



## Is there keyboard shortcut to move input focus to the Google Search box?

Asked 7 years, 7 months ago   Active 3 months ago   Viewed 49k times



71

I search on Google a lot. I find it very annoying to have to move my mouse to the search box and click once so that I can input another search term.



I did Google for some time, but no one seems to be quite as annoyed with this, surprisingly.

I'm using Firefox 8 and Chrome 16, on Windows 7.



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If you know Atlassian Confluence, you might probably know that pressing  will move input focus to the upper right search box, very convenient for a keyboard shortcut hobbyist . Try it [here](#).

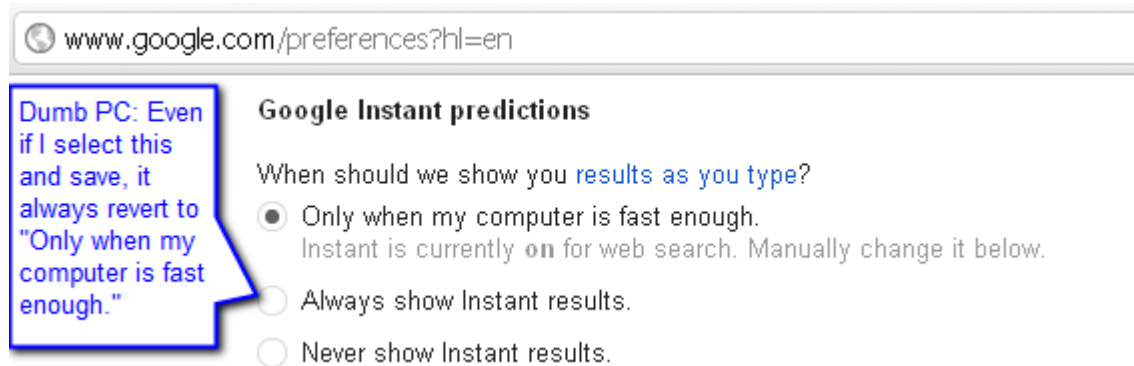
The screenshot shows the Confluence 4.2 Release Notes page. A 'Keyboard Shortcuts' dialog box is open, displaying various shortcuts. The 'General' tab is selected. In the 'Global Shortcuts' section, the 'Quick Search' shortcut is highlighted with a blue box, showing the key '/'.

General	Global Shortcuts	Page / Blog Post Actions
Editor	Go to Dashboard (g then d)	Add Page (c)
Editor Autoformatting	Browse Current Space (g then s)	Add Blog (b)
	Open Shortcut Help (?)	Edit (e)
	Quick Search (/)	Comment (m)
		share.keyboard.shortcut.desc (s)
		Edit Labels (l)
		Edit Watchers (w)
		View Attachments (t)
		Link to Page (k)

A callout box labeled 'search box' points to the search box in the top right corner of the page.

EDIT:

According to slhck's statement. I tried it on several PCs(5+, including virtual machine). The strange thing is that only one of them exhibits the stated behavior. Others(I call them dumb ones) exhibit a weird behavior. Even if I select **Always show instant result** and save, it reverts to **Only when my computer is fast enough**, and the keyboard navigation still does not work.



Poking around for some moment, I finally managed to make it work. The trick is: Select **Never show instant result**, save, then select **Always show instant result** again. Now it remains there and keyboard navigation works.

Confirmed on Chrome and Firefox, and Windows 7 IE8.

Anyway, don't you think there should be a keyboard shortcut(or any key) to jump to search box no matter instant predication is on or off?

google-chrome

keyboard-shortcuts

edited Oct 18 '16 at 11:33



Dog Lover

289 1 4 14

asked Apr 10 '12 at 14:17



Jimm Chen

2,189 6 23 36

Is that Confluence thing just an example of how you want it to be? Are you talking about Google search in general? – slhck Apr 10 '12 at 14:20

1 I talked about Confluence in order to show to the effect/feature I hope to have on Google's web page, --as an analogy, in case someone cannot understand what I mean. – Jimm Chen Apr 10 '12 at 14:51

1 I am always amazed that people aren't aware of **CONTROL+K**. I couldn't survive for 5 minutes without it! – jahroy Nov 8 '12 at 2:06

/ shortcut does work to me on [google.com](http://google.com) webpage. – soyuka May 26 '14 at 9:36

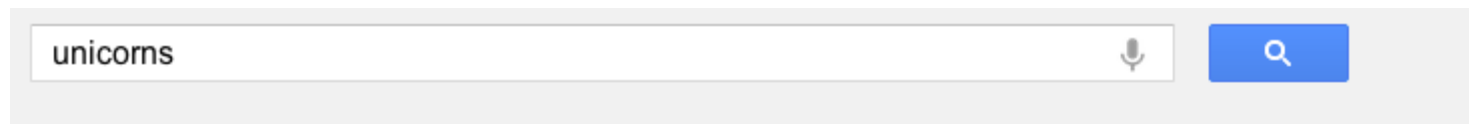
[superuser.com/questions/509192/...](http://superuser.com/questions/509192/...) – Chiel ten Brinke Dec 31 '14 at 9:08

## 15 Answers

▲ **Update:** This does not seem to be working anymore. Press ESC to move the cursor back into Google's search box.

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If you search for something in Google Search ...

A screenshot of the Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "unicorns". To the right of the search bar is a microphone icon and a blue search button with a white magnifying glass icon.

About 16,400,000 results (0.15 seconds)

[Unicorn - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicorn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicorn)

The **unicorn** is a legendary animal from European folklore that resembles a white horse with a large, pointed, spiraling horn projecting from its forehead, and ...

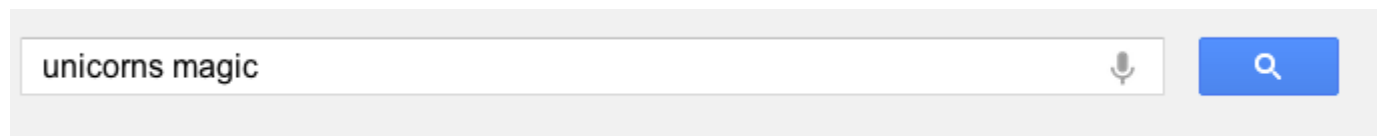
↳ [History](#) - [Origins](#) - [See also](#) - [References](#)

[Unicorns.com - Unicorn Gifts and Collectibles Unicorn Birthday ...](#)

[www.unicorns.com/](http://www.unicorns.com/)

**Unicorns.com** - Gorgeous **unicorn** gifts and collectibles, art, pillow pets, jewelry, books, **unicorn** baby, **unicorn** birthday, movies, glass figurines, clothing, puzzles, ...

... just begin typing again. For example, writing "unicorns", then " magic" (that is, space, then the next keyword) will automatically focus the search box again.





A screenshot of the Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "unicorns magic". To the right of the search bar is a microphone icon and a blue search button with a white magnifying glass icon.

Note that you need to [enable instant search](#) from your settings:

**Google Instant predictions**

When should we show you **results as you type**?

- ☐ Only when my computer is fast enough.
- ☒ Always show Instant results.
- ☐ Never show Instant results.

Finally, you can also press  (Tab) to get a manual selection for the results – navigate through them with  or , and open them with .

edited Jul 28 at 9:42




cassepipe  
13 4

answered Apr 10 '12 at 14:23



slhck  
174k 49 479 496

Sorry, it does not work in my browser. What browser/version are you using? – [Jimm Chen](#) Apr 10 '12 at 14:41




1 Chrome dev, but you need Google Instant enabled. Should work in any Chrome though. – [slhck](#) Apr 10 '12 at 15:03 

it worked in firefox too, for me... – [Mallik](#) Apr 10 '12 at 15:05

2 I've ended up on this answer because it does not work for me anymore. Is it related to the recent end of Google Instant? – [Matthew](#) Jul 30 '17 at 18:14

3 @Matthew You're right... it does not work anymore. – [slhck](#) Jul 31 '17 at 7:56

26    +  in [Chrome](#) not only moves your cursor to the Google omnibox, but it also clears it, saving you the extra keystroke.

 is another way to get to omnibox, and will **always** work, whereas key combinations may also depend on where your mouse cursor or focus is; for example, on SE,  +  is the shortcut to add code to a question or answer.

edited Apr 10 '12 at 16:50

answered Apr 10 '12 at 14:59



wizlog  
10.1k 15 63 112

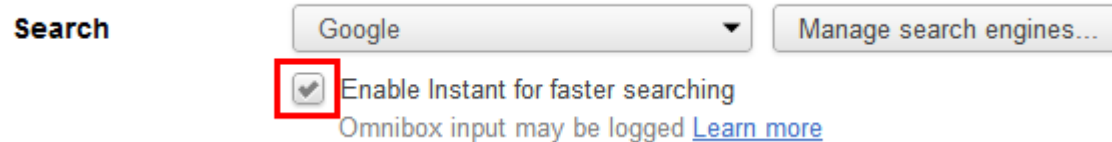
2 Seems like Ctrl+E is an alternative on SE :) [support.google.com/chrome/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=157179](https://support.google.com/chrome/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=157179) – [Der Hochstapler](#) Apr 10 '12 at 15:32

- 1 Pressing Ctrl+K clears the Omnibox but leaves a question mark for some reason. – [DMan](#) Apr 10 '12 at 22:57
- 5 @DMan: the question mark ensures that the text entered is to be **searched**, not gone to. For example (and to clarify), typing "?www.StackExchange.com" will make a Google search for "www.StackExchange.com". Its actually a really great feature when you think about it for a minute. – [wizlog](#) Apr 11 '12 at 5:17
- @wizlog - Oh cool, I didn't know that. Will certainly save me a few keystrokes as I always hit down down a couple times after using Ctrl + L and typing in something I want to *search*. – [DMan](#) Apr 11 '12 at 5:25
- On Mac Chrome, Option + Cmd + F clears the address bar and precedes with "?". Press escape to cancel the clearing of address bar and show the current URL again. [support.google.com/chrome/answer/157179?hl=en](https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/157179?hl=en) – [Baker](#) Mar 7 '16 at 3:02

▲ In Google Chrome, you can press Ctrl + L to focus the address bar. This would allow you to perform a new search instantly.

20 In case you want to focus the search box on the actual Google website, please refer to [slhck's answer](#).

▼ You can also enable Instant inside Google Chrome by checking the following setting:



edited Mar 20 '17 at 10:17

Community ♦  
1

answered Apr 10 '12 at 14:22

[Der Hochstapler](#)  
70.5k 51 240 292

I might clarify that this isn't so useful for Firefox in this particular context. – [Shinrai](#) Apr 10 '12 at 14:36

- 1 Sorry, that's not quite the same as in-page search box. For example, I first search "ipad gps", but not satisfied with the result, then I want to append "bluetooth". If I use search box, I can just append "bluetooth", but for address bar, I have to key in "ipad gps bluetooth" from the beginning. Also, Google Instant predictions does not work from address bar. – [Jimm Chen](#) Apr 10 '12 at 14:46
- 3 @Shinrai in firefox, you can use Ctrl+K to jump to the upper right search box. – [houbyssoft](#) Apr 10 '12 at 19:34
- 1 @Chen: But that's not how Confluence's search works. All Confluence's search page seems to do is let you re-focus an empty search box. This would be no different from searching via the address bar or via the Firefox search tool. Also, Google Instant [does work in Chrome's address bar](#). You can also enable this in Firefox using InstantFirefox. – [Lèse majesté](#) Apr 11 '12 at 9:36
- 1 @ChenJun When using CTRL+E , at least in IE, takes you to the address bar, and replaces the url with ? last-search which you can then modify. Chrome doesn't remember the search, at least not for me. – [frozenkoi](#) Apr 11 '12 at 18:30



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The **CTRL** + **E** shortcut works for Firefox, I.E. and Chrome (in Windows) to move the focus to the search box (well, in IE and Chrome to the address bar, clear it and start with `?`, which is the same as a search box).

For Ubuntu, Firefox doesn't seem to pay attention to **CTRL** + **E** (at least not for me), but **CTRL** + **K** works.

Then depending on how you've configured your browser is the search engine that will be used to perform your search.

edited Nov 8 '12 at 0:51

answered Apr 10 '12 at 21:21



[frozenkoi](#)

540 3 9

1 +1 on the `?` reference. Also, OP could install vimperator on firefox and just type `:o <searchtext>` – [Lieven Keersmaekers](#) Apr 11 '12 at 7:40

**CONTROL-K** works for Windows, Ubuntu, AND Mac (**COMMAND-K**)... – [jahroy](#) Nov 7 '12 at 19:54

@jahroy Cool. But not for all browsers. In Windows IE **CTRL** + **K** duplicates a tab. In Win. Firefox it does move to the search field. – [frozenkoi](#) Nov 8 '12 at 0:41

@frozenkoi - That is correct. I was responding to this: *For Ubuntu, Firefox doesn't seem to pay attention to CTRL+E*. Obviously there's no IE in Ubuntu (thank goodness). Either I overlooked your mention of **CTRL+K** or it was added/edited today. **CTRL+K** works for Firefox and Chrome on all platforms. **CTRL+L** seems to be the most universal way to get to the address bar (**ALT+D** doesn't always work). – [jahroy](#) Nov 8 '12 at 1:56

@jahroy Yeah I added your info into the answer when I saw your comment. – [frozenkoi](#) Nov 8 '12 at 2:58



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**Control** + **K** is probably the shortcut I use the most every day.

It works for Firefox and Chrome on Linux, Windows, and Mac (use the *Command* key on Mac).

**Control** + **E** is the equivalent for IE.

For Safari, it's **Command** + **Shift** + **F** (far less convenient).

edited Nov 8 '12 at 2:03

answered Apr 11 '12 at 5:53



[jahroy](#)

362 3 11

Pressing `Esc` while on a Google search cycles between selecting all of the current search text and selecting none.

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edited Oct 18 '16 at 8:31



Dog Lover

289 1 4 14

answered Jul 11 '14 at 13:20



Emwat

84 8

This is not an answer. Please add a comment when you have enough reputation – FiveO Jul 11 '14 at 16:00

3 I believe it is an answer: pressing the Esc button cycles between the search box and the rest of the content. – Doktoro Reichard Jul 11 '14 at 16:33

@DoktoroReichard Agreed. This appears to work for me so far. Nice answer. – Dog Lover Oct 18 '16 at 6:40

I am a heavy `ctrl+k` (and `ctrl+l`) user, but this is not sufficient for this use case. Often I want to **adjust my search** with additional refinements. To do this what I found easiest is to use Chrome (instead of Firefox) with the so-called `Vimium` extension, see:

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<http://vimium.github.io/>

The key combination that brings you to the search box is `gi`.

Note: This is by the way not the only speed-up you get. I love their way of **addressing links** in the browser, just type `f` and you will have a few letter combinations that bring you to any link on that page. You will never go back.

answered Jan 24 '14 at 11:07



Anne van Rossum

186 1 10

2 Thank you - I don't know why you have been downvoted - this is one and only proper answer here for the question formed like this. I'm adding Vimium to my toolbox :) – yatsa Nov 7 '16 at 16:20

On a mac, `COMMAND+L` moves focus to the search bar

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answered Mar 3 '13 at 17:28



Rose Perrone

312 1 2 15



▲  
1 Since the search box in a website is not identified in a standard way across all websites, there isn't a dedicated keyboard shortcut to jump straight to it. What you'll have to do is just keep hitting `Tab` (or `Shift` + `Tab` to go backwards) until you end up in the search box again. These keyboard shortcuts will cycle through all the website's links and input forms.

▼ Some search engines will let you begin typing immediately to do another search if you don't click anything else. Other than the method above, sometimes they'll code their site with some javascript that captures keyboard input. Experiment and see what the site provides.

answered Apr 10 '12 at 17:35



**Ben Richards**

**11k** 9 46 70

▲ As of 2017-07-31, [Google removed this feature entirely from search](#).

1 I created the [open source Web Search Navigator extension](#) to fix this and add extra features (like configurable keyboard shortcuts).

▼ See [installation instructions](#).

Hope you find it useful, but in any case - feedback is welcome!

edited Oct 1 '18 at 10:55

answered Aug 4 '17 at 18:14



**infokiller**

**286** 2 6

1 I am using this extension and I must say it works great, you can focus search and move around the SERP very easily – [Nobita](#) Nov 7 '17 at 17:59

▲ If I just type something, it jumps to the Google Search Box. Also Backspace moves to the Google Search Box. The spacebar does something different (it is like pushing PgDn?).

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answered Dec 24 '14 at 2:11



**chelder**

**141** 1 2 15



I too felt the same way while using the google search box often.

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There is no shortcut for such function, But there is another way for it.



You can use the method of using the mouse on the keyboard buttons with the help of **mouse keys** option.

Once you did this, place your cursor over the search engine box and left it untouched.

Now you can press "5" button which is the replacement of a left click in the mouse.

I hope this would be useful when you watch English movies, series (especially The Big Bang Theory) or other videos and you want to find the meaning of any word.

edited Dec 12 '17 at 13:12



Pierre.Vriens

1,297 6 13 19

answered Dec 12 '17 at 7:57



Vishva

1



Could might try hitting "ESC" and then just start typing; the typing will probably be appearing appended to whatever string you've already typed in the search bar. This works for me on Firefox on OSX.

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Also since anything that isn't recognized as a URL is interpreted as a search on my browser (default search set to google.com), if you don't want to append to the text, but, rather, replace it entirely, then you might as well do CNTRL-L (COMMAND-L in OSX) and use the address/search bar combo in Firefox / Google Chrome.



answered Jan 15 '16 at 3:56



T Sandwich

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Go to [duckduckgo.com](https://duckduckgo.com) search "something", type H. That's the question all about but for Google. – Metafaniel Sep 7 '17 at 18:19



For your intended use case (search, and then search again without using the mouse), you can use 'Esc' which will select the search box again so that you can type.

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answered Jan 14 '16 at 23:50



Andrew

11 1

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The initial question is "Is there keyboard shortcut to move input focus to the Google Search box?". The answer is yes: the Esc key moves focus to the Google Search box. How is that not an answer? Or did you not realize that "select the search box again" is synonymous with "move input focus to the Google Search box" in this context? – [Andrew](#) Jan 16 '16 at 19:42

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Go to [duckduckgo.com](http://duckduckgo.com) search "something", type H. That's the question all about but for Google. – [Metafaniel](#) Sep 7 '17 at 18:18

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Aside from all the good answers already posted, you can always install a keyboard macro processor like AutoHotKey in Windows or AutoKey in Linux. Once you do that, you can define hot keys that do anything you can do from the keyboard (and a lot more) regardless of what the applications or Window manager provide for you.

answered Apr 16 '12 at 21:38



[Joe](#)

**503** 6 13

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I use Autohotkey daily to to Ctrl+V paste into CMD windows etc. But I'm not very versed in it and it seems a bit overkill. Frankly speaking, Autohotkey's syntax is not very elegant and hard to remember so hard to compose. Anyway I'll be thankful if you can present a workable Authotkey script to do that. – [Jimm Chen](#) May 3 '12 at 0:33

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@JimmChen Sorry, I just know of Autohotkey. I use AutoKey on Linux. It rocks, but won't help you. – [Joe](#) May 3 '12 at 14:29

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