

Big6 #3: Location & Access

“The Internet is actually made up of many information centers, each of which may have its own software with its own peculiar or unique set of rules and procedures. Ranging through dozens of different information sources, the searcher often encounters conflicting and confusing command structures. To prevent gridlock and wasted time, it makes sense to browse the help menu of these sources early in the visit, figuring out just what is and is not possible.”

Digital research logic

1. Question and draw before you search

2. Use only the best
 - a. Speed

 - b. Boolean capabilities

 - c. Power sorting & searching features

 - d. Interface design

 - e. Browsing Capabilities

 - f. Breadth & depth of database

 - g. Digital logic

 - h. Reasonable advertising

 - i. Useful results

3. Learn the syntax

4. Learn the features

5. Start big and broad (then narrow cautiously)
6. Browse before grazing
7. Go to the source
8. Be discrete
9. Cull your findings
10. Be playful

McKenzie, Jamie. *Beyond Technology: Questioning, Research, and the Information Literate School*. Bellingham, WA: FNO Press, 2000.

My two favorite search engines are:

<http://www.altavista.com>

and

<http://www.google.com>

What are the differences?

Try searching the same subject on both. Did you remember to look at the help section first?

Tools for you:

A useful comparison of search engines

<http://www.notess.com/search/features/>

A great search tools chart

<http://www.infopeople.org/src/chart.html>

And, a popular site with “nerds”

<http://searchenginewatch.com/>