



Internet/Web Basics

The Web, also known as the World Wide Web (WWW), is essentially a collection of an uncountable number of “pages” of information displayed on the Internet. It is an information-sharing tool that is growing at an unbelievable rate. You can view this information with the help of a “web browser.” Once you have a web browser, you can search this information using a “search engine.” You can find information on the web about virtually anything, and from almost anyone—including professional organizations, schools and colleges as well as individual people just like you!

For more information on the Library and programs, visit www.bcpls.org

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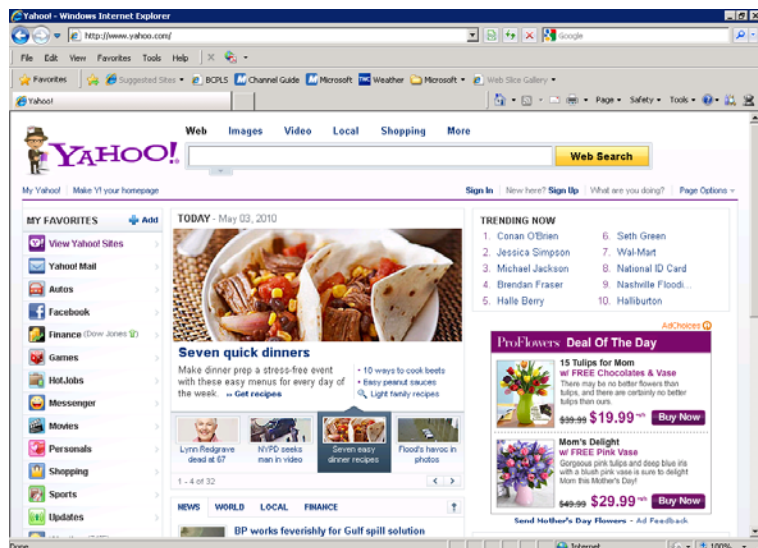
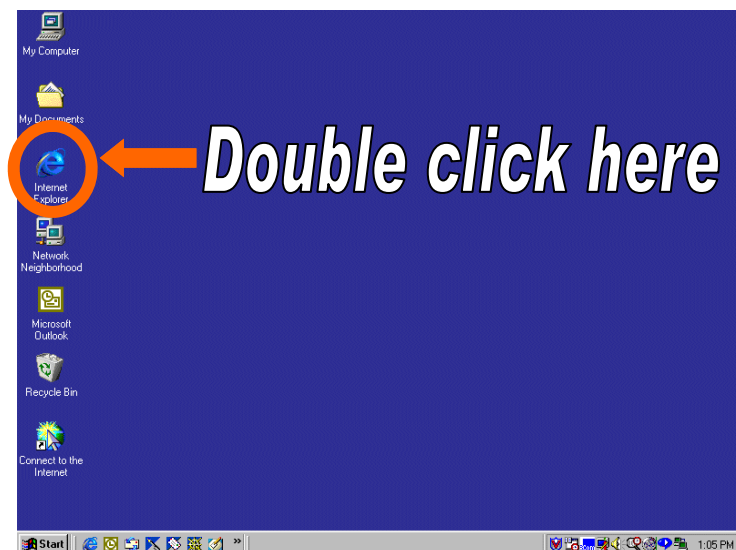
Locate and Open a Web Browser

A web browser is a program that lets you see information and images on web sites. A browser reads the information on a web page and displays it on the computer screen. There are many browsers; the most popular ones are:



All Windows Computers will have Internet Explorer, and all Macintosh/Apple computers will have Safari. All of them can be downloaded free from the internet if you want to change, and they all work in much the same way. Here at the library, we have Internet Explorer to use.

Locate the browser “icon” (the pictures above) on your desktop.

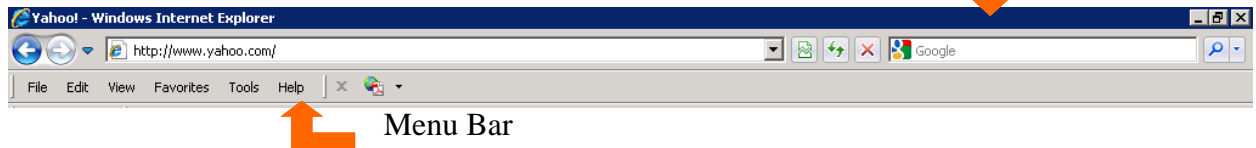


Point to the browser’s icon with the mouse and double-click with your **left** mouse button on it. A window like the one pictured to the left should come up on the screen.

Using the Browser's Menu Bar

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The Menu bar is directly below the Title bar and it displays the menu. You use the menu to give instructions to the software. For the purpose of this workshop, we will use the Internet Explorer browser, but once you know how to use one browser, it is easy to learn how to use another--they all function in a similar way.



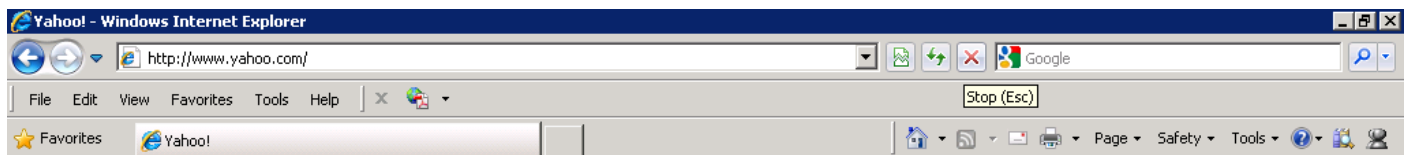
You can click on each of the words to see a menu of the tasks you can perform.

To see a menu:

1. Point with your mouse to a menu option
2. Click the left mouse button once to open a drop-down menu
3. Point with your mouse to a particular item
4. Click once with the left mouse button to select the item

A close-up screenshot of the "File" menu in Internet Explorer. The menu items listed are: "New", "Open...", "Edit with Notepad", "Save", "Save As...", "Page Setup...", "Print...", "Print Preview...", "Send", "Import and Export...", "Properties", "Work Offline", and "Close". An orange arrow points to the "File" menu header.

Using the Browser's Toolbar



The toolbar buttons provide quick commands to the browser while you are viewing web pages. The toolbar is located just below the menu bar. Below are some examples of what the different icons mean. If you roll over the icons ("hover") with the mouse, you will get a description (in a pop-up window) of what they are, and the tasks that they perform.

These are the most commonly used buttons on the toolbar:



Back Forward Refresh Stop Home

The **Back** button is to go back to a web page that you have just viewed.

The **Forward** button is to go forward to the web page that you have previously viewed.

The **Refresh** button will reload the web page that you are on—webpages will change throughout the day, so it is important to refresh it to see the most recent changes.

The **Stop** button is to stop a web page from loading.

The **Home** button brings you back to your "starter" web page.

Web Addresses (aka “URLs”)

Web site addresses are easy to recognize and we see them everywhere. A web site address is also called a URL (Uniform Resource Locator).

Here is an example of a typical web site address:

www.yahoo.com

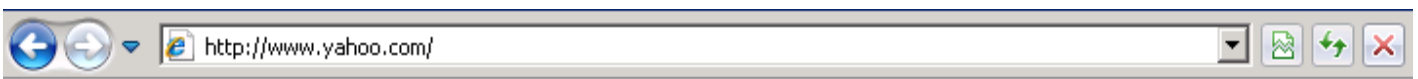
This is the most commonly used way to display a web site address.

This is how a web site address is formed:

- It generally starts with “www,” which means World Wide Web; it is then followed by the name of the web site, which is yahoo in this case. Notice that a dot or period separates these two parts. Popular websites include “Amazon,” “Ebay” and “CNN.”
- At the end of this address you will notice “.com.” This is what we call a domain name. It tells us where the web site has been registered. It can also be .edu, .org, .gov, .mil, .net, or one of many other domain names.
- If you see a forward slash or bar like this one / after the domain name, it means that it is taking you to a specific area and web page on that web site. In the case below, it is taking you to the web site’s “Search” page.

<http://www.yahoo.com/search>

Now that you know what a web site address looks like, you can go to a specific site by typing it in the browser’s address bar. It is located just below the toolbar. In Internet Explorer, the address bar looks like this:



If you want to go to a specific web site (say, Amazon), perform the following tasks:

- 1. In a web browser, click once with the left mouse button in the white area of the address bar - this will highlight any text in the address bar.**
- 2. Type the address www.amazon.com in the address bar (or anywhere else you want to go)**
- 3. Click on the “Go” button in the far right corner of the address bar or press on the Enter key on the keyboard**

*Note: There is an “http://” that appears in front of the web site address. This is just how the web browser fetches the web site for you to view. You do not need to put this in when you are typing a web site address. The browser will know what to do on its own.

Identify and Follow Links on a Web Page

A link (also called hyperlink) is an underlined word or phrase or an image on a web page that links to another place on the same page or to an entirely different web page. You can tell that you are on a link when you slide the mouse over some text or an image and the pointer becomes a hand.

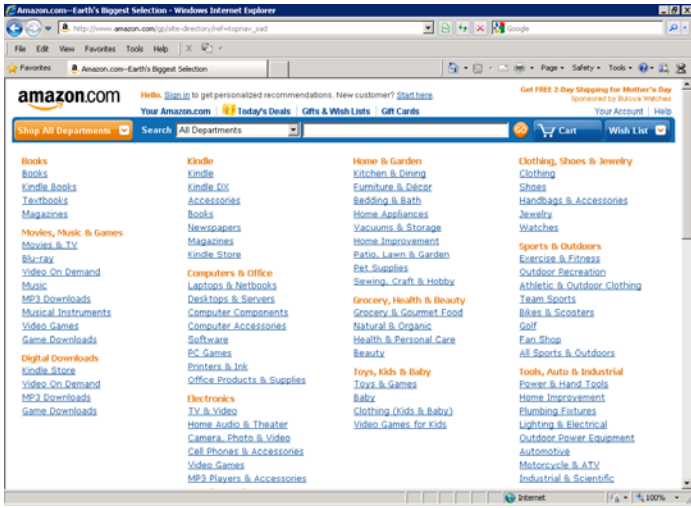
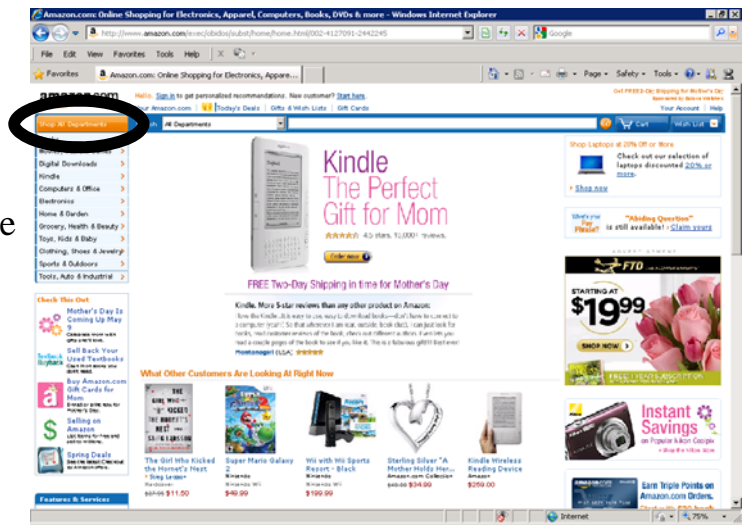
Run your mouse over the Amazon page. You'll notice that as you point to an item, text appears below the link describing that item. This is called a "rollover."

Let's follow a link! We are now going to look at the "Shop All Departments web page on the Amazon web site.

Here is how to do it:

1. Slide the mouse over to the orange button on the left that says "Shop All Departments"
2. When the pointer turns into a hand over the phrase "Shop All Departments," click once with the left mouse button

You should now see a web page with all the categories that Amazon uses listed.



You can go back to the previous page by clicking on the "Back" button on the browser's toolbar.

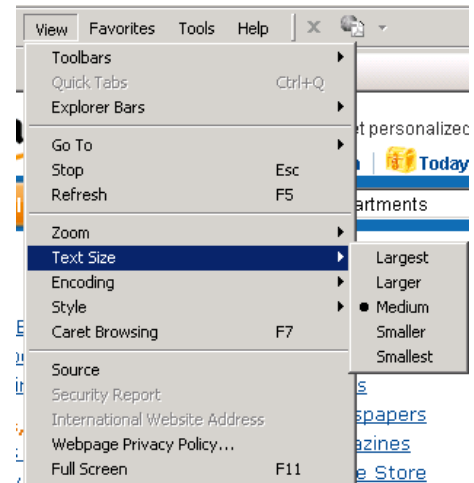
Practice going to different links—remember that you can use the "Back" button to go back to the previous page or use the "Forward" button to go to the subsequent page.

Manipulate a Web Page

If you are not comfortable with the text size on a web page, you can choose to change the size that the text is displayed in.

To change text size:

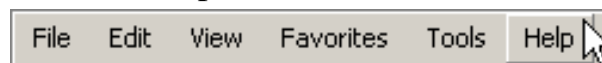
1. Bring the mouse pointer to the “View” option on the browser’s menu bar
2. Click once with the left mouse button
3. Slide the mouse down to “Text Size” You will see another little menu pop up on the right hand side of “Text Size.”
4. Slide the mouse to the right and down to the size of text you need
5. Click once with the left mouse button



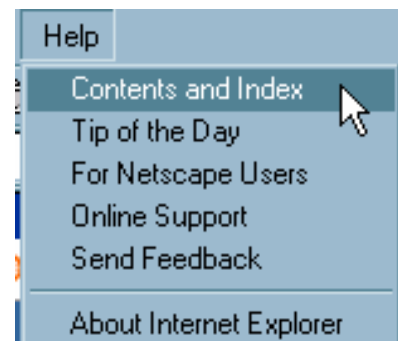
The text on the web page you are on should change to the size of text you have chosen. To change the text size back, just repeat the previous steps and put it back to the size it was originally. This is a good tool to use, considering that web pages come in all shapes and sizes – it is essentially magnifying the text so that it becomes easier to read! *Note: This works on MOST pages, but not all! It depends on how the page was designed. You can use the “zoom” function on any page - note that it is right about the “text size” option in the view menu.*

Finding Help

As with many other programs, Web browsers have **Help** features that you can use if you need a hand in conducting a task. The help feature can be found in the browser’s Menu bar.



1. Point with your mouse to the “Help” option on the browser’s menu bar
2. Click once with the left mouse button
3. Slide the mouse down to “Contents and Index”
4. “Contents and Index” will become highlighted
5. Click once with the left mouse button



*It is important to note that all web browsers are not the same. Like television sets, they all browse the same Internet, but are designed very differently. The “Help” feature on many browsers may not be found the way it is shown here.

Using Search Engines

To find information on the web, you will need to use a search engine. A search engine goes out and finds information for you on the World Wide Web. There are many search engines out there. A few examples are:

YAHOO Google Bing

Let's go to Google!

To open the Google search engine:

1. Go to the address bar and type the address: **www.google.com**
2. Click the "Go" button or press Enter key on your keyboard.

Google is now open and looks like:



3. Click once with the left mouse button in the search box
4. Type a word or a sentence on the information that you are looking for
5. For example, type the word "Spain" to see what you come up with
6. Click once with the left mouse button on the Google Search button



Google immediately gives you many websites that have to do with "Spain."

Try the following steps in order to refine your search:

- If you get too many "hits", try adding extra words that describe what you want – if that gives you more instead of fewer results, put "and" between each word, e.g. "spain **AND** vacation" will find only pages where both of those words are included.
- Put phrases in quotation marks, e.g., "historical sites in spain", "John Smith" or "american association of social workers."

Refine Your Search

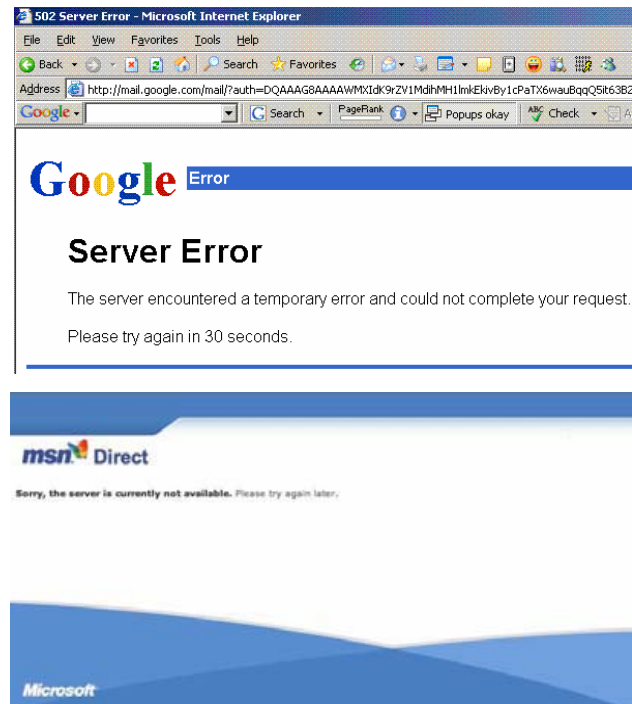
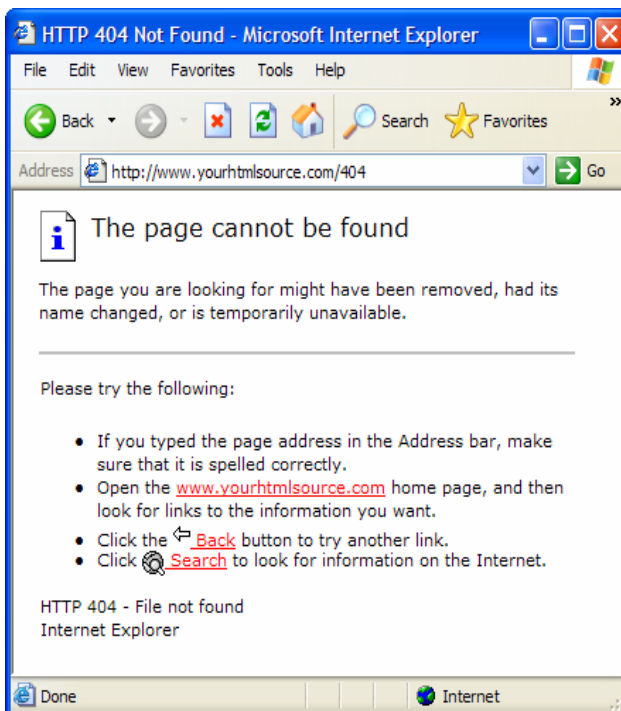
Understanding Error Messages

Sometimes you will type a web site address but an error page comes up instead of the website. This does happen from time to time. You can also get an error message when you click on a link on a web page. If it does happen, just verify if you have typed the web site address correctly. If an error page still comes up, it can mean different things such as any of the following:

- The web site is temporarily down
- The web site does not exist anymore
- Your program can't open the web site because of some restrictions
- There may be too many people trying to access it at the same time

There may be nothing you can do to rectify the situation. In this case, you may just have to move on and go to another web site or another link. In this day and age, major websites are down for a very short period of time. It is the equivalent of a major television network going down – you can rest assured that many, many people are working very hard in order to bring it back up as soon as possible!

The following are screenshots of “down” websites (these are just some examples, there are many other looks and wordings for error messages):



Navigating the Web

Identifying Advertisements

It is common to find advertisements on web sites. A lot of these advertisements are traps. They get you to enter your personal information and tell you that this is for a chance to win money or prizes but most of the time it's just to get your email address so they can send you junk mail.

Some other advertisements just pop up and tell you that you need to **Click Here** because you have a virus and you need to clean up your computer or something similar. Again, these are just ways to get you to send these people your personal information or sell you something. Please consult your instructor if you have specific questions.

REMEMBER: You can always ignore advertisements, just like you can change the television channel at home. You are not forced to do anything on the Internet!

Personal Safety

For your own safety, **NEVER** give out your personal information over the web to unsolicited advertisements. These are not secure. If you are applying for something legitimate, it will be done on a secured site. You can tell if it is a secured site because you will see a little lock in the taskbar at the bottom of the screen in the right hand corner.



Additionally:

- Don't give out passwords to anyone - online or in real life.
- Ensure the identity of the person/organization before providing sensitive information (SSN, account info, etc). In fact, if someone asks you for your SSN or Account info - it's never a bad idea to call the company and make sure they are legit! (for example, your bank will NEVER ask you to send them your SSN or Account number over the web - if they do you can give them a call and check it out. Often it's someone pretending to be your bank!)
- Report suspicious e-mails to the appropriate authorities or bank – Internet Crime Complaint Center – www.ifccfbi.gov.
- Be careful about advertisements, especially those that “come to you” - pop ups on your screen or advertisements that appear on web pages you visit.
- Remember how easy it is to find someone through a phone number or a real address, so be careful about providing that information as well.

When in doubt - don't give it out!

Navigating the Web

Viruses

One of the biggest fears among new computer users is being infected by a computer virus or programs designed to destroy their personal data. **Viruses** are malicious software programs that have been designed by other computer users to cause destruction and havoc on a computer and spread themselves to other computers where they can repeat the process.

Viruses are loaded onto your computer **without your knowledge**. They can destroy or delete everything on your hard drive such as your file and folders. They can be downloaded with pictures and files from the web or they can be attached with email messages.

A virus can do everything from completely breaking your computer to stealing your personal information. They can also turn your computer into a “bot” that can be used to damage other computers or steal other people’s information.

Your home computer **should be protected against viruses**. You can equip it with virus safety software that stops viruses from attacking the computer’s hard drive and your files. When you try to download something from the web, the virus safety software will scan the downloaded file or image to make sure that it does not contain any viruses.

An **Anti-virus software** can be purchased when you get your computer or can be put on it after you have it. Some of the most popular brands are **Norton, McAfee, AVG, Microsoft Security Essentials or Eset**. There are others as well. The cost can range from free (for AVG or Microsoft Security Essentials) to \$60 or \$70 a year.

In addition to having an anti-virus program, you should avoid downloading programs from the web if you don’t know that they are safe (and this means they have a good reputation - not just that the site says “virus free”). Also be careful of advertisements or websites that have big flashy “buttons” that say “CLICK HERE” - even something as simple as that can cause a virus.

Sticking to websites you know you trust and use often is better than just wandering (or “surfing”) around the web and seeing what you can find. Visiting lots of different and obscure sites on a regular basis raises your risk of getting a virus.

Another way to help minimize your virus risk is to use Google as a search engine. Let’s say you use Google to find a website on cats. Once you click on the link from the Google result page, if the website has a virus on it, Google will tell you that the page might be a “security risk” before taking you to the site and exposing you to the risk!

Be Safe and Be Smart While on the Internet!