Click to prove
you're human

If privacy is what you're after and you want to get away from using Google, DuckDuckGo is a great alternative. The service focuses on putting privacy first, from internet browsing to email forwarding. However, the results aren't as relevant or robust, so you may not always find exactly what you're looking for. Thousands of privacy-conscious users have already made the switch from messaging platforms like WhatsApp to more secure-seeming options such as Signal and Telegram. At the same time, many people may be opting to use DuckDuckGo instead of Google or Bing for web searches, likely because the lesser-known search engine does not collect user data or track what you search. You may like DuckDuckGo has seen more than 4 million users install its apps and browser extensions, making it their default search engine, and you can too.Here's how to switch to — and use — DuckDuckGo. How to add DuckDuckGo to your browserIf you simply want to try out DuckDuckGo, type duckduckgo.com into your browser's address bar and enter your search query. Use it for a while and see if you like it. Once you're ready to make the switch, you can either select DuckDuckGo as your default search engine or add the appropriate app or extension to your browser. Adding DuckDuckGo to ChromeChrome users have two options for using DuckDuckGo on the desktop. The simplest option, if you're looking only for the private search function, is to make DuckDuckGo the default search engine.Get instant access to breaking news, the hottest reviews, great deals and helpful tips.Go to Settings (the three vertical dots at the top right of your browser bar) > Search engine > Manage search engine. Click the vertical dots next to DuckDuckGo and select Make default. This will make DuckDuckGo the default search engine in your address search bar as well. The setting to make DuckDuckGo the default search engine in Google Chrome. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Google/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)An alternative for extra privacy is to install the DuckDuckGo Chrome extension. This will block hidden trackers and connect you to encrypted versions of websites if available. If you change your mind about DuckDuckGo, both the default setting and the browser extension can be disabled in Chrome's settings. Adding DuckDuckGo to FirefoxTo make DuckDuckGo your default search engine in Firefox, toggle open the Settings options with the three horizontal lines to the far right of your address bar. Click Preferences and open the Default Search Engine drop-down menu to select DuckDuckGo. This will change the settings for search in your address bar.The setting to make DuckDuckGo the default search engine in Firefox. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Mozilla Foundation/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)To make DuckDuckGo your homepage in Firefox, drag this link to the Home icon and select Yes in the pop-up window. (Image credit: Mozilla Foundation/DuckDuckGo/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)Like Chrome, Firefox has an add-on called DuckDuckGo Privacy Essentials that has extra privacy features. Adding DuckDuckGo to other browsersSafari users can simply tap the magnifying glass in the search bar, which will bring up a drop-down to select the default search engine. You can also add the DuckDuckGo extension from the App Store. The setting to make DuckDuckGo the default search engine in Apple Safari. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Apple/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)With Brave, open the hamburger menu at the top right and go to Settings > Search Engine. Open the dropdown menu at the top of the page and select DuckDuckGo as your default. The setting to make DuckDuckGo the default search engine in the Brave browser. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Brave/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)In Edge, click the three horizontal dots (they look like " ... ") in the top right and select Settings. On the next page, click the three stacked lines in the top left and select > Privacy, Search and Services. The setting to make DuckDuckGo the default search engine in Microsoft Edge. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Microsoft/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)Scroll all the way down the page and, under the Services heading, click Address Bar and Search. Open the dropdown menu next to Search Engine Used in the Address Bar and select DuckDuckGo. You can also get the Privacy Essentials add-on. Adding DuckDuckGo on mobileDuckDuckGo has browsing apps for both iOS and Android. If you prefer to use DuckDuckGo as your default search engine within Safari, Firefox, or Brave, follow the steps on DuckDuckGo's help pages. How to use DuckDuckGoDuckDuckGo isn't all that different from any other search engine. Type your query into the search bar and get your results. As with Google, you can narrow your search to images, videos, news, maps and shopping.DuckDuckGo's results pages look fairly similar to Google's, with knowledge panels, news carousels and related searches. However, you'll get more with Google search results, such as recent tweets, People Also Ask and videos, than you'll get with DuckDuckGo. Google's search results, including frequently asked questions, news, tweets and related topics. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Google/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)Google also returns different, and perhaps more relevant, results, depending on your perspective. When we searched for "Sundance Film Festival," Google's first four results (punctuated by People Also Ask and tweets from @SundanceFest) were from different pages on Sundance.org. DuckDuckGo adds news and images to search results, but that's about it. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: DuckDuckGo/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)With DuckDuckGo, we got only one link, to the main festival page. The second result was from Wikipedia. Bing adds blog postings, a map and even trivia questions to the news, frequently asked questions and related topics. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Microsoft/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)Microsoft's Bing splits the difference between the two, with results similar to DuckDuckGo but more robust knowledge panels. It's also worth noting that DuckDuckGo uses Apple Maps (with pretty mediocre results) and Yelp reviews. Google obviously shows Google Maps and Google reviews. Bing runs on OpenStreetMap and TripAdvisor. DuckDuckGo's mapping search results aren't very informative. Click for larger image. (Image credit: DuckDuckGo/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)Google Maps' results are great if you want to go skiing, but maybe not so much if you want to see a movie. Click to enlarge. (Image credit: Google/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)Bing has the most useful map, plus tips on what to do and where to eat. Click for larger image. (Image credit: Microsoft/Screenshot by Tom's Guide)All that is to say, DuckDuckGo isn't anything special once you get beyond the privacy features. However, it can be a useful alternative if you're looking for a new search engine. Free privacy-focused internet search engine DuckDuckGo promises a seemingly dream experience of private searches, no ad-trackers and smarter encryption. In an age of data leaks, breaches, scandals and growing concerns over cyberattacks, the company caters to internet users' increasing desire for privacy. Below, we'll show you how to install and use it on your phone and computer.DuckDuckGo saw more than 50 million app downloads and a 55% traffic increase over a 12-month period, according to a June 2021 report from SpreadPrivacy.com. The search engine and its accompanying tools is another weapon you can add to your digital privacy arsenal, like Apple's prompt to opt out of tracking and the Sign in with Apple feature.   In addition to its private search engine, DuckDuckGo offers a privacy browser app for iOS and Android, as well as a Chrome extension. If you'd rather not download the app or extension, you can also go to duckduckgo.com and run your searches there. Here's how to use DuckDuckGo on your browser or mobile. How to install DuckDuckGo for Android1. Open the Google Play Store app.2. Search DuckDuckGo.3. Choose DuckDuckGo Privacy Browser.4. Tap Install.5. Tap Open.6. DuckDuckGo will ask if you want to set Google Chrome or DuckDuckGo as your default browser app. Choose which one you want and tap Set As Default. When I visited Old Navy's site in my browser, this is what DuckDuckGo told me. From there, DuckDuckGo will ask you to do a quick search as a tutorial. I searched a clothing store I frequent and DuckDuckGo immediately notified me that it had blocked two ad trackers. You can also view the grade DuckDuckGo gave the website you've visited, how many trackers were blocked, whether the connection is encrypted and what the site's privacy practices are. Tap the flame icon next to the search bar to clear out any vulnerable personal data from your tabs. Tap Clear All Tabs and Data to "burn" away your personal data. How to install DuckDuckGo for iPhone1. Open the App Store.2. Search DuckDuckGo.3. Choose DuckDuckGo Privacy Browser.4. Tap Get.5. Enter your Apple ID password or confirm the download with Face ID or Touch ID.6. Tap Open.7. DuckDuckGo will ask if you want to make DuckDuckGo your default browser app. Choose Set As Default or Skip.From there, DuckDuckGo will redirect you to your Settings app for any additional changes and to view what the program will have access to. You can choose your default browser app from Safari to DuckDuckGo here as well. After you've configured your settings the way you want them, you can open the app and start running searches. When I visited CNN.com, DuckDuckGo reported that it had blocked almost 30 trackers. In addition, the app provided a privacy grade for the site, as well as the option to wipe personal data out of the browser with the fire icon. DuckDuckGo and SiriUnder DuckDuckGo's tab in Settings, you can see what the program can do with Siri and your search requests. You can choose whether or not you want Siri to learn from your DuckDuckGo searches to make suggestions for you, allow the DuckDuckGo app and its contents to appear in search, as well as allow suggestions and content from DuckDuckGo and Shortcuts for the app to appear in Search and widgets. If you don't have Siri enabled, this isn't something you have to worry about. How to install the DuckDuckGo Chrome extensionOn DuckDuckGo's website, the option to add the private search engine to Chrome is a button right under the search bar. 1. Open DuckDuckGo in a Google Chrome browser.2. Click the Add DuckDuckGo to Chrome button. This will redirect you to the Chrome Web Store. 3. Click the Add to Chrome button in the top right corner. 4. DuckDuckGo will ask if you want to add Privacy Essentials. This will give DuckDuckGo permission to fend off ad-trackers and keep your searches private. If you agree, click Add Extension.5. You'll be redirected to a page saying the extension was successfully installed. DuckDuckGo will also give you links to download the privacy browser on mobile. 6. When you're ready, click Start Searching and you'll be taken to the main DuckDuckGo search bar.Now when you open a new window or tab on Chrome, DuckDuckGo will pop up instead of Google's search bar. DuckDuckGo Search and DuckDuckGo Private Browser – our privacy-protecting alternative to Google Search and Chrome in one free app – is now available on all major platforms. Privacy Pro, our three-in-one privacy subscription service, is also available to U.S. residents in the DuckDuckGo browser on all major platforms. Find step-by-step instructions for your device below.