

# Filtering information quickly

## 1. Introduction

It's easy to feel overwhelmed when you search the web. This activity will introduce some simple tips to help you navigate a way through seemingly endless search results without feeling you're about to climb a mountain.

### Learning outcome

By the end of this activity you will be able to apply these tips when you search the web.

## 2. Filtering search results

Research can seem fuzzy and even chaotic when a search engine inundates you with information. Filtering will help you to focus on a particular timescale, issue or theme and bring some clarity to your search.

## 3. Filter by timescale

The Google search engine, for example, has a set of filters that can help you to reduce the number of search results.

If you're looking for recent information on a topic or event, select **Tools** and change the **Any time** option to 'Past week', 'Past 24 hours' or 'Past hour'.

Alternatively, choose 'Custom range' to set your own timescale.

## 4. Focus on news

If you're looking for press reports, reviews, or comment, choose the **News** filter to focus on this type of information.

If you'd like the most up-to-date material, select 'Tools' to find an option to filter by timescale.

## 5. Search by title keyword

If a Google search returns more material than you can manage, select **Settings** and choose **Advanced search**.

The 'Advanced Search' option will open showing your search word(s). Try changing the 'terms appearing' option from 'anywhere in the page' to **in the title of the page**. Select the 'Advanced Search' button to re-run your search.

## 5. Exercise

This activity introduced some simple tips that can help you to quickly filter search results. This involves your judgment as much as your ability to navigate your way around a search engine.

Try a quick [Google search](#). This will give you a chance to try this out for yourself.

- Check the time, try not to spend more than 5 minutes on this exercise.
- Choose a topic that interests you.
- Decide what sort of information you want before you begin your search.
- Your search may have returned links to thousands of web pages. Scan the first few search results. Is there anything especially relevant?
- What's your next step? For example, do you want to focus on a particular type of information such as news stories? Are you looking for recent information? Or, do you want to add more keywords to your search?

## 6. Summary

This activity has introduced some simple tips to help you navigate a way through seemingly endless search results.

You should now be able to apply these tips when you search the web and filter information quickly.

## Next Steps

Visit the 'Target your Google search' activity if you'd like to learn more about search filters.