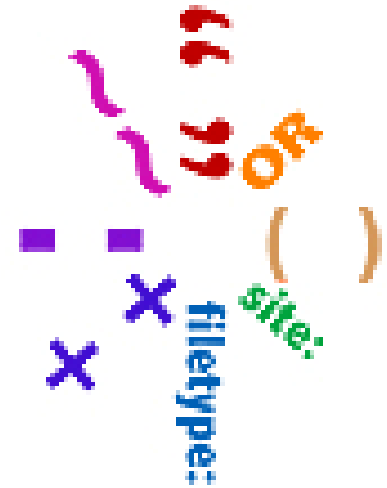# Power Searching on the Web: An 8-fold Path

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(Enriching Scholarship 2007)

http://www.umich.edu/~pfa/pro/8fold/

Power Searching on the Web

- **Workshop Overview**
  - Internet Searching vs. Library Resources
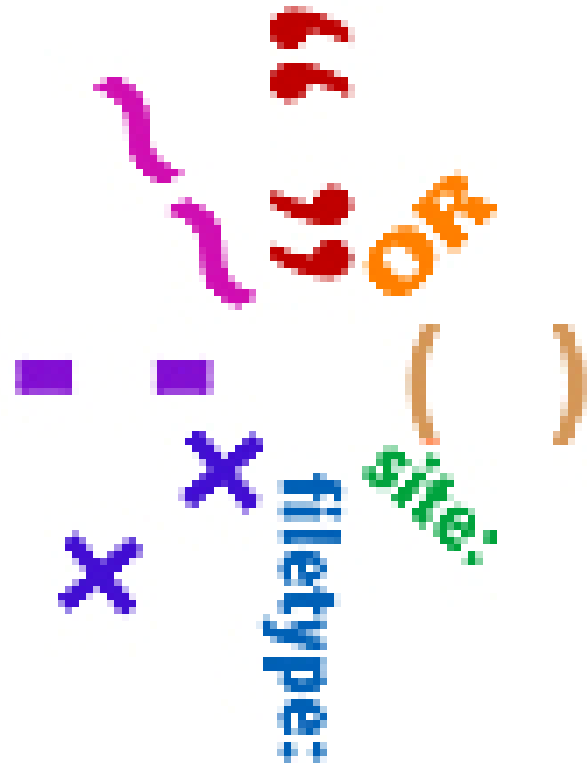 - Basics of Internet Searching (8 tips)
  - Question/Answer

Internet Searching vs. Library Resources

- Many of the resources demonstrated have fee-based equivalents, that have been paid for by the University Libraries.

- Think of the resources demonstrated both as useful in their own right, but also as illustrations of a resource type or discovery tool that might be useful in other contexts.

- Our discussion today begins with the Internet. Other contexts might include, for example, print or peer-reviewed research.

Power Searching on the Web: Tips

- Quotation marks
- OR
- Parentheses
- Limit by site
- Limit by filetype
- + (plus sign)
- - (minus sign)
- ~ (tilde sign)

Tip 1: Quotation marks

- This is most useful when the words to be searched are not very specific, have different meanings in various subject areas, or when it is important that the same word is repeated.

  - ”string theory“
  - “global warming”
  - “head and neck cancers”

Tip 2: OR

- Use this when you want *any* of the terms, not *all* of the terms.
  - ibuprofen OR motrin OR advil OR nuprin
  - "illegal immigrants" OR "illegal aliens"
  - thermal OR fluid sciences

Tip 3: Parentheses

- Useful to group terms that should be processed together, at the same time and in the same way in the search, but which you want to combine with another concept.

    - ("sports drinks" OR gatorade) (erosion OR "tooth decay")

    - "string theory" (discussion OR blog OR forum OR listserv)

    - "attention deficit disorder" (youth OR teens)

Tip 4: Limit by site

- This is useful when you want to control the quality of the search results, when you know a site that is likely to have what you need, and also when you want to find again a known document.
  - (amoxil OR amoxicillin OR trimox) (site:fda.gov)
  - (motorcycle OR atv OR motorbike) "helmet usage" site:.gov
  - "global warming" kyoto site:.org

Tip 5: Limit by filetype

- **Especially useful when you have reason to suspect that the answer you need will be in a certain format.**
  - ("child safety seats" OR "child car seats") "seat belts" (standards OR standard OR specification) filetype:pdf
  - "juvenile diabetes" filetype:pdf
  - "social networking" (teens OR youth) filetype:ppt

Tip 6: + (plus sign)

- Use the **plus sign** to force the inclusion of stop words in phrase searches.
  - euclid book I OR euclid book +I
- Use this to search foreign words with diacritics exactly as spelled.
  - émail fragile compared to +émail fragile

Tip 7: - (minus sign)

- **Use the minus sign to exclude terms from my results that represent a clustering of irrelevant results.**

  - "breast cancer" (recovery OR survivor OR survival) -xxx -porn -pornography –paid

  - "attention deficit disorder" (treatment OR therapy) –teens –youth

  - "global warming" kyoto -site:.com

Tip 8: ~ (tilde sign)

- Searches the selected term in thesaurus-mode (Google only)
  - cancer survivor or ~cancer survivor
  - alcohol ~teens
  - television ~child

Search Strategy Tips

- Compare results from multiple search engines
- Use truncation
- Use concept and term suggestions
- Use reviewed search results/links
- Use special search engine features

Questions?

- Workshop evaluation can be found at:
  https://www-a1.lsa.umich.edu/es_conf/app/?confid=9

- Workshop resources available at:
  http://www.umich.edu/~pfa/pro/8fold/ and
  http://www.umich.edu/~pfa/pro/8fold/med/

- Send questions to:
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