

Windows 7 Advanced Searching

Adding operators

One way to refine a search is to use the operators AND, OR, and NOT. When you use these operators, you need to type them in all capital letters.

Operator	Example	Use this to
AND	tropical AND island	Find files that contain both of the words "tropical" and "island" (even if those words are in different places in the file). In the case of a simple text search, this gives the same results as typing "tropical island."
NOT	tropical NOT island	Find files that contain the word "tropical," but not "island."
OR	tropical OR island	Find files that contain either of the words "tropical" or "island."

Adding search filters

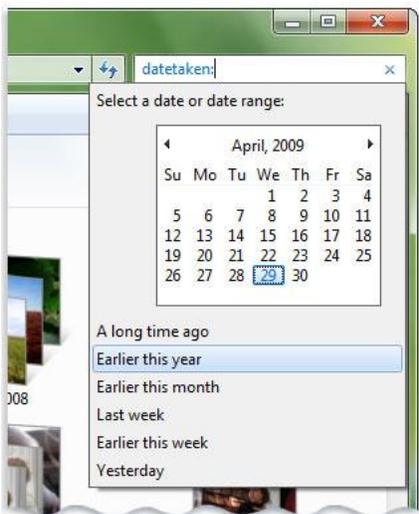
Search filters are a new feature in Windows 7 that make searching for files by their properties (such as by author or by file size) much easier.

To add a search filter to your search

Open the folder, library, or drive that you want to search.

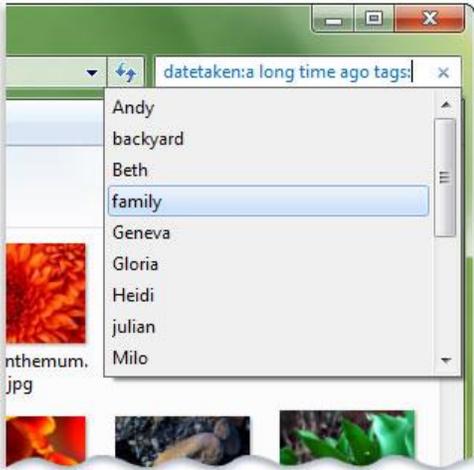
Click in the search box, and then click a search filter (for example, Date taken: in the Pictures library).

Click one of the available options. (For example, if you clicked Date taken:, choose a date or a date range.)



The "Date taken" search filter

You can add multiple search filters to a search, or even mix search filters with regular search terms to further refine your search.



You can use two search filters to search for a picture tagged with "family" that was taken a long time ago.

Depending on where you're searching, only certain search filters are available. For example, if you're searching the Documents library, you'll see different search filters than you would in the Pictures library. You can't specify which search filters you'll see, but you can change the type of file that a library is optimized for. This will, in turn, change which search filters are available when searching that library.

Using keywords to refine a search

If you want to filter on a property that doesn't appear when you click in the search box, you can use special keywords. This typically involves typing a property name followed by a colon, sometimes an operator, and then a value. The keywords aren't case sensitive.

Example search term	Use this to find
System.FileName:~<"notes"	Files whose names begin with "notes." The ~< means "begins with."
System.FileName:= "quarterly report"	Files named "quarterly report." The = means "matches exactly."
System.FileName:~="pro"	Files whose names contain the word "pro" or the characters pro as part of another word (such as "process" or "procedure"). The ~ means "contains."
System.Kind:< picture	Files that aren't pictures. The < means "is not."
System.DateModified:05/25/2010	Files that were modified on that date. You can also type "System.DateModified:2010" to find files changed at any time during that year.

Example search term

Use this to find

System.Author:~!"herb"	Files whose authors don't have "herb" in their name. The ~! means "doesn't contain."
System.Keywords:"sunset"	Files that are tagged with the word sunset.
System.Size:<1mb	Files that are less than 1 MB in size.
System.Size:>1mb	Files that are more than 1 MB in size.

Note

You can use a question mark (?) as a wildcard for a single character and an asterisk (*) as a wildcard for any number of characters.

You can also use the operators AND, OR, and NOT to combine search keywords. (Note how the use of parentheses can change the effect of a search term.)

Example search term

Use this to find

System.Author:Charlie AND Herb	Files that are authored by Charlie as well as any files that include Herb in the file name or in any file property.
System.Author:Charlie AND System.DateModified:>2009	Find only files that are authored by Charlie after 2009.
System.Author:(Charl* AND Herb)	Files that have either Charles and Herb or Charlie and Herb listed as authors.
System.Author:"Charlie Herb"	Files that are authored by someone with exactly this name.

Using natural language search

You can turn on Natural language search to perform searches in a simpler way, without using colons and without the need to enter AND and OR in capital letters. For example, compare these two searches:

Without natural language

With natural language

System.Music.Artist:(Beethoven OR Mozart)	music Beethoven or Mozart
System.Kind:document System.Author:(Charlie AND Herb)	documents Charlie and Herb

To turn on natural language search

Open Folder Options by clicking the Start button , clicking Control Panel, clicking Appearance and Personalization, and then clicking Folder Options.

Click the Search tab.



Select the Use natural language search check box.

Even with natural language search turned on, you can continue to use the search box in exactly the same way. If you want to use operators or search keywords, you can. The difference is that you can also enter searches using a less formal method. Here are some examples:

- e-mail today
- documents 2011
- author Susan
- pictures vacation

Note

When you turn on natural language search, some searches might give more results than you expect. For example, if you search for "e-mail today" you will see all messages sent today as well as any messages with the word "today" in the contents.