

Listen to this extract from a phone-in radio show about finding information on the Internet.

Optional exercise: Decide whether these statements are TRUE or FALSE according to the recording

1. All search engines follow the same rules
 2. *Google* is considered one the best search tools
 3. *Yahoo* has more categories than *Google*
 4. There are surprisingly few online dictionaries
 5. Nowadays most libraries are online
 6. *Google* has more than a billion pictures
 7. *Kidsclick* was designed by school teachers
 8. *Intute* was set up by American universities
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I: With us today on the *click.on.line* phone-in is Jason Hadlington, an expert in looking for information on the internet. Welcome to the show Jason.

J: Thanks. It's good to be here.

I: In the modern world, where time is important and information is everything, the internet can be a fantastic tool. But it can give us lot of headaches if we don't know where to look. So, Jason, what's the secret to effective searching on the net?

J: Well, there are a number of things to bear in mind. There are lots of different ways of looking for info. Unfortunately each search engine – or search tool - has been developed by different groups of people and so each one has its own way of looking, its own rules. The first step is familiarising yourself with those rules, or as many as you can at any rate.

I: We have our first caller on the line. Brian? Brian Pringle. Do you have a question for Jason?

Brian: Yes. Hello Jason. Which are the best search tools if I want to do a search with keywords?

J: *Google* is the most popular, but *Yahoo* and *MSN* are not far behind.

B: And for a factual answer to a specific question?

J: *Ask.com* is good for that. But you have to phrase your question well. That's the trick. *Brainboost* and *factbites* seem to work quite well too.

I: Thank you Brian. We have another caller on the line – Katie, Katie Moore. What's your question Katie?

K: Hello. Yes, I'd like to ask Jason about general topics – sport or travelling – where is the best place to find information?

J: Well some of the search engines have categories. *Yahoo* provides fourteen main categories, *Google* has got sixteen. So you can go directly to the category that you need and take it from there.

K: And if I don't know how to spell the key word?

J: (*laughing*) Easy! There are lots of good online dictionaries such as *dictionary.com* or *thefreedictionary.com*. If you are not very good at spelling it's probably a good idea to save a dictionary as one of your favourites.

I: Thank you Katie. Jason, what if somebody prefers a more traditional way of finding information – like using a library for instance

J: No problem. These days most libraries are online. The *world wide web virtual library* provides easy access to these sites – these *virtual libraries* – as they are known.

I: Virtual libraries eh? I like it. We have another caller on the line – Martin – from Brighton. Hello Martin, what's your question?

M: Hello. I'd like to ask Jason about pictures. Images. Which are the best sites for finding images?

J: Good question Martin. Once again, *Google* is a good resource with over a billion images. *Yahoo* has more - over a billion and a half!

M: And videos?

J: Who hasn't heard of *youtube*? But you'll find similar sites if you do a *Google* search and new sites are opening every week, every day!

I: Thank you martin. Jason – what about parents who are concerned about their kids accessing sensitive websites? Have you got any advice for them?

J: Yes. This is a real worry for some parents. *Kidsclick* is a search tool for kids. It was designed by librarians.

I: *Kidsclick*?

J: Yes, *kidsclick* – and *yahooligans*. *Yahooligans* is designed especially for kids aged between seven and twelve.

I: Ok, and I think we've got time for one last question. Barbara, from Leeds.

B: Hello. I'd like to ask about current affairs. Which sites are the most reliable?

J: Well, my favourite is the BBC – bbc.co.uk. But every media organisation has a presence on the internet. It's just a matter of finding your favourite and then maybe bookmarking it so that you can get to it quickly.

B: Oh and I'm a university student. Could you recommend any search engines that I might find useful for my studies?

J: Yes. Most of the British universities have set up their own site at www.intute.ac.uk

I: Intute?

J: Yes, i-n-t-u-t-e. It's a great site. With resources for education and research and more than one hundred thousand records. The site also has a virtual learning centre ... just write v-t-s before the intute – so - www.vts.intute.ac.uk. It's really very interesting

I: Thank you Jason. I'm afraid that's all we have time for now. Next week on ...

ANSWERS: 1 F, 2 T, 3 T, 4 F, 5 T, 6 T, 7 F, 8 F