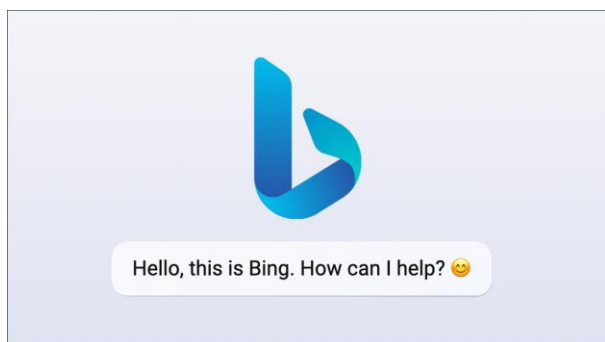


# 6 Cool Things You Can Do With Bing Chat AI

CORBIN DAVENPORT, @corbindavenport, howtogeek.com, MAR 8, 2023, 7:00 AM EST | 7 MIN READ



Microsoft [revealed an AI-powered Bing chatbot](#) in February, dubbing it “the new Bing.” But what can you actually do with the new Bing, and where does it fall short?

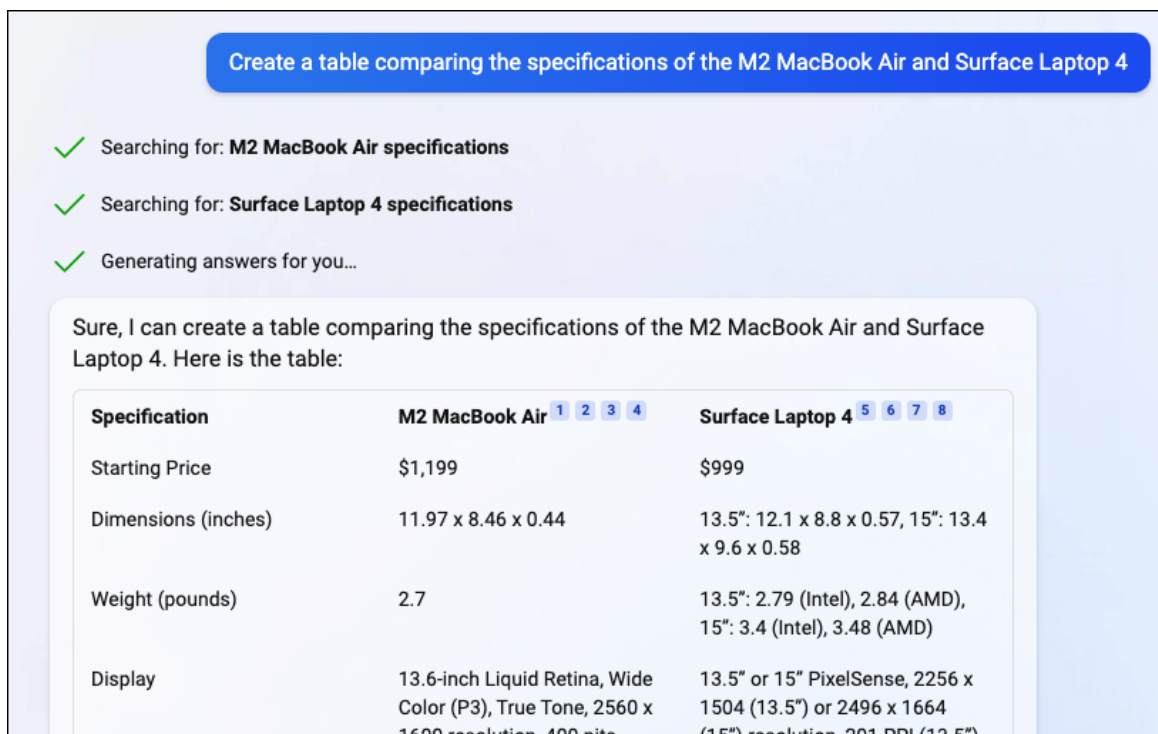
The [new Bing](#) is impressive for an automated tool, as it can not only answer questions in full sentences (or longer paragraphs), but it can also draw information from recent web results. The web features give it an edge over [ChatGPT](#), which has limited knowledge of current events and facts, but it still has problems providing [factual answers](#) or [helpful responses](#). That significantly affects its usefulness as a tool, though Bing’s ability to cite sources can help you double-check its responses.

**Note:** The new Bing chatbot is currently restricted to a waitlist. If you haven’t already been granted access, you’ll need to [join the waitlist](#) first.

Even in its current limited state, Bing Chat has at least a few features that are helpful and *usually* don’t break.

## Create Comparison Tables

The primary strength of Bing over ChatGPT and other services is that it can search the web for recent information. It can then process that information into several formats, including comparison tables. The simplest way to do this is to ask something like, “Create a table comparing the specifications of the [M2 MacBook Air](#) and Surface Laptop 4.”



Create a table comparing the specifications of the M2 MacBook Air and Surface Laptop 4

- ✓ Searching for: **M2 MacBook Air specifications**
- ✓ Searching for: **Surface Laptop 4 specifications**
- ✓ Generating answers for you...

Sure, I can create a table comparing the specifications of the M2 MacBook Air and Surface Laptop 4. Here is the table:

Specification	M2 MacBook Air <a href="#">1</a> <a href="#">2</a> <a href="#">3</a> <a href="#">4</a>	Surface Laptop 4 <a href="#">5</a> <a href="#">6</a> <a href="#">7</a> <a href="#">8</a>
Starting Price	\$1,199	\$999
Dimensions (inches)	11.97 x 8.46 x 0.44	13.5": 12.1 x 8.8 x 0.57, 15": 13.4 x 9.6 x 0.58
Weight (pounds)	2.7	13.5": 2.79 (Intel), 2.84 (AMD), 15": 3.4 (Intel), 3.48 (AMD)
Display	13.6-inch Liquid Retina, Wide Color (P3), True Tone, 2560 x 1600 resolution, 400 nits	13.5" or 15" PixelSense, 2256 x 1504 (13.5") or 2496 x 1664 (15") resolution, 201 PPI (13.5")

With that prompt, Bing will try to guess the most important specifications, and lay them out in an easily readable table format. You can also tweak it by listing variables manually, like “Create a table comparing the specifications of the M2 MacBook Air and Surface Laptop 4, listing the display and ports.” With that example, the only rows of the table are “Display” and “Ports.”

If you’re trying to compare two products or objects in the same field, like [Arch Linux and Ubuntu](#) or [Wi-Fi and Ethernet](#), there are probably guides written by real humans that can offer more insight than Bing. However, the feature is still helpful for comparisons that might not exist in written content, or quickly checking one or two specific details across a wide range of devices. You also still need to check the citations, because Bing isn’t perfect at interpreting web pages.

**Create a table comparing the storage of the M2 MacBook Air, PowerBook G4, and iPhone 11**

✓ Searching for: **PowerBook G4 storage**

✓ Generating answers for you...

Okay, I can update the table for you. According to the search results, the PowerBook G4 has a storage range of **10GB - 80GB** <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> depending on the model and can be upgraded with SSDs <sup>3</sup>. Here is the updated table:

Device	Storage
M2 MacBook Air	256GB - 2TB
PowerBook G4	10GB - 80GB
iPhone 11	

**Learn more:** [1. techable.com](#) [2. techable.com](#) [3. everymac.com](#) [+2 more](#) 2 of 8 ●

Note: Bing couldn’t find the storage capacity of the iPhone 11

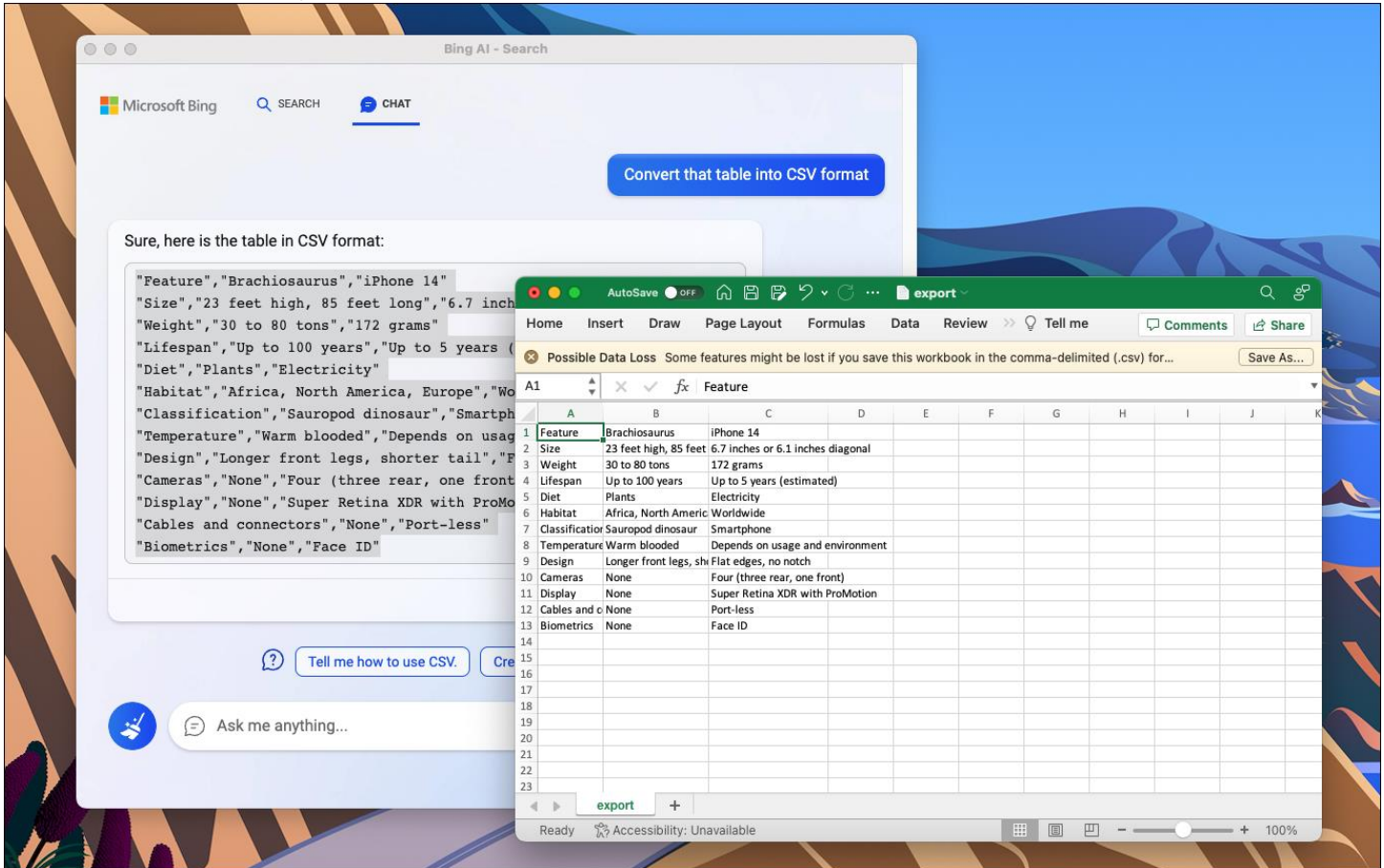
This feature can also be entertaining if you ask Bing to compare two things that no one would ever have a reason to compare. Ask it to lay out the differences between a phone and a dinosaur, or a car and a pencil. You’ll almost always get some funny results.

Sure, I can create a table comparing a brachiosaurus to the iPhone 14. Here is the table:

Feature	Brachiosaurus	iPhone 14
Size	23 feet high, 85 feet long <sup>1</sup>	6.7 inches or 6.1 inches diagonal <sup>2</sup>
Weight	30 to 80 tons <sup>1</sup>	172 grams <sup>3</sup>
Lifespan	Up to 100 years <sup>4</sup>	Up to 5 years (estimated)
Diet	Plants <sup>5</sup>	Electricity <sup>2</sup>
Habitat	Africa, North America, Europe <sup>6</sup>	Worldwide
Classification	Sauropod dinosaur <sup>7</sup>	Smartphone
Temperature	Warm blooded <sup>7</sup>	Depends on usage and environment
Design	Longer front legs, shorter tail <sup>7</sup>	Flat edges, no notch <sup>8</sup>

If the data is helpful and accurate, you can also export it for use in a document or other resource. Try asking it “Convert that table into Markdown format” or “Convert that table into HTML format.” You can ask for CSV format, which you can then copy and paste into a text editor (like Notepad) and save as a [.CSV file](#) for use with applications like Microsoft Excel and LibreOffice Calc. It wouldn’t surprise me if Microsoft eventually adds a built-in “Open in Excel” button for table results.

This conversion method usually causes the citations to be lost, but you can retain them by asking something like, “Convert that table to CSV, and include the citations in a row.”



Opening a .CSV file in Excel with data pasted from Bing’s CSV export

Again, you should always check Bing’s citations to make sure the information is correct. For example, with tech products like iPhones, I’ve found Bing often citing old articles about rumored details rather than finalized specifications or product pages.

## Multi-step Web Searches

Bing’s greatest strength might be its ability to convey information in a single response that normally takes several web searches. For example, let’s say I’m watching *Star Trek: Enterprise*, and I see [a character](#) who I recognize as being played by the actor who played the android Data in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, but the character in this show is not Data. If I’m curious who that is and when they will appear again in the show, I might need find the actor’s name first (which would give me [Brent Spiner](#)), then I can look him up in IMDB, the Star Trek fan wiki, or another resource to see a list of his appearances in *Enterprise*. If I already know the character or actor’s name, that takes one step out of the process, but it’s still something that will require some fact-finding with a search engine.

There's someone who looks like Data in Star Trek Enterprise, which episodes does he appear in?

- ✓ Searching for: **Data in Star Trek Enterprise**
- ✓ Searching for: **Star Trek Enterprise episodes**
- ✓ Generating answers for you...

Data is a character from Star Trek: The Next Generation and its spin-off movies, not Star Trek: Enterprise <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>. He is an android created by Dr. Noonian Soong <sup>3</sup>, who is a descendant of Arik Soong, a geneticist who appeared in three episodes of Star Trek: Enterprise <sup>3</sup>. Are you looking for those episodes?

Learn more: [1. hero.fandom.com](#) [2. memory-alpha.fandom.com](#) +8 more

1 of 8 ●

Yes, please tell me which episodes Arik Soong appears in.

- ✓ Searching for: **Arik Soong episodes Star Trek Enterprise**
- ✓ Generating answers for you...



Arik Soong appears in three episodes of Star Trek: Enterprise, which form a story arc about his involvement with genetically enhanced humans called Augments. The episodes are:

- **Borderland** (Season 4, Episode 4): Enterprise rescues Soong from prison to help them deal with a group of Augments who have kidnapped some Klingons <sup>1</sup>.
- **Cold Station 12** (Season 4, Episode 5): Soong and the Augments raid a Starfleet facility that holds

Meanwhile, I asked Bing “There’s someone who looks like Data in Star Trek Enterprise, which episodes does he appear in?” Bing Chat correctly identified that Spiner plays [Arik Soong](#) in Star Trek Enterprise, and why he was cast in the role: “[Data] is an android created by Dr. Noonian Soong, who is a descendant of Arik Soong, a geneticist who appeared in three episodes of Star Trek: Enterprise.” Bing then provided a list of episodes with Arik Soong, citing IMDB and various fan wikis.

There are other examples of this with more practical purposes, but if it’s an important question, you need to double-check Bing’s logic. I asked Bing to tell me the minimum box size I would need to ship a Nintendo Switch Lite and an M1 MacBook Air, and it checked the web for the dimensions of both devices to produce an answer: 8.51 by 8.18 by 1.43 inches. The answer didn’t include padding, which would *definitely* be needed if I was shipping those items, but Bing did in fact tell me “you may also want to consider adding some padding or cushioning materials.”

## Draw Text Art

[ASCII art](#) is a form of artwork that relies on text characters, popularized by command-line tools and other computer software. Bing can generate ASCII art from a provided prompt, and some requests like “Create ASCII art of a person standing next to a car” work well. It’s worth noting that this might be closer to plagiarism than regular [AI art](#) — the car is identical to [artwork attributed to Jane Wakenshaw on the ASCII Art Archive](#).



To be fair, converting from one zone to another is also something that Google Search, regular Bing, Wolfram Alpha, Time.is, and other tools can usually handle. Bing Chat isn't breaking any new ground here, but you can feed it into other Bing features. For example, if you're planning an event for a certain time, Bing Chat can do a batch conversion and present the data in different formats or writing styles.

I am having a remote pizza party on March 10 at 6 PM ET. Tell me the converted times for Boston, Topeka, Atlanta, Denver, and Ontario in a table.

- ✓ Searching for: **March 10 at 6 PM ET to Boston, Topeka, Atlanta, Denver, and Ontario**
- ✓ Searching for: **March 10 at 6 PM ET to Boston**
- ✓ Searching for: **March 10 at 6 PM ET to Topeka**
- ✓ Generating answers for you...

Here is the table of the converted times for Boston, Topeka, Atlanta, Denver, and Ontario:

Location	Time
Boston	6 PM ET
Topeka	5 PM CT <sup>1</sup>
Atlanta	6 PM ET
Denver	4 PM MT
Ontario	3 PM PT

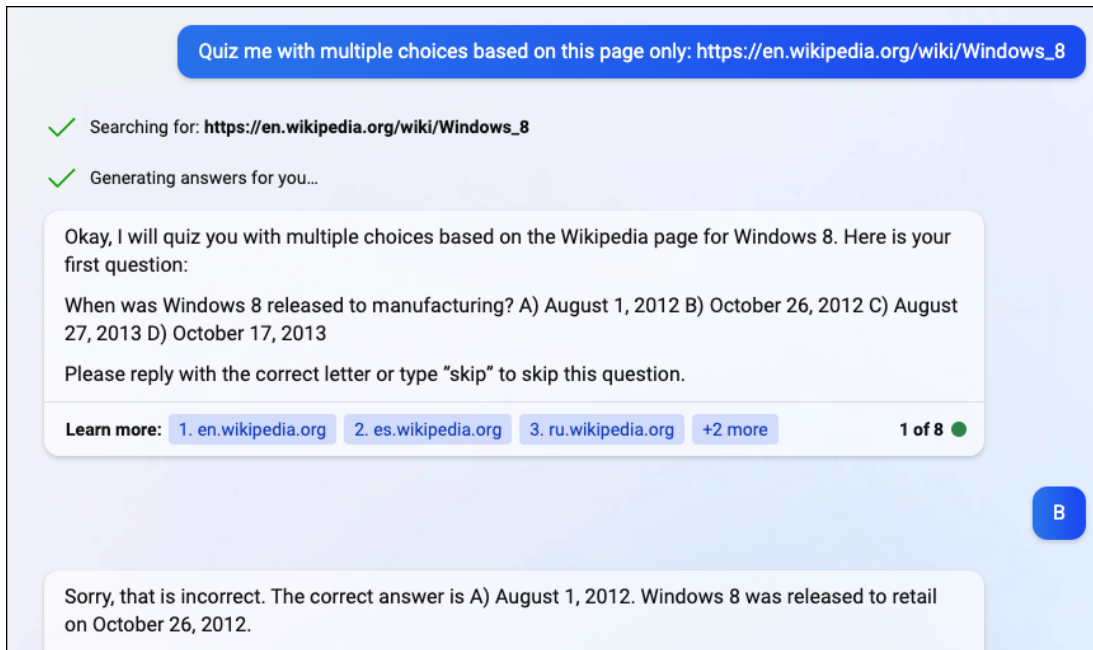
I still prefer Time.is for most time-related tasks, especially since [the link for an event](#) can be shared, but I haven't noticed Bing providing incorrect data for time conversions yet.

## Turn Web Pages Into Quizzes

Multiple-choice quizzes or flash cards can be a helpful tool for studying, but the process of converting notes, web resources, or book chapters into actionable data can be time-intensive. That process in itself can sometimes help you memorize information, but Bing can also quiz you on any provided data.

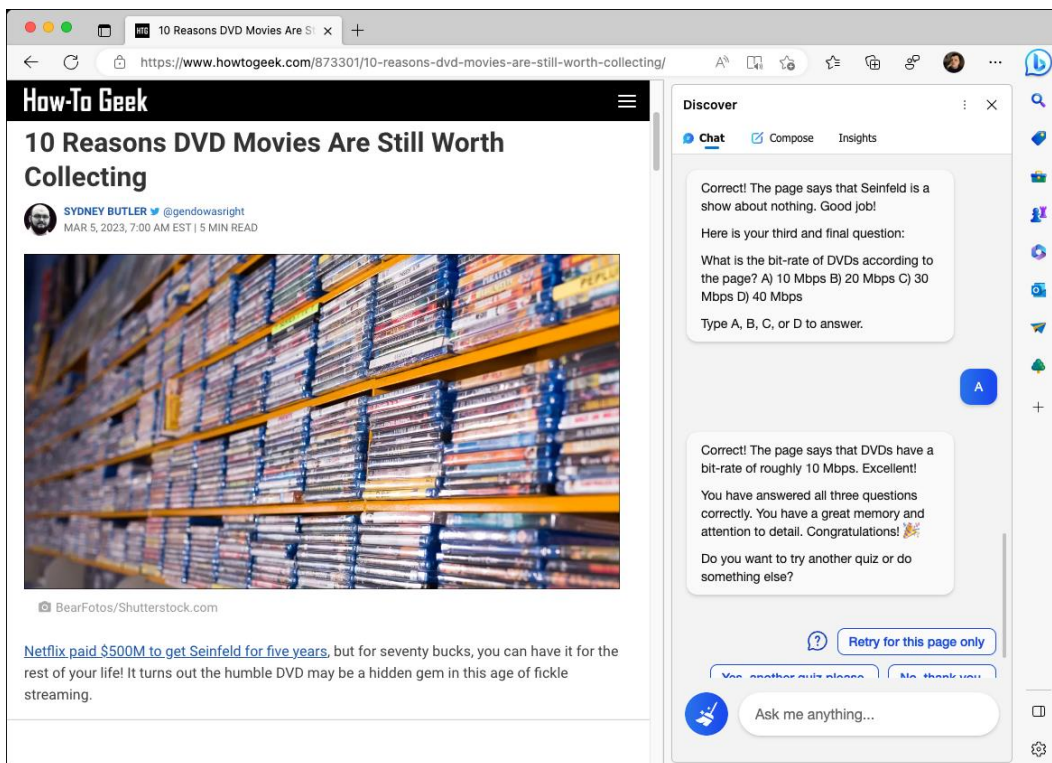
Bing is inconsistent with how it generates answers to prompts about quizzes, sometimes choosing to give you all the questions and answers in one statement (which you then have to handle yourself), and sometimes starting an interactive quiz. I've had the best luck with getting the latter format by asking "Quiz me with multiple choices based on this page only:" followed by a pasted web address.





Even when saying “this page only,” Bing will sometimes use data from similar web pages. For example, I asked it to quiz me about a *How-To Geek* article, which also pulled in a post on Twitter that linked to the article. There seems to be no way to fully override this except to use the Bing sidebar in Microsoft Edge (only the [Canary](#) and [Dev](#) versions have Bing, as of March 2023).

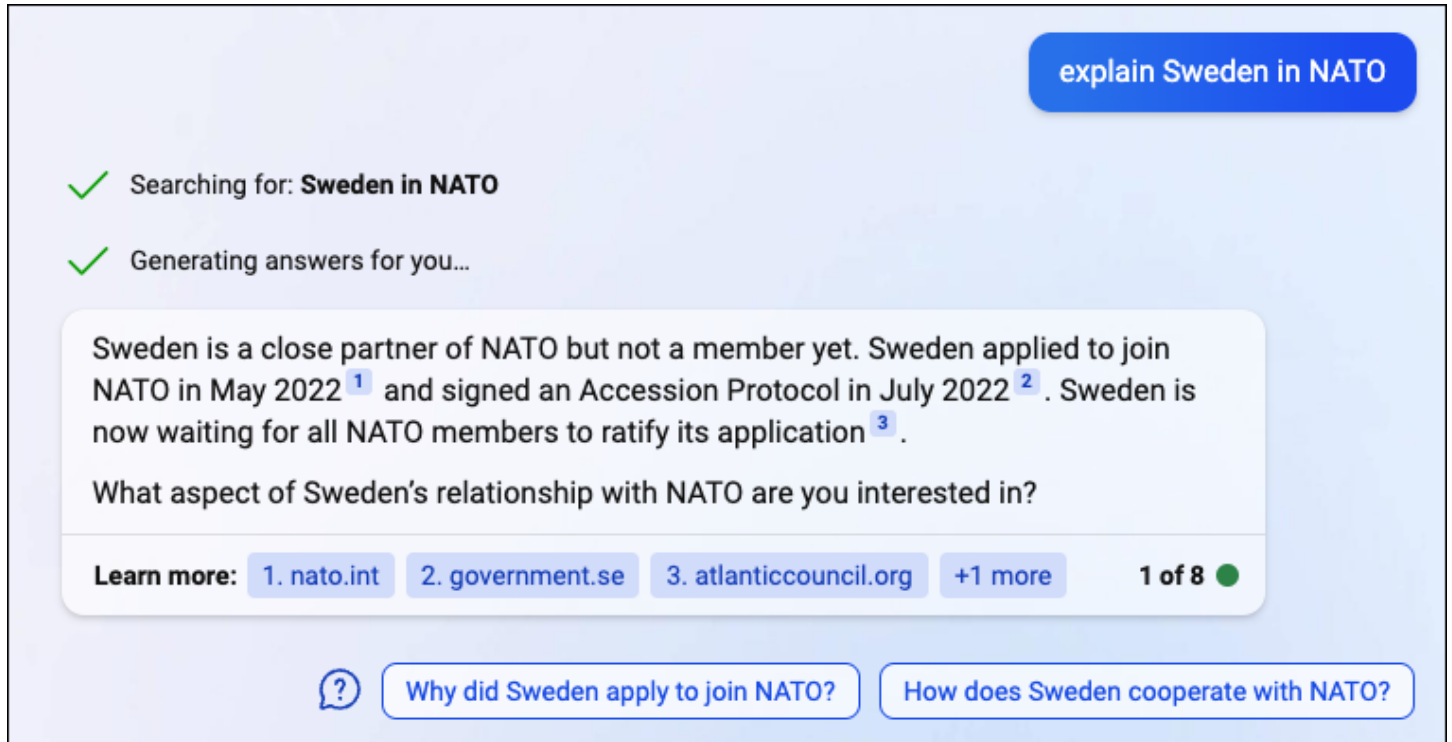
To use the more reliable implementation in Microsoft Edge, go to a web page, click the Bing button to open the sidebar, and ask Bing to “quiz me with multiple choices based on this page.” You then need to click the “Retry for this page only” button, which will force Edge to not search the web for additional data.



I’ve still encountered a few bugs in this mode where data is pulled from elsewhere — Bing asked me about the core temperature of the Sun from a *How-To Geek* article about [collecting DVDs](#). There’s a chance Microsoft has fixed those problems by the time you read this article.

# Get Up to Speed on Current Events

Every once in a while, there will be something that *everyone* is talking about and simultaneously requires a detailed explanation of context to understand. If it's a news topic, recent articles usually include recent context as you read past the first few sentences, but not always. Bing can be helpful in circumstances where you have no clue what is going on, and recent news coverage isn't helping.



The screenshot shows a Bing AI search interface. At the top right, there is a blue button labeled "explain Sweden in NATO". Below this, two green checkmarks indicate the search status: "Searching for: Sweden in NATO" and "Generating answers for you...". The main content area contains a text box with the following text: "Sweden is a close partner of NATO but not a member yet. Sweden applied to join NATO in May 2022 <sup>1</sup> and signed an Accession Protocol in July 2022 <sup>2</sup>. Sweden is now waiting for all NATO members to ratify its application <sup>3</sup>." Below this text is a question: "What aspect of Sweden's relationship with NATO are you interested in?". At the bottom of the text box, there is a "Learn more:" section with three links: "1. nato.int", "2. government.se", and "3. atlanticcouncil.org", followed by a "+1 more" link and a "1 of 8" indicator with a green dot. At the bottom of the interface, there are two blue buttons with question marks: "Why did Sweden apply to join NATO?" and "How does Sweden cooperate with NATO?".

Usually, you can ask something like "explain Sweden in NATO," and Bing will describe the topic in a few sentences. As with all of Bing's responses, make sure to check the citation links and ensure they are reputable sources that you trust. I've also found that Bing occasionally pulls data from outdated news articles, so if you're asking about an ongoing situation in the news, it may tell you outdated information.