

Google: 5 Things You Didn't Know it Could Do

The Google search engine at www.google.co.uk has a few tricks up its sleeve that you may not know about. These nifty tools and features may save you time and effort that can be spent on more profitable or rewarding tasks.

Google Conversion Tool

The nifty search engine has its own in built converter. Try typing into the Google search box "4ft 6in in metres" or "23c in Fahrenheit" and you will get an instant conversion. Move your calculator to the bottom drawer of your desk or throw your slide rule out of the window. If you don't know what a slide rule is then Google it – you will be amazed at how your ancestors worked in the old days.

Google Calculator

Similarly, your old friend Google can act as a calculator. Try typing in "43% of 92" and in the twinkle of an eye receive instant enlightenment. Where was this while I was doing my GCSE'S?

Google Currency Converter

You know what's coming don't you. Type "£123 in US\$" and be amazed with the instant currency conversion.

Google News

Visit <http://news.google.co.uk> (you don't need the "www" bit) to visit a bang up to date computer generated news site. The Google news site aggregates headlines from over 4,500 English language news sources on the planet. You can ask the site to group news stories together according to your particular interests. An archive section is navigable from the top of the site which lets you look back through history. I typed in "Titanic" in the archives search box and was able to instantly download a PDF of the actual front page of the New York Times from April 12th 1912.

Google Mobile

Download Google Maps for mobile from free by visiting the Google UK website at www.google.co.uk/gmm. I downloaded the software straight onto the desktop of my PC and then hooked up my mobile to my PC with the bit of cable that my mobile phone manufacturer gave me in the box it came with. I think this would prove quicker and easier for most people than getting online with your mobile and downloading directly. Download times to mobiles still seem dreadfully slow to me.

Most mobile phones that are less than 3 years old will operate Google Maps. With Google Maps loaded onto your mobile you will never get lost when walking or driving in any UK city although software specifies that it should not be used when driving (who would think of such a thing?).

Many mobile phones come with GPS all ready installed. GPS stands for "global positioning system" and lets you know exactly where you are on the face of the earth through satellite technology. You can enter a start and end point for any road journey and be supplied with detailed directions. Another nifty feature is that you can specify a start and end point and find the best way to make this journey on public transport.

Going by foot in a strange city is now a breeze.

It's clear to me that this functionality is a direct competitor to satellite navigation. The only real difference I can see is that you don't receive verbal instructions. This doesn't bother me – I can get those at home.

It's possible to add your favourites to Google Maps such as home, irritating relatives in Berkshire or Big Dave's Bar & Grill.

Hope these nifty features will help you in the office and on your travels.

About the Author

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