

How to Google More Effectively: The Basics

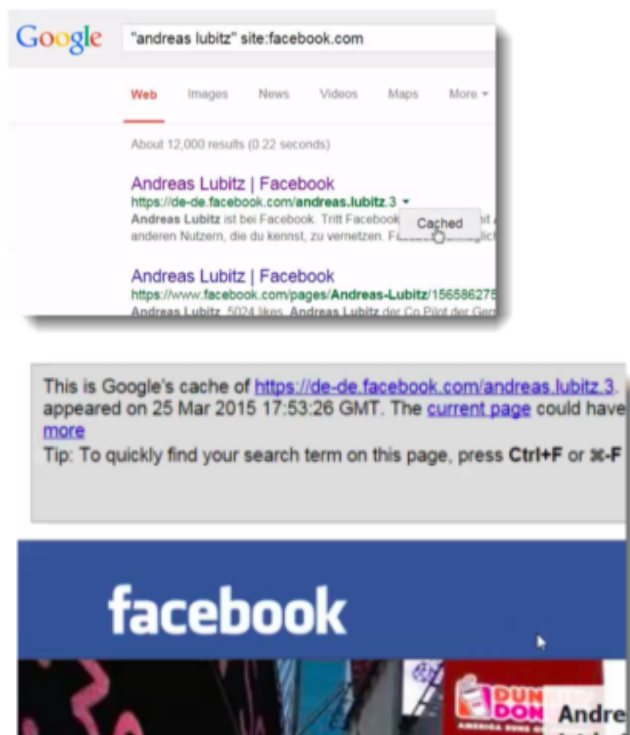
- Focus your search by either using quotation marks around phrases
 - o For example, search for **"Michael Jordan"** with quotation marks **" "**, instead of searching for **Michael Jordan** without the quotation marks. If you don't use the quotation marks, Google will find any pages with the words Jordan and Michael on them.
- Use the minus sign (hyphen) directly before any words or phrases you want to eliminate from the search
 - o For example, to search for pages mentioning the word Tripoli, but not the word Libya, search for **Tripoli -Libya**. Please note that this will only eliminate pages that have the word Libya not pages about Tripoli in Libya. If you want to find pages about Tripoli in Greece or Lebanon, it is much more efficient to add keywords relating to those cities. You could try searching for **Tripoli Greece -Libya**.
- You can add flexibility, and avoid ruining a search, by adding the word **"OR"** in capital letters between options.
 - o For example, to find pages about different sorts of Chemical Weapons alleged to have been used in Syrian towns try searching for **Sarin OR Chlorine "Al-Hasakah" OR Jobar OR "Khan al-Asal"**. If you miss out the word OR (in capitals) Google will search for pages that have *all* the words on them, which might not be that many.
- You can focus your search to a particular domain with the prefix **site:**, leaving no space afterward
 - o For example to find all mentions of COVID on the Indian government website, search for **site:india.gov.in COVID**
- Searching the phrase **ext:pdf** looks exclusively for pdf files. If you know a few words that were in that document, put them in quotes in Google, and see if there are any other sources for the same document.
 - o For example, to find pdf documents mentioning Bagram from US Military websites, search for **Bagram ext:pdf site:mil**.

Time Travel:

Sometimes you need information that has been removed from the web, such as a deleted tweet, website or Facebook account. There are a number of tools that can help bring the information back.

1. Search engine caches

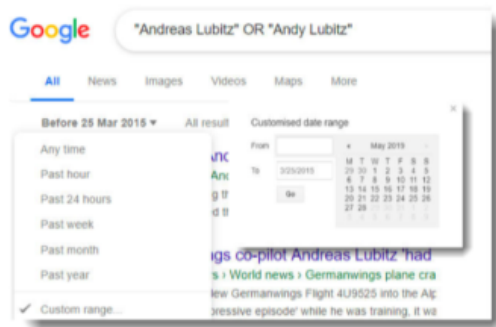
- If information has only recently been deleted and still comes up in a Google search, try clicking on the little black triangle next to its entry in the search results. This might give you access to a stored copy in the search engine's cache.



- Even though this Facebook page had been, a copy still existed in Google's cache.

2. Date range searches

- Some personal information can be buried by later news coverage. To go back to the time before a big news story broke, click on "Tools" and choose a date range from the time drop-down box:

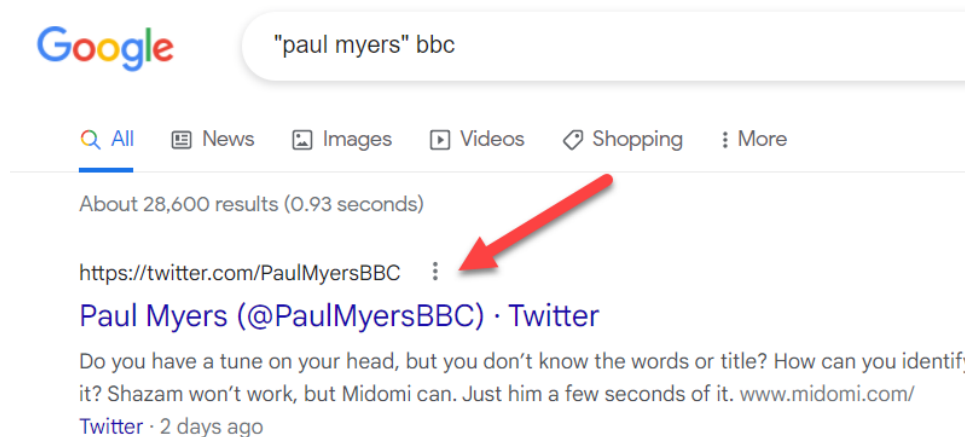


3. Archives

- [Archive.is](#) is especially good for finding deleted social media posts and accounts.
- And the [Wayback Machine](#), which is great at bringing back web content.

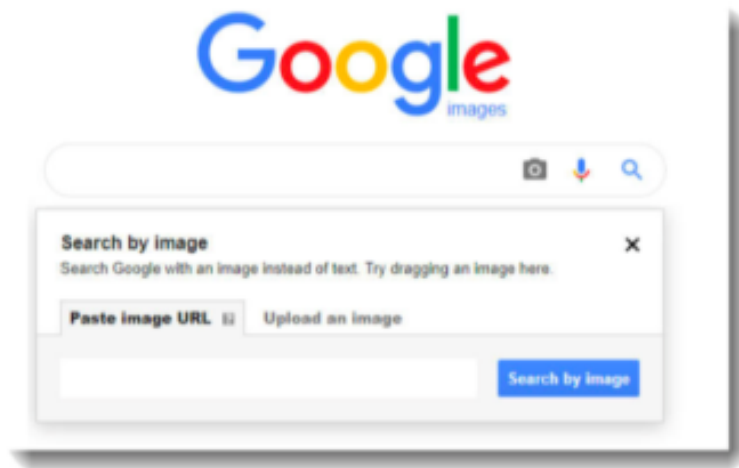
4. Caches

- More recently deleted material might be found by looking for copies on Google's database (the one you look through to find search results). This can be found by clicking on the three dots next to the web address, after you have done a search and then clicking on the link marked "cached".



Searching by Image

- Identifying where an image is found online can lead you to information that will identify the person in the image.
- Google's reverse image search can be found by clicking on the camera icon in Google Image's search box.



Finding People

Identifying the Right Person

- As names are often very commonplace and sometimes incomplete, it is best to gather as much information as possible about the person you are looking for.

Think about the following issues:

- **Name:** spelling, abbreviations, transliterating in other alphabets, could they use their other parents' surname, change after marriage, unique usernames
- **Relationships:** family members on friends lists, same friend across different networks
- **Employment:** job, company, previous employment
- **Connected places:** where were they born, where do they work
- **Email address:** can websites to find work email addresses that follow a format
- **Also think about what the person looks like, as well as their interests, causes and hobbies.**

People Research Tools

- Some online resources gather personal data into a searchable resource.
- [Pipl Pro](#), [Skopenow](#), [Spokeo](#), etc., are dedicated people research sites and provide a wealth of personal information on the subject of your investigation. They can be searched by phone number, email name and other factors. Spokeo is similar in some respects but focused on US citizens.

Searching Social Media

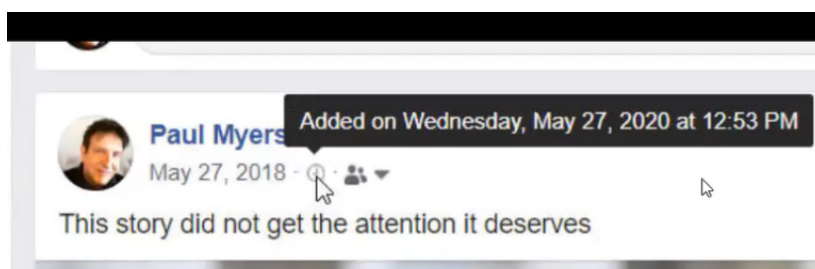
- People have different social networks for different aspects of their lives. Each will have different followers.
- You can search social networks via Google by using site: for example [site:facebook.com](#), however it is usually best to start with the internal search boxes on the social network sites as they have a direct connection to their own database and can offer more up-to-date results
- You can search Youtube first via Google, by entering [site:youtube.com](#), or by searching in its video tab.

Searching Twitter

- Twitter has a very useful, flexible [advanced search form](#). Other resources are also available, including:
 - [Tweepsect](#) will show follows, followers and follow-backs.
 - [Followerwonk](#) compares followers of two or three accounts.
 - [Tweetbeaver](#) has loads of useful Twitter search tools.
- Identifying hashtags relevant to your search can help you

Searching Facebook

- Groups and pages have their own built-in search which helps you find your way to a particular post.
- Facebook's People tab is one of its most useful features. You don't even need to search for a name. Just enter a few details about the sort of person you are looking for. For example, you can simply search for a profession, a company, a town, or a university. You can also find filters on the left-hand side of the page that allow you to specify aspects relating to your search.
- The Posts tab lets allows you to search for keywords in Facebook posts. The filters allow you to specify a source, a date, and to search Facebook Groups.
- If you have a hunch that someone has post-edited something on Facebook, click on the three little dots to the top right, see 'edit history', and you'll be able to see previous versions;
- If you suspect that an entire post has been moved back into the past, hover your cursor over the small clock icon next to the Facebook post, which will reveal the date it was added:



Searching Instagram and Tiktok

- Slightly more difficult to search, but very valuable if your target is younger or you are investigating an issue that is relevant to a particular demographic.
- You may find it easier to search these sites via Google with for example, [site:tiktok.com](#)
- [Picuki](#) is one of many “Instagram Viewer” sites that offer effective searches of Instagram. It allows Instagram images to be copied and opened at full size.