



Searching with Google

A search engine is a web page that helps you to find things on the Internet. I am sure that most of you have used search engines in the past, but I have found that most web searchers do not know how to use search engines effectively. It is especially frustrating to search for something and then have to spend hours wading through the millions of results. By using some simple "operators", you can quickly find what you are looking for.

Google is my favorite search engine. I find it is the fastest and I can usually find what I am looking for easily. While this tip sheet was written using Google, the tips provided can be used with most search engines. I have included a list of popular search engines at the end of this tutorial. **Note:** This tutorial was written 1/14/01, your results might vary depending on when you search. The tutorial was written for City of Walnut Creek Public Services Department employees.

Double click the Internet Explorer icon on the desktop or click **Start > Programs > Internet Explorer**.

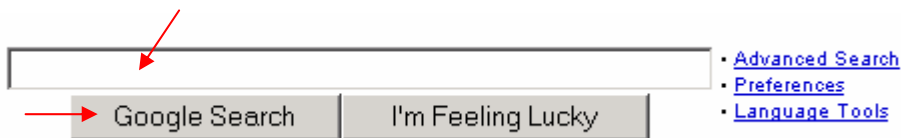
Click the small Internet Explorer icon  in the address box once.



(Clicking the icon, will select the current address (the text will be highlighted blue). With the text highlighted, type a new address (you do not need to press backspace or delete, the existing text is replaced automatically when it is highlighted).

Type **www.google.com** and click **Go** or press Enter on your keyboard. If you are reading this on-line you can click here <http://www.google.com>.

The Google web site will appear on your screen. In the search box (see arrows below), type the terms that you want to find.



In this example, we will search for picnic table (The City has decided to purchase new concrete, not wood, picnic tables for the parks.).

Type **picnic table** in the search **box** and **click** the **Google Search button**. (While Google is **NOT** case sensitive, most search engines are, i.e., PicNc TaBlE is not the same as picnic table. I recommend that you always use all **lowercase** letters unless you are searching for people). Note: Typing picnic tables will also yield different results.

Here are my results. Wow! **292,000** pages with the words picnic table. The reason this happens is that search engines search for each word individually so you may have results with pages that have picnic at the beginning of the page and table at the end of the page.



[Advanced Search](#) [Preferences](#) [Language Tools](#) [Search Tips](#)

picnic table

Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

[Web](#) [Images](#) [Groups](#) [Directory](#)

Searched the web for picnic table.

Results 1 - 10 of about **292,000**. Search took 0.09 seconds.

Even worse, the first result is for **building** your own picnic table, which would not be suitable for Walnut Creek Parks.

[PLANS for Easy To Build Picnic Table](#)

Great for any kind of outing...Extremely sturdy. Constructed From One Sheet Of Plywood...Fast...Easy Assembly...Stores FLAT. ...

Description: **Picnic Table** Plans made from just 1 sheet of plywood.

Category: [Recreation](#) > [Outdoors](#) > [Equipment](#) > [Cooking](#)

[members.aol.com/postmark92/picnic.htm - 6k](#) - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

We need to be more specific with our search. We are looking for the **exact** phrase "picnic table". In the search **box type "picnic table"** (including **quotes**) and **click Google Search**.

[Web](#) [Images](#) [Groups](#) [Directory](#)

Searched the web for "picnic table".

Results 1 - 10 of about **85,900**. Search took 0.16 seconds.

Our results are improving (85,900). When you use quotes with search terms the quotes tell the search engine that the pages must contain both words (the exact phrase).

Remember that the city has specific criteria for these tables; they must be made of concrete, not wood.

The **+** and **-** are operators used when searching. The **+** (**plus**) indicates that a word must be found on the page and the **-** (**minus/hyphen**) cannot be found on the page.

In the search box type **"picnic table" -wood +concrete** (notice that a **space** is included **before** the plus or minus, but not after it.) and **click Google Search**.

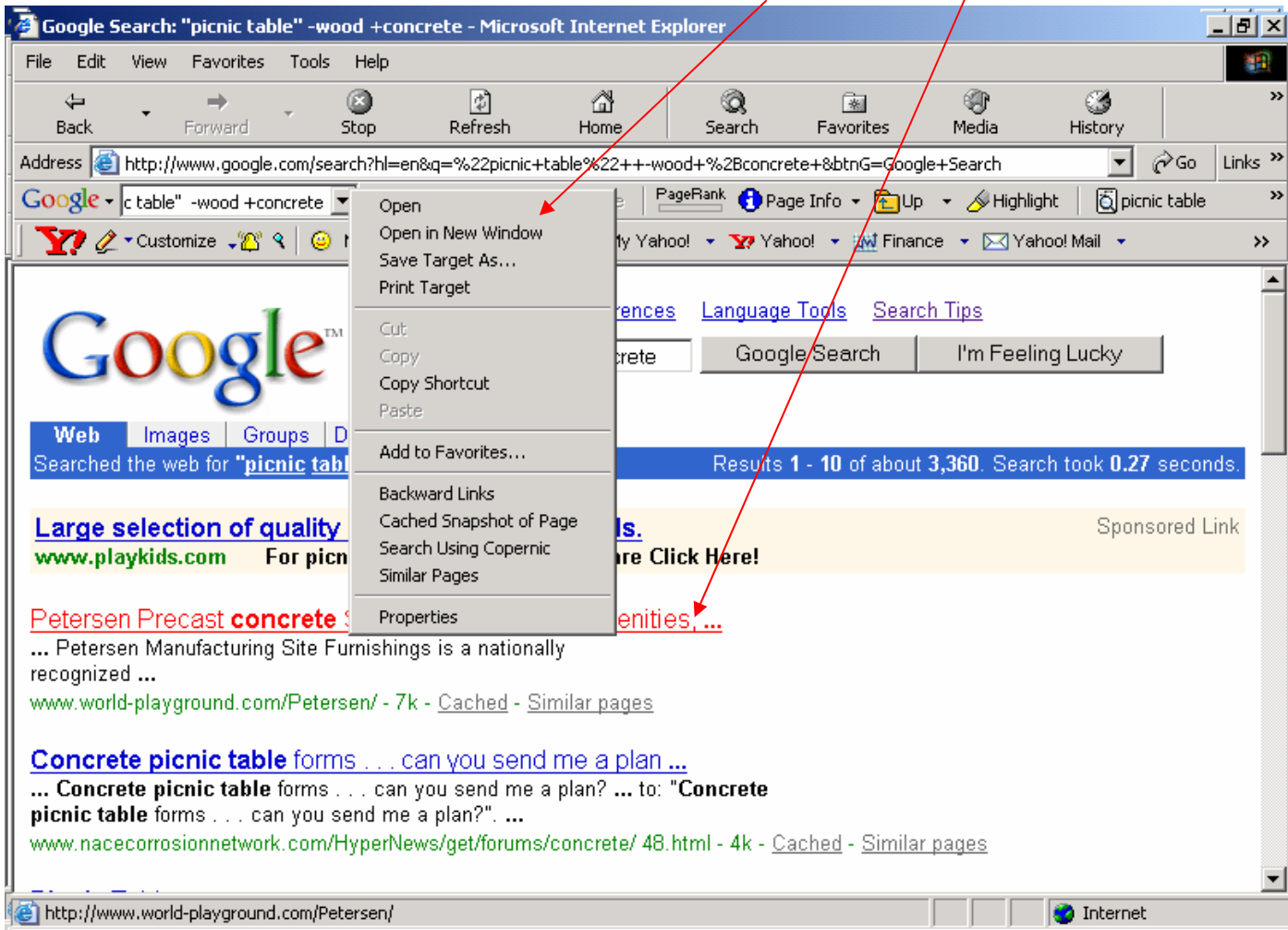
Finally, we have what we were looking for, much more manageable results. We started with 292,000 and we now have 3,360 pages and the first several are relevant to what we want.

[Web](#) [Images](#) [Groups](#) [Directory](#)

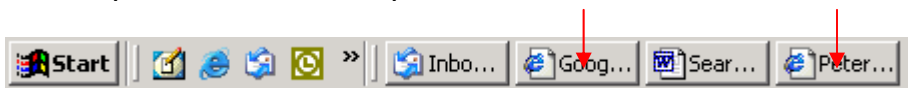
Searched the web for "picnic table" -wood +concrete.

Results 1 - 10 of about **3,360**. Search took 0.27 seconds.

To view the results, I recommend **right clicking the link** that you want to open in the results section, and select **Open in New Window** from the menu. (At the time of writing, Peterson Precast Concrete was the link that I used. Please note that their site has JavaScript errors and that is not in my control.)



The selected page will open in a new browser window and your search results will still be available. You can switch between your documents using the Taskbar at the bottom of your Desktop Window. (Clicking the icon of the document you want to view (see red arrows below) "switches" or "opens" the document. You can open as many windows as you like, you are only limited by your computer's memory and that varies by machine.



Windows Taskbar

Remember that these tips will work with most search engines. For search engine specific help, look for a link that says help or tips on the search engine you are using. Here is a list of other popular search engines.

http://www.altavista.com	http://www.goto.com
http://www.yahoo.com	http://www.infospace.com
http://www.looksmart.com	http://www.excite.com
http://www.dogpile.com	http://www.metacrawler.com/
http://www.copernic.com Copernic is a great program for searching the web, there is even a FREE version!	