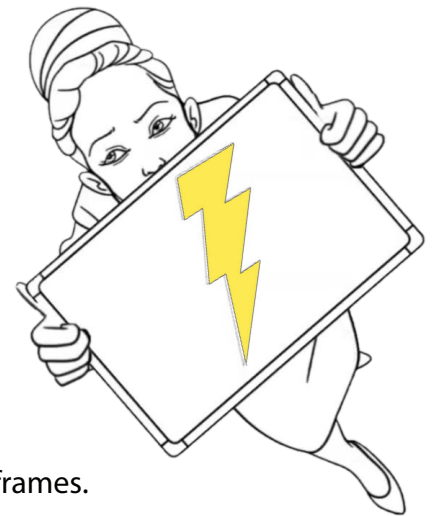# Supercharge Your Search

Why is it crucial to take your search skills up a notch?

Accessing information is easier than ever thanks to the Internet, but a lot of it is not reliable. Worse still, the top search results for important issues are manipulated by corporations' opinions of what's credible and what's not.

So, if you use basic search terms and don't look beyond the first 10 results—like most people —you're blindly trusting corporate executives who may not be competent, honest, or even decent.

To quickly find what you need, use these tips:

1. **Look beyond the first page of results.** Many searches yield millions of results, so if the issue is important, don't settle for what other people want you to see.

2. **Perform tightly focused searches by using:**
   - quote marks to find exact words or phrases.
   - operators like "OR" and "NOT" to expand and limit options.
   - domain limiters to search specific types of sites.
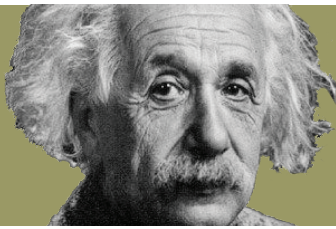   - date limiters to search for materials published in specific time frames.

For example, searching for:

- healthcare spending site:.gov will limit results to U.S. government websites.
- healthcare spending site:cms.gov will limit results to the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.
- (healthcare OR health) (spending OR expenditures OR costs) ("Affordable Care Act"OR ACA) site:cms.gov will limit results to pages within the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and probably capture most everything on this site dealing with the costs of Obamacare.
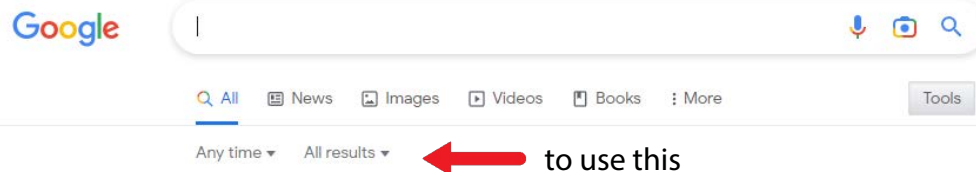
When using quote marks, realize:

- it will only return those exact words, so consider searching for common variants like: "income tax" OR "income taxes"

- you can do a wildcard search by replacing the letter or digits with an asterisk (*), so searching for "water pollut*" will include *water pollute*, *pollutes*, *polluters,* and *pollutants* in the results.

- competitors to Google (like DuckDuckGo) often don't respect quotations and produce results that don't contain the exact phrases you are looking for. So until they improve their products, Google is probably your best choice for targeted searches.
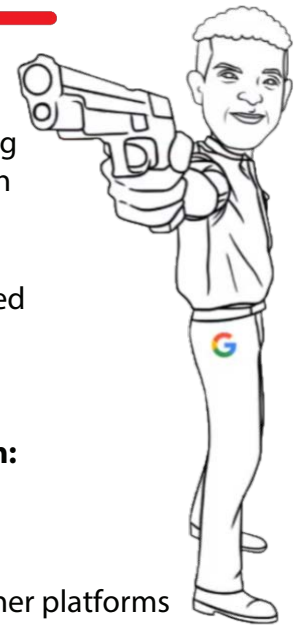
Supercharge Your Search (part 2)

You can also use the Google "Tools" button to delimit and sort by upload date:

click here

to use this

3. **Modify your searches.** If your first search doesn't produce what you're looking for, ask yourself, "What's wrong with these results?" and then change your search terms. If that doesn't work, keep refining until you find that pot of gold.

4. **Use Google Scholar.** Currently, the order in these rankings isn't as manipulated as Google's main search. Also, it cuts out a lot of the junk that is on the net, but sadly, it often omits some quality content as well.

5. **Quickly search through the sources you access by using the FIND function:**

> For PCs: Crtl+F
> For Macs: Command+F

6. **Be super skeptical of search engines** and other platforms that censor and bury what they deem to be "misinformation."

7. **Learn from your experiences.** Bookmark and record websites that deliver provable facts and kick those that don't to the curb.

8. **Bonus tip:** If you need an academic paper that is locked behind a paywall, search for it elsewhere on the web, as the authors sometimes post the papers to their websites.

REMEMBER: Take everything with a grain of salt and vet your results with Just Facts' Standards of Credibility. There is NO substitute for this.