

Searching the Web

Finding the Needle in the Online Haystack

The Biggest Library in the World

Books, pictures, music, videos, etc.

- The World-Wide Web has over 1 billion websites ...
- ... and 3 new websites are created every second.
- Each site may contain multiple pages.
- Each page may contain multiple items:
 - newspaper articles, recipes, leaflets, whole books
 - sketches, plans, maps, photos
 - songs and instrumentals
 - blogs, podcasts, videos and films
- That's a heck of lot of information!



**Finding something on the Web
is like looking for a needle in
an enormous haystack.**

**So, how do you find anything on
the Web?**

...

You use a search engine.

What Is A Search Engine?

A search engine is just an ordinary website that holds an index of all the pages on the Web.

In the same way that you might look up a topic in the index of an encyclopaedia, a search engine looks up Web pages that match a word or phrase that you give it.

An Example

If you type

chocolate cake recipe

into a search engine, it will find Web pages that contain the words 'chocolate' or 'cake' or 'recipe'.

You will get about 500 million hits! 😞

If you put the whole phrase in quotes, like this

“chocolate cake recipe”

It will find pages that contain that exact three-word phrase, and you will only get about 10 million hits. 🤔

Popular Search Engines

The top three

- Google. By far the most popular.
- DuckDuckGo. Search without tracking.
- Bing. The Microsoft one.

The easiest way to do a search is to type your query into the address bar at the top of your Web browser. The browser will automatically go to your usual search engine, pass on what you have typed, and display the results.