**RBHS Library**

**10 Quick Google Search Tips**

Source: http://guides.hcl.harvard.edu/content.php?pid=151291&sid=1751433

**1. Avoid Stop Words**

The more stop words in your query (such as adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, or forms of "be"), the less likely your results will include what you're looking for.



**2. Boolean Basics**

The Boolean AND command is automatically implied in ALL [Google](http://www.google.com) searches. Boolean OR must be in all capital letters, or else Google will simply ignore it. Boolean NOT is the minus sign "-" and must be in front of each word youwant to exclude.

****

**3. No Case Sensitivity**

[Google](http://www.google.com) searches are not case sensitive. All letters, regardless of how you enter them, are understood as lower case. For example, searches for "george washington," "George Washington," and "George washington" all return the same results.



**4. Use Quotation Marks**

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

You can force [Google](http://www.google.com) to look for words in the exact order you type them in by putting quotation marks around the words in your search.



**5. Restrict Domain**

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

In order to help you find quality hits, you might want to restrict your search only to Web sites at government or educational institutions. You can do this by typing in your search and then the word site: [remember the colon] and then the domain.



**6. Don't Assume Singular/Plural Included**

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

[Google](http://www.google.com) improves its results by ONLY looking at the form of the word that you type in. If you type in the word "cake," it won't necessarily find the word "cakes." Be precise when searching and use the appropriate Boolean command when necessary.



**7. No Truncation, But...**

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

No user-defined truncation is allowed in [Google](http://www.google.com). Instead, the search engine automatically uses its "stemming" technology. When appropriate, it will search not only for your search terms, but also for words that are similar to some or all of those terms. For specific truncation needs, use a series of searches and the Boolean operators.



**8. How to Search Using Common Words**

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

[Google](http://www.google.com) generally ignores common words and characters such as "this," "where," "how", as well as certain single digits and single letters. It will indicate if a common word has been excluded by displaying details on the results page below the search box. If a common word is essential to your search, you can include it by putting a "+" sign in front of it (be sure to include a space before the "+" sign) or put quotation marks around two or more words. **Ex. "where are you"**



**9. This NOT That**

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

You can exclude a word from your search by putting a minus sign ("-") immediately in front of the term you want to avoid. (Be sure to include a space before the minus sign.) This can be useful when you are searching for a term that has more than one meaning; "apple" can refer to the fruit or the computer company. To find web pages about apple that do not contain the word "computer", type:



**10. Searching Synonyms**

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

You may want to search not only for a particular keyword, but also for its synonyms. Indicate a search for both by placing the tilde sign ("~") immediately in front of the keyword. For example, to search for food facts as well as nutrition and cooking information, use:



Top of Form

Bottom of Form