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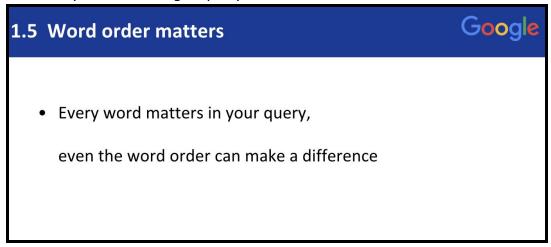
Lesson 1.5: Word Order Matters

Access Lesson 1.5 slides here

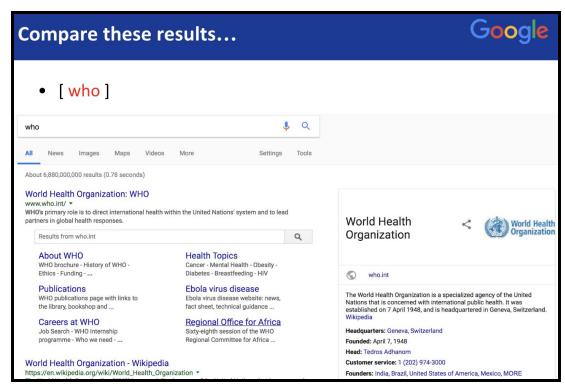
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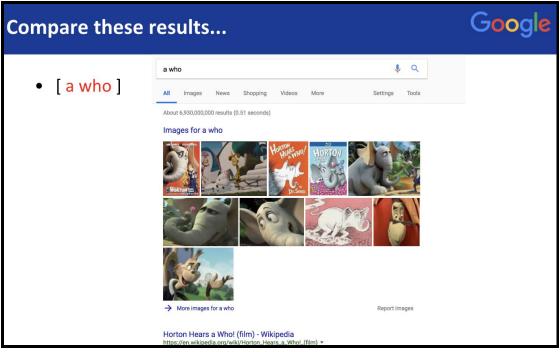
This is lesson 1.5 about word order and the big thing to know is word order actually matters when you're creating a query.



You want to think about what is the most natural order of your query terms so if you have terms that are, for example, two words like a city name say San Francisco you probably want to say San Francisco not Francisco San and so those will matter, but otherwise word order matters more generally. So it's true that every word in a query matters as well as the word order sequence mattering so here's an example you could do, the single term for a query like who. What is that?

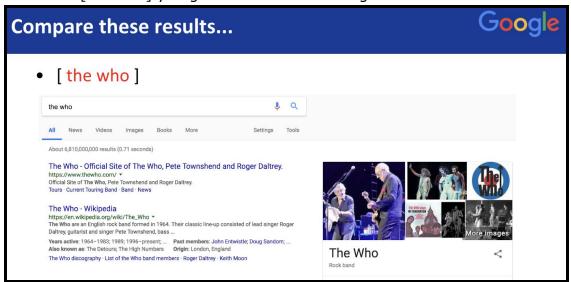


You'll find out quickly it's the World Health Organization. So this is a really well-known website so naturally a query like [who] will take you there but suppose you modify it just a little bit and add the article a in front of this, so what is [a who].

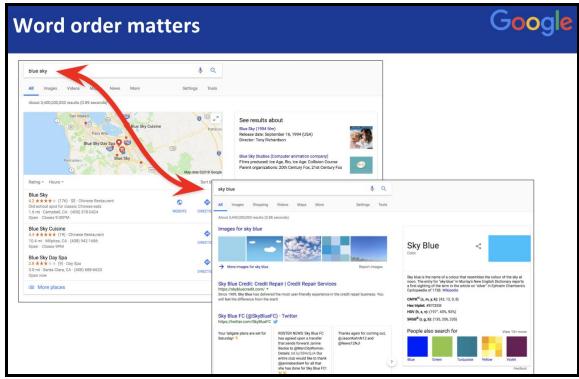


In this case it's a reference to the Dr. Seuss book which has lots of whos as small furry creatures inside of it and by adding the article "a" in front it makes a

difference. It makes a difference so much so that if you change the article say to "the" like this [the who] you get a reference to a English rock band.

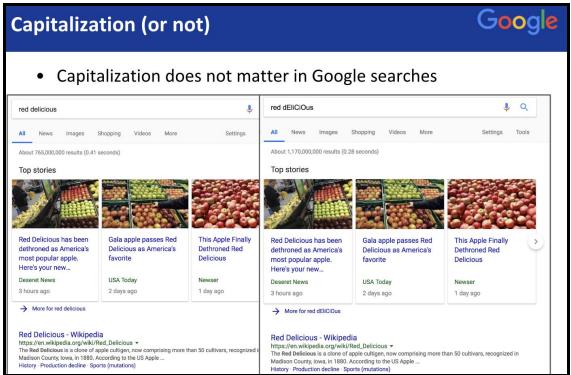


So even little words matter and of course if you switch that around to [who the] I don't know what you'll get, you'll get something that's probably not exactly what you're looking for in this space. So word order matters, so if we do something like sky blue or blue sky what kind of difference would that make in the results?

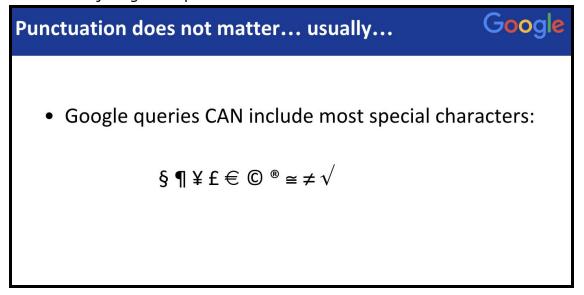


Well if you look here, if I say blue sky I get a bunch of references to different restaurants, different shops and so on in the area that I'm living, in this case the San Francisco Bay Area. That's great but if you're looking for sky blue like the color, you have to put those words in that order. You can see that here and when you do the sky blue guery you get this beautiful set of chips and images and colors, exactly

what you think, so word order really does matter. Think about that as you're putting together your queries, for instance dog chow is something your dogs eat a Chow dog is a very fuzzy animal so that is an example of a real difference in word order. It's also important to realize that when you're doing your queries capitalization doesn't matter to Google. Yes it's important typographically, but here you see two queries side by side [red delicious] in all lowercase and [red dEliCiOus] with a weird mixed case and you can see the results are exactly the same.



So capitalization in the middle of, in the beginning or at the end it doesn't matter. We found that people don't do it consistently enough for us to use it as a search signal so we've just given up on it.

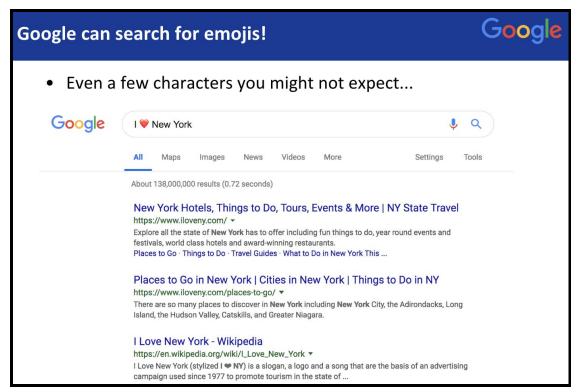


On the other hand, special characters do matter, so a couple years ago lots of special characters were just dropped. They were difficult to index but we figured out how to do that and now you can search for different kinds of single symbols, like the paragraph symbol, the radical sign, the not equal sign and so on.

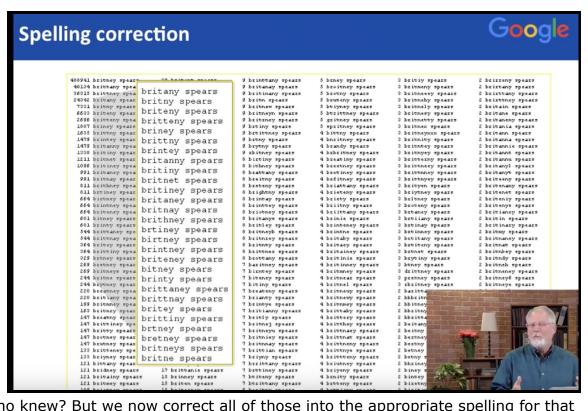
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• A few characters DO make a difference:

[C++]
[C#]
[#hashtag]
[$100]
[@dmrussell]
[45%]
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In particular you can use these for technical queries like C++ or C#, both programming languages, but when you use that character, the sharp symbol or the pound symbol you can use it either before a term or after a term. Notice that if it's got a space between it, so sharp character, space and then a second character, second term that's actually two different queries, two different query terms separated. If you put them adjacent to each other with no space between them that becomes an independent search term. That's how you can search for hashtags. We also look for things like dollar signs \$ or at @ symbols or percent % symbols and so on, and again if you put it next to the term you're searching for that's a special unit, a thing you can search for in it of itself.



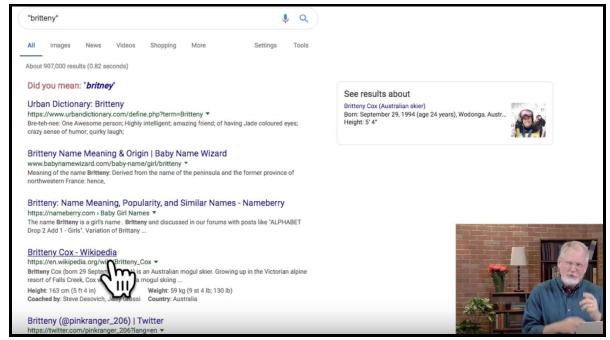
We also allow you to search for characters you might not have thought you can search for, for example for Greek characters like Omega or alpha. You can also search for emojis. So in this example I've got [I ♥New York]. You could replace that with I ♥whatever, and you will be able to search for terms, sentences that appear anywhere in the web. We can index all of the emojis in the world, so the beer character or whatever you'd like to search for, we can search for that. Another thing to know about your searching is that Google has an incredibly great spell correction system so we've discovered that there are 30,000 creative ways to misspell Britney Spears' name.



Who knew? But we now correct all of those into the appropriate spelling for that person. I want to show you something in particular, so obviously we have a lot of ways to misspell Britney Spears, but if I do Bri TTT like this, it should spell correct it right? And yes, in fact, it does, but now if I want to look for my friend who actually spells hers in an interesting way with two T's what I would do is put double quotes around the variant spelling of her name, like that.



So this is not the misspelling! With double quotes I'm saying that I really WANT that spelling. When you do that it says "did you mean Britney and that spelling?" but in fact you can see there are multiple people who really do spell their name with two T's. Who knew?



This is the way you can find it. Now what I'd like you to do is go on to the next activity. Click on the arrow and see if you can use your newly acquired skills to solve the questions there.

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