



Google Search Engine Algorithms

History of Main Google Algorithm Updates from 2000 To Present

Google is a system that is constantly working to improve and optimize its mechanisms. Millions of pages of information are processed every minute. This all happens instantly. For well-coordinated and large-scale work, it is necessary to constantly update Google's search algorithms so users are provided with the best results.

Here is a list of major (confirmed or not) Google updates since launch. Having studied the history of the formation of the giant, we have the opportunity to answer the main question: How do I get to the top?

Google Timeline

2020 updates

January 13, 2020 - **January 2020 Core Update**

Confirmed update

Google rolled out a new core update. Significant fluctuations were noticed but the output had already stabilized by January 19. It was a big update, but it was still smaller than the Medic.

- Google SearchLiaison [tweet](#).

January 22, 2020 - **Featured Snippet De-duping**

Confirmed update

Now Google has stopped duplicating featured results in SERPs and Featured Snippet. This greatly changed the rules of the game. Getting into the selected fragment, the site lost its position in the search results. Read the related article - [How to Optimize Featured Snippets Google to Increase Traffic](#).

March 11, 2020 - **COVID-19 Pandemic**

Unconfirmed update



The WHO pandemic statement on March 11 seemed like a turning point. On the day of the announcement, Google greatly changed the queries related to Covid and soon a special local search was launched, based on the pandemic situation in the region.

May 4, 2020 - **May 2020 Core Update**

Confirmed update

There was another update of the main algorithm, which quickly became known as May the Fourth since it was launched on the day of Star Wars.

- Read More - [Google May 4, 2020. What We Can Say in 2 Weeks.](#)
- Google SearchLiaison [tweet](#).

August 10, 2020 - **Google Glitch**

Confirmed update

Google confirmed that it was a glitch in their indexing systems. There were significant fluctuations but soon everything recovered.

- Google SearchLiaison [tweet](#).
- [Google Search bug caused by issue with its 'indexing systems'.](#)

September 16, 2020 - **Unnamed Update**

Unconfirmed update

A significant fluctuation that lasted for several days was noticed. There was no official statement.

2019 updates

March 12, 2019 - **March 2019 Core Update**

Confirmed update

Google has stated that this is the third major algorithm update since launch. No details about the update have been received.

- [Google Names The 3/12 Update The "March 2019 Core Update"](#).
- Google SearchLiaison [tweet](#).

April 5, 2019 - **Deindexing Bug**

Confirmed update

Google stated that it was indeed an indexing error that occurred over the weekend of April 5th. Some of the sites sank, but most of them soon completely regained their positions.

- [Google says the de-indexing issue has been fixed \(SEL\).](#)



May 23, 2019 - **Deindexing Bug**

Confirmed update

Indexing had failed again but was quickly fixed.

- [Google says the de-indexing issue is fixed.](#)
- Google SearchLiaison [tweet](#).

June 4, 2019 - June 2019 Core Update

Confirmed update

Danny Sullivan of Google has named the core algorithm update (for the first time). It was announced that the deployment will begin on the 3rd and last for some time.

- [Early data around the Google June 2019 core update shows some winners, losers.](#)
- Google SearchLiaison [tweet](#).

September 16, 2019 - **September 2019 Review Rich Results Update**

Confirmed update

Google no longer allows for what it calls "self-service" to display in search results. This means that sites can no longer use schema markup to place reviews displayed on their own website among the SERPs. Google also pointed out that the name property should be specified in structured data. You must give a name to the product in question.

- [Webmaster Central Blog](#).

September 24, 2019 - **September 2019 Core Update**

Confirmed update

The next update of the main core is not like the previous ones and is not so large-scale. The sites that have been pessimized by earlier ups have felt most of the update. Subject to corrections, they began to regain their positions.

- [Google's September 2019 Basic Update will be released today \(SEL\).](#)

October 22, 2019 - **BERT update**

Confirmed update

The launch of BERT meant a new level of learning for Google. Now the search algorithm has begun to understand speech and content, better responding to user searchjes.

- [Understanding search terms is better than ever before \(Google\).](#)
- Read more in the article - [Google BERT Update](#).

December 9, 2019 - **BERT International Deployment**

Confirmed update



Google has confirmed that BERT will be rolled out globally, in 70 languages. The end of the process is not specified.

- [BERT is embedded in Google search in over 70 languages \(SEL\)](#).

2018 updates

January 18, 2018 - **Page Speed to Become Mobile Ranking Factor**

Confirmed update

Loading speed is becoming a ranking factor on mobile devices and desktops. Slow pages may decrease in rankings but webmasters have time to prepare until the summer of 2018 when pessimization will be officially introduced.

- [Google Statement](#) - Page speed is becoming a ranking factor on mobile. Read the related article - [AMP: What You Need to Know About Accelerated Mobile Pages](#).

March 8, 2018 - **"Brackets" Core Update**

Confirmed update

The unfolding seemed to take several weeks. Google confirmed the update to the core algorithm but did not give a name. The comic title was coined by Glenn Gabe.

- [Bracket Update - Analysis and insight from Google's March 7, 2018 Algorithm Update \(GSQi\)](#).
- Search Engine Land has reported that Google has [confirmed the update](#).

March 26, 2018 - **Mobile-First Index implementation**

Confirmed update

Google has finally announced the launch of the mobile index. It has been tested for several years.

- [Implementation of mobile-oriented indexing \(Google\)](#).

Read the related article - [Mobile-First Indexing: How Does it Impact SEO?](#)

April 17, 2018 - **Unnamed Core Update**

Confirmed update

There was significant hesitation in response to which Google announced the rollout of a core kernel update, but no details were given.

- [Google confirmed the rollout](#) on April 20.

June 14, 2018 - **Video Carousels**

Confirmed update



Google has moved video from mainstream search results to a video carousel. This shook up organic results significantly.

- [Google is replacing video thumbnails with a desktop carousel \(RankRanger\).](#)

July 9, 2018 - **Mobile Speed Update**

Confirmed update

Google did not cheat and launched an update to download speed as a ranking factor on mobile devices. The search engine assured that the update affected sites with a very low speed.

- [Using page speed in mobile search rankings \(Google\).](#)

August 1, 2018 - **"Medic" Core Update**

Confirmed update

Google has confirmed a massive kernel update. It was noted that the update affected medical sites and sites that are associated with YMYL. This laid the principles of E-A-T as the basis for a new search engine strategy.

- [Google Medic Update: The update to Google's core search has had a big impact on healthcare / medical \(SER\) sites.](#)
- [The Google update on August 1, 2018 had a big impact on YMYL \(MarieHaynes.com\) sites.](#)

October 15, 2018 - **Unnamed Update**

Unconfirmed update

Fluctuation was recorded, but there was no official confirmation from Google.

November 29, 2018 - **Unnamed Update**

Unconfirmed update

Fluctuation was recorded, but there was no official confirmation from Google. It looked like a training session prior to major updates.

- [Google Search Algorithm Update Hits Friday November 30th? \(SER\).](#)

2017 updates

January 10, 2017 - **Intrusive Interstitial Penalty**

Confirmed update

There started penalties for intrusive interstitial ads that got in the way of the user. This was announced during the summer of 2016.



- [Official: Google intrusive interstitial ads for mobile devices \(SER\) penalty introduced.](#)

February 6, 2017 - **Unnamed Update**

Confirmed update

Significant gouging of mobile search results was noticed during the week. Desktops were also seen in the impact of the update, but there were no official statements.

- Barry Schwartz reported an algorithm update to [SERoundtable](#).
- [February 7, 2017, Google Algorithms Update - Analysis and results of a major core rating update \(GSQi\).](#)

March 8, 2017 - **Fred**

Unconfirmed update

It looked like a major update, Gary Illis even jokingly named it, but later stressed that it was not an official statement. There was a theory that the update was about the link quality.

- [Google's new unconfirmed 'Fred' ranking update is shaking the SEO \(SEL\) world.](#)

June 20, 2017 - **Google Jobs**

Confirmed update

Google has now launched a job portal. Results are based on data from nearly every major vendor including LinkedIn, Monster, Glassdoor, and CareerBuilder.

- [Connect to job seekers using Google Search \(Google\).](#)

September 28, 2017 - **Unnamed Update**

Unconfirmed update

On September 25-28, all trackers recorded significant fluctuations in issuance. However, there was no official confirmation.

- [Advanced Google Algorithms and Search Result Shuffle \(SER\).](#)

October 17, 2017 - **Chrome Security Alerts**

Confirmed update

This was not a full upgrade but it made the HTTPS factor much stronger. With the release of the new Chrome 62, Google began to inform users about unsecured sites using the browser.

- [Next steps to more secure connection \(Chromium\).](#)

October 27, 2017 - **Featured Snippet Drop**

Unconfirmed update

From the 27th to the 31st, there was a significant drop in the number of selected fragments in the search. During this period, the ability of Knowledge Panels also expanded.



- [Is the featured snippet bubble popping? \(SEL\)](#).
- [Google Knowledge Panels: The Ultimate Cheat Sheet](#).

October 27, 2017 - **Google ccTLDs No Longer Give Access to International Search Results**

Confirmed update

Google has changed its attitude towards country code top-level domains such as google.co.uk, google.ca, google.co, etc. These domains will not participate in the international ranking but will receive priority in local issues.

- [Google ads](#) for country code top-level domains.

November 15, 2017 - **Unnamed Update**

Unconfirmed update

There was considerable fluctuation, especially on mobile search results. But no confirmation came.

- [Mid-November Google Algorithms Search Rank \(SER\) update](#).

November 30, 2017 - **Increase snippet length**

Confirmed update

Presumably the snippet length has been increased to 300 characters after over 2 years of testing. Google confirmed the snippet's updates but didn't provide details.

- [Google Shuffles Global SERP Feature Trends \(RankRanger\)](#).

December 14, 2017 - **Maccabee update**

Unconfirmed update

Barry Schwartz called the recorded fluctuations Maccabee. Google did not confirm or deny this assumption. The only thing that followed is the statement about the implementation of some updates.

- SERoundtable's Barry Schwartz named the December update [Maccabee](#).

2016 updates

January 8 - **Core Quality Rank**

Unconfirmed update

Significant fluctuations in search results were noticed. Google finally confirmed that this was an update to the main algorithm. Also at a press conference on January 12, John Mueller confirmed that Panda has become part of Google's core algorithm.

- [Google confirms that a major search ranking update has occurred but is not related to Penguin \(SER\)](#).



February 23, 2016 - **AdWords Update**

Confirmed update

Google has significantly changed the location of the AdWords block in the search results. While this change was for paid ads, it did have an impact on the CTR of competitive commercial searches.

- Prediction by Barry Schwartz at [Search Engine Roundtable](#).
- Conclusions by Matt McGee at [Search Engine Land](#).

May 10, 2016 - **Untitled Update**

Unconfirmed update

The trackers noticed a fluctuation in the results for a week but Google did not confirm. The impression was that previously deployed updates were canceled.

- [Google rejects all recent major algorithm updates \(SER\)](#).

May 12, 2016 - **Mobile-friendly 2**

Confirmed update

A year after the first rollout, Google updated the ranking factor to give more priority to adapted sites in mobile search results.

- John Mueller of Google [has confirmed](#) the completion of the [algorithm update](#) rollout.

23 August 2016 - **Mobile Interstitials Penalty**

Unconfirmed update

Google announced that from January 1, 2017, it will begin to pessimize sites with intrusive interstitial ads.

- [Google has announced](#) that it is pessimizing sites with intrusive interstitial ads.

September 1, 2016 - **Possum update**

Unconfirmed update

There were significant fluctuations in local delivery. Many argued that the update was aimed at reducing duplicate and spam results on local lists.

- [Everything you need to know about the Google Possum \(SEL\) algorithm update](#).
- [Is there a big update to Google search? Chatter thinks so. \(SEL\)](#).

September 5, 2016 - **Core Search Algorithm Update**

Unconfirmed update

There was a significant fluctuation in the results, which prompted the idea of updating the main Google algorithm. Conversations were now centered around changes to local search. There was a theory that there were actually 2 algorithms: one for local and the other for general search.



- Barry Schwartz told Search Engine Land that everything points to an [update to the underlying search algorithm](#).

September 23, 2016 - **Penguin 4.0 Update**

Confirmed update

The Penguin 4.0 update was announced after two years of silence. This was a major update. From this point on, the Penguin became part of the main algorithm.

- [Penguin is now part of our core algorithm \(Google\)](#).

September 27, 2016 - **Penguin 4.0 Phase 1**

Confirmed update

Google stopped punishing bad links but started to devalue them. This marked the beginning of the era of the "softer" Penguin.

- [Why haven't you recovered from the penguin? \(Million ounces\)](#).

October 6, 2016 - **Penguin 4.0 Phase 2**

Unconfirmed update

This is considered to be the completion date for the Penguin major update rollout.

December 14 - **Unnamed Update**

Unconfirmed update

There was considerable fluctuation in extradition but no official announcement was made.

- [December, 15. Signals of the Google Search Algorithm \(SER\) update](#).

2015 updates

February 5, 2015 - **Untitled Update**

Unconfirmed update

Google has not officially confirmed this update but significant fluctuations in the results have still been noticed.

- Google stated that it had nothing to do with Penguin or Panda.

April 22, 2015 - **Mobilegeddon mobile update**

Confirmed update

Google has officially made mobile usability a ranking factor in mobile SERPs. This has greatly impacted search results around the world. It was announced that the update will roll out gradually from April 21st.



- Sharon Gaudin from Computer World published a helpful guide: "[How to Prepare, in 7 Steps, to Google's Mobile Search Change.](#)"
- [Find more mobile-friendly search results.](#)

May 3, 2015 - **Google Core Quality Update**

Confirmed update

This was an update to the quality of the main algorithm which significantly changed the search results.

- [Google's "phantom" algorithm update hits websites \(CNBC\).](#)
- [Search Engine Land](#) received confirmation from a Google source on May 19.

June 18, 2015 - **Panda 4.2**

Confirmed update

This update definitely affected sites happy that issues were fixed by Google in 2014. Panda was dedicated to fighting spam links and content farms. Sites with low quality content could also be affected. However, no strong fluctuation was noticed.

- Google announces an update to [Search Engine Land](#).
- [Google Panda Update: Everything We Know About Panda 4.2 \(SEM Post\).](#)

October 5, 2015 - **Hacked Sites Algorithm**

Unconfirmed update

This update regards hacked spam sites. This algorithm was supposed to remove compromised sites from the index. It is estimated that this update affected 5% of queries worldwide.

- [Search Engine Roundtables](#). Barry Schwartz received confirmation from Gary Illis of Google that this algorithm only affects spam requests.

December 10, 2015 - **RankBrain**

Confirmed update

Google announced the launch of a machine learning system (presumably launched in the spring of 2015). Google's RankBrain has led to an increase in Google's dedicated search results. This led to a significant increase in the number of search results containing related searches.

- [Google is turning its lucrative web search into artificial intelligence machines \(Bloomberg\).](#)

December 17, 2015 - **HTTPS update**

Confirmed update

Now sites with secure https protocol are given priority in ranking because user safety is a priority.



- Google [announced](#) that they are now indexing HTTPS pages.

2014 updates

February 6, 2014 - **Top Heavy 3**

Confirmed update

The Top Heavy algorithm was aimed at combating advertising on the top page of the resource, over spam, and relevance.

- Google's Matt Cutts confirmed this [algorithm update](#) in a tweet.
- [Google is updating its page layout algorithm to accommodate Top Sites \(SEL\) ads.](#)

May 16, 2014 - **PayDay Load 2.0**

Confirmed update

A series of updates followed before it was impossible to know for sure if the algorithm of action has changed. The update affected spam requests.

Matt Cutts tweeted: “Over the weekend, we started rolling out a [rating update](#) for searches.”

May 19, 2014 - **Panda 4.0**

Confirmed update

Most major search algorithm update affecting 7.5% of searches. Panda punishes poor quality content and parser sites while boosting sites with great content in search results, providing Google users with better quality results.

- Google's Matt Cutts announced [Panda 4.0](#) on Twitter.
- [Google starts rolling out Panda 4.0 now \(SEL\).](#)

June 12, 2014- **PayDay Load 3.0**

Confirmed update

This update was like the previous update (PayDay Load 2.0). There was a theory that the first was aimed at certain sites and the second was aimed at spam requests.

- Google's Matt Cutts announced this [algorithm update](#) on Twitter.
- [Version 3.0 of the Google Spam Algorithm launches today \(SER\).](#)

July 24, 2014 - **Pigeon (Google Local Algorithm Update)**

Confirmed update

Google has updated its local search ranking rules to improve and update the information. When receiving geo-dependent queries, Google provides the most informative local search results for the user.

- Upgrade Discussion Thread - [Worldwide Webmaster Search Forum.](#)



August 6, 2014 - **Advantage of HTTPS/SSL Websites**

Confirmed update

Sites with SSL certificates are prioritized in issuance. Online stores and other sites that deal with user personal data and online payments have begun a massive migration to HTTPS as one of the top-ranking factors for YMYL sites.

- [Official announcement of Google Webmaster Central](#).
- Google support documentation on [securing your site with HTTPS](#).

Read more in the following article - [HTTPS vs. HTTP: All You Need to Know](#).

September 23, 2014 - **Panda 4.1**

Confirmed update

According to the statement, the update was significant and affected 3-5% of searches. This was another example of slow deployment, making it difficult to estimate a precise scale.

- [Google's official announcement](#) was made by Pierre Far at Google Plus.
- Updated on the [Webmaster World forum](#)

October 17, 2014 - **Penguin 3.0**

Confirmed update

The search engine does not welcome webspam. Pierre Phar, a Google analyst, announced that they launched the deployment. Many sites dropped in the SERP. Many of the resources that sank after the last update of Penguin 2 have regained their positions.

- There was confirmation by John Mueller of the possibility of returning sites in case of bug fixes on the [central Google Webmaster Help Forum](#)
- [Google AutoCorrects: Penguin 3.0 is still rolling out, 1% Impact \(SER\)](#).

October 21, 2014 - **Pirate 2.0**

Confirmed update

A little over two years later, Google released a DMCA supplement aimed at protecting software and protecting against digital media piracy.

- [Public policy blog](#).
- Rank Ranger's Shiri Berzak shares his thoughts on the [fight against piracy in the Google Pirate Update](#).

December 10, 2014 - **Penguin Everflux**

Confirmed update

Google Officials Says Penguin Is Moving To Continuous Updates

- [Google says Penguin will move to "continuous updates" \(SEL\)](#).



December 22, 2014 - **Pigeon Expands**

Confirmed update

The local search update has affected English speaking regions such as the UK, Canada, and Australia. All Google's actions are aimed at improving and updating local search.

- [Local search forum](#) has reported major changes in the ranking of local results.
- [Local search results were influenced by the popularity of the Google Pigeon update in the UK \(Strategy Digital\)](#).

2013 updates

January 22/March 14, 2013 - **Panda 24/25**

Confirmed update

The 24th and 25th algorithm updates affected 1 to 1.2% of Google searches. Matt Cutts announced that Update 25 will be the last until Panda is integrated into the main algorithm.

- Announcement by Matt Cutts on [SMX](#).
- Cutts recommends using the [Fetch as a Googlebot](#) tool to view sites through Google's eyes.

May 9, 2013 - **Phantom**

Unconfirmed update

This update was never confirmed but there were a lot of rumors on the webmaster forums about large fluctuations in traffic between May 7-14.

- [Google is updating \(Google: nothing to announce\) \(SER\)](#).

May 22, 2013 - **Penguin 2.0**

Confirmed update

Upgrade influenced requests in various languages, including 2.3% of English requests. Thanks to the new technology, "Penguin" has become better at finding webspam. It was rumored that the update affected scanning beyond the second level of the resource.

- Video explanation by [Matt Cutts](#) from [Google](#).

June 11, 2013 - **Payday Loan and Google Dance**

Unconfirmed update

Payday Loan targeted niches with notorious results full of spam. Google Dance is not an update, but rather a reminder that Google Panda is updated every couple of months. It takes about 10 days to deploy and therefore the fluctuations are not so significant.

- [Google's algorithm for sending spam requests: loans to pay off + \(SER\)](#).
- The [SEO blog](#) talks about dancing.



- Google's Matt Cutts talks about [what a site owner should do if he thinks he has been negatively influenced by Panda](#).

June 28 - **Multi-Week Update**

Confirmed update

Matt Cutts later said on his Twitter account that there was a significant change in the SERP over several weeks. The nature has remained unknown but the rendition has changed a lot.

- [Google's Matt Cutts: Releasing Weekly Updates \(SER\)](#).

July 19, 2013 - **Knowledge Graph Expansion**

Unconfirmed update

KG's influence began to affect more than 50% of searches. This influenced more than a quarter of all searches.

- [The day the knowledge web exploded \(Moz\)](#).
- Read more - [Google Knowledge Graph](#).
- [Google Search 101: What is the Knowledge Network and How It Works](#).

August 20, 2013 - **Hummingbird**

Confirmed update

The search has been "humanized". Hummingbird, released around August 2011, is a new search algorithm developed by Google with a focus on semantic search. Google will give more relevant results by forming the results without relying on keywords, and finding synonyms for the search. Google announced the launch date on September 26th.

- Search Engine Land provides this helpful FAQ: [Everything about Google's new "Hummingbird" algorithm](#).
- Find more here - [Algorithms That Affect SEO](#).

October 4, 2013 - **Penguin 2.1**

Confirmed update

Google reacts to suspicious sites and spam anchor lists. This update was aimed at changing the data and also continued to fight low-quality links.

- Search Engine Journal Report: [Penguin 2.1: What's Changed Since 2.0 and How to Recover](#).

December 18, 2013 - **Authorship Rich Snippet Update**

Unconfirmed update

Authorship and extended snippet results fell more than 15%, peaking on December 19.



- A chat on the [Webmaster World](#) forum indicates significant negative changes in search results.

2012 updates

January 5, 2012 - **January 30**

Confirmed update

This update pack was more about quality and improvement. Landing page relevance in image search, site link authority and overall algorithm improvement for better results

- [The Official Google Search Blog](#) provides a complete listing including codenames.

January 18, 2012 - **Panda (ref 3.2)**

Confirmed update

Google has confirmed an update to Panda's web spam algorithm but there have been no significant changes. There was an assumption that this is not a change in the algorithm but an update of data on the sites affected by Panda.

- [Confirmed: Google Panda 3.2 \(SEW\) update.](#)

January 19, 2012 - **Page Layout Algorithm**

Confirmed update

Also known as "Baby Panda" or "Top Heavy". The algorithm analyzes the usefulness of the site content on the first screen. Sites with heavy ads on the first screen began to rank lower.

- This update was covered in the [Google Webmaster Center blog](#).

February 3, 2012 - **February 17**

Confirmed update

There is provided a list of 17 items of new changes such as spelling and text quality. A major announcement was Panda's tighter integration into the main search index.

- [17 search quality metrics: January \(Google\).](#)

February 27, 2012 - **Panda (ref-3.4)**

Confirmed update

Another Panda's upgrade. Google updated the database, making the algorithm more responsive and more sensitive to changes in the web.

- [Google confirms Panda 3.3 \(SEL\) update.](#)
- [Confirmed: Google Panda 3.3 \(SER\).](#)



February 27, 2012 - **Venice**

Confirmed update

Google began to take into account the regionality of users to form natural results. Users located in different regions began to receive different results in Their search results.

- Search Engine Land reports [why the Venice Google update is revolutionizing global SEO](#).

February 27, 2012 - **February 40**

Confirmed update

A list of 40 changes from Google improved snippets for video feeds, several image search improvements, and relevance updates.

- The official Google Search blog details the [main search quality metrics: 40 changes for February](#).

March 23, 2012 - **Panda (ref-3.4)**

Confirmed update

This update, the main goal of which is to lower the position of a site with a low content level, affected 1.6% of searches. The principle of indexing remained the same.

- Google's [Twitter](#) Announcement

April 3, 2012 - **March 50**

Confirmed update

There was another batch of 50 updates. This also included improved relevance of image search, improved approach to character indexing, better understanding of local searches, launching extended site links in mobile search, etc.

- [Search Quality Key Metrics: 50 changes in March \(Google\)](#).

April 19, 2012 - **Panda (ref-3.5)**

Confirmed update

Overall, this was a fairly common update with minimal impact on searches. There was a tendency to increase the ranking of large sites and brands.

- Google's Webmaster Blog dubbed it "[Another Step to Rewarding High-Quality Websites](#)."

April 24, 2012 - **Penguin**

Confirmed update

A new algorithm was launched, affecting 3.1% of searches, aimed at combating search spam, capable of taking into account both external and internal factors. Most of the sites that use spam



methods have been downgraded or removed from Google search. This update was named "Penguin".

- [Another step towards rewarding quality sites \(Google\)](#).
- More in our article - [Algorithms That Affect SEO](#).

April 27, 2012 - **Panda (ref-3.6)**

Confirmed update

The update, released less than a week after Panda 3.5, was minor and imperceptible.

- [Confirmed: The Panda 3.6 update happened on April 27 \(SEL\)](#).

May 4, 2012 - **April 52 updates**

Confirmed update

This package featured all of the April updates including the Penguin update and other link ranking changes, including indexing, spelling, sports scores, and more.

- Google announces 52 updates on its [official blog](#).

May 16, 2012 - **Knowledge Graph**

Confirmed update

The knowledge graph was launched for the first time, which laid the foundation for a modern SERP look. An algorithm comes into force, which implies the use of a knowledge base to improve the results of issuance using semantic information retrieval from various sources.

- [Introducing the knowledge web: things, not strings \(Google\)](#).

Read more in the article [Google Search 101](#).

May 25, 2012 - **Penguin 1.1**

Confirmed update

The Penguin update was insignificant. The data update affected only 0.1% of searches in English. For the first time, it was precisely determined that the Penguin update was being updated outside the main search algorithm.

- [Google is releasing update 1.1 for Penguins \(SEL\)](#).

June 7, 2012 - **May 39 (Search Highlights May 39)**

Confirmed update

Google has summed up its activities in May and provided 39 changes. Included were Penguin updates, links, content quality, and rankings.

- [Search quality score: 39 changes in May \(Google\)](#).
- [Search Engine Land](#) gives an overview of the May updates.



June 8, 2012 - **Panda (ref-3.7)**

Confirmed update

The update was minor and affected less than 1% of English-language requests. This Panda update affected website owners who fell under the Panda of earlier versions.

- [Confirmed: Google Panda 3.7 \(SER\) update.](#)
- The Weidert Group discusses how [Panda 3.7 affects your SEO.](#)

July 19, 2012 - **Link Checker**

Confirmed update

Webmasters have been notified through GSC to comply with the rules for artificial backlinks. Bottom line: Track bad links, request deletion, and report abuse to Google.

- [Madness: Google sends out new link alerts and then says they can be ignored \(SEL\).](#)
- [Google is sending a new Unnatural Link Alert \(SER\) packet.](#)

July 24, 2012 - **Panda (ref-3.8)**

Confirmed update

This was a minor update that was almost imperceptible.

- [Shout Me Loud](#) discusses what to do next with Google 3.8.
- Read about the [official Google Panda 3.8 update](#) on Search Engine Land.

August 10, 2012 - **June/July 86**

Confirmed update

The two-month silence from Google resulted in 86 changes. These include caching HTML5 for mobile devices, improving the relevance of SERPs, improving the processing of "long tail" queries, and more.

- [Key Search Quality Metrics: 86 changes for June and July \(Google\).](#)

August 10, 2012 - **DMCA Penalty (Pirate)**

Confirmed update

Google will punish websites for using content that infringes copyright.

- The official [Google blog](#) writes about updating their search algorithms.

Mid August 2012 - **7 Results**

Unconfirmed update



Google started showing 7 results in the listing, instead of the usual 10. According to research, it affected 17-19% of the results.

- Search Engine Land Reports: [7 Is the New 10? Google shows fewer results but more from the same domain.](#)

August 20 - **Panda (ref-3.9.1)**

Confirmed update

Announced and relatively small updates of the Panda algorithm with database updates. The approximate change in the issue did not exceed 1%.

- [Confirmed: Google Panda 3.9.1 \(SER\) update.](#)

September 18 - **Panda (ref-3.9.2)**

Confirmed update

This was a minor update of data. The change in search results did not even reach 1%.

- [Search Engine Land](#) talks about this update.

September 27, 2012 - **Panda (ref-4.0) + EMD (Exact Match Domains)**

Confirmed update

After this update, the search algorithm has become better. The approach to detecting "low-quality" sites changed, and the ranking algorithm for English results has changed. After the update, it became known that the SERP that was affected by the Panda for different countries had different indicators. The English language SERP changed by 7.5%. It also changed the way Google handles an exact match domain with fewer low quality matches.

- [Webmaster World](#) is discussing the impact of these updates.

October 4, 2012 - **August/September 65**

The belated monthly updates of the search algorithms from Google had 65 points including improvement of snippets, creation of more relevant page titles, updating of the "Knowledge Graph", etc.

- [Key search quality metrics: 65 changes for August and September \(Google\).](#)

October 5 - **Penguin Update 3**

Confirmed update

The numbering of the Penguin was reset and this was the third update, affecting only 0.3% of requests.

- [Search Engine Land](#) covers Matt Cutts' message.
- [Search Engine Journal](#) discusses strategies for releasing Panda.



November 5/November 21, 2012 - **Panda (ref-21/22)**

Confirmed update

Google has updated its search algorithm database. Changes have been made to between 1% and 1.1% of search queries.

- [Search Engine Land](#) discusses the update in more detail.
- [Google Panda Official Update #22: November 21st \(SER\)](#).

December 4, 2012 - **Knowledge Graph Expansion**

Confirmed update

Google has added Knowledge Graph functionality to languages other than English. This update has enhanced the ability to generate searches.

- [Get more accurate answers from the Portuguese to Japanese and Russian \(Google\) Knowledge Network](#).
- [Google Search 101: What is the Knowledge Network and How It Works](#).

December 21, 2012 - **Panda 23**

Confirmed update

There were no major changes with the 23rd algorithm updates. However, the update affected 1.3% of English-speaking queries and was stronger than the previous two.

- [Confirmed: Panda Update Version # 23 \(SER\)](#).

2011 updates

January 2011 - **Overstock.com**

NOT confirmed update

The well-known site Overstock.com was punished for using black SEO. A month later, the same thing happened with JCPenny. This foreshadowed a rise in Google's interest in links and an update to Panda.

- [Ranked by Overstock.com in Google](#) - Discussion at WMW.

January 28, 2011 - **Attribution Update**

Confirmed update

The scandalous spam cases received a response from Google a new update. It influenced about 2% of searches.



- [Matt Cutts](#) on running the algorithm.

February 23, 2011 - **Farmer Panda- (Panda)**

Confirmed update

This affected 12% of sites. The changes affected weak content and content farms.

This update appeared in Europe later, in April of 2011.

- [Web Master World](#) has opened a discussion on this update.
- Message from [Google](#) about rewarding high quality sites
- A post from [Google](#) listing additional guidelines for building high quality websites

March 30, 2011 - **Button +1**

Confirmed update

Google unveiled its +1 button, which was a kind of response to the competition between Facebook and Twitter. Users are able to influence the search results of their social environment.

- [The official Google webmaster Central Blog](#) has announced the +1 button.

11 April 2011 - **Panda, version 2.0**

Confirmed update

The Panda has finally reached English-speaking countries along with the rest of the world. The new large-scale update has affected the whole of Europe. Any content errors are taken into account, such as style, spelling, mismatching tags, and oversaturation of keywords.

New factors are taken into account, such as blocking sites (does not matter at the level of the Chrome browser or search). In fact, Panda is a "scavenger". The algorithm is obliged to clear the results from doorways, satellites, sites only for placing ads and links, and sites with unique content.

- On the webmaster blog: [High-quality sites algorithm goes global, incorporates user feedback.](#)

May 9, 2011 - **Panda 2.1**

Confirmed update



Panda 3.0 was not discussed much before its release. The actual update and was never announced by Google.

- This is an update to Panda 2.1, not Panda 3.0, says Google ([SEL](#)).
- [Google Panda 3.0](#).
- [Need Hits](#) calls the latest Panda update a Google rankings shake-up.

June 21, 2011 - **Panda 2.2**

Confirmed update

This new update is done separately from the main index. It was supposedly aimed at fighting cybercriminals and posting someone else's content.

- [Why aren't sites coming back from Panda?](#) - discussion at WMW.
- Why Google Panda is more a ranking factor than [SEL](#) algorithm update.

July 23, 2011 - **Panda 2.3**

Confirmed update

Update of Panda, as some webmasters believed, although it was not finally clear whether this was an update or a change in the ranking factor. The theory was that Google began to differentiate the quality of content differently, ultimately leading to a more relevant page.

- [Search Engine Land](#) is studying an update.
- Thread at [WebmasterWorld](#).

August 12, 2011 - **Panda 2.4**

Confirmed update

The Panda update affected approximately 6-12% of requests. The new algorithm now works in all languages except Japanese, Korean, and Chinese (Google is testing them).

- The Quality Sites Algorithm has been launched in additional [Google](#) languages.
- Webmaster World members discuss [Google Panda 2.4 - now in all languages!](#)

August 16, 2011 - **Extended links**

Confirmed update

Google has launched extended links, often for brand related queries. It launched 12 links at first but soon narrowed it down to 6.

- The evolution of sitelinks: [Google](#) enhanced and improved.



September 15, 2011 - **Pagination**

Confirmed update

To improve the fight against duplicate content, Google introduced two new parameters: rel=prev and rel=next for pagination pages.

- Breakdown with rel="next"/"prev" - [Google](#).

September 28, 2011 - **Panda 2.5**

Confirmed update

This is another fuzzy Panda update. However, some sites have complained of heavy losses. The details were unclear but there was a theory that the change was aimed at broader analysis of content quality.

- [Confirmed: Google Panda 2.5 Update Arrived This Week](#).

October 5, 2011 - **Flux**

Confirmed update

Matt Cutts tweeted that there could be fluctuations for a few weeks but it will only be around 2%.

- [Search Engine Watch](#) tells us what to expect and what to look for.
- [Twitter Matt Cutts](#).

October 18, 2011 - **Request encryption**

Confirmed update

Google said that searches will be encoded (encrypted). Webmasters faced problems when working with analytics, because some of the data in organic keywords was “not represented”. The amount of this data grew over several weeks.

- [Improved search security \(Google\)](#).

November 3, 2011 - **Freshness**

Confirmed update

Google announced innovations that will affect approximately 35% of requests. They influence content that is sensitive to time changes, and on the frequency and relevance of publications.

- [Providing you with fresher and more recent search results \(Google\)](#).



November 14, 2011 - **10 updates (10-Pack of Updates)**

Confirmed update

Matt Cutts showed a list of the last ten innovations in an effort to be more open. Some of the updates were small though and included extended snippets, cross-language support, updates, and other factors affecting the ranking and display of search results.

- [Ten recent algorithm changes.](#)

18 November 2011 - **Panda (ref. 3.1)**

Confirmed update

The Panda continues to weaken, but there have still been updates. The official version of Panda 3.0 has not been launched, which is why many call this version 3.1. Updates are becoming more frequent but affect less than 1% of requests.

- [Google Panda 3.1 update: November 18 \(SER\).](#)

December 2011 - **December 10**

Confirmed update

This is the second half of 10 updates. It affected parked domains, blog searches, photos, images, etc. Google stated that such updates will come monthly.

- [Search Quality Highlights: New Monthly Algorithm Change Series \(Google\).](#)

2010 updates

April 2010 - **Google Places (update)**

Confirmed update

Back in 2009, Places was launched but remained part of Google Maps. It was in 2010 that it was integrated into local search results. This opened up new opportunities for local SEO and changed the Local Business Center brand in Google places.

- [The official Google blog](#) talks about Places.

May 2010 - **May Day update**

Confirmed update

The publishers noticed a significant correlation in the search results and Matt Cutts later confirmed that the algorithm was changed. This affected long-tail searches. Many foreshadowed the imminent update of Panda.



- Video: Google's Matt Cutts about May Day Update ([SERroundtable](#)).
- [Webmaster World](#) discusses May Day events.

June 2010 - **Caffeine**

Confirmed update

The latest release of a new web indexing, scanning and storage system.

- [Official Google Blog](#) - Update presentation.

September 2010 - **Instant Google**

Confirmed update

The add-on made it possible to show the results of the search results while the user was typing the request. This triggered an instant reaction from webmasters who were trying to find a pattern between input and final result. Judging from the discussions, no significant correlation was seen.

- [Google Instant](#).
- [The official Google blog](#) talks about the discovery of Google Instant.

November 2010 - **Instant View**

Confirmed update

A magnifying glass icon has appeared in the SERP. It allowed the user to view pages of different sites on Google without clicking on the link. This clearly speaks of the search engine's work on design, quality, and user-friendliness.

- Instant preview - [Google](#).

December 2010 - **Social Signals**

Unconfirmed update

Social signals from Twitter and Facebook are now taken into account by Bing and Google in their rankings.

- [Google video](#) confirms the impact of social signals.

December 2010 - **Negative reviews**

Confirmed update



Google began to consider user and company reviews when ranking after the New York Times smashed DecorMyEyes on its pages. This is a company that had negative customer reviews but still ranked highly in search engines.

- [Google's attitude](#) towards negative customer reviews.

2009 updates

February 1, 2009 - **Tag Rel-canonical**

Confirmed update

Canonical tag was launched as a joint development of Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo. This innovation allowed SEOs to send canonicalization signals to search bots without affecting users.

- [Learn about Canonical Link in 5 minutes \(MattCutts.com\)](#).
- Read more about using the tag in SEO - [Rel=Canonical Tag : Best SEO Practices for Canonical URLs](#).

February 2009 - **Vince**

Unconfirmed update

According to SEOs, this update has given priority to larger brands in Google. In contrast, Google's [Matt Cutts](#) insisted that the changes were minor.

- [Webmaster World](#) has some buzz as members react to fluctuating search results.

August 2009 - **Caffeine Preview**

Confirmed update

Google presented a new web indexing system that allowed the search engine to crawl and store data much more efficiently, providing the user with more relevant information. Early access was granted to developers in August 2009 with a final rollout in June 2010.

Google asks users to provide feedback by including the word “Caffeine” in the feedback form.

Internal optimization increases Google's trust in a site. Penalties for spam and technical problems are introduced. A site that takes a long time to load and contains broken links may be downgraded in the search results.

- [Google Webmaster Central Blog](#) reveals its secret project.



- Google Caffeine: A detailed test of the new Google ([Mashable](#)).
- [Search Engine Land](#) represents their perspective on change.

December 2009 - Real Time Search

real-time search has ceased to be a fantasy. Very fast indexing occurs, Twitter appears, and all this is combined into a common feed. It is being updated right here and now.

2008 updates

April 2008 - Dewey

Confirmed update

Strong fluctuations in March and early April. It was rumored that Google was trying to increase its influence by promoting its tools.

- [Search Engine Land](#) shows how Google Suggest works.

August 2008 - Appeared in the search dropdown menu

Confirmed update

Significant update of the Google home page. For the first time, a drop-down menu appears. Its task is to prompt the user with a search query.

- Google asks for user feedback for March/April 2008 ([SERroundtable](#)).
- See [Google Autocomplete Help](#) for more information.

2007 updates

May 2007 - World search update

Confirmed update

This cannot be considered an update in full. Google has integrated news, videos, images, and local search verticals into traditional results. This dramatically changed the format of the search results.

- [The official Google blog](#) announces this feature and provides examples.



June 2007 - **Buff**y

Unconfirmed update

This correlation of the results was most likely for certain words. It has been suggested that this was just a bunch of small changes.

- This update was discussed and named Buffy by members of [Webmaster World](#), in honor of Vanessa Fox's departure from Google.
- Google "Buffy" update - Google.com June update ([table of results](#)).
- Seattle SMX Results ([MattCutts.com](#)).

2006 updates

November 2006 - **Snot (again)**

Unconfirmed update

It seemed that this update covered the whole of 2006. Google was constantly making changes and adjusting the additional index. At the end of 2006, a statement was made that these were not sanctions applied.

- Explanation of the Google supplemental index ([SERroundtable](#)).

December 2006 - **False alarm**

Unconfirmed update

Rankings in the SERP have moved a lot, even though Google employees assure that there were no changes.

- Unconfirmed update refuted by Matt Cutts ([SERroundtable](#)).

2005 updates

January 2005 - **Nofollow**

Confirmed update

Google launched the nofollow parameter. Nofollow helps remove unwanted links, including spam comments on blogs. This is not a traditional algorithm update but still should not be underestimated. The main goal is to fight spam, the update had a big impact on links.

- Google, Yahoo, MSN are teaming up to support the Nofollow attribute for links - [SEW](#).
- [Official Google Blog](#) - Questions and Answers.
- Additional information - [Wikipedia](#).



February 2005 - **Allegra**

Unconfirmed update

The Bourbon update affected 3.5% of requests. There were no unanimous conclusion on what the algorithm was aimed at. One theory is that Allegra influenced the sandbox. Others speculated that Google has begun to penalize poor quality links.

- Discussion at [WebMaster World](#)
- Check out more information on [Kuro5hin](#)
- Google Update Feb 2005 - [SEW](#)

May 2005 - **Bourbon**

Confirmed update

There was a theory among webmasters that Bourbon affected duplicate content and non-canonical URLs (that is, there was a confrontation between www and sites without www).

2 June 2005 - **XML sitemaps**

Confirmed update

HTML sitemaps have been replaced with XML. Google allows webmasters to upload sitemaps through the GSC, giving the right to influence the crawling and indexing process.

- [Explained](#) by Shiva Shivakumar of Google, CTO of Google Sitemaps.

28 June 2005 - **Personalized Search**

Confirmed update

Google launches SERP personalization. Unlike earlier attempts, the search engine began to directly use the history of searches, taking into account personal preferences. Although the effect was not significant at first, Google did not abandon the technology.

- [Google's Official Blog](#) Explains Personalized Search.
- Explanation of the concept of personalized search from [SEW](#).

September 2005 - **Gilligan**

Unconfirmed update

An update that supposedly consisted of three phases. There were no major changes in the beginning, according to Google. The second stage in October was more visible to optimizers. The SERP is still updated daily but the toolbar PR every quarter. For this reason, many began to call the update nothing more than a false one.



October 2005 - **Places and Maps (Google Local/Maps)**

Confirmed update

The innovation has affected regional SEO. All information from the maps are linked in the LBC.

- Google integrates local products and maps ([Google](#)).

December 2005 - **Big Daddy**

Confirmed update

The Big Daddy update was an infrastructure change aimed at addressing URL canonicalization and redirection issues.

It was a gradual unfolding that began in December 2005 and ended in March 2006.

- [Webmaster World](#) has been discussing their suspicions about the update several weeks before the official news arrives.
- [Matt Cutts](#) presents the Big Daddy timeline.

2004 updates

January 2004 - **Austin**

Unconfirmed update

An addition to the famous Florida is coming out. Google continues to fight against spam promotion methods. Invisible text and the overspam of keywords both on the page and separately in meta tags are included.

In 2004, there was a theory that Google adopted the "Hilltop" algorithm, as a result, webmasters began to take page relevance more seriously.

- [Google Update Austin](#).
- The [Search Engine Journal](#) details what Austin is.

14 February 2004 - **Brandy**

Confirmed update

The algorithm was distinguished by a large number of changes. Brandy brought the expansion of the Google Index, along with an emphasis on anchor text relevance, quality of inbound links



defining an online environment and Latent Semantic Indexing (LSI). Google is starting to distinguish between synonyms and keyword analysis tactics have changed.

- [Sitepoint](#) makes an assumption about what algorithmic changes have occurred.
- The conversation about this update started on February 13th at [Webmaster World](#).

2003 updates

1 February 2003 - **Boston (Boston)**

Confirmed update

Boston is the first algorithm to receive an official name from Google. This algorithm was launched to analyze the backlink data in more detail. This significantly changed the search results. The original idea of Google was to update the algorithm monthly. As the changes began to occur often, the idea of a monthly periodicity was dropped.

[Webmaster World](#) expressed their delight at the news about Boston.

April 2003 - **Cassandra**

Unconfirmed update

Google and links have been inseparable from the start. The search engine tries to influence the quality of the links. Cassandra focuses on link quality issues, co-domain bulk links, hidden text, and hidden links. It was also the first time that Google allowed banned sites to submit a revision request, which many were waiting for. [Webmaster World](#) has been actively discussing changes in keyword weights, banned sites, site age, and redirects.

May 2003 - **Dominic**

Unconfirmed update

The first Google bots were spotted - Freshbot and Deepcrawler. The exact nature of this algorithm has remained a mystery. Many webmasters reported crashes. The only clear change was that Google is starting to crawl, count, and measure backlinks differently.

The discussion on [Webmaster World](#) was so intense that the moderators had to split the discussion into two branches.

June 2003 - **Esmeralda**

Unconfirmed update

Esmeralda was the last monthly algorithm update, after which the process was more continuous. "Google Dance" has been replaced by "Everflux". Probably heralded major infrastructure changes at Google. From this moment, an indicator of changes that are already expected is launched.



Ranking and backlinking issues are discussed by [Webmaster World](#) members.

1 July 2003 - **Fritz**

Confirmed update

Fritz is completing the monthly Google Dance update and is moving entirely to Everflux. The search engine launches daily crawling and updating of the index percentage to improve and update search results.

[Webmaster World](#) is discussing the Fritz update.

[Matt Cutts](#) explains the difference between Google Dance and Everflux caused by Fritz New streamlined process. He says most people won't notice at all, but webmasters will definitely see the data updates.

September 2003 - **Snot (known as Supplemental Index)**

Unconfirmed update

Google starts indexing more documents by creating an "additional" index. The danger of getting into it was actively discussed before the reintegration of the index.

1 November 2003 - **Florida**

Confirmed update

Like Hurricane Florida, the new update was massive and aggressive. Many SEOs felt that the old, spam SEO techniques of the 90s are not only ineffective but can also lead to sanctions and lower positions of the resource.

Many large sites are losing ground. Promotion becomes much more difficult (but also more interesting).

[Web Workshop](#) puts forward theories about what happened and answers the question that interested every SEO specialist "Where are we going?"

2002 updates

September 2002 - **Google Dance Began**

Unconfirmed update

This is the first fixed Google update.

Up to this point, the search engine has been doing monthly Google Dance and PageRank updates. Google Dance supposedly included a significant change in relevance rankings and an



increase in the importance of anchor text quality. This update was not officially announced, but many webmasters have noticed large-scale correlations in search results.

This algorithm update generated a lot of discussion on the [WebMaster World](#) forum.

dauction Senior Member

Msg#:120053 3:32 am on Sep 28, 2002 (gmt 0)

How on earth can they justify dropping sites that were ranked in the top 10 and are now page 20 and NOTHING at all has changed on the sites from the last month?
The biggest thing is they move the toilet mid stream without a hint they are going to do it...(change the rules)

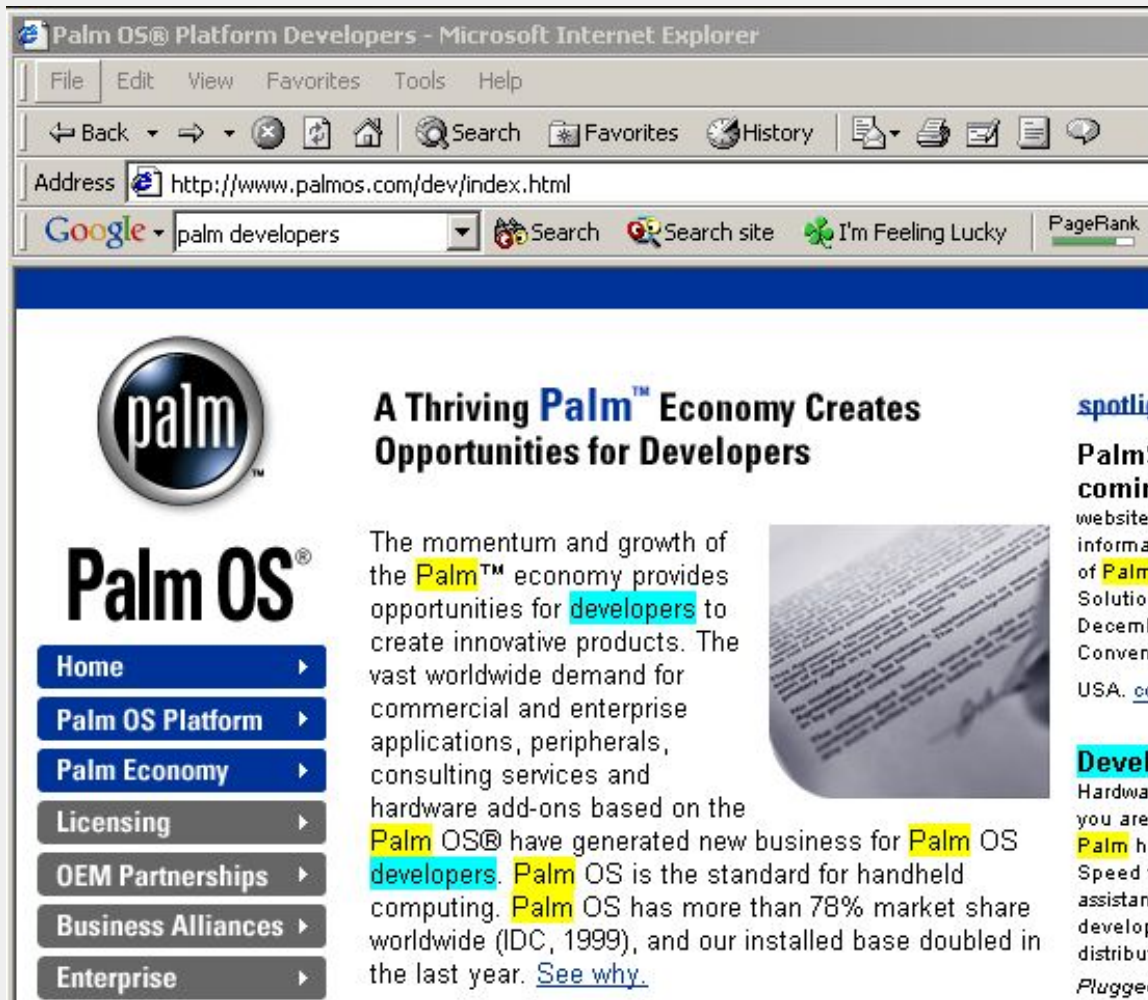
Googles a joke..
tired of their games..
off to support ANY other search engine..enough of this every month change the rules nonsense..good bye Google
..Good riddance..

The commentator was wrong at that time. Google will change the rules of the game more than once and all SEO specialists will simply have to continue this race to victory.

2000 updates

December 11, 2000 - **Google Toolbar**

Confirmed update



Google launched TBPR (Toolbar PageRank) to find information faster and easier. The free browser extension allows you to search Google from any webpage and search on any website using Google's advanced search engine. This moment can be considered the birth of SEO. The race for top positions has begun

- [Official announcement.](#)

1998 updates

September 4, 1998

Google Inc. was founded by Sergey Brin and Larry Page. The first algorithm was launched back in March 1998. The search engine was launched and Page Rank was invented. Its algorithm was based on the transfer of link weight between pages and the basic rule that initially all pages have a certain weight. The more resources link to a page, the higher the PR and, accordingly, the higher the place in the search results.



$$PR(u) = \sum_{v \in B_u} \frac{PR(v)}{L(v)},$$

Two basic rules of the new system:

- The more links leading to the page, the higher the PR, and the higher the place in the SERP
- The higher the Page Rank of a linking page, the more link weight it can transfer