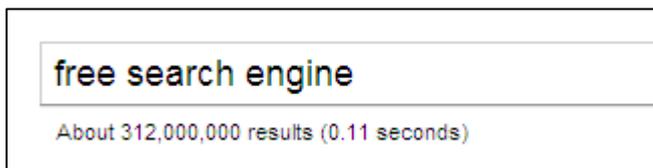# Search tips

By default the search engine tries to locate pages which have exact matches for *all* of the words entered in your search query. If that fails, it then tries to locate pages which contain *any* words in your search query. If that happens a short message is displayed at the top of the search results indicating this has been done.

In addition, there are several ways to modify the default search behavior.

1. **phrase search**
   The search engine supports three types of phrase search.
   - To match an exact phrase, use quotes around the phrase
     Example: **"free search engine"**
   - To match a near (within a couple of words) phrase, use square brackets [around the words]
     Example: **[free . search . engine]**
   - To match a far (within several words) phrase, use braces { around the words }
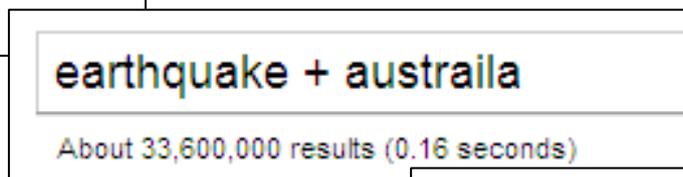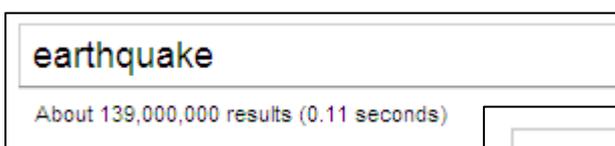   Example: **{free search . . . . . engine}**

   -
2. **+ and - qualifiers**
   If you prepend a word with **+** that word is required to be on the page.
   If you prepend a word with **-** that word is required to *not* be on the page.
   Example: +always –never.

3. *** wildcard**

   If a query word ends with a ***** all words on a page which start the same way as that query word will match.

   Example: **gift***

4. **? wildcard**

   If a query word contains a **?** any character will match that position.
   Example: **b?g**

5. **boolean search**

   You can use the following boolean operators in your search: AND, OR, NOT. These operators MUST be in capital letters.
   Example: **(contact AND us) OR (about AND us)**

tree

About 61,500,000 results (0.34 seconds)

tree +blue

About 47,500,000 results (0.32 seconds)

tree +blue OR +red

About 60,900,000 results (0.37 seconds)

All of these techniques can be combined: **+alway* -ne??r***

- Numeric ranges: You can refine searches that use numeric terms by returning a specific range, but you must supply the unit of measurement.
  Examples: **Windows XP 2003..2005,**   return >   **PC $700 $800.**

Wonder Wheel:

The Google Wonder Wheel can visually assist you as you refine your search from general to specific. Here's how to use this tool: <u>Enter the search word **DBMS**</u>

1. Click on **More** Search Tools | **Wonder Wheel** in the lower-left section of the screen to load the Wonder wheel page (Figure A).
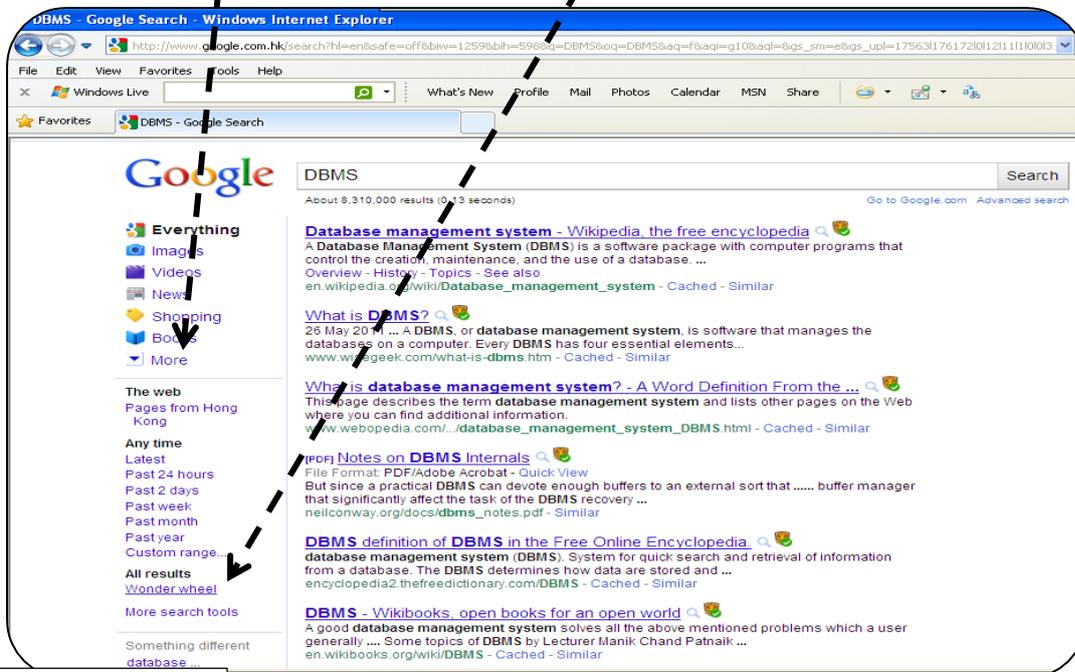

Figure A

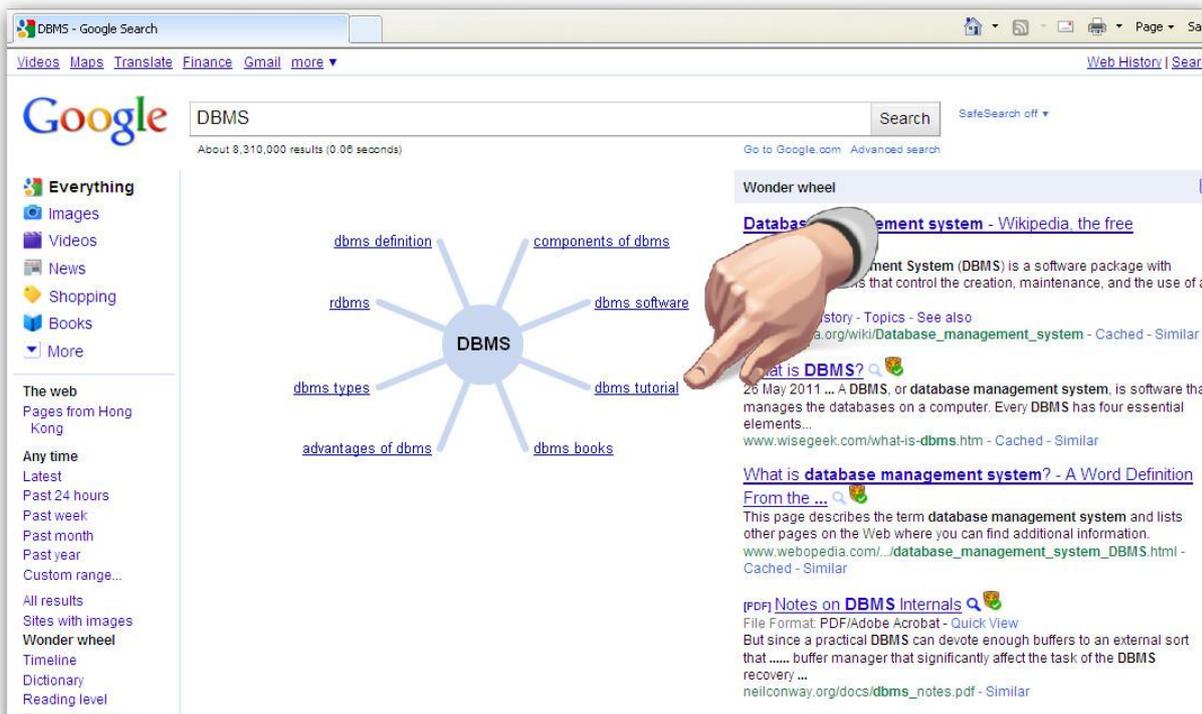2. Click on dbms tutorial to display a second wheel (Figure B).

Figure B
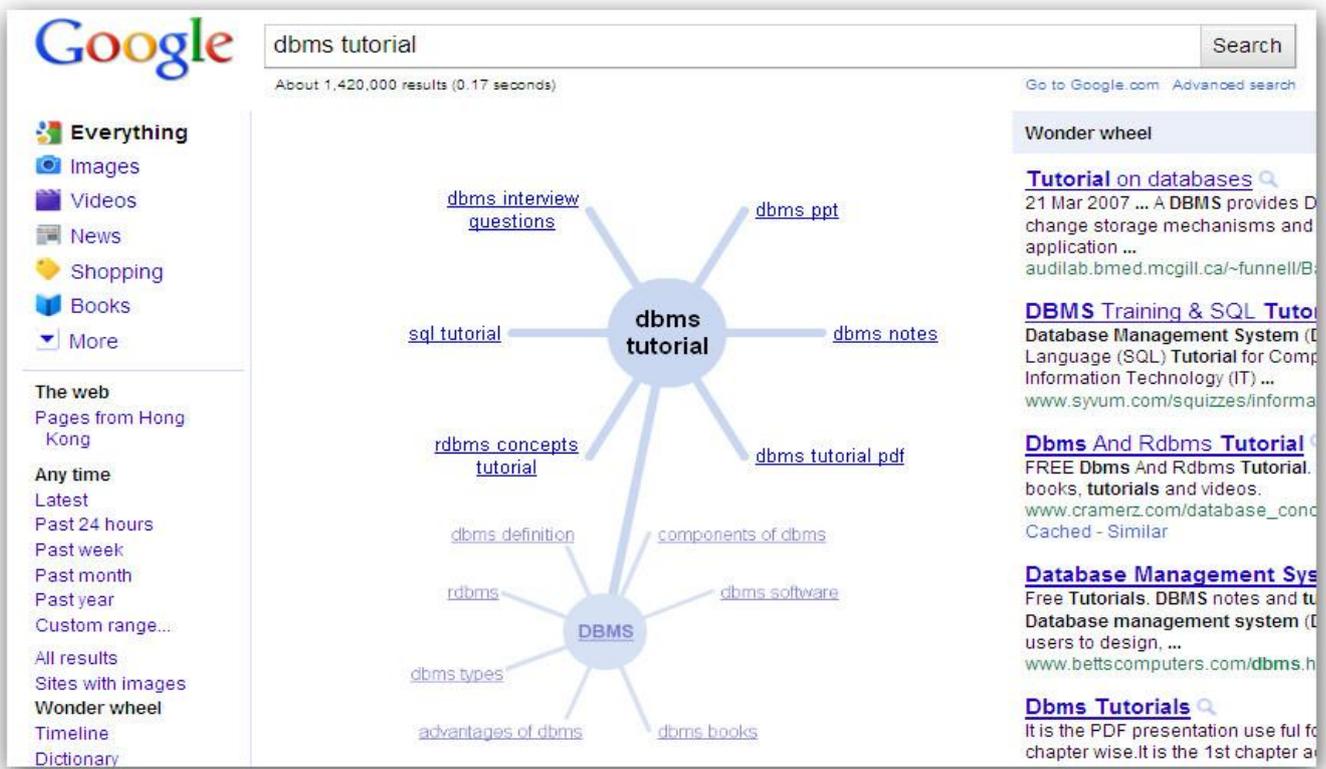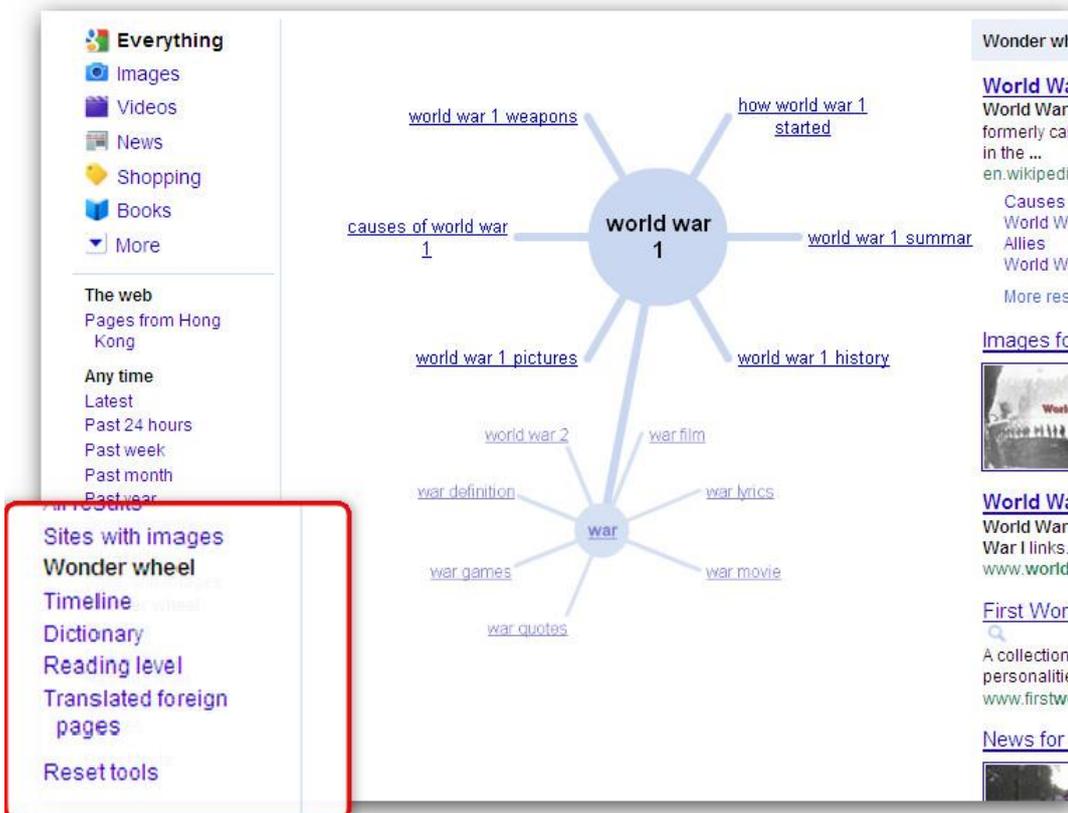
Figure C

As you can see in Figure **C,**

Google now displays two wheels showing the DBMS and dbms tutorial Wonder Wheels, with the results for dbms tutorial on the right side of the page. You can continue drilling down the tree to further narrow your search. Click the Close button next to the words Wonder Wheel at the top of the results to remove the Wonder Wheel(s).
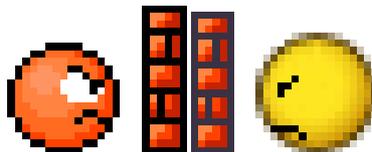
{try war}

Take not of the other options along the left side.
- Timeline
- Dictionary
- Translation

Tip:

Set a time limit -- then change tactics

Sometimes, you never can find what you are looking for. Start an internal clock, and when a certain amount of time has elapsed without results, stop beating your head against the wall.

It's time to try something else:

- Use a different search engine, like **Yahoo!**, **Bing**, **Startpage**, or **Lycos**.
- Ask a peer or call support.
- Ask a question in the appropriate forum.
  Use search experts who can find the answer for you.

The bottom line :

A tool is only as useful as the typing fingers wielding it. Remember that old acronym GIGO, **garbage in**, **garbage out**?

Search engines will try to place the most relevant results at the top of the list, but if your search terms are too broad or ambiguous, the results will not be helpful. It is your responsibility to learn how to make your searches both fast and effective.

The Internet is the great equalizer for those who know how to use it efficiently.

Anyone can now easily find facts using a search engine instead of dredging them from the gray matter dungeon -- assuming they know a few basic tricks. Never underestimate the power of a skilled search expert.

Source:

TechRepublic – http://techrepublic.com

http://www.search.com/search?q=searching+tips