

# Save Time When Searching

By Jason Olson

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Let's say you have a research project to do and your topic is "the relationship George Washington (first president of the United States) had with his brother." You try a search on Google.

Not sure what to search for so you start with "washington". This search will bring what you're looking for. Right? WRONG!!! This will return 30,900,000 results and the first page contains four universities, two newspapers, two state government sites, the District of Columbia Convention & Visitors Bureau, and a site titled "Access Washington". Not one of these pertains to President George Washington.

You'd have to go all the way to the fourth page (#33) before you get to a site that is about THEE George Washington. However, this site is "an illustrated story about George Washington's modern day visit to Washington D.C." Still not what you need.

You decide to search for "george washington". This gives you 2,470,000 results. Two of the top ten results are about George Washington University, two about the national monument, one is a "collection of 65,000 Washington documents", one about his home in Mount Vernon, Virginia, one of the illustrated story, and three biography sites.

Biography - that might be what we need. But does biography mean his political life or his family life? Do you want to look at each of these sites to see if they mention his brother? Let's try another search.

This time you search for "president george washington" and it brings 1,450,000 results. Believe it or not, one of the

top ten results is not about the president, rather it's about the George Washington Hospital. Eight of the top ten sites are political and number one is a biography. Does this biography site mention his brother?

Let's try another search. You try "george washington sibling". Only 18,100 results!!! Getting better...but wait, these are about siblings attending George Washington University or siblings as topics within the Psychiatry department at (you guessed it) George Washington University.

When you're fed up and about ready to quit you decide to try one more time. This time you search "george washington brother". We have ourselves a winner!!! Although there are 480,000 results, the first page alone is full of what you need.

Here are a few lines contained in the pages returned in the top 10: His brother's death also brought about a future for George Washington...George accompanied his brother to Barbados in an...In 1752, Washington's older brother Lawrence died...and soon thereafter George went to live with his half brother... George spent much time with Lawrence Washington, his older half-brother.

There you have it, searching for the right keywords and keyword phrases can save you lots of time and frustration.

These principles apply to many (but not all) of the search engines. Just get on your favorite search engine and see how it compares. Also, view the search tips section of the search engine to see what they suggest.

Happy searching!!!

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