



Google Search Tactics - 10/21/25

Google Searches can be useful when we need an answer. They can also be useful for researching ideas we have. In this session, we will explore different tactics that can make your Google Searches more useful and exclude content that just gets in the way.

1. Use voice search (it's fast & forgiving). Tap the mic in Google/Chrome and speak clearly.
Try: *weather tomorrow in Winston-Salem; call the nearest CVS.*
2. Ask full questions, not single words. More context = better answers.
Try: *best way to clean eyeglasses without streaks.*
3. Put quotes around exact phrases. Finds the exact wording.
Try: *"Social Security benefit statement" login.*
4. Exclude what you don't want with a minus (-). Filters out noise.
Try: *hearing aids reviews -sponsored -ads.*
5. Search one trusted site with **site:** Helpful when you already trust a source.
Try: *property tax relief site:ncdor.gov*
Try: *iPhone tips site:support.apple.com.*
6. Use the tabs under the search box. Narrow by Images, News, Maps, Videos, and Shopping.
Try: *blood pressure chart → tap Images.*
7. Add "answer words" for instant tools. Converters, calculators, definitions show on top.
Try: *How many Cups in a gallon, What time is it in Spain, 600 * 876*
8. Refine with location & time. Add *near me, today, 2025*, or your town.
Try: *shred events near me today; flu shot clinics Winston-Salem 2025.*
9. Check who's behind a result (...). Tap ... About this result to see the publisher and date. Prefer well-known, up-to-date sources—especially for health and finance.
10. Make results easy to read.
 - SafeSearch: Google app → your profile pic → Settings → SafeSearch
 - Bigger text: Phone Settings → Display → Font size
 - Compare pages: Long-press a result → Open in new tab

On-screen filters (easy taps)

- **Tabs:** After you search, tap **Images / Videos / News / Maps / Shopping**.
- **Tools (time):** Tap **Tools** → **Any time** and pick **Past hour / Past 24 hours / Past week / Custom range...**
- **Images tools:** In **Images**, tap **Tools** to filter by **Size, Color, Type, and Time**.

Additional filters

- **site:** limit to one website or a whole domain.
`property tax relief site:ncdor.gov`
- **inurl:** word must appear in the page's web address (URL).
`warranty inurl:pdf`
- **intitle:** word must appear in the page title.
`intitle:"blood pressure chart"`
- **related:** pages similar to a site (good for finding alternatives).
`related:consumerreports.org`
- **cache:** Google's last saved copy of a page (for when a site is down).
`cache:cdc.gov`
- **filetype:** find specific document formats (PDF, DOCX, PPT, XLS).
`medicare enrollment guide filetype:pdf`
`budget template filetype:xlsx`
- **before: / after:** (YYYY-MM-DD) restrict by date without opening Tools.
`social security COLA after:2025-01-01`
`flu guidance site:cdc.gov before:2024-10-01`
- **Quotes " "** exact phrase match.
`"North Carolina homestead exemption"`
- **Minus -** exclude terms.
`hearing aids reviews -sponsored -ads`
- **OR** (must be uppercase) include either term.
`mortgage relief OR forbearance`
- **Parentheses** group logic.
`(prescription discount OR copay card) site:.gov`
- **Number range ..** search between two numbers.
`best smartphone 2023..2025`
`snow blower 300..600`

- **Wildcard in quotes** * for a missing word in a phrase.
"how to * an iphone"
- **Define:** quick definitions.
Define:phishing
- **Conversions/Math/Weather/Time** inline answers.
4 cups in quarts · 65*1.08 · weather Winston-Salem · 2pm ET in NC
- **Source: (News only)** limit to a news outlet.
site:news.google.com privacy source:"Associated Press"
- **Trusted guides only:**
scam prevention checklist filetype:pdf site:[ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov)
- **Health info, recent & reputable:**
shingles vaccine side effects site:mayoclinic.org after:2024-01-01
- **Local events today:**
paper shredding event near me after:2025-10-01

Mini-cheatsheet

- site:example.com # only this site
- Filetype:pdf # only PDFs (docx, xlsx, pptx also work)
- "exact phrase" # match exact wording
- -term # exclude a word
- OR # either term can match
- Intitle:word # word in page title
- Inurl:word # word in the page address
- before:YYYY-MM-DD # older than this date
- after:YYYY-MM-DD # newer than this date
- 10..20 # number range
- Instant tools define:word, convert X to Y, timer 10 minutes, sunset today

Tip: If results look odd, tap the address bar and check your spelling, then add 1–2 specific words (brand, town, or year) and search again.