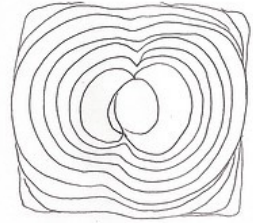


# Peeling the Onion: A Workshop on Research

January 27, 2013  
Park Slope Food Coop



*Inspiration ~ Onions" by  
daintytime on Flickr*

All web links are available on this page: [tinyurl.com/cooponion](http://tinyurl.com/cooponion)

## Expressing Your Search Query

*adapted in part from Finding Information on the Internet: A Tutorial from UC Berkeley*

- How much do you already know about the topic?
- Is your research for yourself, for an assignment, for a friend or relative, or for another purpose?
- What unique words, distinctive names, abbreviations, or acronyms are associated with your topic?
- Should you use popular/layperson words or technical/academic terms?
- What other words are likely to be in any online documents on your topic?
- What synonyms, or variant spellings might express your topic?
- Can you think of any extraneous or irrelevant documents these words might pick up?

## Evaluating a Web Resource

- Accuracy?
- Authority?
- Objectivity?
- Currency?
- Coverage?
- Who wrote and published the information online?
- Why was it put online?

## The Current Information Landscape

### Formats

*These categories have blurred lines, but here's one way to think of the Internet:*

#### Open Web

- Organizational and other standard websites, such as those for a school, a business, a newspaper, or our Coop.
- Blogs, consisting of posts in reverse chronological order and ranging from casual projects and personal opinion to sophisticated journalism.
- Databases, such as the Census and the Internet Movie Database.
- Images and video. Major collections of these formats are YouTube and Flickr.

## Social media

- User generated content and networking, such as Facebook and Twitter. Some content is on the open Web, some requires an online relationship (e.g. “friending” on Facebook) to view.

## Fee-based Web

- Periodical indexes, which are collections of newspaper, magazine, and journal articles.
- Other databases, such as the business directory ReferenceUSA and the test preparation resource LearningExpress Library.
- Google Scholar, which searches online academic journal articles and whose results are often behind a paywall.

## Other parts of the Internet

- Email lists and discussion groups, some of whose posts can be found via Google Groups.

## Books

- Library catalogs, including the joint catalog WorldCat which collects information from libraries all over the world.
- Full text books, which can be searched online through Google Books.

## Magazines and journals

- Some may have articles available on the open Web (check their websites), but content is also often available in periodical indexes through your library.

## **Search**

- General search engines, such as Google and its alternatives, including DuckDuckGo.
- Specialized search engines, such as the health search engine Health on the Net.

## **Library Services**

- Subscription databases
- Ask a Librarian services, including phone, email, and chat reference
- Archives
- Interlibrary loan