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Google Advanced Search

Michael Miller



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Using Google Advanced Search

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About the Author

Michael Miller has written more than 100 nonfiction how-to books over the past 20 years, including Que's *Googlepedia: The Ultimate Google Resource*, *Using Google Apps*, *Using Google Maps and Google Earth*, *Using Google AdSense and AdWords*, *Using Blogger*, *YouTube for Business*, and *The Absolute Beginner's Guide to Computer Basics*.

Miller has established a reputation for clearly explaining technical topics to nontechnical readers, and for offering useful real-world advice about complicated topics. You can find more information at the author's website, located at www.molehillgroup.com.

Dedication

To Sherry: My search is over.

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We Want to Hear from You!

As the reader of this book, *you* are our most important critic and commentator. We value your opinion and want to know what we're doing right, what we could do better, what areas you'd like to see us publish in, and any other words of wisdom you're willing to pass our way.

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Introduction

A confession.

I use Google search every day. I've been using it (and writing about it) since it first launched—before it launched, actually, when it still had the word "beta" on its home page. I use Google because it's easy to use, and because it delivers quality results. I'm not unusual, at least in this respect. Google is the most-used search site on the Web, and most people choose it for the same reason I do—ease-of-use and effectiveness.

What I know that most of you don't, however, is that there are lots of ways to get better results faster when searching Google. Most people just enter a simple query and click the Search button—and that works fine, most of the time. But if you want to turbocharge your searches, you can employ lots of advanced operators and "hidden" features.

Did you know, for example, that Google enables you to search within a specific date range? Or for specific types of files? Did you know that Google enables you to search books and magazines, or scholarly articles, or legal opinions? Or that you can use Google to search for photos on the web, or videos, or even financial information? Or that Google can function like a fancy calculator, and even provide useful conversions?

Google can do all those things, and a lot more—if you know where and how. That's where this book comes in.

Using Google Advanced Search is your comprehensive guide to all aspects of searching with Google. I like to think of it as the instruction manual that Google probably should offer, if search came in a box. (Which it doesn't, of course.) So if you want to learn how to search for just about anything online, this is the book you need.

What's in This Book

Using Google Advanced Search Capabilities contains everything you need to know to get the most out of Google's various search functions. I show you how to search for web pages, images, videos, articles—you name it. I also show you the *best* ways to search—how to get better results in less time. I even show you how to add Google search to your website or blog, and how to optimize your site to rank higher in Google search results.

Like I said, pretty much everything you need to know about Google search.

Who Can Use This Book

Using Advanced Google Search Capabilities is written for all levels of users. I assume you're familiar to some degree with the Internet and your web browser, but that's about it. I don't assume you know anything at all about advanced search techniques; I'll start at square one and progress from there.

How to Use This Book

I hope that this book is easy enough to read that you don't need instructions. That said, there are a few elements that bear explaining.

Let Me Try It

The how-to information in this book is presented as a series of step-by-step instructions, in sections we call Let Me Try It. These sections look like this:



LET ME TRY IT

How to Enter a Basic Search Query

To conduct a basic web search, follow these steps:

1. Enter your query, consisting of one or more keywords, into the search box.
 2. Google displays possible queries in a drop-down box as you type. If you want, you can select one of these queries to being your search without first clicking the Google Search button.
 3. To search for something not included in the drop-down list of suggested queries, complete your query, and then click the Google Search button.
-

Margin Notes

In addition, you can find several special elements in this book, presented in what we in the publishing business call "margin notes."

This is a note that presents information of interest, even if it isn't wholly relevant to the discussion in the main text.

Web Addresses

Because Google is all about searching the web, lots of web page addresses are in the book, like this one: www.google.com. When you see one of these addresses (also known as a URL), you can go to that web page by entering the URL into the address box in your web browser. I've made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the Web addresses presented here, but given the ever-changing nature of the web, don't be surprised if you run across an address or two that has changed. I apologize in advance.

Show Me More, Online

The how-to information in this book is supplemented by a series of Show Me online videos. These videos can be viewed in your web browser over any Internet connection and demonstrate many of the techniques discussed in this book; they're step-by-step instructions that show you what you need to do.

These Show Me videos are referenced in the text like this:



SHOW ME MORE—Conducting a Basic Google Search

To learn more about searching from the Google home page, see the video "Conducting a Basic Google Search" on the companion Using website at <http://www.quepublishing.com>.

Just enter the URL into your web browser to view the video.

Tell Me More, Online

Most chapters in this book also include audio commentary that you might find useful. Like the Show Me videos, you can listen to these commentaries in your web browser over any Internet connection.

These Tell Me commentaries are referenced in the text like this:



TELL ME MORE—How Effectively Do You Search?

To learn more about conducting effective Google searches, listen to the audio clip titled "How Effectively Do You Search?" on the companion Using website at <http://www.quepublishing.com>.

And Even More, Online

When you finish reading this book, I urge you to visit my personal website, located at www.molehillgroup.com. Here you can find more information on this book and other books I've written—including an errata page for this book, in the inevitable event that an error or two creeps into this text. (Hey, nobody's perfect!)

And if you have any questions or comments, feel free to email me directly at googlesearch@molehillgroup.com. I can't guarantee that I'll respond to every email, but I will guarantee I'll read them all.

Get Ready to Work

With all these preliminaries out of the way, it's now time to start. So get ready to turn the page and learn more about how Google search works!

Searching for Images

Among Google's many specialized searches, perhaps the most popular is Google Images. This is a subset of Google's basic Web search that enables you to search for photos, drawings, logos, and other graphics files on the Web. It's perhaps the best way to find pictures online.

Google can find pictures that match your search criteria, which is something short of amazing. After all, pictures aren't like web pages; they don't have any text that Google can parse and index. Instead, Google analyzes the file extension, image caption, text on the host web page adjacent to the image, and other factors to try to determine what the image is a picture of. It's to Google's credit that most of the time it gets it right.

Searching for Images

You can access Google Images in two ways, as shown in Figure 5.1. You can click the Images link on any Google search page, or you can go directly to images.google.com. (Google Images results also appear as part of Google's universal search results when you search from the main search box, typically in a top-of-page OneBox.)



Figure 5.1 *The Google Images home page.*

Basic Searching

For most users, searching Google Images is as easy as entering your query into the search box and clicking the Search Images button. Nothing to it.

How to Search for Images

Here's how to search for images:

1. Go to the Google Images page (images.google.com).
2. Enter one or more keywords that describe the image you're looking for into the search box.
3. Click the Search Images button.

You can use any of Google's advanced search operators within your query. Of particular use is the **filetype:** operator, which you can use to limit your search to JPG or GIF image files.

Learn more about advanced search operators in Chapter 2, "Searching the Web with Google."



SHOW ME Media 5.1—Searching for Images

To learn more about how to use Google to search for images, see the video titled "Searching for Images" on the companion Using website, <http://www.quepublishing.com>.

Searching for a Similar Image

Google also lets you search for images similar to an existing image. There are three ways to do this.

First, you can simply drag an image from another web page or your computer onto the image search box. Google then displays images similar to one you selected, as shown in Figure 5.2.

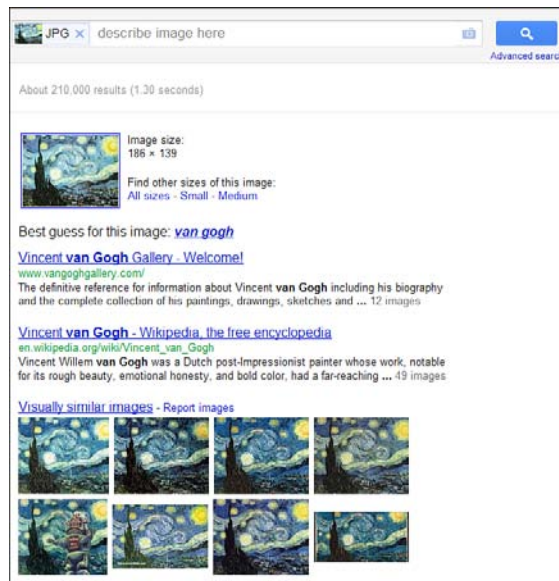


Figure 5.2 *The results of a similar image search.*

Second, you can enter or paste the URL of another image on the web into the image search box. To do this, click the camera icon within the search box; this displays the Search by Image pane, shown in Figure 5.3. Enter the full URL of the image you want to start with, then click the Search button.



Figure 5.3 *Searching for a similar image.*

Finally, you can upload an image from your computer and then search for a similar image. Click the camera icon within the search box to display the Search by Image pane, then click the Upload an Image link. Click the Choose File button and, when the Open dialog box appears, navigate to and select the file you want to search for, then click the Open button. Google now displays pictures similar to the file you selected.

Advanced Searching

If you want to fine-tune your image search, the best way to do so is to use the Advanced Search page. When you click the Advanced Image Search link on the

main Google Images page, you see the form shown in Figure 5.4. From here you can fine-tune your search in a number of ways:

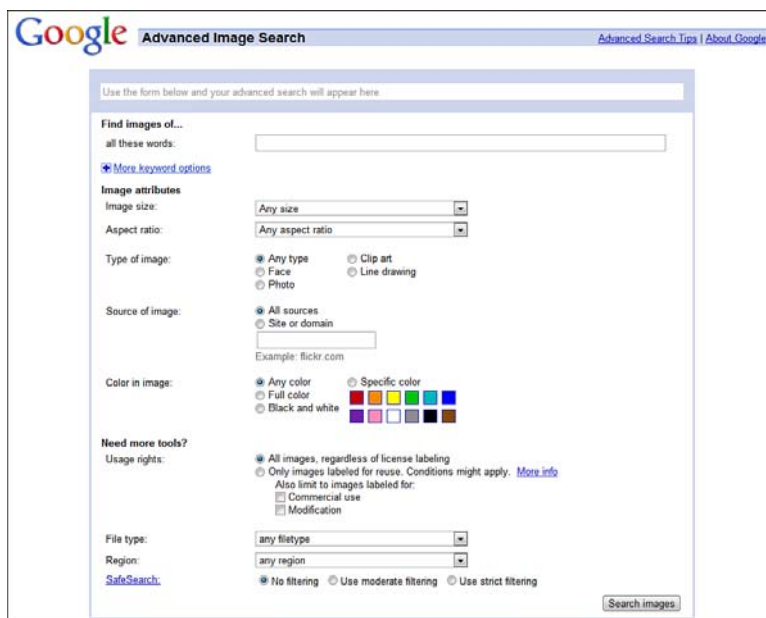
The image shows the Google Advanced Image Search interface. At the top, the Google logo is on the left, and 'Advanced Image Search' is in the center. On the right, there are links for 'Advanced Search Tips' and 'About Google'. Below the header, a text box says 'Use the form below and your advanced search will appear here'. The main form is divided into several sections: 'Find images of...' with a text input field and a link for 'More keyword options'; 'Image attributes' which includes 'Image size' (dropdown), 'Aspect ratio' (dropdown), 'Type of image' (radio buttons for Any type, Face, Photo, Clip art, Line drawing), 'Source of image' (radio buttons for All sources, Site or domain, with an example input field), and 'Color in image' (radio buttons for Any color, Full color, Black and white, and Specific color with a color palette); 'Need more tools?' which includes 'Usage rights' (radio buttons for All images, Only images labeled for reuse, and Also limit to images labeled for: Commercial use, Modification) and 'File type' (dropdown); and 'Region' (dropdown). At the bottom, there are radio buttons for 'No filtering', 'Use moderate filtering', and 'Use strict filtering', and a 'Search images' button.

Figure 5.4 Fine-tuning your search from the Advanced Image Search page.

- **Find results.** Narrow your search by searching for all the words, the exact phrase, any of the words, or pictures not related to the specified words. (Click the More Keyword Options link to view all these options.)
- **Image size.** Search only for images that are large, medium, icon-sized, or any of several specific sizes (larger than 400x300 pixels, larger than 2 megapixels, and so forth).
- **Aspect ratio.** Search for images that have a specific aspect ratio: tall, square, wide, panoramic, or any.
- **Type of image.** Search only for images that contain faces, photo content, clip art, line drawing, or any content.
- **Source of image.** Opt to search only within a specified domain or website.
- **Color in image.** Search only for black-and-white or full-color images, or for images that predominantly feature a given color.
- **Usage rights.** Search for images that you can reuse on your website or in offline publications. You can search for images labeled for reuse, commer-

cial reuse, reuse with modification, commercial reuse with modification, or not filtered by license.

- **File type.** Search only for JPG, GIF, PNG, BMP, or SVG format files.
- **Region.** Search only for images from a specified country or region.
- **SafeSearch.** Apply moderate, strict, or no filtering to the image search results.

The Advanced Image Search page is great if you're looking for images of a particular file type—for example, if you're looking only for JPG images. It's also good if you want to look for portraits or other pictures of people by using the Type of Image option. In addition, this page helps you find larger or higher-resolution pictures for print purposes (both of which are likely to be of a larger file size) or smaller or lower-resolution pictures for Web use (both of which are likely to be of a smaller file size), and photos explicitly licensed for reuse.

Viewing Image Search Results

When you click the Search Images button, Google returns the first page of results. As you can see in Figure 5.5, the matching images display in a grid of thumbnail pictures, ranked in terms of relevance.

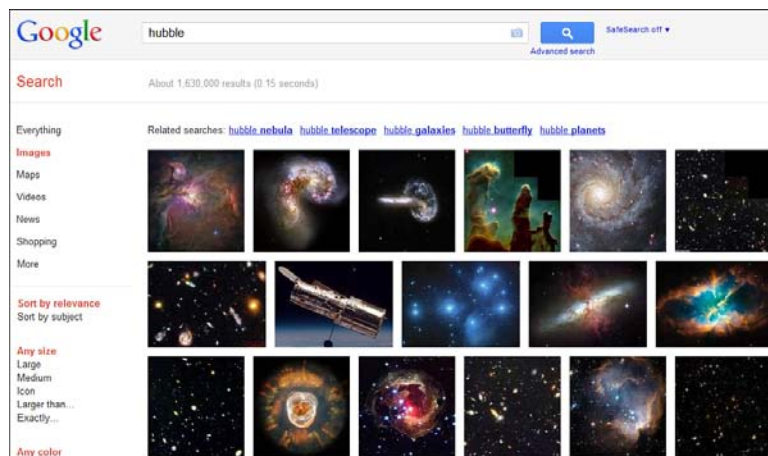


Figure 5.5 *The results of a Google image search.*

To display information about a given image, point to that image. As you can see in Figure 5.6, the image now expands and Google displays an image caption, the

dimensions of the image (in pixels), the host website, and links to the page where the image display, similar websites, and the same image at different sizes.

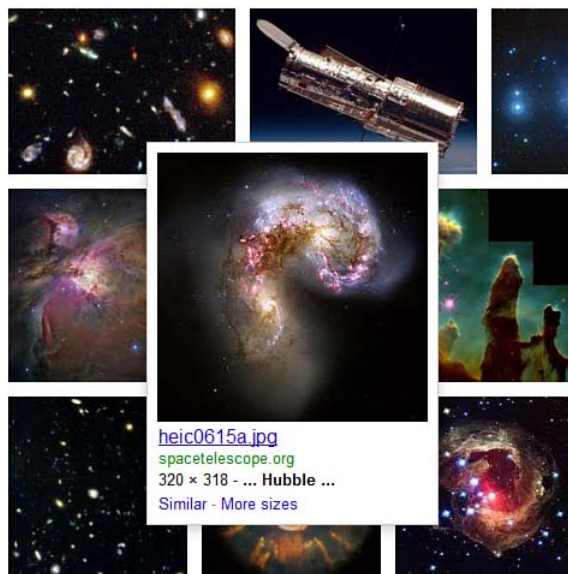


Figure 5.4 Viewing information about an image.

When you click a thumbnail image, the original page is displayed in a box overlaid on top of the hosting page, as shown in Figure 5.5. Information about the image is displayed in a pane on the right side of the page. To view the image full-size on a page of its own, click the Full-Size Image link. To view the host web page, including the photo, click the Website for This Image link.

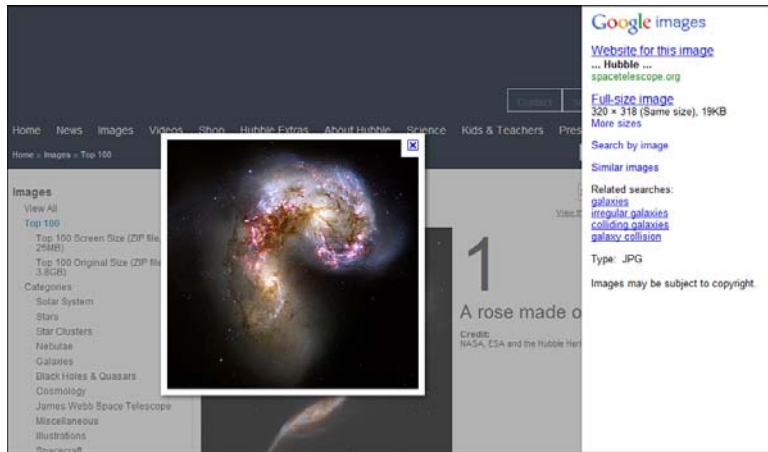


Figure 5.7 Viewing an image found with a Google image search.



SHOW ME Media 5.2—Viewing Image Search Results

To learn more about Google's image search results, see the video titled "Viewing Image Search Results" on the companion Using website, <http://www.quepublishing.com>.

Fine-Tuning Image Search Results

As with normal web search results, Google offers a variety of Search Tools to fine-tune your image search results. You can find these image Search Tools in the left column of the image search results page, as shown in Figure 5.8.



Figure 5.8 *Google's image Search Tools.*

The following are the current Search Tools available:

- **Sort by subject.** By default, Google sorts its image search results by relevance—that is, the most likely matches display on the top of the page. You can also have Google sort the image search results by subject. Click the Sort by Subject link, and each row of the search results page presents a different subset of the main query, like the one shown in Figure 5.9. For example, if you search for **fish** and then sort by subject, Google presents rows of images labeled “salmon fish,” “shark fish,” “trout fish,” “tuna fish,” and the like. Click the Sort by Relevance link to return to the normal results display.

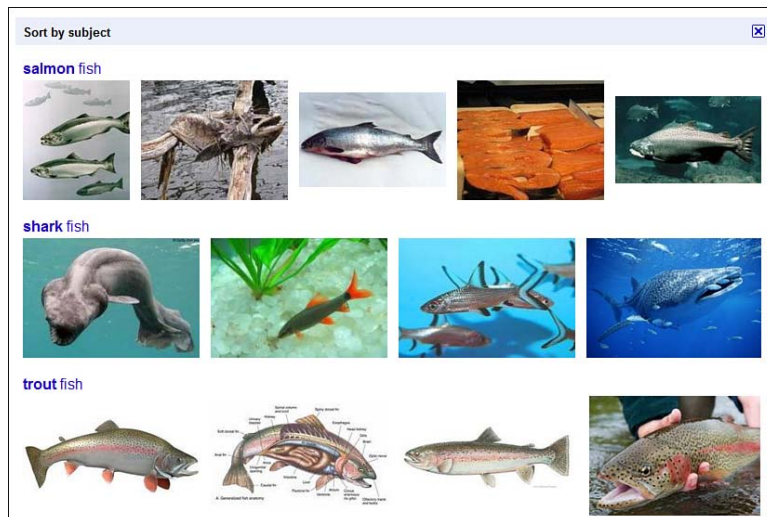


Figure 5.9 Image search results sorted by subject.

- **Size.** When you're looking for an image of a specific or approximate size, click one of the links in the size section—Large, Medium, or Icon. Click the Larger Than link to search for images larger than a specified size, or the Exactly link to search for images that match specific size requirements.
- **Color.** Looking for an image to match the color scheme of a web page or publication? Then click one of the color boxes in the color section. For example, to look for images with a bluish subject or tint, click the blue box. You can also click the Full Color or Black and White links to display full-color or monochrome photos.

The color option is great for certain types of searches. If you want a picture of a red fish, just search for fish and click the red box—you'll see all sorts of red-colored fish.

- **Type.** These filters enable you to display only images with faces, only photographs (no drawings or line art), only clip art, or only line drawings.
- **Show sizes.** Click the Show Sizes link to overlay image size information (in pixels) on each thumbnail image on the search results page, as shown in Figure 5.10.



Figure 5.10 *The Show Sizes option enabled.*

- **Time.** By default, Google displays images updated at any time. To display more recent results (ideal for items in the news), click the Past Week link.



SHOW ME Media 5.3—Fine-Tuning Image Search Results

To learn more about Google's image Search Tools, see the video titled "Fine-Tuning Image Search Results" on the companion Using website, <http://www.quepublishing.com>.

Saving and Printing Images

Almost any image you find on the Web can be saved to your hard disk or printed. (Unless the page designer has implemented some form of copy protection for the image, that is.) Saving and printing images is a function of your web browser, but here's how to do it in Internet Explorer.

Some sites use special code to prevent users from downloading images. If you right-click the image and see a message to this effect, you can't save that particular image to your hard disk.

To save an image to your hard disk, right-click the picture and select Save. When the Save As dialog box appears, select a location for the picture, and then click the Save button.

To print a picture (without printing the surrounding web page), right-click the image and select Print. When the Print dialog box appears, click the Print button.

Commercial use of copyrighted images is prohibited, so be careful how you use the pictures you find with Google Image Search.



TELL ME MORE Media 5.4—Fair Use: Using Other People's Photos

To learn more about the ins and outs of using the images you find on the Web, listen to the audio clip titled "Fair Use: Using Other People's Photos" on the companion Using website at <http://www.quepublishing.com>.

Filtering Out Dirty Pictures

One of the challenging things about searching the Web for pictures is that, depending on your query, you're likely to stumble across a few adult-oriented pictures in your search results. Assuming that you don't want (or don't want your kids) to see these dirty pictures, Google enables its moderate SafeSearch content filter by default when you use Google's image search. (Moderate SafeSearch filtering blocks the display of questionable images only, not text.)

Learn more about SafeSearch content filtering in Chapter 3, "Understanding Google Search Results."

If you'd prefer to view your search results unfiltered, you have two options:

- From any search results page, click the SafeSearch Moderate link next to the Search button, and select Off.
- From any Google page, click the Options (gears) button in the Google navigation bar and select Search Settings. When the Preferences page appears, check the Do Not Filter My Search Results option, and then click the Save Preferences button.

Removing Your Images from Image Search

If you're an artist or photographer, you might find that your copyrighted images appear in Google Image Search. This might be okay with you, or it might not. If you'd prefer that your images not be displayed in Google Image Search, you can request that Google remove them.

To remove a copyrighted image from Google Image Search, you have to add a special text file to the root directory of your website. This file should be labeled **robots.txt**, and it needs to include specific information about the images you want to protect.

If you want to remove a specific image file from the Google search index, add the following lines to the robots.txt file:

```
User-agent: Googlebot-Image  
Disallow: /subdirectory/file.jpg
```

You replace *subdirectory* with the name of the subdirectory where the image file is located, and you replace *file.jpg* with the name and extension of the file you want to protect.

Alternatively, you can instruct Google to remove all images on your site from the Google search index. In this instance, you want to add the following lines to the robots.txt file:

```
User-agent: Googlebot-Image<  
Disallow: /
```

When the GoogleBot spider crawls your site, it automatically reads the contents of the robots.txt file for instructions. If your site includes a robots.txt file, the spider follows the instructions you specify and does not add the image file(s) you noted.