Search Tools: Summary and Comparison of Commands

The table below summarises and compares a selection of the advanced search commands that are available in Google, Bing and DuckDuckGo. (Yandex will be added shortly).

A list of Google's advanced search operators compiled by Google's own Dan Russell can be found at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ydVaJJeL1EYbWtlfj9TPfBTE5IBADkQfZrQaBZxqXGs/.

There is a full list of Bing's commands at http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ff795620.aspx.

DuckDuckGo's syntax is at https://duck.co/help/results/syntax .

	Google www.google.com	Bing www.bing.com	DuckDuckGo http://duckduckgo.com/
Default search	Automatically looks for synonyms and variations on your terms. Drops words from your search if the number of results is low or zero.	Automatically looks for synonyms and variations on your term. Usually searches on all of your words but has started to drop terms if the number of results is low.	All of your words but drops terms if the number of results is low or zero.
Wild card or truncation	Not user specified. Google automatically looks for variations and synonyms. (But see Proximity and asterisk below).	Not user specified. Automatically looks for synonyms and variations.	No
Alternative terms or variations	Use OR for example `oil OR petroleum`	Use OR for example `oil OR petroleum`	Use OR for example `oil OR petroleum`
Suggests other search strategies and related terms	Suggests searches as you type. Also offers related searches at the bottom of your results page.	Suggests searches as you type in your search. 'Related Searches' at the bottom or to the right of your results page .	Suggests searches as you type.
Phrases	"…" for example `"climate change"`	"…" for example `"climate change"`	"..." for example `"climate change"`
Proximity	Use the asterisk to stand in for one or more words in a phrase for example `solar * panels`	`near:n` listed in Bing's documentation but no longer seems to work.	No

Exclude pages with a word	Precede words with a minus sign (-)
	For example
	`cabbage -red`
		Precede words with a minus sign (-) or use NOT
		For example
		`cabbage -red`
		`cabbage NOT red`
			Precede words with a minus sign (-)
			For example
			`cabbage -red`

Boost importance of a term	Repeat the term 2 or more times in your search. Also changes the order of the results.	Repeat the term 2 or more times in your search. Also changes the order of the results.	
Word in URL:	`inurl:` for example `inurl:chocolate`	No	No
Word in title	`intitle:` for example `intitle:petroleum`	`intitle:` for example `intitle:petroleum`	`intitle:` or `t:` for example `intitle:petroleum`

	Google www.google.com	Bing www.bing.com	DuckDuckGo http://duckduckgo.com/
Word in the text	`intext:` ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page for example `intext:parrot`	`inbody:` ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page. For example `inbody:parrot`	`inbody:` or `b:` ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page. For example `inbody:parrot`
Specify part of domain or limit by web site	`site:` looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example `UK carbon emissions site:gov.uk`	`site:` looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example `UK carbon emissions site:gov.uk`	`site:` looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example `UK carbon emissions site:gov.uk`
Similar pages	`related:` looks for pages or sites that are similar in content. For example `related:www.apis.ac.uk`	No	No
File type or format	`filetype:` Looks for files in the specified format. For example `fracking licences 2016 filetype:pdf`	`filetype:` Looks for files in the specified format. For example `fracking licences 2016 filetype:pdf`	`filetype:` Looks for files in the specified format. For example `fracking licences 2016 filetype:pdf`
Search by date	On the results page click on 'Search tools' in the menu above the results, then 'Any time' and select a time period or specify a custom range.	Top of the results page 'Any time' option. Full range of date options available in US version. Other countries only go up to a month.	'Anytime' option next to the search box on the results page. Powered by Yahoo and only goes up to a month.
Definitions	`define` finds definitions and synonyms of words, for example `define permaculture`. Also provides information on the origin of a word, use over time and translations. (No colon is required after 'define'.)	`define` finds definitions and synonyms of words, for example `define permaculture`. Also provides information on the origin of a word and translations. (No colon is required after 'define'.)	`define` finds definitions of words, for example `define permaculture`.
Limit by geography	Country versions of Google	`loc:` followed by two letter country code for example `loc:de`	`region:` or `r:` followed by two letter country code for example `region:de` or click on the duck next to the search box on the results page for a list of countries.
Boolean	OR	AND, OR, NOT and parentheses ( ).	AND, OR and parentheses ( ).
Cached copy	Click on the green arrow next to the URL of a page in the results list and select 'Cached', or search using `cache:` for example `cache:rba.co.uk`	Click on the green arrow next to the URL of a page in the results list and select 'Cached'	No

	Google www.google.com	Bing www.bing.com	DuckDuckGo http://duckduckgo.com/

Unique features	Numeric range search for example
	`toblerone 1..5 kg`
	
	Additional search options in the menus at the top of the results pages.
		`feed:` looks for an RSS or Atom feed related to your search term for example `feed:gardening`
		
		`linkfromdomain:` finds all the outbound links on a domain for example `linkfromdomain:rba.co.uk`
		
		Additional search options in the menus at the top of the results pages.
			No tracking, no personalisation or "filter bubble"