Privacy Oriented Alternative Search Engines To Google

Brief: In this age of the internet, you can never be too careful with your privacy. Use these alternative search engines that do not track you.

Google – unquestionably being the best search engine out there, makes use of powerful and intelligent algorithms (including A.I. implementations) to let the users get the best out of a search engine with a personalized experience.

This sounds good until you start to live in a filter bubble. When you start seeing everything that 'suits your taste', you get detached from the reality. Too much of anything is not good. Too much of personalization is harmful as well.

This is why one should get out of this filter bubble and see the world as it is. But how do you do that?

You know that Google sure as hell tracks a lot of information about your connection and the system when you perform a search and take an action within the search engine or use other Google services such as Gmail.

So, if Google keeps on tracking you, the simple answer would be to stop using Google for searching the web. But what would you use in place of Google? Microsoft's Bing is no saint either.

So, to address the netizens concerned about their privacy while using a search engine, I have curated a list of privacy oriented alternative search engines to Google.

Best 8 Privacy-Oriented Alternative Search Engines To Google

Do note that the alternatives mentioned in this article are not necessarily "better" than Google, but only focuses on protecting users privacy. Here we go!

1. DuckDuckGo

DuckDuckGo is one of the most successful privacy oriented search engines that stands as an alternative to Google. The user experience offered by DuckDuckGo is commendable. I must say – "It's unique in itself".

DuckDuckGo, unlike Google, utilizes the traditional method of "sponsored links" to display the advertisements. The ads are not focused on you but only the topic you are searching for – so there is nothing that could generate a profile of you in any manner – thereby respecting your privacy.

Of course, DuckDuckGo's search algorithm may not be the smartest around (because it has no idea who you are!). And, if you want to utilize one of the best privacy oriented alternative search engines to Google, you will have to forget about getting a personalized experience while searching for something.

The search results are simplified with specific meta data's. It lets you select a country to get the most relevant result you may be looking for. Also, when you type in a question or searching for a fix, it might present you with an instant answer (fetched from the source).

Although, you might miss quite a few functionalities (like filtering images by license) – that is an obvious trade-off to protect your privacy.

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DuckDuckGo

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2. Qwant

Qwant is probably one of the most loved privacy oriented search engines after DuckDuckGo. It ensures neutrality, privacy, and digital freedom while you search for something on the Internet.

If you thought privacy-oriented search engines generally tend to offer a very casual user experience, you need to rethink after trying out Qwant. This is a very dynamic search engine with trending topics and news stories organized very well. It may not offer a personalized experience (given that it does not

track you) – but it does feel like it partially with a rich user experience offered to compensate that in a way.

Qwant is a very useful search engine alternative to Google. It lists out all the web resources, social feeds, news, and images on the topic you search for.

Qwant

3. Startpage

Startpage is a good initiative as a privacy-oriented search engine alternative to Google. However, it may not be the best one around. The UI is very similar to that of Google's (while displaying the search results – irrespective of the functionalities offered). It may not be a complete rip-off but it is not very impressive – everyone has got their own taste.

To protect your privacy, it lets you choose it. You can either select to visit the web pages using the proxy or without it. It's all your choice. You also get to change the theme of the search engine. Well, I did enjoy my switch to the "*Night*" theme. There's an interesting option with the help of which you can generate a custom URL keeping your settings intact as well.

Startpage

4. Privatelee

Privatelee is another kind of search engine specifically tailored to protect your online privacy. It does not track your search results or behavior in any way. However, you might get a lot of irrelevant results after the first ten matched results.

The search engine isn't perfect to find a hidden treasure on the Internet but more for general queries. Privatelee also supports power commands – more like shortcuts – which helps you search for the exact thing in an efficient manner. It will save a lot of your time for pretty simple tasks such as searching for a movie on Netflix. If you were looking for a super fast privacy oriented search engine for common queries, Privatelee would be a great alternative to Google.

Privatelee

5. Swisscows

Well, it isn't dairy farm portfolio site but a privacy-oriented search engine as an alternative to Google. You may have known about it as Hulbee – but it has recently redirected its operation to a new domain. Nothing has really changed except for the name and domain of the search engine. It works the same way it was before as Hulbee.com.
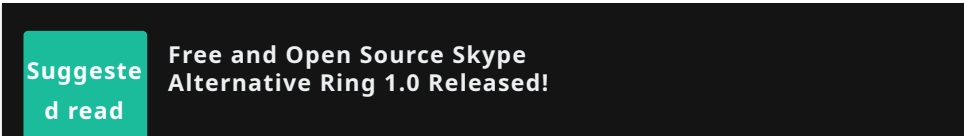
Swisscows utilizes Bing to deliver the search results as per your query. When you search for something, you would notice a tag cloud on the left sidebar which is useful if you need to know about the related key terms and facts. The design language is a lot simpler but one of its kind among the other search engines out there. You get to filter the results according to the date but that's about it – no more advanced options to tweak your search results. It utilizes a tile search technique (a semantic technology) to fetch the best results to your queries. The search algorithm makes sure that it is a family-friendly search engine with pornography and violence ruled out completely.

Swisscows

6. searX

searX is an interesting search engine – which is technically defined as a "metasearch engine". In other words, it utilizes other search engines and accumulates the results to your query in one place. It does not store your search data being an open source metasearch engine at the same time. You can review the source code, contribute, or even customize it as your own metasearch engine hosted on your server.

If you are fond of utilizing Torrent clients to download stuff, this search engine will help you find the magnet links to the exact files when you try searching for a file through searX. When you access the settings (preferences) for searX, you would find a lot of advanced things to tweak from your end. General tweaks include – adding/removing search engines, rewrite HTTP to HTTPS, remove tracker arguments from URL, and so on. It's all yours to control. The user experience may not be the best here but if you want to utilize a lot of search engines while keeping your privacy in check, searX is a great alternative to Google.

searX

7. Peekier

Peekier is another fascinating privacy oriented search engine. Unlike the previous one, it is not a metasearch engine but has its own algorithm implemented. It may not be the fastest search engine I've ever used but it is an interesting take on how search engines can evolve in the near future. When you type in a search query, it not only fetches a list of results but also displays the preview images of the web pages listed. So, you get a "peek" on what you seek. While the search engine does not store your data, the web portals you visit do track you.

So, in order to avoid that to an extent, Peekier accesses the site and generates a preview image to decide whether to head into the site or not (without you requiring to access it). In that way, you allow less websites to know about you – mostly the ones you trust.

Peekier

8. MetaGer

MetaGer is yet another open source metasearch engine. However, unlike others, it takes privacy more seriously and enforces the use of Tor network for anonymous access to search results from a variety of search engines. Some search engines who claim to protect your privacy may share your information to the government (whatever they record) because the server is bound to US legal procedures. However, with MetaGer, the Germany-based server would protect even the anonymous data recorded while using MetaGer.

They do house a few number of advertisements (without trackers of course)- but you can get rid of those as well by joining in as a member of the non-profit organization – SUMA-EV – which sponsors the MetaGer search engine.

MetaGer

Suggested read | **7 Open Source Chrome Alternative Web Browsers For Linux**

Wrapping Up

If you are concerned about your privacy, you should also take a look at some of the best privacy-focused Linux distributions. Among the search engine alternatives mentioned here – DuckDuckGo – is my personal favorite. But it really comes down to your preference and whom would you choose to trust while surfing the Internet.

Do you know some more interesting (but good) privacy-oriented alternative search engines to Google?

Let us know your thoughts in the comments below.