



Search Engines and Internet Directories:

Finding information on the web can be done through search engines and internet/subject directories. So, what's the difference between a search engine and a subject directory? Easy, search engines are automated; and directories are compiled by humans.

Search Engines: collect web pages using software called “robots” or “crawlers” that read web sites and index all the pages that they come across. Each search engine has its own formula for indexing pages; they decide the amount of weight that will be placed on various factors that influence results.

Subject Directories: are created by humans, who select, evaluate and annotate information. Directories rely on the judgment and expertise of the people compiling them. Directories have stringent guidelines that sites must meet before being added, which will create much smaller and cleaner indexes. Below is a list of popular search engines and subject directories.

- **Google:** www.google.com

Has a simple, uncluttered interface and has a good reputation for its high-relevancy results. Google offers searching in 15 different languages, and search services for images. Use Google when you are looking for a specific fact/person/event/narrow topic, or when your topic is made up of multiple ideas.

- **Teoma:** www.teoma.com

Is a medium-sized search engine that produces excellent retrieval. Teoma uses “subject-specific popularity” to rank a site based on the number of same-subject pages that reference them; suggested terms to refine a search; and link collections created by topic experts.

- **Ask Jeeves:** www.ask.com

Is a standard search engine that allows natural language searching of its database. It searches other leading search engines and displays the first 10 responses of each. Its database consists of over 7 million questions.

- **Yahoo:** www.yahoo.com

In past years Yahoo was distinguished by its excellent subject directory of hand selected resources. Yahoo has the largest human-compiled guide to the web with over 1 million sites listed. Yahoo also supplements its results with those from Google. Use Yahoo when you are using the web for personal and or recreational use.

- **Google Scholar:** <http://www.scholar.google.com/>

Google Scholar indexes a portion of scholarly literature. Since Google Scholar is in Beta, some of its results may not be complete or current.

- **Librarians' Index to the Internet:** <http://lii.org/>

Searchable annotated subject directory of more than 6400 Internet resources selected and evaluated by librarians.

- **Infomine:** <http://infomine.ucr.edu/>

Provides scholarly internet resources including electronic journals and books, online library card catalogs and directories of researchers.