



Getting the best from the Internet

Rideau Lakes Public Library Guide

More to cyberspace than MySpace!

The Internet has so much great, up-to-date content out there to help you with school projects and general questions. **The catch?** There is sooooo much of it, that the really good information is often buried. Surfing through web pages for the **facts you need** can take a lot of time.

If you haven't found what you're looking for in print, and you need some search tips, ask at your library!

*Did you know?
There may be up to 800 million
documents on the web?*

Search Engine Quick Tips

Before you start, really think about your topic. Write down *exactly* what you're looking for and even what you're not looking for.

Remember search engines don't pull up everything or can find **too much!**

Pick your **keywords** carefully. Usually 6 to 8. Stick to nouns, objects.

Put **quotes** around a phrase (e.g., "Fort Henry" "global warming") to link up words in the *exact* order shown.

You can sometimes use the word **NOT** to narrow it down.

Try www.webcrawler.com which searches many search engines!

Hooray, you've found a website, now...is it **any good?**

What's in a website?

Dot what? The three letters after the dot may give you a heads up about who is behind the web page. Here are a few examples:

- .gov is a government operated site
- .edu is for higher learning – often Universities
- .com is a commercial site which is usually selling something

Questions to ask

- Who is writing this? Remember **anyone** can host a website!
- What makes them an expert? They can **say anything** they want!
- Can you contact them? Are they part of a group, a university?
- Are they clear about why they're writing? **Research**, entertainment?
- How up to date is the site?
- Does it seem **biased**? Well written?

Really look at what's there

- Is the information **accurate**?
- If they use numbers and figures, is it noted where they came from?
- Does it seem comparable to what you've read in other places?
- Do they **list sources** and quality links?

Watch out for hoaxes, phonies and scams!

Check out <http://www.snopes.com/> or <http://hoaxbusters.ciac.org/>

Get a Guide!

With so much out there on the Internet, let somebody else (who knows their stuff!) do the filtering and sorting for you.

Visit Your Local Virtual Library @ www.rideaulakeslibrary.ca

Click "Online Resources" or "Kids". Check out our online WorldBook Encyclopedia! Try our online databases (Kids Infobits)!

Some other useful guides

<http://www.kidsclick.org/>

This search engine has websites recommended by librarians.

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/>

A curriculum based site for teachers by Kathy Shrock

<http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/detective/index.html>

An "Internet Detective" tutorial on how to size up what you find.

<http://www.sols.org/links/clearinghouse/childrensservices/cybersites.htm>

A list of cybersites for kids from the Southern Ontario Library Service

<http://kidsspace.torontopubliclibrary.ca/>

click on "Explore & Learn"

Homework help from the Toronto Public Library

