Targeted Search Strategies

You can greatly increase the effectiveness of your Internet searches by employing a few strategies that will bring results more closely connected to what you are seeking. The examples below are certainly not the only techniques, but are some of the easiest and most effective.

1. **Be Specific.** Avoid using general terms in your searches.
   If you are looking for information on what is being done to help out the Orangutan, don't simply conduct a search on "**Orangutan**." You will get millions of hits, many of which will be a waste of your time. Instead, narrow your topic with key words that more clearly represent what you are looking for in your results. Try **Orangutan Conservation Organizations** and look at how the results will differ.

   > Tip: You will likely find some credible organizations that offer a variety of sources of information. Try their "links" pages for even more targeted results.

2. **Use Quotation Marks** to target key phrases.
   Instead of searching for **Tigers** on the Web (which will get over 160 million hits), narrow your search with specific targeted phrase that more completely reflects what you are looking for. Watch what happens when we search **"Siberian Tiger Threats"**

   > Tip: Vary your search phrases and use synonyms for key terms to produce even more results.

3. Use "**and**" to link key search terms or phrases. This is another strategy that will narrow the results Watch what happens when we tie **"Asian Elephants" and "Habitat Loss"**

Remember, your information is only as good as the sources from which you choose to take it. Don't be too quick to use the first site that pops up in a search…search results are not organized by credibility. For example, you will often get **Wikipedia** results at the top end of a simple search. While the result may offer some good general information, **Wikipedia is not considered a reliable source for research purposes**. However, the bottom of most entries will often offer a number of web links for additional information that may be quite reliable and informative.

Use the **Favorites** tool when you find a great site to save search results so you don't have to remember where you found the material. By saving good sites to your Favorites, you can easily get back to the good stuff.

Search Ideas for My Species:

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