

Searching the Web by Image in iOS

A primer

Wally Kuzmich
October 24, 2022

The earliest Mac operating systems simulated things familiar to us.

For example...

- a desk top with folders and a trash can
- familiar looking text documents with a white background and black text, rather than the “early computer” appearance of a black background with green text

Since our childhoods we have explored and enquired about the world around us by simply pointing to something and asking ...

”What’s that?”

or

“I really like that. Can I have it or find out about it?”

Online searching is also evolving toward our familiar ways of asking and searching.

TikTok and Instagram have the capability to search by image using a smartphone, often precluding the need for traditional Google searches.

Young people interact and communicate very visually compared to older folk. Their generation is moving away from text-based searching toward image-based searching.

Google is feeling the pinch and doesn't want other services "eating their lunch".

The Lens feature of Google app for iOS

Google Lens was introduced in 2017 as an image recognition and search technology, and was implemented in Android.

It became a feature of Google app for iOS, introduced in 2018.

Google Lens allowed users to point but not ask.

In April 2022 Multisearch was introduced.

Multisearch added a text field to the Google Lens search to make it more specific and efficient.

The camera or stored image still allowed you to “point”.

Now the text field allowed you to “ask”.

At Google's "Search ON" event on September 28, 2022
Multisearch Near Me was introduced.

This feature focuses the Google Lens search to the local area
for people wanting to shop closeby and get things right away.

Multisearch Near Me will be implemented later this Fall.

For MacOS Safari there are ImageFinder and ImageSearch extensions available.

These essentially direct you to the Google Images website which has a “Search by Image” icon in the search field that invokes Google Lens and provides a window to drag the image to be searched.

As yet there is no Multisearch feature where text information can be added to enhance Search by Image the way it does on a smartphone.

Some Helpful Links

[Google unveils a more visual search experience for the TikTok generation | TechCrunch](#)

[Google Lens - Wikipedia](#)

[What is Google Lens and how does it work? - Pocket-lint](#)

[Go beyond the search box: Introducing multisearch](#)

[Google multisearch - search by image and text at the same time](#)

[Search On 2022: New technology and updates to Google Search](#)

[Google Search On 22 recap: 10 changes announced today](#)