

## ***Internet Search Tips***

There's a ton of useful historic and genealogical research on the internet, but it can be frustrating to find if you don't know the proper way to pose your questions when doing an internet search.

### **Use several search engines**

A search engine is a service that searches for websites containing key words that you use in posting your query (question). Each evaluates website information in a little different way, so the results may be a bit different. There are dozens of search engines, but the most useful for family history are Google.com, Yahoo.com, Ask.com., MSN.com, and AOL.com.

### **Posting your questions**

Start your search narrow with lots of key words.

You can control how narrow or wide your search is by adding words and symbols to your query. These tools also give you access to specific resources like newspapers and libraries. Try these shortcuts on searches within websites as well.

<b>NOT</b>	before a word or phrase that you want excluded. Must be all in CAPS.
<b>-</b>	immediately before a word or phrase with a space before the – does the same as NOT.
<b>OR</b>	all in CAPS gives results with any of the terms you specify. Broad search.
<b>AND</b>	between words and phrases gives results for wherever those two or more words both appear anywhere in a paragraph. Narrow search.
<b>+</b>	immediately before a word or phrase with a space before the + does the same as AND.
<b>W/DOC</b>	placed between words or phrases and it will search for all instances of those words anywhere in the document.
<b>“ ”</b>	around a phrase locks the words together. Post Smith Family History and you are likely to get results for both Smith Family and Family History. With quotations marks around “Smith Family History” the results will relate to only that phrase. It also forces the search to

include certain common words, like about and will, which ordinarily would be ignored.

## Advanced Search

Google and Ask.com have an advanced search feature on their search page that makes it easy to do searches with all of the above restrictions.

\* immediately after a word will search for all forms of that word.

~ immediately before a word does a synonym search.

**AUTHOR(author name)** search by name of the author.

**SOURCE(newspaper title)** restricts the search to only the newspaper you have in the parentheses.

**PDN(mm/dd/yyyy)** search by published date.  
Specific date PDN(04/12/1941) or range  
PDN(>11/15/1870AND<06/05/1911)

**YR(yyyy)** for a specific year

**YR(yyyy-yyyy)** for a range of years

**yyyy..yyyy** Another way to query a range of years. Works for other numerical queries (e.g., \$50..\$100)

**YR(<yyyy)** before a specific year

**YR(>yyyy)** after a specific year

**AT(article type)** restricts search to a particular type of data—letters, marriage, birth, review, etc.

**AT(photo-standalone)** results in articles with images

## Retrieve Lost Web Pages

That “File Not Found” message you sometimes get when searching the internet may not be exactly true. There may still be a page from the last time the page was indexed. Hit the back button to return to the search page. At the bottom of the of the meta tag (site description), beside the URL look for a link called “cached.”

**Related Sites Treasures** Check out the “similar pages” or “more results” links at the bottom of the meta tag of sites you really like.

[www.FamilyHistoryCoach.com](http://www.FamilyHistoryCoach.com)

