

Transcript: Google for academic research

– Locations in Google

Country versions of Google give priority to local content - this could be useful if you are researching a topic in a country other than the country you are based in.

However, Google does not make it easy to use country versions.

Notice that if you navigate to google.com or google.fr, for instance, you still see 'United Kingdom' in the footer.

Your results will not be the same as if you were actually in the USA or France using Google.

To emulate using a country version of Google, you can try:

Settings > Advanced search > Narrow your results by... language

Settings > Advanced search > Narrow your results by... region

site: command, e.g. site:.no ; site:.fr

using something like [TOR](#) or a VPN service to mask the country you are actually in and see the results as if you were in another country

Tor's method of randomly sending the connection through many servers throughout the world means it is slower than you are used to, and it will bounce you around various country versions of Google, so interesting in terms of playing with country bias results.

A **VPN** is a service that keeps your web browsing secure and private over public Wi-Fi and it is also used to create a secure connection to another location, thereby allowing you to appear as if you are in another place. E.g. the university's VPN

makes it seem as if your laptop is on campus so allows you to access drives on university computers and to access the online library without having to log in so much. The Opera or Vivaldi browsers have an optional VPN (limited country options) and there are many free and cheap VPN services available - you can choose where to be so note, if you use a VPN then the version of Google you end up using will be the country it thinks you are in.

These options can be useful if you want a country bias, just not the country you are physically located in. **It is not possible, as far as I know, to get rid of the country bias altogether.**

Using an alternate search engine such as DuckDuckGo is the best way to ditch Google's country bias, but even DuckDuckGo has regional choices in a drop down.

We noticed once that with Verbatim selected, Google was showing "unknown location" at the foot of the screen. This does not work every time though – certainly not on a library staff computer – so yet another of Google's mysteries.