

## Top Things You Must Realize When Searching

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For the uninitiated, searching for web pages can seem a slow, obscure process. Unless you have a high-speed Internet connection, web pages may seem to take days to load. And the searching itself – you have to admit it looks weird typing in bunches of plus signs, asterisks, parenthesis, and other funny symbols and operators to find what you want.

To help you in this process and show that you are not, I've compiled a top five list of things you must realize when searching the web for information. No pencils will fly, no drums will roll, but you just might learn something.

### 5. Search Engines Have to Make Money

Before you grumble over the growing number of advertisements and sponsored links that appear in search engine results page, remember that most search engines are free. You're not paying anything for a very costly service. Thus, these sites have to earn income somehow to stay afloat (computing power and bandwidth isn't cheap!) So, to put it bluntly... live with it.

(Yes, I know some types of advertising are much more obtrusive than others. Popup ads, dancing animations, and other larger advertisements may make it harder to use some search engines that support these types of ads. If you don't like it, vote with your mouse clicks and move to another search engine).

### 4. Sites Go Down

Worse yet, you've entered in your perfect search query, looked at the results page, and the first site you see no longer exists!

The Internet changes all the time. Unfortunately, search engines and directories are not able to constantly query every site on the Internet to see if they are still online. Occasionally (in other words, probably frequently) you will find links to web sites that no longer exist. It is just a part of life. Especially with the dot-com bust, many web site owners can no longer afford to host free

resources. If they could not convert their traffic to paying customers, they just took their sites down.

So when you find a link that is dead, don't pump your fist in anger ... just go back to the results page and move along. Or, better yet, if you're using a search engine that caches pages, such as Google, just look at the cached version of the now defunct pages and find the information contained therein. It's like stepping through a time machine!

### **3. Your Web Browser Will Crash**

On a related note, not only do web sites go down – but so may your web browser. Sometimes it will be due to visiting a multimedia-intensive web site. Sometimes it will seem to happen for no reason. But it will happen, and when it does, don't go blaming yourself saying that you did something wrong.

Web browsers, like just about any other type of computer software program available on the market, are **not** infallible. They can and usually do contain bugs. These may predictably rear their ugly heads when visiting sites containing a lot of multimedia and advanced interactive elements, or they may appear completely at random.

If your web browser crashes, do what I do. Just restart it. Don't say you did something wrong. Don't think that you must be so bad with computers that you crashed the Internet. Just restart your browser, and if you have to restart your computer to do so, then do it as well. Most likely the crash is **not** your fault.

### **2. The Internet Can Be Slow**

No matter how fast your on-ramp to the Internet may be, there will be times where it seems to take forever to load a web page. This is just the nature of the beast.

As the Internet is a loosely connected network, if certain connections go down, computers may not always be able to route information via other networks. Thus access speed will suffer and your web browser will start to crawl. If this seems to be happening often, step away from the computer, go outside and take a nice, long walk (unless it's 30 degrees below). You can run your search another time when the speed is back to normal.

And the #1 thing you must realize when searching...

### **1. The Best Result Just May Be On Page 10**

Most people only look through the first page of search engine or directory results, usually the top ten listings. Others may visit the second page, but relatively very few people venture to the higher numbered pages.

This is a shame – sometimes the best results to a search engine query are not in the first ten listings as they may only contain links to commercially driven sites or sites run by web owners who know how to manipulate listings. In some cases web sites containing perfectly good information may not be listed in the top 10, 20, 50, or even top 100 results.

Obviously searching through the many pages and pages of resulting sites will take extra time, especially if you do not have a high-speed connection to the Internet. But, this time spent may well be worth it if you find some gems in the rough! So if you have the time, speed, and patience, browse through the deeper results pages. You never know what you may find!

And that's it – my top five list of things you must realize when searching. This covers slow access time, results not on page 1, browser bugs, web sites popping up and down and changing management, and the need for sites to make money, causing advertisements to become more obtrusive. Gosh, that just makes you want to go out and search right now, doesn't it? <grin>.

This article was written by Andrew Malek, Internet Search Guru and author of Find Stuff On the Net, an e-book that can show even beginning computer users how to navigate the Internet without fear. Gain confidence using your web browser. Master search engines. And more! For further information and free snippets of the book, visit <http://www.findstuffonthenet.com/>