

GOOGLE

Pocket Guide



O'REILLY®

*Tara Calishain,,
Rael Dornfest & DJ Adams*

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Froogle

Google Catalogs is a great way to do offline shopping, especially if you like to browse with nothing more than a couple of keywords. However, if you're the modern type who insists on doing all shopping online, you'll want to check out Froogle (<http://froogle.google.com/>).

"Froogle," a combination of the words "Google" and "frugal," is a searchable shopping index that looks a lot like the Google Directory (see Figure 24) with a focus on getting you right to an online point of purchase for the item you're interested in. The service was launched in December 2002 and, at the time of this writing, is still in beta.



Figure 24. Froogle

There are two ways of finding items in the Froogle directory: browsing and searching. In the same way as browsing and searching Google can lead to different results, so too will you

find different products depending on the road you take in Froogle.

Browsing for Purchases

The Froogle home page lists a set of top-level categories, each with a representative smattering of subcategories. To browse a particular category, just click on the link. You'll find that even after some drilling down to just the subcategory you're after, there are still bound to be a lot of items. For example, there are currently over 3,000 results on the Flowers > Arrangement category.

Listings include a picture (when one is available, as is most often the case), price, the store selling the item, a brief description of the item, and a link leading to all items from that particular vendor in the category at hand. You can narrow things down by choosing to view only items within a particular price range.

Unless you have a lot of time and really like shopping, the browsing option is less than optimal. Searching Froogle works much better, especially when you're in a hurry and have something specific in mind.

Searching for Purchases

Froogle sports a basic keyword search, but to get the most out of your search, you want the Froogle Advanced Search (http://froogle.google.com/froogle_advanced_search).

Some of the Advanced Search will look familiar if you've used the standard Google Advanced Search; you can specify words, phrases, and words that should be excluded. But you can also specify products that are below a specified price or within a particular price range. You can also specify whether your keywords should appear within the product name, the product description, or both; this gives you some nice additional fine-grained control. Finally, you can specify the

category in which your results should appear from Apparel & Accessories to Toys & Games.

Figure 25 shows a sample set of Froogle search results.

The screenshot shows the Froogle search interface. At the top, the Froogle logo is on the left, and the search bar contains the query "grundig intext:"short wave"". To the right of the search bar are buttons for "Froogle Search", "Advanced |", and "What is Fro". Below the search bar, it says "Find products for sale from across the web." and "Search took 0.23 seconds." The results section shows "Showing 1-10 of 306 results in All categories". There are filters for "Narrow Results by Category" and "Narrow by price: \$ to \$". The first result is for a "Grundig YB300PE AM/FM/Short-wave Radio" priced at \$79.99. The second result is for a "GRUNDIG S350 AM - FM - Short Wave World Receiver Radio" priced at \$99.88. On the right side, there are "Sponsored Links" for "Grundig AM/FM/World Radio" and "Short Wave" products.

Figure 25. Froogle search results

Froogle Special Syntax

Froogle does have some special syntax up its sleeve.

intitle:

intitle: restricts results by the name of the product.

```
intitle:giraffe
intitle:grundig porsche radio
```

intext:

intext: restricts results by the product description.

```
intext:figurine
intext:"short wave"
```

You can use `intitle:` and `intext:` in combination, so `intitle:giraffe intext:figurine` will work as expected.

There's also an OR option, specified by a `|` (pipe). For example, to find a glass giraffe or elephant, you would search for: `glass (intitle:giraffe | intitle:elephant)`.

Adding a Merchant to Froogle

With Google's prominence in the regular search space, it's reasonable to expect that Froogle will quickly become a popular shopping destination. If you sell things online, you might be wondering how much Google charges a vendor to be a part of the Froogle stable.

The short answer is: nothing! Yup, you can be listed in Froogle without paying a dime. There are some limitations, though. Currently, Froogle accepts only English-language web sites and products priced in U.S. dollars.

Merchants who wish to be included on the site are invited to submit a *data feed*—a tab-delimited file generated by your favorite spreadsheet program, in-house content management system, product database, or the like. For more information on making your products available via Froogle, see <http://froogle.google.com/froogle/merchants.html>.