

Online translation resources

When you translate, you may occasionally need to check a word, want to verify whether a word is used in a certain context, or see how similar phrases have been translated elsewhere. Tackling unfamiliar words is one of the biggest challenges for translators, but there are plenty of free online resources to help you, including glossaries, bilingual dictionaries, translator forums, corpora, and more. The list below is not exhaustive, and there will likely be resources specifically for your language, so please let us know if you have good resources you want to share!

Practical tips

- When you look up a word in a bilingual dictionary or other resources, make sure you choose the right translation from the list of possible meanings – many terms can be ambiguous, and one wrong word can change the entire meaning of a translated sentence.
- If you don't know which one is the correct option, try and check more than one source to make sure you have found the correct equivalent in your language.
- Remember: Medical conditions or treatments are not always applicable or well known in certain countries and languages, so you may need to put them into context and give an explanation. If an English term has no equivalent in your language, you could, for example, keep the English term and add an explanation in your language in brackets afterwards, or the other way round.
- For all of the resources listed below, please remember that anyone can post information on the Internet, so assess the source, and when in doubt ask for someone else's opinion or try and verify it with another resource to be sure.

Bilingual dictionaries and glossaries

Linguee is an online dictionary with a built-in search engine to let you search bilingual texts. Search results are divided into several sections. At the top, you see the results from its editorial dictionary, while external sources are listed underneath. There is also a Linguee app that works offline.

ProZ is an online translation community. It offers a range of terminology resources for specific topics and language pairs.

UNTERM is a multi-lingual terminology database maintained by the United Nations and other specialised agencies of the UN system, including the World Health Organization.

IATE is the EU's terminology database which is being used by the EU institutions and agencies

Lexilogos offers a list of resources by language. You select your language, then type in the word you are looking for and choose which dictionary you would like to use. This is a quick way of comparing resources to ensure you've chosen the right translation.

Forums

Translation forums can be a useful resource when you have exhausted all other search options or want to double check something with other native speakers of your language.

ProZ KudoZ is a network where you can post questions about translation: You enter the source language, target language, and can select the topic of your question. Note: you will need to create a ProZ account first.

Wordreference.com is a dictionary and forum. If you are looking for help with a translation you should first search the forum to see if there is already a thread about it. If there isn't, post a new thread, including the context of the word or phrase you need help with. Note: answers from native speakers are usually more reliable.

Healthcare journals, databases and other trustworthy health websites

If you know of relevant health publications in English or your language, you can search these resources to see if they contain examples of a term you are translating. This is useful if you have doubts, as you will be able to see how these resources use the term in a medical context.

Making the most of search engines

Using a search engine to look for a term or phrase can be useful to judge the appropriateness of your translation. You can use the number of results the search yields to help you judge how common a particular phrase is. Also, within the search results, you will see examples of how a word or phrase is used within a text, and whether your translation fits the context.

Additional search engine functionalities can help you filter search results and reduce the time you spend looking for translations. Consider for example using [Google advanced search](#) to narrow results by language and more. Have a look at [more Google tips](#) with examples, e.g. excluding certain phrases or even websites from results, and how to search for exact phrases.

[Google image search](#) can sometimes be useful if you are struggling to find the meaning of a word using traditional tools. This search lets you see words as a visual representation, and it offers a different insight to a dictionary.

Wikipedia

Wikipedia can be a useful reference tool when translating. If a word or expression does not exist in a dictionary, it could be the subject of an article on Wikipedia. It is also likely that the article has corresponding articles in other languages. You can tell by looking at the bottom left sidebar, which contains links to the same article in other languages. Even if a certain article doesn't have links to the language you are translating into, Wikipedia can still be a good resource, as the explanation of a term often offers information for you to feel more confident about its meaning and how to approach the translation.