



Victor Valley College Library

INTERNET SEARCH TOOLS

There are generally two methods available to search for information on the Internet: Web Directories and Web Search Engines (including Meta-Search Engines). If you are in the habit of only searching the Internet one way, we recommend that you review the following information to broaden your understanding of other search options.

- **Subject Directories**, such as Yahoo, generally depend on human editors for their listings. Directories are compiled based on descriptions of Web sites and listed under one or more subject categories. Some directories only list sites selected as the "best" sites in various subject areas. Directories are a good place to start when looking for information on general subjects and to get an overview of what is available on the Internet. Directories find fewer but often more relevant sites than search engines.
- **Search Engines**, such as Google, create their listings automatically by "crawling" the Web and returning results. They are useful in searching for very specific information, but they are not the best tools for finding sites on broader topics (see "Subject Directories"). Search engines are different in size, search features, and the criteria of documents indexed. Keep in mind that no single search engine that covers the entire Web. In order to retrieve the most relevant information, learn to use two or three search engines well by reading the "Search Guides" for each engine.
- **Meta-Search Engines** search multiple search engines and Web directories simultaneously and categorizes the results by each search tool. Since search engine may produce a different set of results, meta-search engines are useful in performing the most extensive search possible.

The links below were selected based on their recognition as quality resources. Remember that Search Engines and Directories are in a continuous state of transformation. To stay current with changes and new products, see: searchenginewatch.com or searchengineshowdown.com.

Selected Subject Directories

- **Infomine (infomine.ucr.edu)**
Originated from U.C. Riverside and maintained by librarians for Internet resources relevant to faculty, students, and researchers at the university level. It provides links to over 100,000 reviewed and annotated Web sites. It also offers a unique expanded search feature to allow browsing by Library of Congress Subjects and Classification System as well as author, title, and Table of Contexts.

- **ipl2 (www.ipl.org)**

"Information You Can Trust" is the motto of ipl2, a collaboration between the Internet Public Library (IPL) and the Librarians' Index to the Internet (LII). This is a searchable, annotated subject directory of high quality Internet resources selected and evaluated by librarians for their usefulness in providing accurate, factual information on a topic. Other features include resources by subject, links to newspapers and magazines, special collections, suggested sites for kids and teens, and online reference service.

Selected Web Search Engines

- **Google (www.google.com)**

For many people Google is the first choice in search engines. Besides searching for Web pages, it offers a number of special features. From the home page, click on "more>>" to access a list of Google services and tools. For precision searching, click on "Advance Search" to customize your search strategy by word or phrase, date, Internet domain, and language.

- **Yahoo (www.yahoo.com)**

Launched in 1994, Yahoo is the Web's oldest Web directory. In 2002, it replaced human editors with crawler-based listings for its main results. You can use tabs above the search box on the home page to find images, Yellow Page listings or Yahoo's shopping search engine. You can still search classic Yahoo by selecting Yahoo Directory (<http://dir.yahoo.com>). This will take you to a list of Web sites reviewed and approved by a human editor.

- **Ask.com (www.ask.com)**

Formally known as "Ask Jeeves," Ask.com is a "natural language" search engine that lets you enter searches in the form of a question. The results produced are sites selected as being the most authoritative and popular and best match the topic of your search.

Selected Meta-Search Engines

- **Yippy (serach.yippy.com)**

Yippy, formerly known as "Clusty," is a meta-search engine developed by Vivisimo in 2004. It queries multiple search engines-Ask, Open Directory, Gigablast and others-and combines similar results into topic "clusters" for easy navigation.

- **Dogpile (www.dogpile.com)**

Dogpile utilizes meta-search technology and returns results from the leading search engines including Google, Yahoo, Bing, and Ask. Since each search engine has its own method of searching, Dogpile compares the results, eliminates duplicates, and returns the most relevant sites.

- **Ixquick (www.Ixquick.com)**

Ixquick is a meta-search engine that uses stars to rank results from popular search engines. For example, a result with five stars means five search engines ranked the site as one of the best based on the query. Ixquick also offers a global feature that searches local and international search engines from a selected 18 languages.