

BVCC General Meeting

December 12, 2022

Google Searching Techniques

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Internet Searching in General

- **See the July 12, 2021 meeting presentation on BVCC website for discussion of some alternatives to Google and how search engines like Google find sites of interest**
- **Would like to be able to say that alternatives to Google that do less tracking get comparable results, but depends on what you're trying to find. For some things, Google just returns a lot more matches.**

Specifying a Search

- **Simplest** – A sequence of keywords – if not in quotes can appear in arbitrary order – most common type of search because it frequently works well enough
- **A search phrase** – "words in quotes" – will look for that exact sequence of words
- **A search expression** – containing operators, functions, parentheses to form more complex logical relations
- **Search on many browsers defaults to Google. Edge defaults to Bing. Default can be changed but some browsers more difficult than others. Can always explicitly go to <https://google.com> (or image.google.com)**

Ordering of Search Results

- **Specified criteria frequently not taken as absolute but approximate – tolerates misspellings – can make incorrect assumptions**
- **Specified search criteria influence ranking**
- **May get back results that partially satisfy criteria as well**
- **Those that fit criteria and have paid to advertise appear first, but there will be a little "Ad" in front of their URL to indicate they are near the top of results because of payment, not that they are necessarily the best match.**
- **Ads excepted, those hits that fit search criteria best should appear higher**
- **For those hits judged to fit equally well, the most current will usually appear first**

Google Search Expressions

- **For a "complete" list of 42 Search Operators, See <https://ahrefs.com/blog/google-advanced-search-operators/>**
- **For a "must know" list of 20 advanced Google search ops see <https://searchengineland.com/advanced-google-search-operators-388355>**
- **Realistically you are not going to remember all these possibilities, just a smaller number you regularly find useful**

Keywords

- **keyword1 keyword2 ... keywordn**
 - **Just a simple list of one or more key words (case insensitive)**
 - **Returns items containing one or more of the keywords in any order, ranking higher those items with more of the keywords**
 - **If a keyword is not in its dictionary, may suggest an alternate spelling**
 - **Example:**
bella vista computer club

This will find our website. Because keywords could appear in any order and with separation, this might also find a website page that contained a sentence like: "Bella Abzug had a house with a nice vista and used computers." But it makes sense to try the simplest search to see if it finds what you want. Result from the above search also includes page with "Bella Vista Computer Services" because it meets 3 of the 4 criteria.

Exact Phrase

- **"an exact phrase"**
 - One or more words in quotes – Not case sensitive
 - phrase and words must be found as given
 - **Example:**
"bella vista computer club"
Finds a shorter list of websites – excludes Bella Vista Computer Services because exact search phrase not found and individual words in the phrase don't count if complete phrase not present

Combining Criteria

- **criteria1 AND criteria2 – try to find both – implied if multiple criteria without "AND" or "OR"**
- **criteria1 OR criteria 2 – OK if either (or both) present**
- **Can use parens to control order of evaluation:
("joel ewing" OR "joel C Ewing") AND bentonville
Will find web pages that have either form of my name associated with "bentonville" on the same page**

Limit Search to One Website

- **site:siteURLhere**
 - Can be combined with other criteria to only find relevant pages at that site, or can be used by itself to find all data Google associates with that website
 - **Example:**
site:bvcomputerclub.org dues
 - Can be used with an exact phrase to see if a sentence or longer was intentionally or unintentionally included on multiple pages at the website.

AROUND(n)

- **criteria1 AROUND(n) criteria2**
matches if "criteria1" and "criteria2" are separated by no more than "n" words
 - "criteria1" AROUND(0) "criteria2" behaves like "criteria1 criteria2"
 - Example:
("joel" AROUND(1) "ewing") AND "bentonville"
will match "joel ewing", "joel c ewing" or "joel x ewing" where x is any word, as long as on same page with "bentonville" [interestingly the results include a Walmart regional manager Joel Ewing in Mississippi, because that web page includes reference to the corporate headquarters in Bentonville.]

Excluding Pages With A Keyword

- **-keyword**

Exclude pages that include this keyword

- **Used in combination with other search criteria when there are too many unwanted hits and there are one or more keywords that only apply to unwanted hits**
- **Example:**
"joel ewing" -actor - teacher - director -theater -theatre

* Wildcard Match

- * can match zero or more words
 - Useful when you can only remember pieces of a famous quote
 - Example:
"Breathes there a" * "this is my own"
finds "Breathes there the man, with soul so dead, Who never to himself hath said, This is my own, my native land! [Sir Walter Scott, "Lay of the Last Minstrel"] – search was smart enough to handle one wrong word in the search ("a" vs "the")
 - There are literary works that are not covered, probably because they can't be found in a scanable form on a website.

Others

- **There are many others, but these are the ones I tend to use often enough to remember how to use them.**
 - **Some of the others are more useful for analyzing content of a website and less useful to someone just searching for information on a topic**

Things That Google Search Can't Find

- **It appears that Google search may not include text from specialized on-line libraries, in particular there are digitized books under the Google Books project that can be searched on the Google Books website whose content does not appear to be in the ordinary Google search database.**
 - **Example: Google Books search is able to locate "Breathes there a pig" as a parody of Sir Walter Scott's poem that appeared in a children's book "Freddy and the Bean Home News" by Walter R. Brooks, and it displays the entire parody and its context. Regular Google search can't locate the quote, probably because it doesn't occur in a format understood by web crawlers, possibly protected by copyright considerations.**

A [Relatively] New Kind of Search – Images

- **Google search now includes in addition to the magnifying glass another icon, a little camera, that allows searching using an image**
 - **Clicking the "camera" give you a window to drag or upload an image to be analyzed. Depending on browser, may need to use <https://image.google.com>**
 - **Don't use full resolution images from a camera, reduced resolution images of several 100KiB should be adequate if recognition is possible.**
 - **Google will try to find similar images that have appeared online. If it's a sufficiently famous site or building and sufficiently unique in appearance, odds are Google will find a similar picture on one or more websites where the picture is identified by name and location.**
 - **Don't expect it to be able to locate an average house just because it appears on Google Street View.**

Examples

- **An image of a wall print hanging at Ford dealership**
- **Several images from scanned slides from sister**
- **Several images in my collection from my personal collection**
- **Pictures of a past residence – identification failed, not sufficiently "unique"**
- **Picture of parade on Garrison Ave, Fort Smith – failed, possibly too unique (a specific parade before things like that were posted online)**

<https://image.google.com>

Google
Images



|



Image Upload Window



Search any image with Google Lens



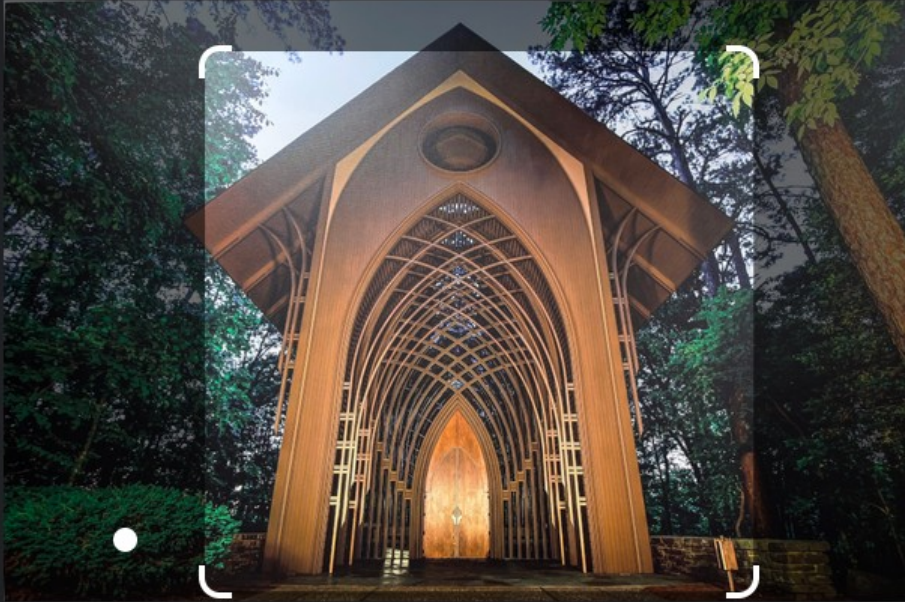
Drag an image here or [upload a file](#)

OR

Paste image link

Search

Find image source



Mildred B. Cooper Memorial Chapel

4.9 ★★★★★

Wedding chapel

Search



Visual matches



fineartamerica...

The Bella Vista
Arkansas Mildred ...



fineartamerica...

The Bella Vista
Arkansas Mildred ...



etsy.com

Bella Vista
Arkansas Mildred ...



pixels.com

Bella Vista
Arkansas Cooper...



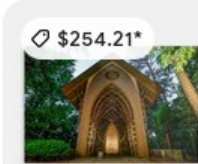
fineartamerica...

Bella Vista
Arkansas Cooper...



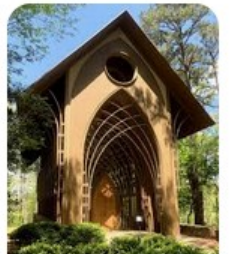
pixels.com

The Bella Vista



redbubble.com

The Bella Vista



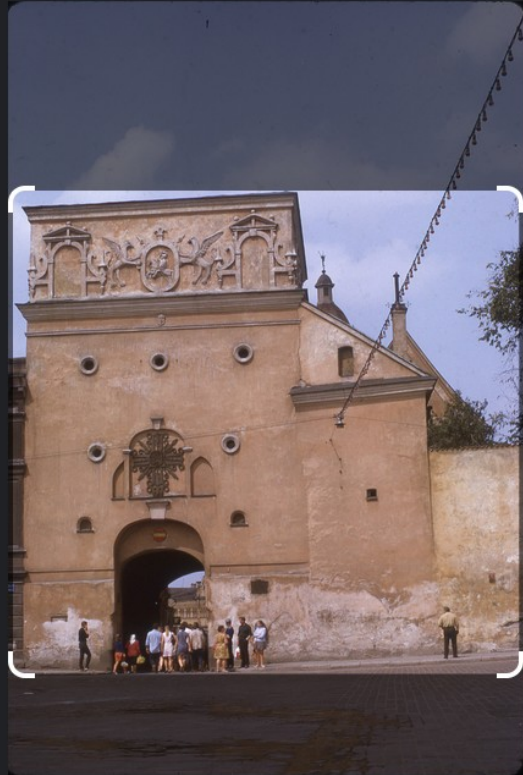
Search

Text

Translate

Vilnius, Lithuania, Gates of Dawn

Find image source



Search

Text

Translate

Gates of Dawn

4.7 ★★★★★ (10,347)

Pilgrimage place

Search



Visual matches



interest.com
Ostra Brama w
Wilnie | Painting...



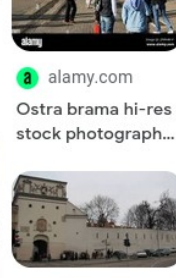
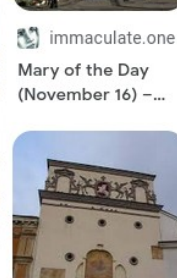
wikipedia.org
Вострая брама —
Вікіпедыя



immaculate.one
Mary of the Day
(November 16) —...



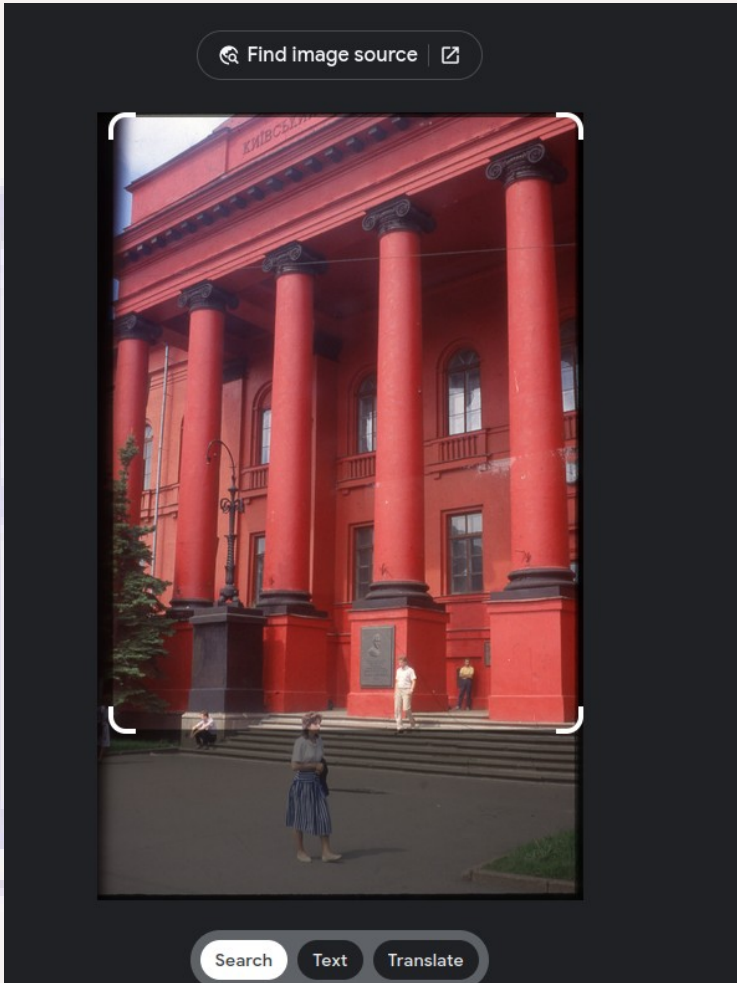
alamy.com
Ostra brama hi-res
stock photograph...



alamy.com

urban.kalaites

Kiev University, Kiev, Ukraine



Find image source

Search Text Translate

Red University Building

4.7 ★★★★★

University department

Search



Visual matches



123rf.com

Taras Shevchenko National Universit...



WSJ wsj.com

Russian Bombings Threaten Kyiv's...



encyclopediaof...
University



iir.edu.ua

КНУ ім.Т.Шевченка – у ТОП-500!



sight.nu

Students from Ukraine need our...



tripadvisor.com

Tarasa Shevchenko Boulevard (Kyiv) -...



visitukraine.tod...

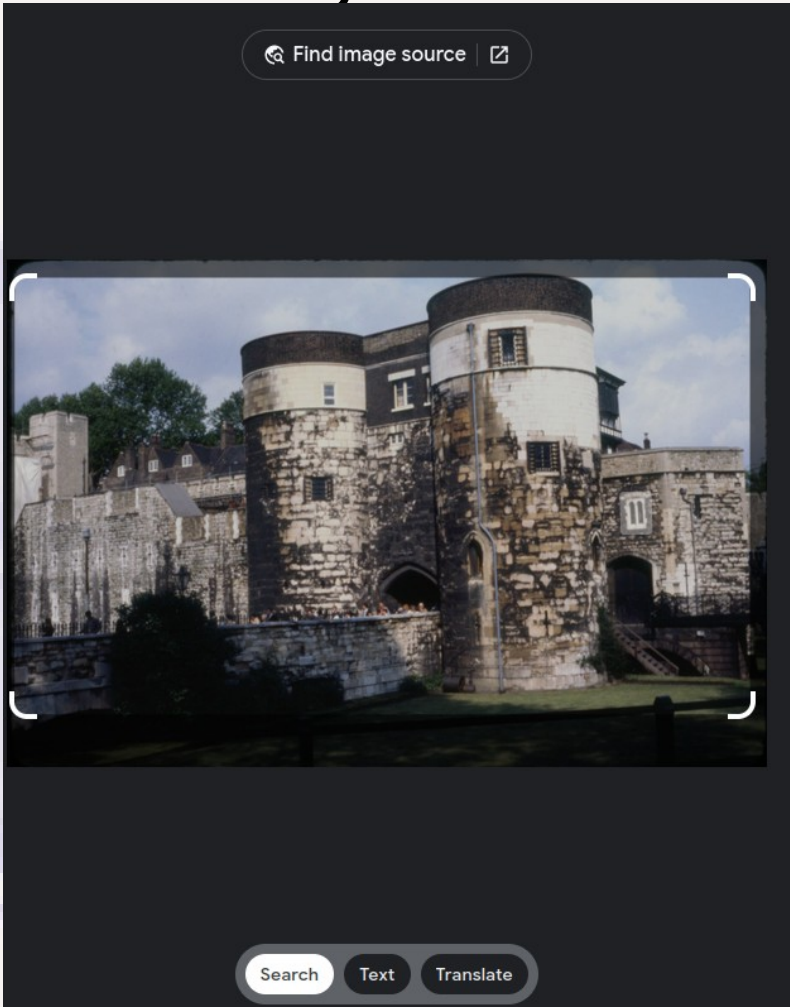
Visit Ukraine - Admission for...



visitukraine.tod...

Visit Ukraine - Admission for...

Byward Tower, Tower of London



Byward Tower
4.6 ★★★★★
Historical landmark

Search



Visual matches



flashbak.com
Fabulous
Kodachrome...



pepysdiary.com
Tower of London
(The Diary of...



paye.net
Tower of London -
PAYE



wikimedia.org
File: Tower of
London main...



britainexpress...
Tower of London
Photo, Middle...



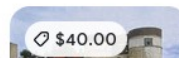
facebook.com
Our gates are
opening again! |...



famous-histori...
Tower of London



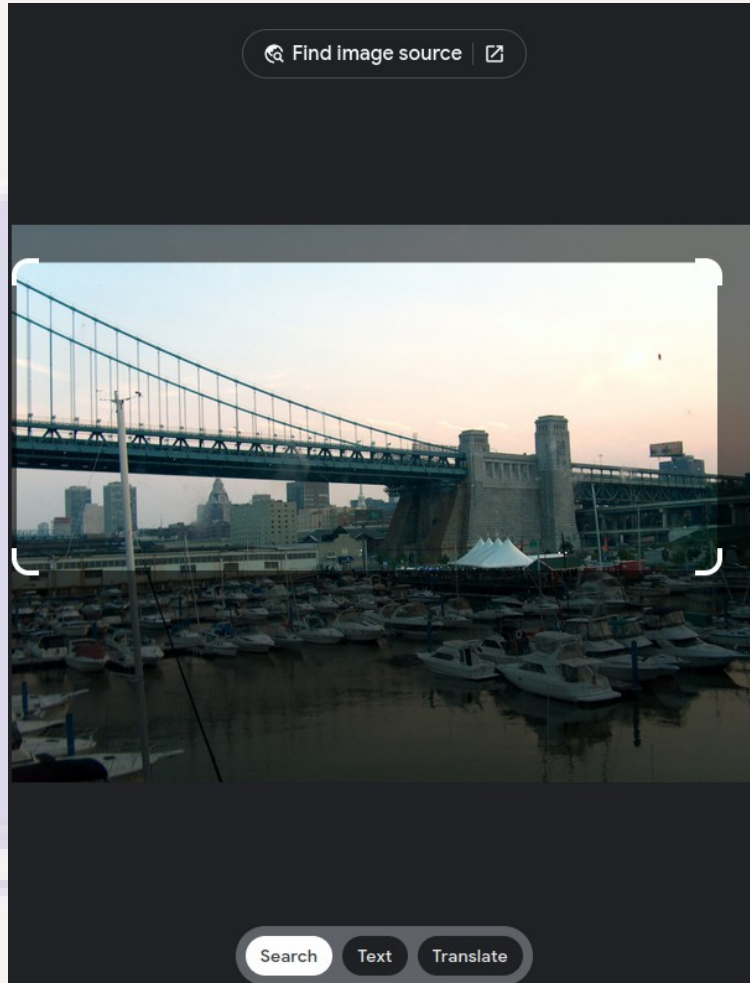
famous-histori...
Tower of London



\$40.00



Ben Franklin Bridge, Philadelphia



Brooklyn Bridge
4.8 ★★★★★
Bridge

Search



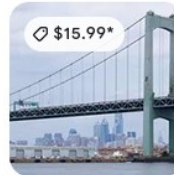
Visual matches



tidaltrail.org
Marinas | Tidal
Delaware Water...



pixels.com
Philadelphia
Benjamin Franklin...



amazon.com
Proust Was A
Neuroscientist



fineartamerica...
Brooklyn Bridge
Photograph by...



wikimedia.org
File:Bridges
Bridges...



arrestedmotio...
Streets: Lewy
Bombs the...



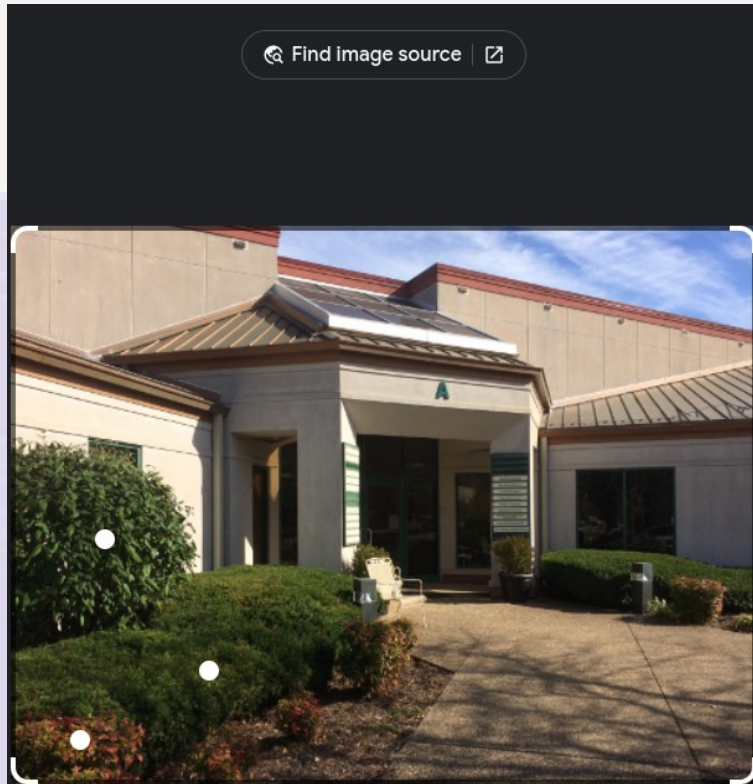
pinterest.com
Ben Franklin Bridge
| Manhattan bridg...

Search



















Text

Translate

Highlands Crossing (choice 43 was Entrance C)



Find image source

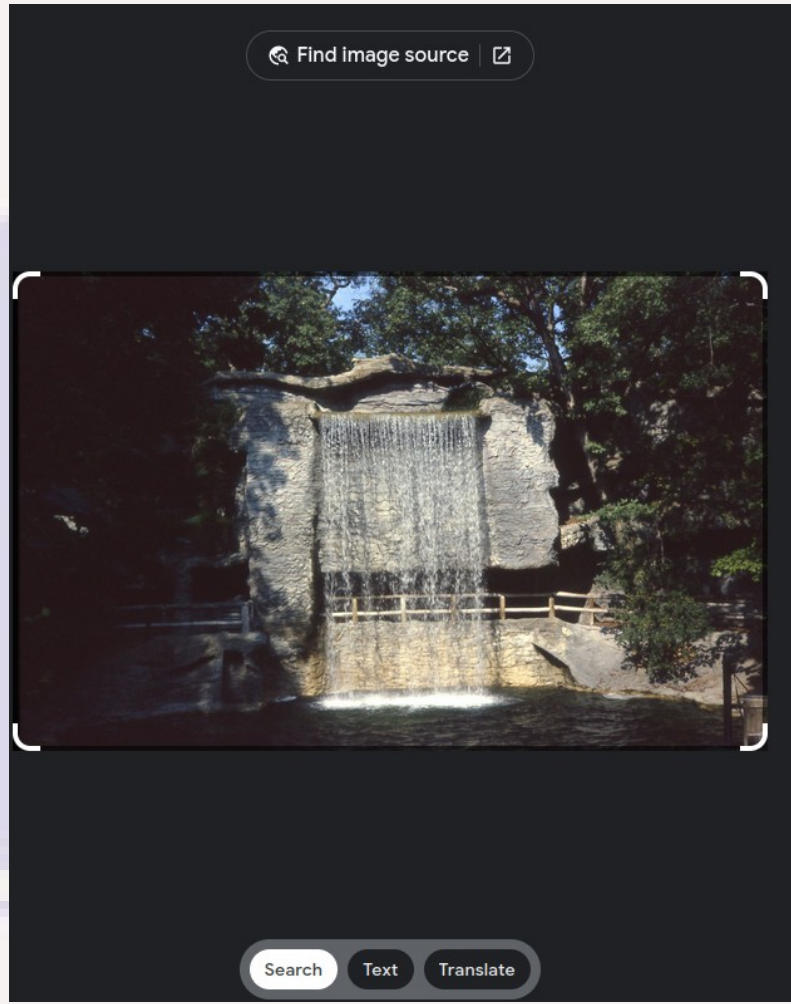
-  [cbsbank.com](#)
Starkville, MS |
CB&S Bank
-  [loopnet.com](#)
151 Regions Way,
Destin, FL 32541 |...
-  [Livingston Regional Hospital](#)
-  [yelp.com](#)
UC DAVIS MEDICAL
GROUP - 17 Photo...
-  [kintegra.org](#)
Kintegra » Contact
Us
-  [emergeortho.c...](#)
South Asheville -
EmergeOrtho
-  [mgsave.com](#)
Ascension Saint
Thomas DeKalb in...
-  [gaeyeinstitute...](#)
richmond-hill -
Georgia Eye...
-  [tricare.mil](#)
Womack Army
Medical Center >...
-  [cdcblentonville...](#)
The Apartments at
Highlands Crossin...
-  [socialsecurityo...](#)
Blair County, PA
Social Security...
-  [sonnenfeldand...](#)
Monmouth County
Child Advocacy...
-  [coldwellbanker...](#)
677 S State St,
Newtown, PA 189...
-  [kaod.com](#)
Home - K A Oldham
Designs
-  [ochsnerrush.org](#)
Rush Medical Clinic
- Philadelphia - ...
-  [dalfen.com](#)
TERRACOTTA
BUSINESS CENTE...
-  [ajjas.org](#)
-  [eventective.com](#)
Salvation Army

Search

Text

Translate

Waterfall at Silver Dollar City (12th)



alamy.com
Anaheim california
1960s hi-res stock...



australianphot...
Review: Olympus
OM-D E-M1X ~...



bigstockphoto...
Waterfall Face
Image & Photo...



wdwvacationti...
The Ten Best
Jungle Cruise...



kzookids.com
8 Wonderful
Reasons to Visit...



clcdesign.com
Franklin Lakes
Backyard Retreat ...



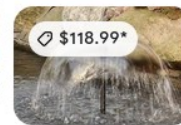
lntonline.com
Officials update
electricity, water...



grkids.com
Things to Do in
Grand Rapids MI:...



ebay.com
1961 Press Photo
People Under...



amazon.com
ECO-WORTHY
Solar Fountain...



gerbehof.de
Natur Spa -
Naturresort...



travelinmissou...
Things To Do In
Independence M...



onlyinyourstat...
12 Unbelievable
Missouri Waterfall...



lifeinleggings.c...
Silver Dollar City &
Branson, Missouri

Comparison


6. Silver Dollar City Waterfall – Branson, MO



My picture (on left) over 3 decades old. Had wooden fence then.

Jasper Co Courthouse, Carthage, MO

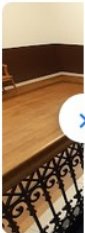


Find image source




Search Text Translate

Jasper County Courthouse
5.0 ★★★★★
County government office


Search




Visual matches




penmac.com
Local Staffing & Jobs | Carthage,...




tripadvisor.com
Jasper County Courthouse,...




brbrv.com
The Carthage Courthouse | Big...




tripadvisor.com
Carthage Courthouse - ...



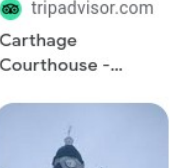
isapa.com
judicial — Latimer, Sommers &...



facebook.com
The McPherson Law Firm | Joplin...



tripadvisor.com
Carthage Courthouse - ...



tripadvisor.com
Carthage Courthouse - ...

Conclusions

- **Image recognition does a pretty good job on well-photographed things that are sufficiently unique**
- **If there are a number of similar items it may still manage to include the right image as one of the choices**
 - **May be able to narrow choices if you know which ones are not plausible**
- **May allow you to identify interesting images that you failed to document where taken, or that were taken by someone else.**