

I. Internet Search Tools – Two Categories

A. Search engines – Two types:

1. Individual search engine

- a. uses computer programs called “spiders”, “crawlers”, or “robots” to match key search words with the web pages that contain them
- b. The results returned are lists of web pages and titles
- c. Examples:
 - i. Google.com – the largest database of Web pages
 - ii. Ask.com



2. Meta-search engine

- a. sends requests for information to several search engines simultaneously and compiles the results
- b. As the results are compiled, duplications are eliminated, thus yielding fewer results than a search engine
- c. Examples:
 - i. www.excite.com
 - ii. webcrawler.com

B. Subject directories – searchable databases that are developed and maintained by human selection of sites to search broad subject categories and their descriptions

1. Used in research and often linked to library systems
2. Also referred to as research databases
3. Mostly made up of thousands of specialized searchable databases, such as library catalogs and article databases
4. Searches for non-HTML formats (PDF, Word, Excel, script-based, PowerPoint, etc.)
5. Results in more reliable pages than search engines
6. Examples:
 - a. <http://infomine.ucr.edu> – compiled by academic librarians from the University of California and elsewhere
 - b. Directory.google.com
 - c. www.lli.org – Librarians’ Internet Index
 - d. www.about.com

II. Internet Search Methods – Four Categories

A. Keyword - Keying a main idea, phrase, or concept (search string) in the search box, with or without quotation marks

1. Use quotation marks to identify a phrase
2. “To be or not to be” will return results only of the entire phrase

B. Field - search conducted for a specific title, domain, URL, or host Allows user to adjust breadth and depth of a search

C. Boolean logic

1. Uses operators with keywords to narrow search parameters

2. Operators include AND, OR, and quotation marks
 - a. AND narrows results by searching for pages that contain both keywords
 - b. OR expands results by search for pages that contain either of the keywords
- D. Miscellaneous search methods**
1. Different language support – searches for words in different languages
 2. Spell checker – gives suggestions if the word keyed for the search is spelled incorrectly
 3. Phonebook – uses phone numbers to search for locations and addresses
 4. Math/equivalents – solves basic math problems and converts equivalents