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.

A list of Google's advanced search operators compiled by Dan Russell (works at Google) can be found at
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ydVaJJeL1EYbWtlfj9TPfBTE5IBADkQfZrQaBZxqXGs/
(updated August 2019).

	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. Drops words from your search if the number of results is low or zero.	All of your words and looks for synonyms and variations on your term.
Wild card or truncation	Not user specified. Google automatically looks for variations and synonyms. (See use of the asterisk to stand in for whole words below).	Not user specified. Automatically looks for synonyms and variations.	No
Alternative terms or variations	Use OR for example `hematology OR haematology`	Use OR for example `hematology OR haematology`	No
Suggests other search strategies and related terms	Suggests additional terms as you type in your search. Also offers related searches at the bottom of your results page.	Suggests additional terms as you type in your search. 'Related Searches' at the bottom or to the right of your results page.	Suggests searches as you type. Also offers related searches at the bottom of your results page.
Phrases	"…" for example "`climate change`". Sometimes ignored.	"…" for example "`climate change`" Sometimes ignored.	"..." for example "`climate change`" Sometimes ignored.
Proximity	Use the asterisk to stand in for one or more words in a phrase for example `solar * panels`	No	No
Exclude pages with a word	Precede words with a minus sign (-) For example `raspberry -jam`	Precede words with a minus sign (-). For example `raspberry -jam`	Precede words with a minus sign (-) For example `raspberry -jam`
Boost importance of a term	Repeat the term 2 or more times in your search.	Repeat the term 2 or more times in your search.	
Word in URL:	`inurl:` for example `inurl:chocolate`	No	No

Word or phrase in title	`intitle:` for example `intitle:"clinical guidelines"`	`intitle:` for example `intitle:"clinical guidelines"`	`intitle:` or `t:` for example
			`intitle:"clinical guidelines"`
			`t:"clinical guidelines"`

	Google www.google.com	**Bing** www.bing.com	**DuckDuckGo** http://duckduckgo.com/
Word in the text of the page	`intext:` ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page for example `intext:penryn` should not pick up Penrhyn. Sometimes ignored by Google.	`inbody:` ensures that an exact match of your term appears in the text of the page. For example `inbody:penryn`	`No.`
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:www.gov.uk`	`site:` looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example `UK carbon emissions site:www.gov.uk`	`site:` looks for your terms on a specific site or type of site. For example `UK carbon emissions site:www.gov.uk`
Similar pages	`related:` looks for pages or sites that are similar in content. For example `related:http://www.nice.org.uk/`	No	No
File type or format	`filetype:` Looks for files in the specified format. For example `fracking licences filetype:pdf`	`filetype:` Looks for files in the specified format. For example `fracking licences filetype:pdf`	`filetype:` Looks for files in the specified format. For example `fracking licences filetype:pdf`
Search by date	On the results page click on 'Tools' in the menu above the results, then 'Any time' and select a time period or specify a custom range. Alternatively use before:YYYY/MM/DD and/or after:YYYY/MM/DD, for example `uk general election after:2017/06/01 before:2017/08/31`	At the top of the results page select the Date option, and then a time period or specify a custom range.	On the results page click on "Any time'" in the menu above the results, then select a time period or specify a custom range.
Definitions	`define` finds definitions and synonyms of words, for example `define citrine`. Also provides information on the origin of a word, use over time and translations.	`define` finds definitions and synonyms of words, for example `define citrine`. Also provides information on the origin of a word and translations.	`define` finds definitions of words or phrases, for example `define citrine`
Limit by geography	Country versions of Google but now has to be done via Settings, Advanced Search. Scroll down to "Then narrow your results by…" You may need to change to the relevant language as well. Alternatively append &cr=countryXX to the URL of your search, where XX is the 2 letter country code	Country version of Bing. Go to Settings, Country/Region and select the country from the list.	Use the drop down country menu on the left of the screen above the results.
Boolean	OR between terms to search for alternatives	No longer offers Boolean	No.

	Google www.google.com	**Bing** www.bing.com	**DuckDuckGo** http://duckduckgo.com/
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
Unique features	Numeric range search for example `electric vehicle production forecast 2022..2030` Verbatim to force Google to search for all of your terms exactly as you typed them in. On a desktop/laptop, run your search and from the options across the top of the results page select 'Tools'. From the second row of options that appears select 'All results' followed by Verbatim. The location of Verbatim on mobile devices varies.	`feed:` looks for an RSS or Atom feed related to your search term for example `feed:gardening`	No tracking, no personalisation or "filter bubble"