

How Search Engines Work

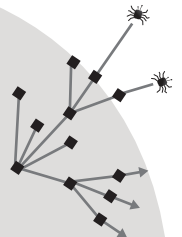
Ever wonder how a Web search works? Before a search engine can deliver results, it must go through many complicated steps—all of which can take less than half a second!



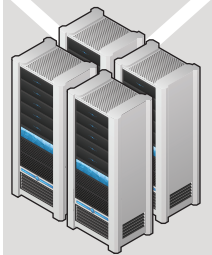
Search engines have automated software called "spiders" (or "crawlers"). These spiders "crawl" Websites and build lists of the words they find on the hundreds of millions of Web pages that exist.



The spiders also record how many times a word appears on a Website. Words with a higher frequency are considered more relevant to a particular search.



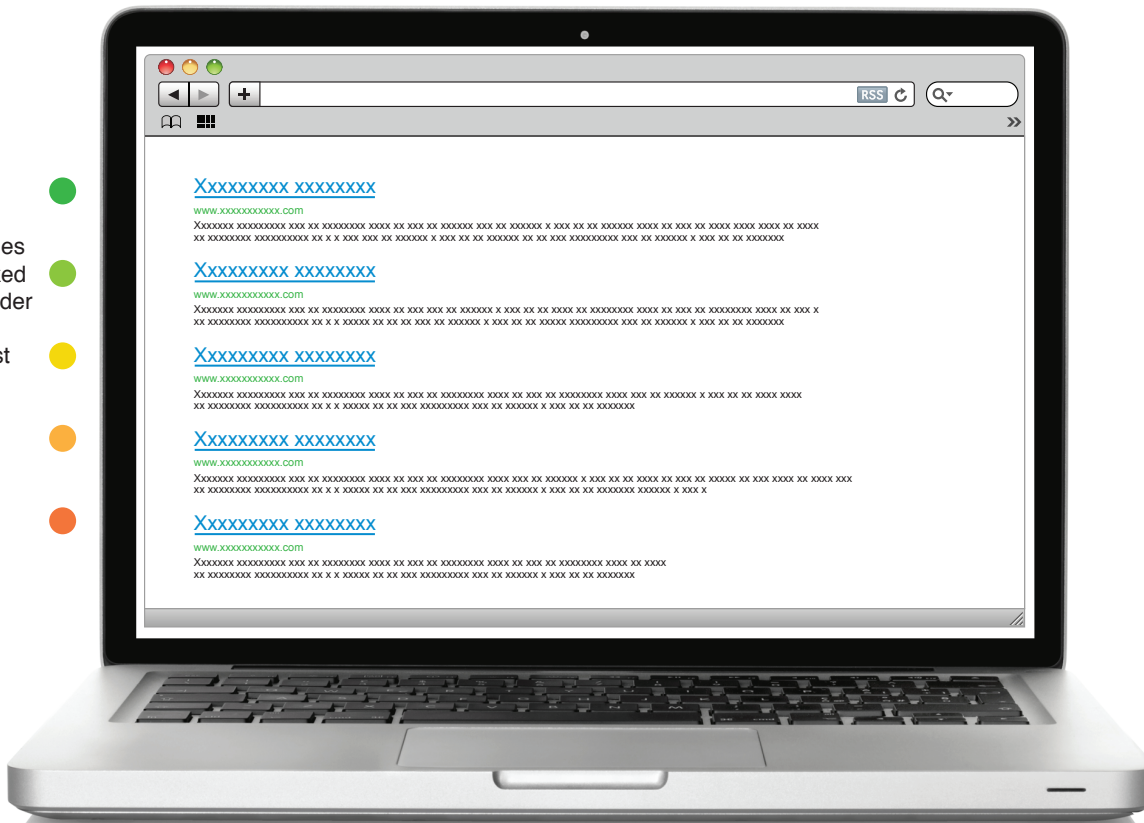
In addition, the spiders follow every link found within a Website. In this way, the spiders quickly begin spreading out across the Web.



The information is returned to a central database, where it is indexed, or alphabetized and categorized. The spiders periodically return to Websites to record any information that might have changed, and the database is updated accordingly.

Finally

The pages are ranked in the order in which they best answer your search query.



The pages are sorted by relevance according to how many times the word or words are mentioned. Each page is given an overall score.



The pages containing the word or words you searched for are located among hundreds of thousands of pages.

When you type a word search into a search engine, software quickly sorts through the many millions of entries in the database to find matches to your query.

