

Search engines have search robots. These are software programmes. They are called „crawlers“ and crawl through the WWW from website to website. They create lists of the words they find on the websites.

The crawlers also count how often a word appears on a website. If a word appears frequently, it is probably important for the content of the website.

They store the web addresses of the pages they find together with important keywords in a kind of huge table of contents, the „search index“.

This is like a huge long list with lots of topics and keywords. This list also shows how the pages are connected to each other.

You can imagine the internet a bit like a huge library. But the internet is not as tidy as a library. There are 1.9 billion websites that people have put there. No one can remember that many pages. But search engines know their way around this huge mess.

When they find a link they follow it to the next page. This way they will always find new websites.

How does a search engine work?



1 The pages are selected and sorted so that they best meet your search query.

This is done by algorithms.

2 They select from the millions of websites those that they think match your search query and you.

3 If you now press „Search“, the search engine no longer has to search the entire WWW. It only searches the many millions of entries in „its“ table of contents, the search index.

And that's as fast as lightning. You can't even blink that fast.

The crawlers return to the websites at regular intervals to see if anything has changed. Then the index is updated.

