

You Can Search But Can You Find? Get Better Results – Google Search Basics



This handout will provide you several important tools for better controlling the kind of search results you get when using the Google search engine.

1. AND operator

AND is used to join words or phrases when both (or all) the terms must appear in the items you retrieve. Type the word residential in the Google searchbox. **Google searchbox: residential** and you get about 152,000,000 hits where the word residential appears.

Do the same for the word sprinkler. **Google searchbox: sprinkler** and you get about 10,800,000 hits.

Now enter both words. Google searchbox: residential sprinkler and you get about 299,000 hits. This is because Google by default assumes an **AND** operator anytime you enter multiple keywords. In other words it looks for any Web pages where the words residential or sprinkler both appear somewhere.

2. "Quotation marks"

That's still a lot of hits though. What if you want to make the results more focused? Using quotation marks tells Google to look for instances where words in quotations appear directly next to one another as a phrase.

Search in Google for the phrase residential sprinklers. **Google searchbox: "residential sprinklers"** Now you get about 39,000 hits.

3. Narrow by domain

Still too many hits? Try narrowing it down by site domain (i.e., military, educational, governmental, private organization) **site: .gov, .mil, .edu, or .org**. Let's narrow our search for the phrase residential sprinklers to .gov sites. **Google searchbox: "residential sprinklers" site: .gov** This yields just about 1,700 hits.

4. OR operator

The **OR** operator tells Google to retrieve any record that contains either (or both) of your keywords. This broadens your search results.

For example OR the phrase "residential sprinklers" with the phrase "fixed extinguishing systems" in the .gov domain. **Google searchbox: "residential sprinklers" OR "fixed extinguishing systems" site: .gov** You now get about 1,580 total hits (230 hits for "fixed extinguishing systems" plus about 2,000 for "residential sprinklers").

To learn more about the basics of searching Google visit:

<http://www.google.com/support/bin/static.py?page=searchguides.html&ctx=basics&hl=en>



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