

Introduction to the Internet

Your Guide to Navigating the World Wide Web



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What Is the Web?

To date, the World Wide Web is the premiere Internet feature ever created. It is a collection of electronic documents that are linked together like a spider web. The web has continued to evolve into an electronic publishing medium and into a popular method for conducting electronic commerce.

Links

Links are the 'glue' that hold the Web together and may show up in one of two ways:

1. Underlined and [highlighted wording](#), or
2. Clickable icons and pictures

What is an ISP?

Internet service providers (ISPs) supply access to the Internet for a fee. Types of service:

Traditional Modem Access: This is the type of service in which you have an internal or external modem connected to your computer via a serial cable, and you initiate a call to the ISP whenever you want to use the Internet. (This is also sometimes called "dial-up.")

Broadband Connections:

1. DSL Service – Persistent connection
2. Cable Modem Service – Persistent connection

Comparison shop for an ISP at The List: the Definitive Internet Service Buyer's Guide @ www.thelist.com.

What is a browser?

A Web browser is a software program that allows you to view and explore information on the Web. Microsoft Internet Explorer is the most popular browser software in use today. Version 7.0 is the newest iteration and is making its way into more and more computers. IE 6 is also common. Other browsers include Mozilla Firefox and Safari.

The Tools→Internet Options Menu

Frequent users of the Internet often customize their Web browser layout and take advantage of built-in features. You can customize your browsing experience in many ways, including:

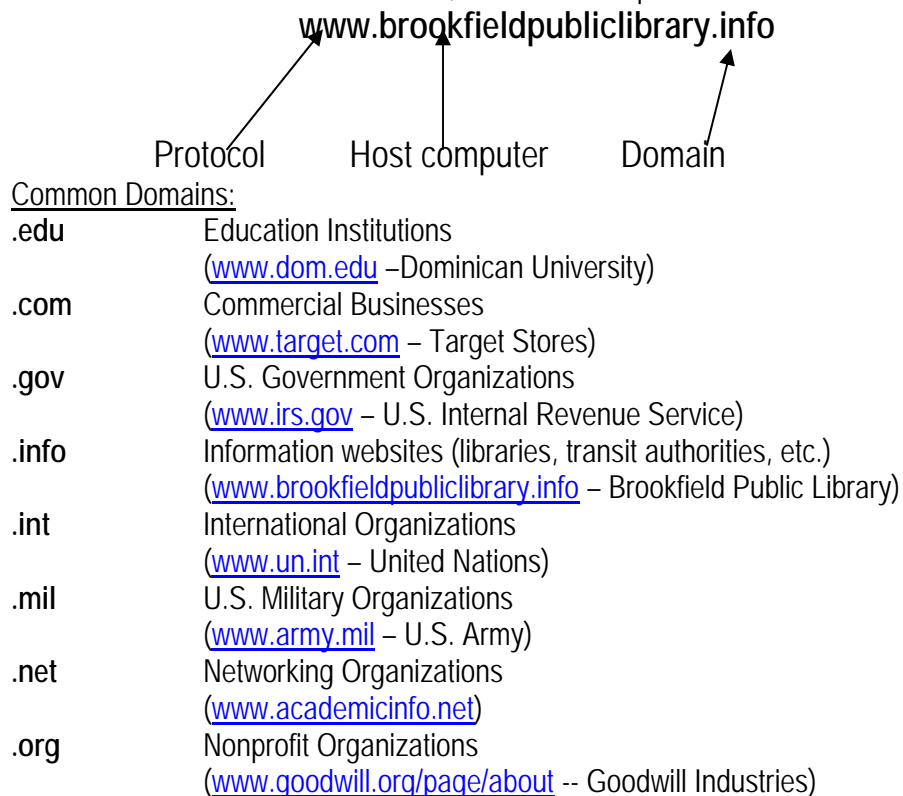
1. Changing the homepage (single page or tabbed layout);
2. Creating a custom toolbar layout;
3. Increasing the font size for ease of reading;
4. Blocking or allowing pop-up messages and advertisements.

For your safety and security, you can also choose to:

- Clear your browsing history, cache, and temporary internet files folder.
- Clear (or disallow) cookies.
- Have your computer 'remember' web form and password information.
- Enable the Phishing Filter (IE7)

Anatomy of a URL

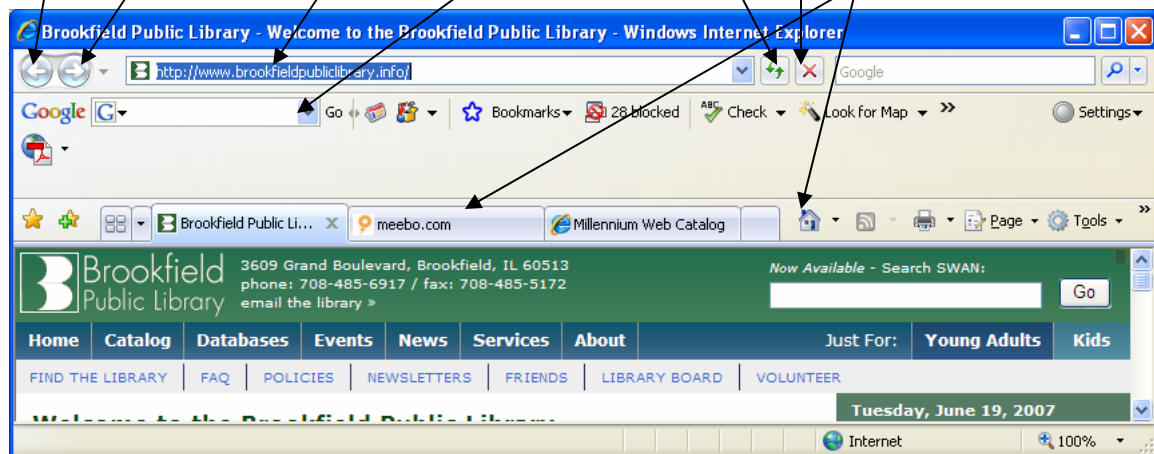
An abbreviation for Uniform Resource Locator, a URL is a unique address for an Internet resource.



Internet Explorer Toolbar and Address Toolbar

Become familiar with the navigating functions of the IE toolbar:

back forward *address bar* Google toolbar refresh stop home tabs.



* Type in the site address here.

- Be sure the cursor is blinking inside this box before typing the address.
- Do basic searches right inside the address box by typing in a few words.

Evaluating Sites & Using Caution Online

It pays to keep in mind that almost anyone can publish a website. Be discriminate when considering using a website for medical or legal research, or in making important decisions. Evaluate websites by taking the following into consideration:

Creator Credibility/Affiliation:

- Who is the author of this page?
- What is his or her stake in publishing this information?
- Is this person or organization reputable and recognized?
- Is the author or organization asking for money suspiciously?

Currency/Accuracy of Site:

- Is the site updated regularly?
- Are 'last revised' dates published on the page?
- Is the site reviewed by a higher body?

Objectivity of Material:

- Does the author organization attempt to represent a particular view?
- Is the site clearly biased, or are there attempts to include other viewpoints/positions?

Coverage of Material:

- Would it be more efficient or appropriate to use a print source instead of the website?
- Is the material comprehensive or does it contain limited amounts of information?

Security Issues:

- Does the site use secure server software to encrypt personal data submitted to it?
- Is the site committed to protecting personal information? Do they maintain a privacy policy?
- Is the site disclosing or selling your personal information to third parties?

Glossary

Internet Lingo to Know

Blogs: Short for weblog, a blog is a website in which entries are made—as in a diary or journal—and displayed in reverse chronological order. Anyone can publish a blog using freely available web-based software. Blogger.com is a popular blog host.

Bookmarks or Favorites: Lists of frequently used Websites and URLs. Referred to as Favorites in Internet Explorer.

Cable Modem: A modem that plugs into a cable network to provide Internet access. It receives Internet data over the same type of cable that cable television uses.

Chat: Another term for Instant Messaging.

Cookies: A Web script designed to retrieve information about you, the site visitor. Cookies build profiles of what users buy, where they are browsing from, etc. Browsers may be set up to either accept or reject cookies.

DSL: Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) is a high speed data service offered by telephone companies that works over existing copper telephone lines.

Email: Mail that's electronically transmitted by your computer. Email is short for electronic mail.

Emoticons: A sequence of typed characters that create a rough picture of something, such as a facial expression. ☺ : -)

Homepage: The document displayed when you first open a Web browser. Browsers may be set up to open to the page of choice. Homepage can also refer to the first document at a specific Web site.

HTML: An acronym for hypertext markup language, HTML is the formatting language used to tag various parts of a Web document so browsing software will display that document's links, text, graphics, and attached media.

HTTP: The abbreviation for hypertext transfer protocol, HTTP is method used to transfer or convey information on the web. The data transfer process allows users, using a web browser, to retrieve web pages written in HTML. Most web addresses, or URLs, start with http://, code which tells your computer how to transfer the data within a webpage such as <http://www.target.com>

Instant Messaging: A technology that gives users the ability to identify people online and to exchange messages with them. Examples include Yahoo! Messenger and AOL Instant Messenger.

Internet: A computerized network of networks used worldwide.

Pop-up: A message (usually an advertisement) that automatically appears in a new window when you access a webpage. You can set your internet options to block or permit pop-ups.

RSS: Short for Really Simple Syndication, this technology creates a “feed” of data that you can subscribe to. RSS feeds from new webpages and blogs are programmed to constantly update and send information to the **aggregator** of your choice. RSS allows you to subscribe to websites that interest you, and, rather than visit 10 websites per day, have the updated content delivered to one central location that you can check. (Example: Bloglines)

Search Engine: A software program that uses a keyword or directory structure to search for information in websites and databases. Examples: Google and Yahoo!

World Wide Web: A collection of graphical pages on the Internet that can be read and interacted with.