fill-in-the-blanks field searching, use Power, Business, or Investext search forms.	
Nested Search	Use **parentheses** to group Boolean expressions into more complex queries.	SAT AND ("sample test" OR "prep course")
Proximity Search	Not available.	
Wildcard Search	Use an **asterisk (*)** to search for *multiple* characters at the end of (or within) a word, or a **percent sign (%)** to look for a *single* character. Wildcard must be preceded by at least four other characters.	GRE test prep* gene%logy

Improving Results with Field Search

As you may recall from our discussion of keywords in Chapter 2, one of the best ways to narrow the focus of a search with any search engine is to zero in on specific *fields*. Searching the *titles* of Web pages and documents, for example, can reduce your results list considerably and help you find items that *feature* (instead of simply *mentioning*) your search terms.

With Northern Light's Simple Search form, you can use the field-search terms listed here to find Web pages and Special Collection documents. In each case, type your search word or phrase *immediately* following the colon, without leaving a space.

- `title:` To look for words or phrases in the titles of Web page or documents (**Figure 9.23**).
- `url:` To look for words in URLs.
- `link:` To find Web pages or documents that link to a specific site.
- `text:` Used in combination with another field-search term to find a word or phrase in the body of a Web page or document.

Several other Northern Light field-search terms apply only to Special Collection documents:

- `company:` To locate Special Collection documents by company name.
- `ticker:` To locate documents by a company's stock ticker symbol (**Figure 9.24**).
- `pub:` To find documents from a specific publication.
- `recid:` To find a document based on its ID number from the Northern Light article summary page.

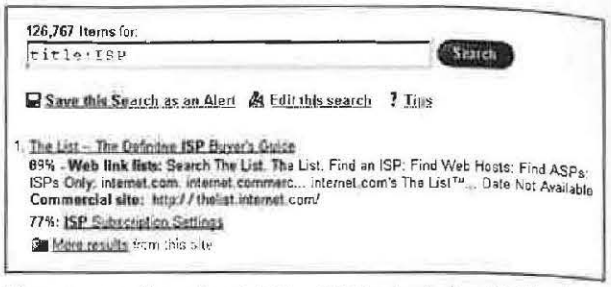


Figure 9.23 By using `title:ISP` to look for *ISP* in the titles of Web pages and documents, we zeroed right in on a site offering "The Definitive ISP Buyer's Guide."

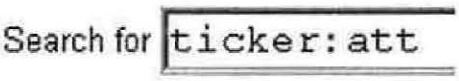


Figure 9.24 You can use a `ticker:` field-search term to find Special Collection documents by a company's stock ticker symbol, in this case AT&T's.

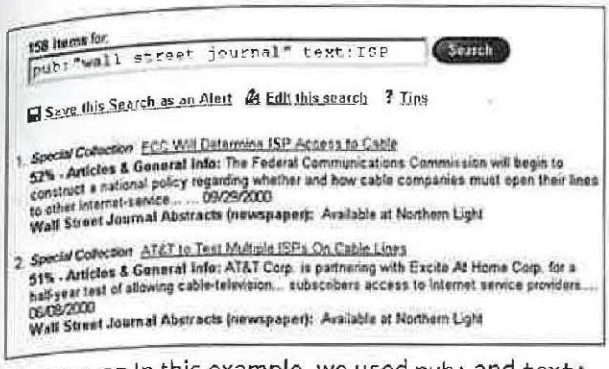


Figure 9.25 In this example, we used `pub:` and `text:` field-search terms together to look for *Wall Street Journal* articles that mention the term *ISP* in the body of the article.

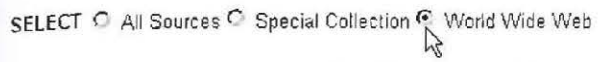


Figure 9.26 Both Power Search and Business Search let you limit your search to Web sites *or* Special Collection documents—a capability not offered on the Simple Search form.

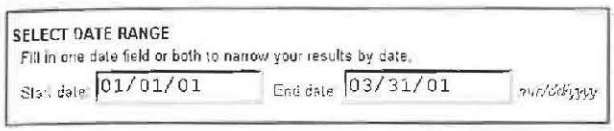


Figure 9.27 You can also do a date search on the Power and Business Search forms.

✔ Tips

- If you want to search both the *body* of a Web page or Special Collection document as well as another field, you *must* include a `text:` field-search term in your query (**Figure 9.25**).
- For more field-search examples, see the Northern Light Quick Reference (**Table 9.1**).
- For even easier field searching, use Northern Light's Power, Business, and Investext search forms. All three offer a fill-in-the-blanks approach to field searches.
- In addition to field searching, the Power Search and Business Search forms let you choose which Northern Light database you want to search—Web or Special Collection (Figure 9.26). You can also specify a date range for your query (**Figure 9.27**).

Customizing Northern Light

You can't change anything about the content and layout of the Northern Light home page—at least not at this writing. Nor can you set preferences for the way your search results are presented.

But if Northern Light becomes your search engine of choice, you may want to consider customizing your Web browser so that it takes you automatically to one of the Northern Light search forms whenever you go online or click your browser's Home button.

You might also want to set up a Northern Light account. It only takes a minute or two, and once you've gone through the process, whenever you want to purchase a document from the Special Collection, all you have to do is enter your username and password and the purchase will be charged to your credit card.



Figure 9.28 To make Northern Light your Web browser's home page location, type the complete Web address in the Internet Explorer Address box (or the Netscape Location box).

To make Northern Light your home page:

1. Decide which of the two search forms you want to use on a regular basis—Simple Search or Power Search.
2. Access your Web browser's home-page setup feature and type the complete Web address for the page containing the search form you prefer into the home page Address or Location box (**Figure 9.28**):
   `http://www.northernlight.com`
   (if you expect to do most of your searches using the Simple Search form).
   `http://www.northernlight.com/power.html`
   (if you prefer the Power Search form).

✔ Tip

- If you're not sure how to access your Web browser's home-page setup feature, see "Customizing Your Web Browser" in Chapter 4.



Figure 9.29 Use the Accounts link on the Northern Light home page to set up a member account.

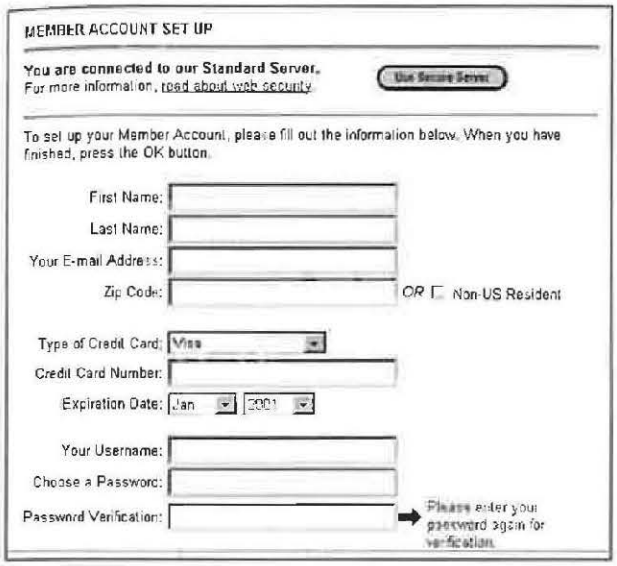


Figure 9.30 Once you've completed the Member Account form shown here, you'll be able to buy Special Collection documents, charging the fee to Visa, Mastercard, or American Express.

To set up a Northern Light account:

1. Go to the Northern Light home page (`www.northernlight.com`) and click `Accounts` (**Figure 9.29**).
2. On the Accounts page, click `Create New Account` to display the Member Account Set Up Page (**Figure 9.30**).
3. Complete the form. Then click `OK` to indicate your acceptance of the "terms of service" and to submit the form to Northern Light.

✔ Tip

- Many of the documents in Northern Light's Special Collection database are available free of charge elsewhere on the Web. You'll find some of them in searchable archives maintained by the publications in which they originally appeared. You might also track them down at Web sites like FindArticles (`www.findarticles.com`) and NewsDirectory (`www.newsdirectory.com`). But you can't beat the convenience of having them searchable and available for viewing and printing at a single site. And with Northern Light's price of just $1 to $4 per document, it may not be worth your time to try to locate the free versions.

10

YAHOO!



Good to Know

- Yahoo is the Web's most popular search site.
- Created at Stanford University in 1994, it was the first major attempt at organizing and classifying the information available on the Internet.
- When you do a Yahoo search, you are actually searching both the Yahoo directory and the Google database of more than a billion Web pages.
- Yahoo is a good place to start when you need general information on a topic, or when you are not quite sure what you're looking for but have a sense that you'll recognize it when you see it.

Technically speaking, Yahoo is not a search engine at all. It's actually a searchable subject directory. And its database—estimated at some two million Web sites—is a mere fraction of the size of its competitors. So how has Yahoo managed to become the Web's most popular search service? What is it that makes finding information with Yahoo so easy?

The answer lies in the fact that Yahoo is more of a hands-on operation than most other search sites. Instead of relying on automated search robots or spider programs to build its database, Yahoo maintains a staff of some 150 editors. Their job is to review information submitted by Web site creators and other Internet users and decide, first, whether a particular site merits inclusion in the Yahoo directory, and if so, under which category.

This is a time-consuming process, of course, so Yahoo supplements its human-compiled directory with listings from Google (`www.google.com`), one of the Web's largest spider-created databases. (See Chapter 6 for more on Google.)

The beauty of Yahoo is that when you enter a query, your search is run simultaneously against both the Yahoo directory *and* the Google database of more than a billion Web pages. If the search terms you've entered are found among Yahoo's own listings, those

matches will be presented first, followed by Web pages found in Google. If nothing is found in the Yahoo database, you'll at least have the Google results.

So why not just use Google to begin with?

You might very well prefer to start with Google when you're looking for something quite specific. But for those occasions when you want to explore what the Web has to offer on some very broad topic, or when you're not quite sure what you're after, a Yahoo search is often your best bet.

✔ Tips

- Yahoo was developed in 1994 at Stanford University by David Filo and Jerry Yang, graduate students in electrical engineering. At the time, they were simply interested in keeping track of their personal favorite sites on the Internet. But before too long, word got out and they began getting hundreds of messages a day alerting them to wonderful sites that should be added to the Yahoo directory.

  Eventually the workload started interfering with their studies, so the pair dropped out of school, raised a million dollars in venture capital, and turned their dorm-room project into one of the Internet's most popular (and successful) businesses.

- Today, most search engines include a human-compiled directory on their home pages—often the Open Directory (`www.dmoz.org`) or LookSmart (`www.looksmart.com`). But Yahoo develops its own subject directory and continues to set the standard. Its classification system is so detailed that the *San Jose Mercury News* has called Yahoo "the closest in spirit to the work of Linnaeus, the 18th-century botanist whose classification system organized the natural world."

Contact Information

Yahoo!, Inc.
Santa Clara, California
408-731-3300 (voice)
408-731-3301 (fax)
www.yahoo.com

The Yahoo Home Page

One of the things you'll come to appreciate about Yahoo is that once you've learned your way around the home page (**Figure 10.1**), chances are that you won't have to relearn where things are anytime soon. Unlike most of the other major search sites, Yahoo settled on the overall organization and "look and feel" for its home page early on, and they're not constantly fiddling with it.

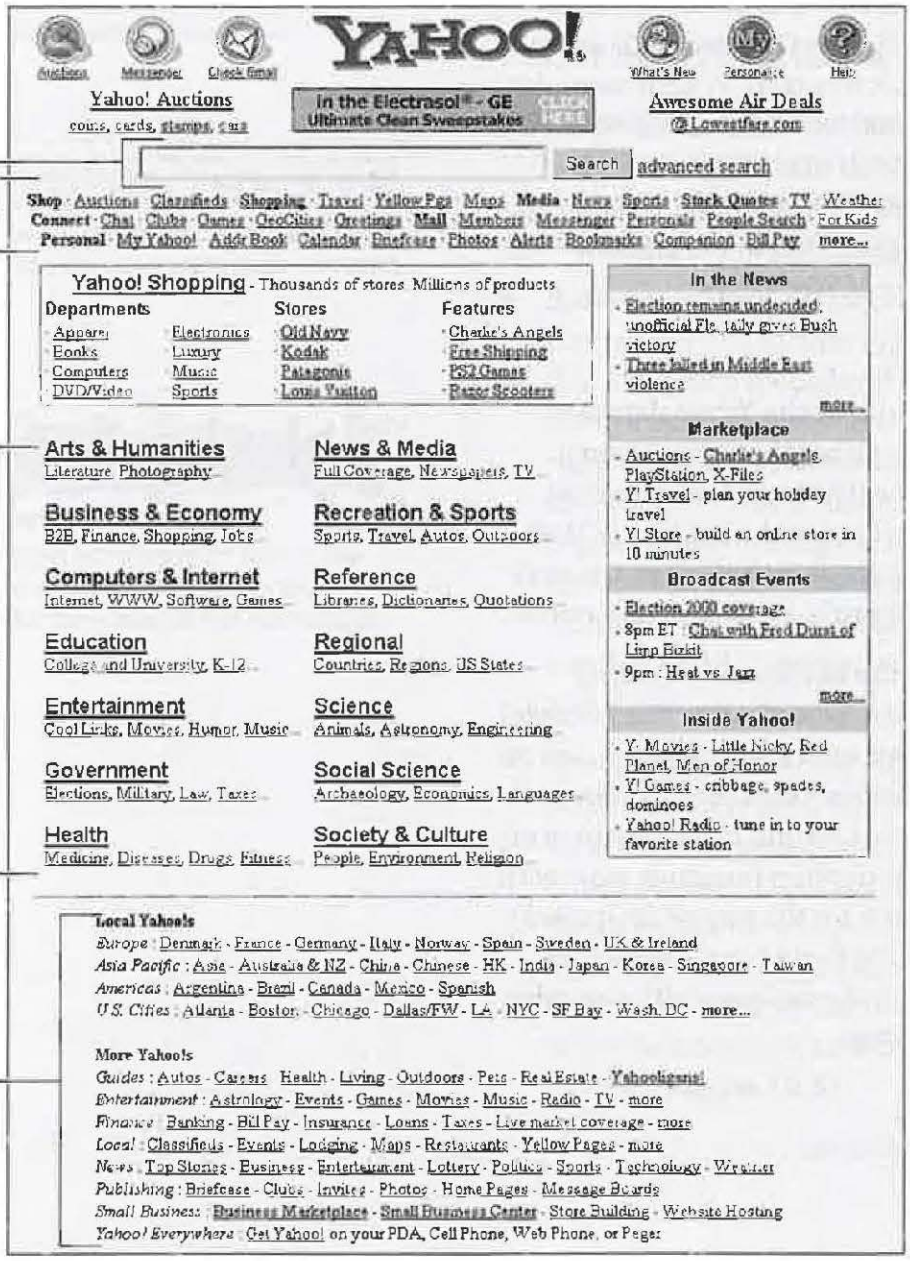


Figure 10.1 The Yahoo home page.

The Yahoo home page is designed not just for searching but as a "portal" page as well—offering news headlines, e-mail services, stock quotes, and so forth. From a searcher's perspective, the most important features to zero in on are the search form and the Web directory.

Here's a quick look at how to use those features, as well as a couple of other search-related tools.

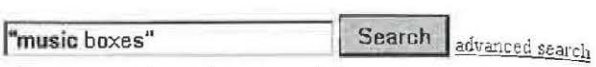


Figure 10.2 The Yahoo search form.

Search form

To search Yahoo, type a word or phrase in the Yahoo search form (**Figure 10.2**) and click on the Search button. Within seconds, you'll be presented with a list of Yahoo topic categories and Web sites that match your request. If no matches are found, Yahoo will display Web pages found in the gigantic Google database of Web pages.

✔ Tips

- Keep in mind that the Yahoo database is a *directory* rather than a traditional search engine database. Consequently, Yahoo doesn't index the full text of Web pages. Its database includes just the site's topic category, title, and a brief description.
- To increase the likelihood of finding matches in the Yahoo (rather than Google) database, start with search terms based on the general subject that you're interested in. For example, to find manufacturers of antique reproduction furniture, start with a Yahoo search for the phrase (in quotes) `"reproduction furniture"`. More than likely, you'll find a category with a number of possible sites.



Figure 10.3 Yahoo's Web directory categorizes sites into the 14 broad subject areas shown here.

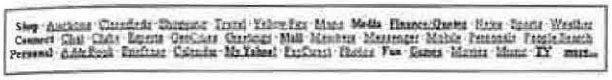


Figure 10.4 These reference tools on the Yahoo home page can help you find the answers to many common search questions.



Figure 10.5 Yahooligans Web Guide for Kids is one of many specialized versions of the Yahoo search service, all accessible from links on the home page.

Web directory

When you simply want to explore what the Web has to offer on a rather broad topic, use the Web directory (**Figure 10.3**). Click on one of the 14 major topic categories and then work your way through the subcategories, moving from general to more specific information.

When you find a category that looks promising, you have the option of continuing to "drill down" further into the directory. Or you can do another keyword search of just that particular category.

Other search-related tools

If you decide to use Yahoo on a regular basis, there are two other search-related features on the home page that you'll want to explore and become familiar with:

- **Reference Tools**. Sometimes the fastest way to find a particular type of information is to use a specialized tool. Yahoo offers a collection of them (**Figure 10.4**) right below the search form. You'll find a shopping directory, business yellow pages, people-finding tools, maps and driving directions, classifieds and personals, daily news headlines, stock quotes, local weather and TV listings, sports scores, and more.
- **Specialty Yahoos**. The Yahoo home page also offers links for country-specific versions of its search service, regional directories for U.S. cities, and special Yahoo guides on subjects like autos, careers, personal finance, and real estate. There's also a link for Yahooligans, a version of the Yahoo search service designed just for kids (**Figure 10.5**).

continues on next page

✔ Tips

- You can tailor Yahoo to your personal interests and information needs by clicking on the Personalize link (**Figure 10.6**) at the top of the Yahoo home page. For more on this feature, see the section on "Customizing Yahoo" later in this chapter.
- To make Yahoo your default home page, follow the instructions for "Customizing Your Web Browser" in Chapter 4.
- To get back to the Yahoo home page at any time, click on the Yahoo logo that appears at the top of most pages, or look for the Yahoo! or Home link.



Figure 10.6 Click on the Personalize link in the Yahoo navigation bar to create your own customized version of the Yahoo home page.

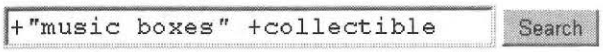


Figure 10.7 To do an AND search, put a plus sign (+) in front of each word or phrase.

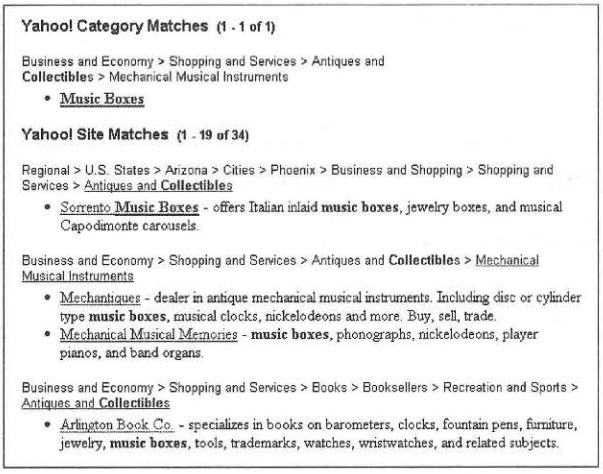


Figure 10.8 Here's an example of how Yahoo presents search results. Category Matches come first, followed by Site Matches.



Figure 10.9 Web Page Matches (contrasted with Site Matches) come from the Google database. The terminology is a bit confusing at first, but you'll get the hang of it.

Searching with Yahoo

Now let's try an actual Yahoo search to see how it works and how the search results are presented. Start by going to the Yahoo home page (www.yahoo.com).

To search with Yahoo:

1. Type a word or phrase in the Yahoo search form (**Figure 10.7**) and click on the Search button to submit it.

   Yahoo ignores the words AND, OR, and NOT. Therefore, to do an AND search, put a plus sign (+) directly in front of each word or phrase you want to include in your search results.

   For OR searches, type each word or phrase separated by a space.

   For NOT searches, put a minus sign (-) in front of the word or phrase you want to exclude.

   Phrases should be enclosed in double quotes.

2. Yahoo will search its database for both topic categories and Web sites that match your query. Category Matches (if any) will be listed first, followed by Site Matches (**Figure 10.8**). Your search terms will be displayed in bold to make them easier to spot.

3. If Yahoo doesn't find any matching categories or Web sites in its database, it will automatically display matches from the Google database (**Figure 10.9**). Yahoo refers to these results as Web Page Matches (contrasted with Site Matches or Web Sites, which both refer to sites in the Yahoo database).

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4. To explore any category or Web site on the results page, simply click on it. Web site links, of course, take you directly to the site. Category links take you to the next level down in the Yahoo Web directory, where you're given a chance to do another search or explore more links.

5. If you choose to do another search while you're on a category page, you have the option of limiting it to the category you're currently exploring. Simply key in one or more search terms and click on the radio button labeled `just this category` (**Figure 10.10**).

6. To look for news articles or Internet events that match your search request, go back to the results page and click `Related News` or `Events` in the menu bar (**Figure 10.11**).



Figure 10.10 Yahoo gives you the option of limiting your directory search to the category you're currently exploring, a neat feature that comes in handy for refining a query.



Figure 10.11 The menu bar on the results page allows you to direct your search to Yahoo's database of news articles and Internet events.

✔ Tips

- Plain-English queries aren't recommended with Yahoo. You're more likely to find Category Matches and Site Matches if you limit your Yahoo queries to a couple of words or phrases rather than a complete question.
- Case doesn't count with Yahoo, so you can use uppercase, lowercase, or a combination when you type your queries in the Yahoo search form and you'll get the same results.
- To search the Yahoo directory for recently added categories and Web sites, click on the link for `advanced search` on the Yahoo home page, enter your query, and use the drop-down menu to select a timeframe ranging from one day to four years.

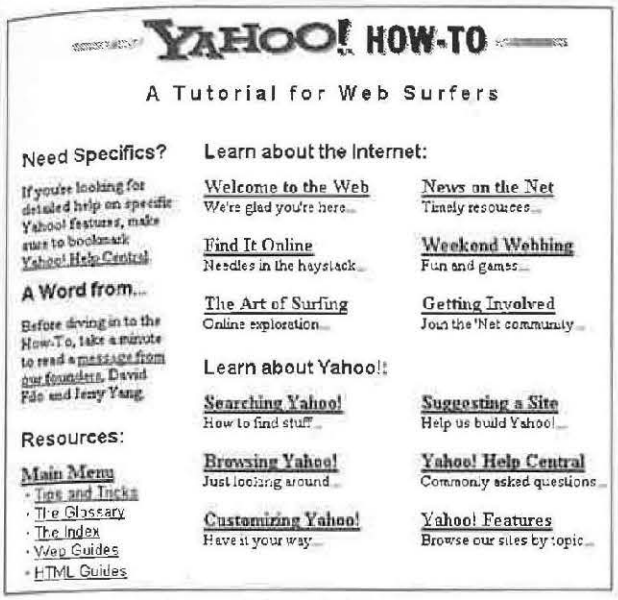


Figure 10.12 This tutorial, available at `howto.yahoo.com`, does a great job of introducing new users to the Internet and Yahoo searching.

- Yahoo allows two types of field searching: titles and URLs. To limit your search to the titles of Web pages, use `t:` followed by a word or phrase `t:"Victorian furniture"`, for example, to find Web pages with the phrase *Victorian furniture* in the title. The term `u:antiques` would find sites with the word *antiques* in the URL.
- For wildcard searches, type at least three letters of the word followed by an asterisk: `classic*`, for example, would find references to *classic*, *classics*, and *classical*. (Yahoo doesn't support the use of asterisks at the beginning or in the middle of a word.)
- If you create a search that you expect to run again periodically, you might want to save it using Yahoo's Saved Searches feature. For more on this feature, see "Customizing Yahoo" later in this chapter.
- For a summary of Yahoo search commands and syntax, see the Yahoo Quick Reference (**Table 10.1**).
- For Yahoo's online help information, click on the `Help` link located at the top of the Yahoo home page and on all search results pages. Or go to `howto.yahoo.com`, where you'll find a delightful "Tutorial for Web Surfers" (**Figure 10.12**). The tutorial includes search tips, an Internet glossary, sample searches, and more.

Table 10.1

Yahoo Quick Reference

FOR THIS TYPE OF SEARCH:	DO THIS:	EXAMPLES:
Plain-English Question	Not recommended.	
Phrase Search	Type the phrase as a sequence of words surrounded by **double quotes.**	`"Russian lacquer boxes"`
AND Search (multiple words and phrases, each of which must be present)	Use a **plus sign (+)** in front of a word or phrase that *must* appear in the results.	`+antiques +Victorian`
OR Search (multiple words and phrases, any one of which may be present)	Type words or phrases separated by a space, without any special notation.	`eggs "Carl Faberge"`
NOT Search (to exclude a word or phrase)	Use a **minus sign (-)** in front of a word or phrase you want to exclude from your results. To find software Easter eggs, for example, you might want to exclude the word *Fabergé.*	`"Easter eggs" -Faberge`
Case-Sensitive Search	Not available.	
Date Search	Not available. However, you *can* search for categories and Web sites that have been added to the Yahoo directory within a certain time frame. To do that, click on **advancedsearch** on the Yahoo home page and use the drop-down menu to select a timeframe (1 day to 4 years).	
Field Search	To search titles of Web page documents, use **t :** directly in front of a word or phrase.	`t:"oriental rugs"`
	To search Web page URLs, use **u :** directly in front of the word you want to find. To search for multiple words, use multiple u: search terms with **plus signs (+)**.	`u:carpeting +u:oriental +u:rug`
Nested Search	Not available.	
Proximity Search	Not available.	
Wildcard Search	Use an **asterisk (*)** with at least the first three letters of your search term. The example would find references to *lacquer* as well as *lacquered* and *lacquerware.* (Note: You *cannot* search for wildcard characters at the beginning or in the middle of a word.)	`lacq*`

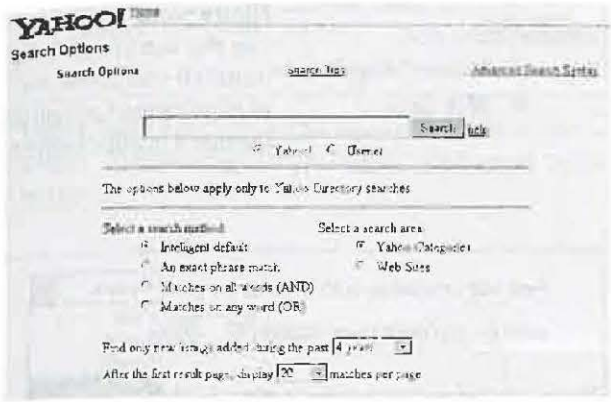


Figure 10.13 Yahoo's Search Options page offers several "advanced search" features not available on the home page.

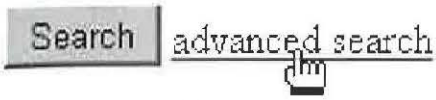


Figure 10.14 Click advanced search on the Yahoo home page to get to the Search Options page.

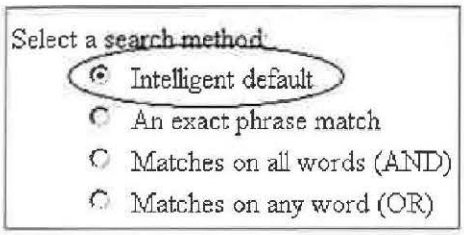


Figure 10.15 Leave the search method set to `Intelligent default` to search just as you would on the Yahoo home page, using +/- signs to include/exclude words and double quotes for phrases.

Using Advanced Search

Yahoo offers a second search form on what it calls the Search Options page (**Figure 10.13**). This form gives you three "advanced search" capabilities not available on the Yahoo home page:

- You can limit your search of the Yahoo directory to categories or Web sites added within a specified time frame ranging from one day to four years.
- You can change the number of matches that are displayed on each page of your search results following the initial summary page.
- You can specify that you want to search Usenet newsgroup postings rather than the Yahoo directory.

Let's take at look at how you might use the form on the Search Options page to search the Yahoo directory and Usenet postings.

To search the Yahoo directory:

1. Go to the Yahoo home page (`www.yahoo.com`) and click on the `advanced search` link (**Figure 10.14**) to the right of the `Search` button.
2. Type your query in the search box, just as you would on the Yahoo home page, and select a search method (**Figure 10.15**). If you leave the search method set to `Intelligent default`, you can use double quotes to indicate a phrase search and plus and minus signs to include (+) or exclude (-) terms. Alternatively, you can use one of the other settings to do a phrase, AND, or OR search, in which case you don't need to use any special punctuation.

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3. If you want to limit your search to Web sites (rather than categories) in the Yahoo directory, click on the Web Sites radio button (**Figure 10.16**). To search both categories *and* Web sites, leave the search area set to Yahoo Categories.

4. To restrict your search to categories or sites that have been added to the Yahoo directory within a certain time frame, use the drop-down menu (**Figure 10.17**) to select from choices ranging from one day to four years.

5. Finally, if you want to change the number of matches displayed per page, use the drop-down menu (**Figure 10.18**) to choose a number from 10 to 100. The new setting applies only after the first page of results. (The layout for the first page is fixed.)

6. Click on the Search button to submit your query.



Figure 10.16 Use the Web Sites radio button if you prefer not to have Yahoo Categories included in your results.

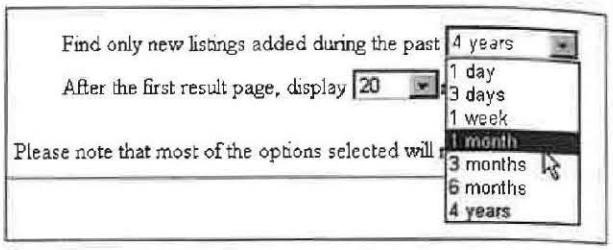


Figure 10.17 This menu lets you limit your search to categories and Web sites added to the Yahoo directory within a certain time frame.

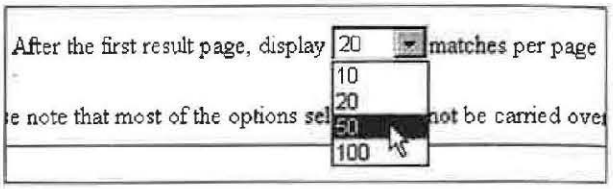


Figure 10.18 Yahoo typically displays search results 20 to a page, but this menu lets you increase the number to 100.

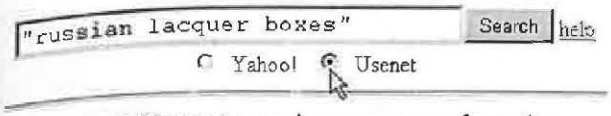


Figure 10.19 You can search newsgroups from the Search Options page by clicking on the Usenet radio button.

To search Usenet newsgroups:

1. Type your query in the search form and click on the Usenet radio button (**Figure 10.19.**)
2. Then click on the Search button and your query will be directed to a database of newsgroup postings maintained by Deja (www.deja.com).

   For more sophisticated searches of Usenet newsgroup postings, see Chapter 15 on Deja and its newsgroup search offerings.

✔ Tips

- The options for search method, time frame, and results per page don't apply to Usenet searches.
- For a summary of Yahoo search commands and syntax, see the Yahoo Quick Reference (Table 10.1) presented earlier in this chapter. The same rules apply to using the search forms on the Yahoo home page and the Search Options page.
- For additional search tips and examples, click Search Tips or Advanced Search Syntax in the menu bar on the Search Options page.

Using Yahoo's Web Directory

As we've said before, when it comes to organizing the Web by topic, Yahoo has set the standard. All the major engines offer Web directories of some sort, often provided by third parties like the Open Directory or LookSmart. But Yahoo offers three advantages over most of its competitors:

- You can simultaneously search both its human-compiled Web directory and a gigantic database of more than a billion Web pages, and the combined results will be presented to you in a well-organized and readable format.
- You can easily avoid (or zero in on) business or shopping Web sites, or sites that are of regional interest, because Yahoo makes a distinction in its directory between commercial *vs.* non-commercial sites, and between sites that are of global interest *vs.* those that are only relevant to a specific geographic region.
- If you find a category in the Yahoo directory that looks promising, you can search again within just that category to find the exact information that you're after.

Think of Yahoo's directory as an incredibly detailed outline of what's available on the Web. And the outline itself, as well as a 25-word description of each site, can be searched. So you can usually zero in on just the information you need, without having to wade through descriptions of hundreds, if not thousands, of irrelevant sites.

The best way to understand what we're talking about is to simply go to the Yahoo home page (www.yahoo.com) and choose a category from the Web directory (**Figure 10.20**). Then explore (or "drill down") through the resulting pages that offer subtopics and sub-subtopics of greater and greater specificity.



Figure 10.20 Yahoo's Web directory is organized into 14 major topic categories.

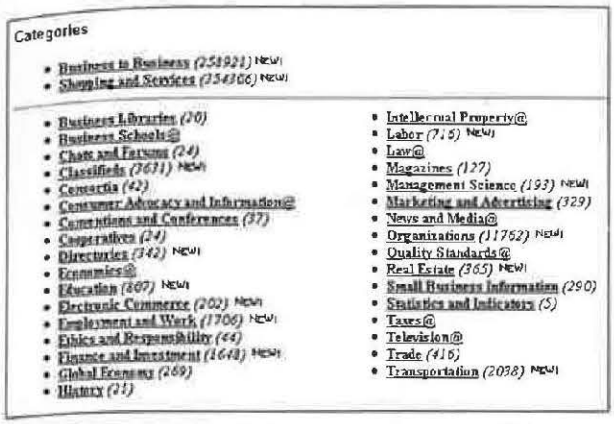


Figure 10.21 Here's what you see when you click on Business & Economy in the Yahoo Web directory—almost two dozen subtopics, presented alphabetically.

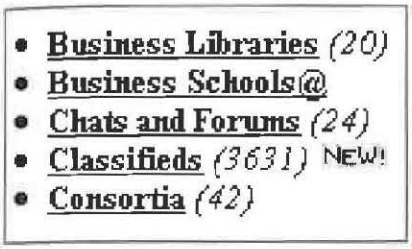


Figure 10.22 The numbers in parentheses show how many Web sites are in that subtopic. The @ symbol indicates a cross-reference. Recently added categories are marked *NEW!*

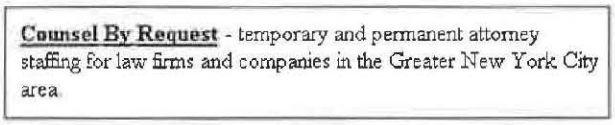


Figure 10.23 The Web site descriptions in the Yahoo directory are brief but informative.

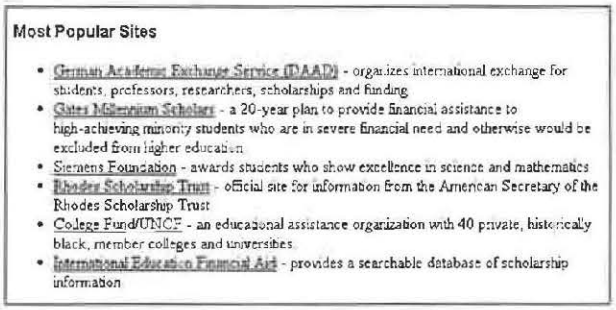


Figure 10.24 For categories with a large number of Web sites, Yahoo often provides guidance on the ones that are most popular.

To browse the Web by topic:

1. Click on one of the 14 topic categories on the Yahoo home page (`www.yahoo.com`) to display the subtopics for that category (**Figure 10.21**), along with some helpful information about each one (**Figure 10.22**):

   The **numbers in parentheses** tell you how many entries are categorized under a particular subtopic.

   An **@ symbol** means that the topic's primary location is located elsewhere in the Yahoo directory. (Clicking on one of these links will take you to the topic's primary location.)

   The word ***NEW!*** (highlighted in yellow) identifies topic categories that have been added recently to the Yahoo Web directory. Yahoo's 14 main topics haven't changed in some time, but new subtopics and sub-subtopics are being added all the time.

2. As you work your way down through the Yahoo directory, you'll eventually reach a page that includes a set of links for specific Web sites, presented alphabetically, along with a brief description of each one (**Figure 10.23**). Written by each site's owner or creator and approved by Yahoo editors, these descriptions will give you a quick handle on the nature and purpose of the Web site—something you don't always get when you use a search engine whose database is created by a spider or crawler program.

3. If the list includes an exceptionally large number of Web sites, it will often be preceded by a section labeled "Most Popular Sites" (**Figure 10.24**).

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4. You may also encounter a section called "Inside Yahoo!" (**Figure 10.25**), which includes links for message boards, clubs, special events, and subject matter created and maintained by Yahoo itself.

5. A pair of sunglasses (**Figure 10.26**) is used to identify Web sites that Yahoo editors consider to be "especially noteworthy resources" in their particular subject areas. Only non-commercial sites qualify for the sunglasses designation.

   Why sunglasses? It only makes sense if you know that, in the early Yahoo days, sites were chosen to "wear the sunglasses" because they were considered to be "cool."

6. As you're working your way through the Yahoo directory, you can stop at any point and perform a search, using a form (**Figure 10.27**) that allows you to specify whether you want to search `all` of Yahoo! or `just this category` that you're currently exploring.



Figure 10.25 Topic-related features created by Yahoo are presented in a section of the results page called "Inside Yahoo!"

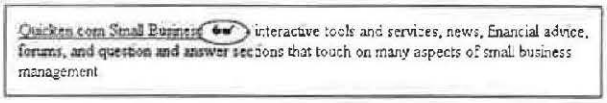


Figure 10.26 Yahoo uses the sunglasses icon to call your attention to exceptionally good (i.e. "cool") Web sites.



Figure 10.27 We've chosen to look for our search phrase in the "Conventions and Conferences" subtopic instead of the entire Yahoo directory.



Figure 10.28 Yahoo helps you keep track of where you are in the directory by displaying your location. To go back to, say, `Antiques and Collectibles`, click on its link.

✔ Tips

- If you have a subject in mind but aren't sure what topic to choose from the Yahoo Web directory, do a search first. For example, type `collectibles` in the Yahoo search form and you'll be presented with categories within four major topics in the Web directory: `Business & Economy`, `Entertainment`, `Recreation`, and `Regional`.
- As you move around the Yahoo directory, the category you're exploring will always be presented at the top of the page, with each subtopic separated by a greater-than symbol (>) (**Figure 10.28**). You can go directly to any subtopic by simply clicking on it.



Figure 10.29 My Yahoo is a customized version of the Yahoo home page, tailored to your particular interests.



Figure 10.30 Use the `Personalize` link on the Yahoo home page to access My Yahoo.

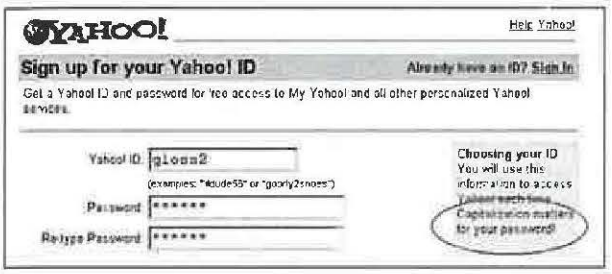


Figure 10.31 Signing up for My Yahoo involves choosing an ID and password. Note that capitalization matters for your password!

Customizing Yahoo

If you like Yahoo and decide to make it your primary search tool, how about creating your own special version of the Yahoo home page, tailored to your personal interests and information needs? That's what My Yahoo (**Figure 10.29**) is all about.

You can't change anything having to do with the way Yahoo searches and displays your results. But once you've signed up for My Yahoo—by selecting a user ID and password and providing some personal information—you can control the content, layout, and color scheme for the Yahoo home page.

More importantly, you can take advantage of three search-related features not available on the Yahoo home page:

- **Saved Searches**. Allows you to save frequently used searches and run them again with a single click.
- **News Clipper**. Similar to Saved Searches, but instead of running your query against the directory of Web sites, you'll be searching Yahoo's database of news articles.
- **Web Site Tracker**. Alerts you to the latest additions to your favorite categories in the Yahoo directory.

To customize Yahoo:

1. Click on the `Personalize` link (**Figure 10.30**) at the top of the Yahoo home page.
2. Then click `Sign me up!` and complete the form (**Figure 10.31**). You'll be asked to choose a user ID and password and to provide some personal information—name, birth date, e-mail address, zip code, gender, occupation, and industry affiliation.

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One word of warning on selecting your My Yahoo password: case counts! So whatever combination of uppercase and lowercase letters you use when you select your password, that's what Yahoo will expect when you access your My Yahoo page.

3. Once you've completed the questionnaire and submitted the information, continue on to your new My Yahoo page, which you can now personalize to your liking by clicking on the Content and Layout buttons (**Figure 10.32**).

4. You can display up to 20 features on your My Yahoo page. To add a feature, click on the box next to it so that a check mark appears (**Figure 10.33**). If you change your mind, click again and the check mark will disappear. Once you've selected the features you want (and removed the ones you don't want), click Finished.

5. The next step is to tailor things further by using the Edit button that appears with each feature. For example, if you've chosen to include Saved Searches on your My Yahoo page, click on its Edit button (**Figure 10.34**) to access the form that allows you to create and save a query. Then click on Finished. (The News Clipper feature works the same way.)

   Once you've added a search to Saved Searches (or News Clipper), you can run it from your My Yahoo page by simply clicking on it (**Figure 10.35**).



Figure 10.32 You can personalize both the content and layout of your My Yahoo page using these buttons.



Figure 10.33 Saved Searches is one of many features you can add to your My Yahoo page.



Figure 10.34 Click Edit to further customize a feature (in this case, Saved Searches) on your My Yahoo page.

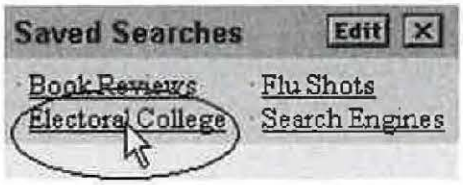


Figure 10.35 Having edited Saved Searches to include several queries, we can run any one by simply clicking on it.

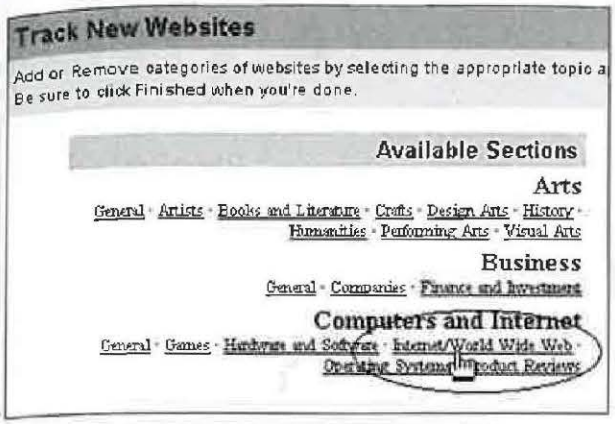


Figure 10.36 To track the addition of new Yahoo categories and Web sites dealing with the Internet, click on that link on the Web Site Tracker page.

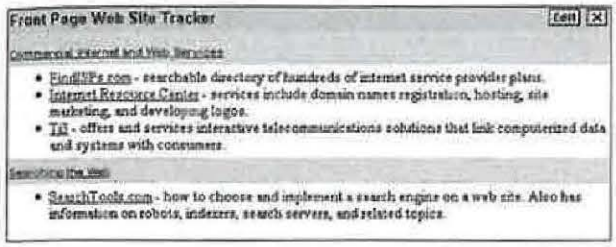


Figure 10.37 Web Site Tracker has identified four new sites in the Yahoo directory dealing with the Internet and Web searching.

6. To track new Web sites in a particular category, add the Web Site Tracker feature to your My Yahoo page and then click on its `Edit` link to display the list of available topics (**Figure 10.36**). Make your selections and then click `Finished`.

   If new Web sites have been added recently to your chosen Web Site Tracker categories, you'll see them immediately on your My Yahoo page (**Figure 10.37**). If not, the Web Site Tracker section will be empty—you won't even see the category names. Rest assured, however, that the categories *will* be tracked (and new Web sites displayed) until you choose to remove them.

7. To make My Yahoo your browser's default home page, use its complete address (`http://my.yahoo.com`) when you specify your home page or startup location. For specific instructions, see the section in Chapter 4 called "Customizing Your Web Browser."

✔ Tips

- You can switch back and forth between the standard Yahoo home page and your personalized page using the links for `Yahoo!` (to get back to standard Yahoo from your personalized page) and `My Yahoo!` (to get to your personal page from the Yahoo home page).
- If you have trouble setting up your personalized version of Yahoo, click on `Help` at the top of the My Yahoo page for step-by-step instructions and answers to frequently asked questions.

PART 3

OTHER GENERAL-PURPOSE SEARCH ENGINES

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Other General-Purpose Search Engines

In Part 2 we introduced you to six of the very best search engines and showed you how to use them to maximum advantage. In our view, you could pick any two of these "Big Six" engines, learn their ins and outs, and henceforth rely on them almost exclusively whenever you need to find information on the Web.

There *are* other options, however. In this part of the book, we'll tell you about the search capabilities offered by four of the most popular Internet portal sites:

- **America Online (AOL)**
- **Excite**
- **Microsoft Network (MSN)**
- **Netscape**

If you're currently using AOL, Excite, MSN, or Netscape as your gateway to the Internet—and you're generally happy with the services the site offers—read the relevant chapter in this part of the book to learn how to search more effectively. Then choose at least one of the Big Six engines in Part 2 to use as a backup when you can't find what you're looking for with your primary search engine.

If you're *not* wedded to any of these portal sites and are simply "shopping around" for a couple of good search engines, skip this part of the book completely and make your selections from the Big Six engines described in Part 2. The search features offered by AOL, Excite, MSN, and Netscape are adequate, but they're no match for the Big Six.

✔ Tip

- If you haven't done so already, be sure to read the chapters on search basics in Part 1 of this book. The next four chapters include references to search techniques and terminology that are explained in more detail in Part 1.

11

AOL SEARCH



Good to Know

- AOL Search is the default search engine for America Online (AOL).
- Its main benefit is that it allows you to search both the Web and AOL's proprietary content—assuming you're an AOL subscriber.
- If you're *not* a subscriber, you can use AOL Search, but your results will be limited to information found on the Web.
- AOL Search's Web results come from the Open Directory Project, supplemented by Inktomi's relatively small 110-million-page database.
- You can use Boolean operators and wildcards in your queries, but AOL Search offers little else in the way of "power search" features.

AOL Search is the creation of America Online (AOL), the world's largest online service. If you're one of AOL's 28 million subscribers—and you use the service not only for Internet access but also for its special proprietary content—you'll definitely want to learn some AOL Search basics. Why? It's the only search engine that allows you to simultaneously explore both the Web *and* AOL content.

Unfortunately, that's about all AOL Search has going for it. The search tools it offers leave a lot to be desired—a full assortment of Boolean operators, but little else to help you focus your queries. And the Inktomi database that it relies on to supplement its Web directory is the smallest of the top search engines covered in this book.

Another major complaint we have about AOL Search is that its search results page, though nicely organized, is very poorly documented. Unlike most of its competitors, AOL Search provides no explanation of what is meant by "Recommended Sites" or "Most Popular Sites." Nor do they explain the distinction between "Matching Sites" and "Matching Web Pages."

Our advice, therefore, is this:

- **If you're *not* an AOL subscriber.** Don't bother reading this chapter. There's simply no point in even considering AOL Search as an option for finding information on the Web. Choose instead from among the "Big Six" engines covered in Part 2 of this book, or the other general-purpose engines described in Part 3.
- **If you *are* an AOL subscriber.** Read on! In just a few short pages, we'll tell you what you need to know in order to use AOL Search to best advantage. We'll also try to shed a bit of light on exactly what it is that you're searching, and how to interpret AOL's confusing terminology on the search results page.

As you may recall from the chapters in Part 1 of this book, it's important—no matter which search engine you use most of the time—to have one or two others that you can fall back on for a "second opinion." That goes double for AOL Search, because its database is so small (relative to others) and its search tools are so limited.

Contact Information

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www.aol.com (AOL portal)
search.aol.com (AOL Search)