

## Search Engines

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Just about everyone on the planet has heard of Google now &ndash; the search engine giant branching out into more online areas every week. Today we discuss search engines, as they are a fantastic way to find out just about anything you want. Google has now become a verb (&ldquo;Google it!&rdquo;) which isn&rsquo;t too surprising considering that in April they had 81% of the search engine market share. Their closest rival is Yahoo with under 10%! So what is Google? Simply put it is a catalog of pages on the internet. A vast, humungous indexed catalog of every word on every web page it has touched. When you type in a search to Google this index is looked up and results are provided based on their relevance to your search. Google closely guards its algorithms, that is its methods of determining which pages are the most relevant for your search. If they didn&rsquo;t, people could design web pages purely to rank highly in Google even if they weren&rsquo;t actually very good or relevant. People and businesses still try and do this (it's called Search Engine Optimisation, or SEO) and it is a huge industry. Getting ranked highly on Google means more people will visit your site which is especially important if you are selling something, or get revenue from advertisements displayed on your website. In the next column we&rsquo;ll discuss how to best perform your searches in Google to get the best results.