10 ways to get more from Spotlight Search on the Mac

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Is this thing on?

Spotlight Search works through multiple categories to get the results you need. You can find out which categories it is actively using on your Mac in *System Preferences>Spotlight* in the *Search Results* pane. Here you can check all the different kinds of categories it will explore for you, things like Documents, Music, Movies and more. (For best results, make sure they are all enabled.)

You may find that the result you want to use isn't the first one on the results list, in which case you can click on the one you want to use or use the up/down arrows to move between items. (Or use the *Command* and the *up/down* arrows to switch swiftly between categories.)

Open an app

Open Spotlight Search and begin typing the name of the application you want to launch. The application name and icon should eventually appear at the top of the search list as you type. Just select the application and hit Return to launch.

Play a song

Type a song title or artist name, and you should see it appear as an Apple Music search result at the top of the list in Spotlight Search. When it does, just tap Return to instantly open the artist or track in Apple Music.

Do the math

Type your calculation into Spotlight Search for a near-instant result.

Check currency

Want to know what 5,000 Euros are in dollars? Ask Spotlight: just type "*5,000 Euro in USD*".

Check a word

The easiest way to check your spelling? Open Spotlight Search and type the word, it should appear as you type. Or type any word and then write '*define*' and you'll see the full dictionary definition, including phrases and alternative words.

Know the scores

Spotlight Search is also smart enough to keep an eye on sports matches for you. Just type "*baseball scores*" to see what's happening in today's MLB matches, or type "*football scores*" to check what's what in the Premier League.

Check the flight

Just type in your flight number to check for any delays — very useful if picking someone up from the airport.

Check Contacts and Calendars

Type the name of a contact, an event, or a reminder to quickly get to a mini-view of that information. Tap Return to open that item in the host application.

Check the weather

Just type "*Weather in [Name of place]*" to get an instant seven-day chart of weather conditions. If you have location enabled on your Mac, you'll see the weather where you are appear first of course – usually when you finish typing the first word.

Complex searches

Spotlight Search is [smart enough to understand](#) quite complex Boolian and Spotlight-search term specific searches. You can ask it to "*find emails from [contact name],*" "*apps from last week*" and more. A great example of this is when you want to find all the screengrabs on your Mac, when you should type, *kMDItemIsScreenCapture:1*. I hope this helps you make better use of good old Spotlight Search on your Mac.

original article:
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