

# Effective Searching

- Common joke/meme idea - "coding is just Googling"
  - An oversimplification, but contains some truth
  - To be a good developer, you need to be good at searching
- Scenarios
  - Error in a program
  - Unsure how to accomplish something
  - Finding general information about certain technologies

- Errors in programs

- Copy/paste error messages

- Take out things specific to your program

- Name of your variables / functions / classes

- File paths

- In Python, the last line of the stack trace is usually the most important

- Use quotation marks if the results don't contain your error

- Common sites in results

- Stack overflow

- Repository of answers to questions

- Great place for finding answers

- Not a great place for asking questions unless you are certain the answer isn't already there

- Read all the answers. Sometimes the best answer is not the accepted answer (green check mark)

- Read comments on answers
- If you copy/paste code, make sure you understand it. If there are parts you don't understand, keep searching
- Official documentation
- Tutorial sites
  - Beware sites that have poorly written content

- GitHub issues

- Might be useful if you're seeing errors when using a library or framework
- There could be a bug in the library with a report on GitHub as an issue
- Comments on the issue might contain a workaround

- How to accomplish something

- Include name of language or tool or library, etc.

- Phrase your query how you would expect it to appear in the page with the answer

- Search engines are often good at interpreting questions but not always

- Other general searching tips

- Start with quantity

- Open the top results in tabs and skim to see what's best

- Rephrase queries if you don't get good results

- Swap out synonyms

- Remove superfluous words

- Try different search engines

- Google, DuckDuckGo, Bing

- Use Google in incognito or private mode if results seem too personalized

- Use site: <site> <query>

- Limits results to that site

- Find discussions

- site:reddit.com <query> to find reddit threads