

X is blocking Taylor Swift searches... barely

X has blocked searches for Taylor Swift in reaction to a recent trend of graphic AI fakes of the world-famous recording artist being posted to the site. Right now, if you search “Taylor Swift” or “Taylor Swift AI” on X, formerly Twitter, you may see a “Something went wrong” message. X head of business Joe Benarroch acknowledged the “temporary” measure, meant to “prioritize safety,” according to *The Wall Street Journal*. But it’s very easy to get around, as we found out when trying some searches after *Platformer*’s Casey Newton posted about the block yesterday.

Rearranging the words in your search to “Taylor AI Swift” or simply putting quotation marks around Swift’s full name both returned results as of this writing, for example. Even tacking another word onto one of the blocked search terms gets results. Also, images still show up under the Media tab, even for the terms that are otherwise blocked.

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Davis / The Verge

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Meta also seems to be addressing the issue, as both Threads and Instagram suggest “Taylor Swift AI” if you start typing

“Taylor” into their search boxes, but neither platform appears to show results. Instead, as of this writing, you may see a message saying that the term “is sometimes associated with activities of dangerous organizations and individuals.”

Reports have said that Swift is considering legal action against the sites hosting the images, which users said they preferred Microsoft Designer to make. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella called the deepfakes “alarming and terrible” in an interview with *NBC Nightly News* on Friday, and said he believes AI companies need to “move fast” to get better guardrails in place.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre weighed in Friday as well, calling on Congress to create legislation to protect people from deepfake porn.

X replied to our email asking whether Swift’s name is being blocked intentionally with an emailed auto-reply.

Update January 27th, 2024, 3:22PM ET: Added additional context.

<https://www.theverge.com/2024/1/27/24052841/taylor-swift-search-blocked-x-twitter-ai-images>