

All about Searching

Introduction

Searching is a broad topic. It can mean searching the Internet for a fact, a recipe or for who said what but it could also mean searching your PC. When it comes to searching your PC, it could be that you're looking for one of the following:

1. A setting such as Screen Resolution
2. A document by title
3. A document by contents (some programs will search PDF contents)
4. A folder
5. A photo by name, place or date
6. A CD, DVD or external hard drive's file and folders.

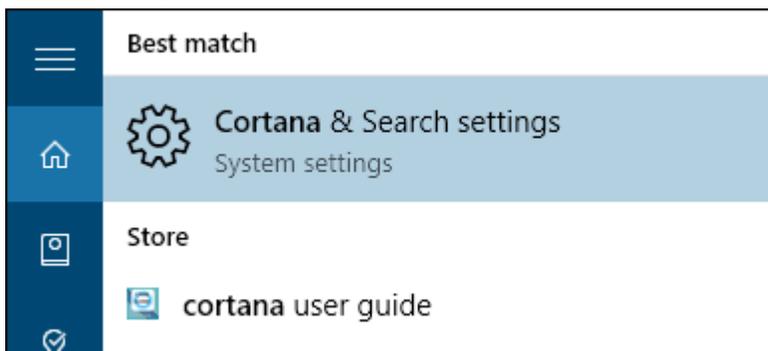
What are the various tools for searching?

- For searching the Internet we obviously use a search engine such as Google or Yahoo. However, using Windows search tools, results from the Internet may also show up. This could be a benefit or a hindrance depending on your needs. In this document I will tell you how to eliminate Web results when using Windows Search. I will also tell you how to continue to have Windows Search use Google instead of Bing with Cortana but it requires you to use Google Chrome.
- There are various 3rd party search programs, many of them free that will search your PC. Some of them will search for file names only and others will search for a file's contents.
- For cataloging external media the best program that I've found is the Advanced File Organizer from Soft Prime at <http://www.softprime.com/> for \$29.95. There's a trial version also. I've been using this for many years.

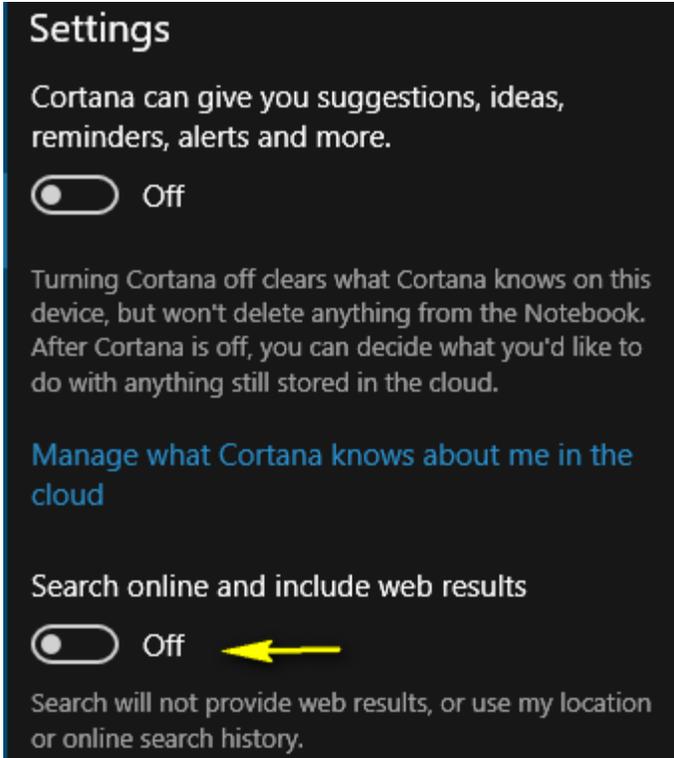
How to force Cortana to use Google instead of Bing in Windows 10. See the article at <http://www.howtogeek.com/226638/make-the-windows-10-start-menu-and-cortana-search-google-instead-of-bing/>

For a list of free Desktop Search programs read the list at <http://www.ghacks.net/2014/08/13/the-best-free-desktop-search-programs-for-windows/>

To limit Cortana's searching to just your PC press the Windows key and start typing Cortana. Click Cortana & Search settings at the top as shown below.



In the screen that opens, turn off Search online to limit the results to your PC as shown below.



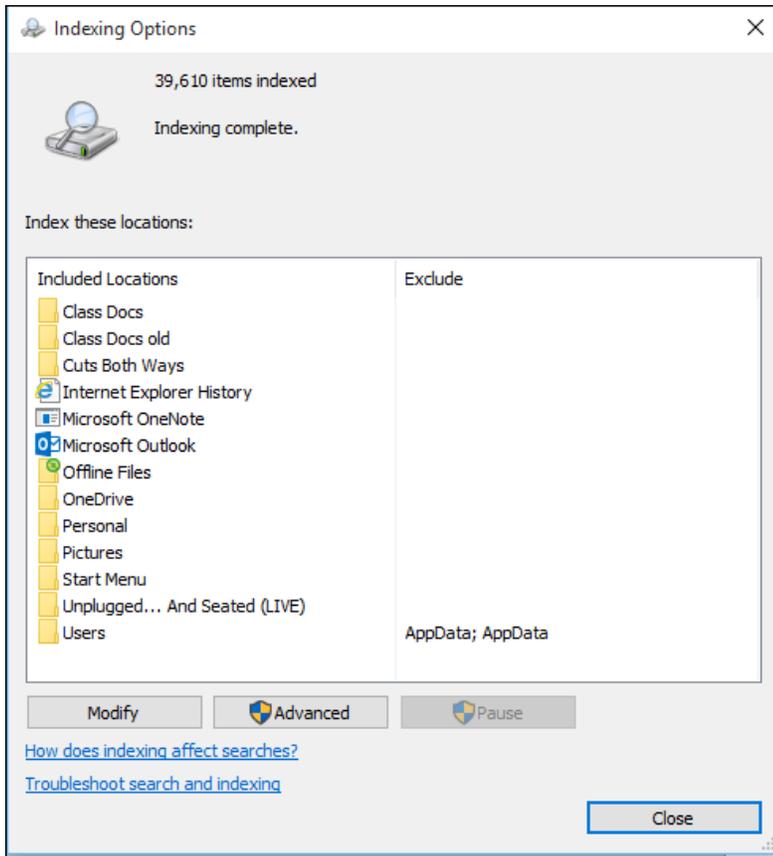
Here's the results from 2 example searches using Cortana.

1. Searching with the term **wire transfer** without quotes gave me over 100 results. First of all it looks like it will only search my PC since it says "Search my stuff".



2. Searching with the same term in quotes gave me just 7 results. It looks like without the quotes, the search is for each word individually in addition to a search for the 2-word phrase.

Cortana will search for file names and for file content. How does this work. Cortana, as well as other search facilities, builds an index of files and their content and store this in a database. You can open the Indexing Options and review them or even change them. To do this, just tap the Windows key and type index and click Indexing Options at the top. This will open the windows as shown below.



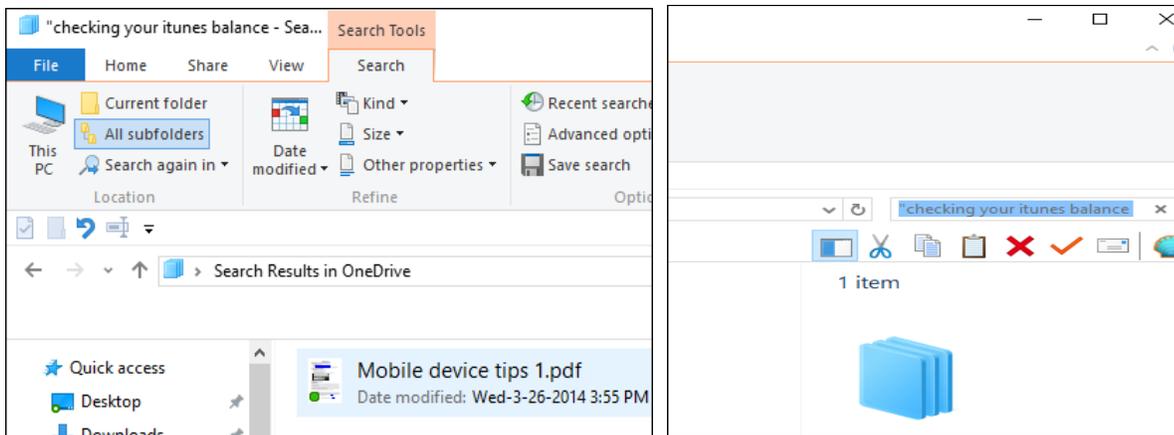
Click Modify to make changes. You can add folders including those located on an external drive. I added a folder containing photos of all of my trips. Just remember, the better organized a drive is by folder and file name, the better the search results. After adding a new location you should allow Windows some time to index it before expecting good results.

I'm not suggesting that Cortana is the be-all end-all of search facilities but it's a good start, especially when searching quickly. Here's a summary of programs and features

Program	Cost	Ext Drives	Settings	File Contents	Catalogs CDs & DVDs	Internet	Search within results	Indexed
Everything	Free	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Cortana	Free	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Depends on settings	No	Yes
Adv. File Organizer	\$29	Yes	No		Yes	No	Yes	Yes
File Explorer	Free	Yes	No	Not well	No	No	No	No

Searching with the Windows File Explorer

- Using File Explorer, navigate to the folder where you want to search
- Enter the search term into the Search box at the upper right and you'll see results pop up. You can even use this to search for file contents. Below is a screen shot where I searched for **checking your itunes balance**. Notice in the 2nd figure below I started the phrase with quotes but I didn't need to end it with quotes.



- In the results you can double click the file to open it directly. In this case the file is titled Mobile device tips 1.pdf.

Summary

1. For searching external media including CDs and DVDs Advanced File Organizer is the best.
2. For just searching files and folder there's a program called **Everything** available from <http://www.voidtools.com/> for free.
3. For searching file content and for settings, files and folders, Cortana seems to be pretty good.
4. Searching with Windows takes two forms. The first is using Cortana and the second is by tapping the Windows key and starting to type. Both methods seem to lead you in the same direction.
5. To limit Cortana to searching your PC follow the instructions above.