Google Tools and Tips

Basic syntax:
“ “ Use quotation marks to search for a phrase: “white house” or “to be or not to be”
- Use the minus sign to disallow pages with that word: football –nfl might get pages on non-US soccer.
* Use the asterisk as a “wild card” to replace an unknown word, or a middle name or initial:
   “william * macy” or “lady * protest too much”

Search limit/focus:
site: limits your search to the site or domain type specified.
inurl: useful when looking for a site for which you only know a portion of the URL
intitle: searches for specified term or phrase only in the title fields of web pages
filetype: searches for files of the specified type; including .pdf .doc .xml .ppt
link: lists pages which link to the specified URL
phonebook: search names, businesses, and does reverse phone number look-up

Others to try:
related: info: define:

Other tips:
• Change your preferences to allow more than just 10 hits per page – less clicking means getting to your results faster!
• Word order does matter. Capitalization does not. Put the most important terms first.
• Google ignores common words (a, an, the, and, of…) unless preceded by a plus: +the or included within a phrase search: “the count of monte cristo”
• Before you search, think about exactly what you’re looking for (statistics? A picture? A definition?)
• If you haven’t found what you’re looking for after 15 minutes, stop and try something else.
Some more helpful information…

**Domain types:**

- .org - organization
- .com - company
- .sch – school (used outside of US)
- .k12 – most US school sites
- .edu – US higher ed
- .gov – US government (add country code for outside US)
- .ac – higher ed outside of US usually used with country code, example, “.ac.uk”
- .net - network
- .mil – US military
- .co – company if paired with a country code, example “.co.uk,”

**Miscellaneous helpful and/or interesting sites**

- **www.easywhois.com:** enter a URL to find out the owner or publisher of that web site.

- **www.archive.org:** The “Wayback Machine” – enter a URL and find past versions of that site.

- **www.citizendium.org:** Aiming to be a more trustworthy alternative to Wikipedia

**Undergraduate Research Engine:** A custom Google search engine created by librarians, with default limits set to search sites that tend to be reliable.