

Net Results

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Welcome

As gardening season winds down here in the Valley I often wish I had an outdoor, weatherproof computer for my garden. As I wander around admiring my organic vegetables I find myself wondering “Now, what is it I am supposed to plant in the fall?” and “Which shrubs can I prune now and which ones am I supposed to leave until the spring?” and a hundred other questions that require me taking my rubber boots and gloves off so I can run in and search the answer on Google. Hopefully the featured article below will help you maximize your search results and minimize your searching time so that you can get outside and enjoy the beautiful autumn weather that is sure to come.

Featured Article: Your Mini-Guide to Google Searches

At any given moment there are millions of people ‘Googling’ something but very few use the many features associated with the search engine that can refine, define and optimize your search. For example, your Google results will be different if you search for *dog* or *dogs*, *crazy horse* or *horse crazy*. Google pays attention to the order of your words and if they are plurals but ignores most little words (I, it, an, for, of, etc.) and punctuation other than apostrophes, hyphens, and quote marks. So, here are some tips for getting more out of your Google searches and for spending less time searching for elusive tidbits.

1. **Be as specific as possible when searching for something.** Typing in *chocolate* will result in pages on the history of chocolate, a Directory Of Chocolatiers in the states, chocolate making schools, a Thai movie called “Chocolate” and so on. If you were looking for chocolate stores in your area, you would be better served typing in *chocolate*

store Courtenay and up pops the Dark Side Chocolates web site. Hint: if you initially typed in *chocolate* Google helpfully suggests related searches at the top of the results: history of chocolate, how to make chocolate, chocolate facts.

2. **Words that are quoted together, stick together.** Google searches for all the words you type no matter where they appear on a page, so they may be right next to each other or all over the page. If you are looking for a specific phrase, book title, person, etc. it is useful to put quotes around the words you want grouped together: “*Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon*”.

3. **Exclude the words you don’t want.** If you want to find out what Brad Pitt is up to these days but are tired of the Angelina Jolie and Jennifer Aniston saga, simply exclude them with a -: “*Brad Pitt*” – “*Angelina Jolie*” – “*Jennifer Aniston*”

4. **Keep the words you do need.** To find the Hitchcock movie you want information on and not an ornithologists guide to avians you can ask Google to keep the *the* with a +: *+the birds*.

5. **Use wildcards for words you don’t know.** If you just can’t figure out what Jimi Hendrix is saying in Purple Haze you can search for it by filling in the blanks with * (wildcards): “Scuse me, while I kiss * *”. This is also a good way to reduce the use of questions in your Google search. For example, instead of asking “*Where is guacamole from?*” you can phrase your search as an answer: “*Guacamole is from **”

6. **Define your search.** If you want to know the definition of a word you can search for your definition one of two ways: *define plethora* or *define:plethora*. The first way will put the definition at the top of your results and the second will provide you only with sites that define the word.

7. **Use it as a quick calculator.** Simply enter the equation into the search box: $2+2*3/5$ and Google will tell you the answer is 3.2. You can also ask for conversions: $90cm=*inches$.

8. **Use Google as your address book.** When you are looking for a phone number, address, map or web site for a company you can type the business name and location into Google and the first entry will have a map and contact info for you. If you are looking for a person type in their last name, first name and location. Similarly, by typing in a street address Google will pull up a map for you.

9. **Don’t leave home without (checking) it.** If you can’t decide whether to bring your umbrella out or not type in *weather Vancouver* and you will see the four day forecast. The weather network link is a close second if you want more details.

10. **Last but not least – Google as your Entertainment Guide.** *Movies Victoria* or *showtimes Victoria* will provide you with a list of films playing in your area. If you can’t remember the name of a film you can type in *movie:Audrey Tautou* and a list of her

movies with reviews and ratings will pop up. The same applies to books you are searching for: *book:tiger boat island* reveals the book *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel.

Google searches can be as easy as typing in a phrase, clicking the first link and finding exactly what you need (or at least a link on the first page of results) or they can be as frustrating as finding a needle in a haystack. These few tips should speed up your searching. You can also Google Google if you want more information on their features. They have an About Google button on every Google page and within these pages there is a "search our site" box.

About nrichmedia

nrichmedia creates innovative and unique web sites and other multimedia for ethical and socially responsible businesses and organizations. We also offer green web hosting, web site maintenance, CD-ROM production, and more.

nrichmedia was founded by Nathaniel Richman in 2000. Nathaniel graduated from the Vancouver Film School with a Certificate of Recommendation in Multimedia Studies in 1997 and has been working in the web design and new media industry ever since. He previously received a Bachelor of Mathematics degree (Honours Actuarial Science) from the University of Waterloo and worked in the pension consulting industry.

Nathaniel works with other designers and programmers, according to the needs of the project, to provide the client with the most professionally designed web site and other marketing material as possible.

"Working with Nathaniel Richman, owner of nrichmedia, has been a great experience. Nathaniel and his team are very professional, reliable and dependable. Nathaniel has helped my website immensely and I look forward to a long term business relationship of continuing to improve my website. Service from nrichmedia has been top quality in every aspect which is hard to find in this industry. I highly recommend nrichmedia to anyone looking for website services."

- Ingrid Watermann, Owner/Operator, i day spa,
www.idayspa.ca

To learn more about nrichmedia's services, view our online portfolio, and read glowing testimonials from many satisfied clients, please visit <http://www.nrichmedia.com>.

Green Web Hosting

nrichmedia is pleased to be offering green web hosting services. Our standard package includes 200MB of disk space (usually more than most small to medium sized businesses require), email and webmail accounts, web statistics, and more.

What makes our web hosting green?

1. Our hosting is shared on powerful, energy efficient servers so the amount of electricity we use is minimized. We maintain our own dedicated environment within these servers and have full control over performance and security.
2. The electricity used by the servers comes from hydropower, which, although not ideal, is one of the more environmentally friendly means of power generation.
3. We've purchased wind power certificates to offset the amount of electricity that we do use. Wind power is, of course, a natural, clean, and abundant energy source with little or no negative impact on the environment.

To sign up for or switch to nrichmedia's green web hosting, please email sales@nrichmedia.com for information on pricing and getting started.

Charitable Causes

nrichmedia donates 5% of proceeds on all projects of \$500 and above to charitable organizations. We are pleased to have supported and continue to support several worthy causes. To see a list of the organizations we support, please visit <http://www.nrichmedia.com/causes.htm>.

The Not-to-be Missed Link: flickoff.org

Flickoff.org is a site devoted to understanding our impact on the environment and offering concrete ways to make changes. Each page has a blog section where people ideas and comments. It is a very interactive site with video, maps, illustrations and more.

Visit: <http://www.flickoff.org/home>

Archives

To view previous editions of Net Results, visit <http://www.nrichmedia.com/archives.htm>.

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