

# Search strategy: How do I make the most out of a Google Search?

Simply typing in your search term will bring back thousands, sometimes millions, of **'hits'**. Be smart and reduce this number to get exactly what you want from your search.

Use + as a **'modifier'** to bring back the exact example you are looking for. See this example:

Search term  
**Picasso** 110,000,000 hits  
*includes Picasso cars*

**Picasso + Cubism** 898,000 hits  
*All include just the painter*

**Picasso + Cubism + Guernica** 122,000 hits  
*All on just that one painting*

Another modifier is speech marks " " This keeps the phrases you want together and stops Google from looking at each word separately.

Search term  
**Renegerative animals** 1,950,000 hits  
*Mixed selection based on each word*

**"Renegerative animals"** 2,410 hits  
*all deal with your subject*

If you are looking for a quotation, put the speech marks around your phrase so that Google keeps the phrase together and searches for all of it, rather than all the words separately. Thus **"the child is father to the man"** will bring you up where that quote came from.

Search for **Define: word** to bring up a dictionary definition, or **Thesaurus: word** to find alternatives to the word. **Translate: word** to translate from or into several languages

**Intitle: word** will only show results with that word in the title. Choose your search words carefully and use alternative ones if the first ones are not bringing back enough useful results.

Remember **a search engine will only look for the words that you put in – it has no idea of the meaning!**

Use ctrl +F to search for a particular word in the web page or document that you have found so that you can spot them in the text.

## REMEMBER

to ask your librarian or teacher if you need support or guidance with your search strategy.