

Internet Basics

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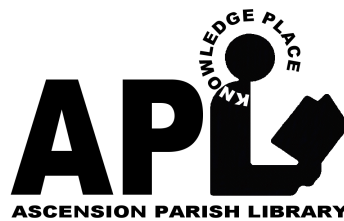
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An Introductory Workshop to the Internet
and the World Wide Web



www.ascension.lib.la.us/apl

Internet Basics Workshop

By offering this workshop we hope to achieve several objectives.

- Introduce you to the Internet with particular attention to the WWW.
- We want you to have a basic understanding of the Internet and the WWW function and what's available on them.
- We want you to become familiar with the Internet Explorer browser.
- We want you to know how to do a simple search.

What is the Internet?

- A global collection of computers and computer networks that exchange information.
- A computer network is a group of computers that have been connected so they can communicate with each other; they can send messages and share information in the form of computer files.

How Information Travels On The Internet

- When you receive information from another computer on the Internet you are downloading; when you send information you are uploading.
- Information travels over phone lines and high-speed data lines.
- The information is broken down into smaller pieces, called packets.

What the Internet Offers

- Electronic Mail (E-Mail)
 - Information
 - Computer Programs
 - Entertainment
 - Discussion Groups & Chat Rooms
 - Online Shopping
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- Exchanging e-mail is the most popular feature on the Internet. E-Mail is the transmission of messages electronically. You can exchange messages with people around the world. E-mail is fast, easy, free, and saves paper.
 - The Internet gives you access to information on almost any subject imaginable: Medical information, news, government documents, famous speeches, recipes, job listings, hobbies, etc.
 - Thousands of computer programs are available for downloading. These programs include word processors, spreadsheets, games, screensavers, etc.
 - The Internet also allows you to play games online, watch movies, listen to music and radio broadcasts, etc.
 - You can also join discussion groups or newsgroups or chat rooms on the Internet to meet people around the world with similar interests. You can ask questions, discuss issues, and read interesting stories. (Discussion Groups and News Groups are like bulletin boards – messages are posted and someone can view it and send a reply at a later date. Chat Rooms provide for communication in real time – it's like talking on the telephone except your using a keyboard to input your words.)

- You can even order goods and services on the Internet. You can buy books, computer programs, flowers, music CDs, stocks, and more.

Connecting to the Internet

- You need specific equipment and programs to connect to the Internet.
- Computer
- Modem
- Communication Software
- Browser
- Internet Service Provider
 - Computer: You can use any type of computer, such as an IBM-compatible or Macintosh computer, to connect to the Internet.
 - Modem: You need a modem to connect to the Internet. A modem lets computers exchange information through telephone lines. (56Kbps modem is standard now).
 - Programs: You need communication software to control the modem and you need a browser to use the Internet.
 - Internet Service Provider: An ISP is a company that gives you access to the Internet for a fee. Many providers offer you a certain number of hours per day or month for a set fee. Some providers offer unlimited access to the Internet for a set fee. EATEL and Cox are examples. Some ISPs, also known as Online Services, provide access to information and services that are only available to their subscribers. AOL is an example of an Online Service.
 - Buying a computer and Internet service is expensive. However, as patrons of the Ascension Parish Library you have access here for free. You can search the Internet for free at any of our libraries.

What is the World Wide Web?

- The WWW is the most popular part of the Internet.
- It consists of a huge collection of files stored on computers around the world.
- It can include colors, graphic images, sound and video clips, and animation.

Whenever you use the Internet here at the library you will be accessing a part of the Internet called the World Wide Web. The Internet is the underlying network of computers and the WWW is a particular protocol or method of using the Internet.

Web Pages

- A Web page is a file on the Web.
- A Web site is a collection of Web pages maintained by a college, government agency, company or individual.
- A Web page is created by using a computer language called Hypertext Markup Language (HTML).
- HTML is a set of codes used to format Web pages and create links.

Hypertext

- Web pages are hypertext documents.
- A hypertext document is one that contains highlighted text or links that connect to other pages on the Web.
- By clicking on the hypertext link you can go to another Web page on the same computer, or a Web page on a computer across the world.

Highlighted means that the text is usually underlined and displayed in a different color than the surrounding text. Graphics can also be links. You simply point to and click on the text with your mouse to follow that link.

- The Web uses a protocol called Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) to transfer documents containing hypertext.
- HTTP's job is similar to that of TCP/IP.
- HTTP and TCP/IP
- Both protocols, or standards, tell computers how to communicate with each other.
- Other protocols:
 - ftp: (file transfer protocol sites)
 - gopher: (for gopher sites)
 - telnet: (for telnet sites)
 - news: (for newsgroups)

Web Addresses

- Each Web page has a unique address called the Uniform Resource Locator (URL).
- The URL tells the computer how and where to look for a document.
- Example: <http://www.cnn.com/world/index.html>
- The hypertext links are attached to Web addresses.
- In this case we are looking at Web address so we are using http which stands for hypertext transfer protocol.

READING URLS

- The protocol is the first section of the URL.(http://) It tells the computer which type of document to look for. In this case you are looking for a hypertext document as opposed to other types of Internet Protocols, ftp, gopher, etc.
- To the right of the protocol is the name of the Web server (ex. www.cnn.com) (cnn is the domain and com is the extension) meaning that it is a commercial enterprise.
- The next part points to a specific folder within the server.
- The next part is the name of the document or file. Web page file names end with .htm or .html.
- The last part is the anchor name. This section is separated from the rest of the URL by the number symbol (#), and points to a specific section of a lengthy Web page.

Web Suffixes

- .com - Commercial enterprises
- .edu - Higher education institutions
- .net - Network operations
- .org - Organizations, usually non-profit
- .mil - Military networks
- .gov - Government agencies

Web Browsers

In order to view Web pages you need a Web browser.

- A Web browser is a program that lets you view and explore information on the Web.
- Netscape Navigator
- Microsoft Internet Explorer

Searching the Web

If you don't know which site to go to for the information you're looking for you are going to have to search the Web.

- There are many free services you can use to find information on the Web.
- Search Engines, Search Directories, and Meta Search Engine
- Search engines constantly visit Web sites in order to catalog Web pages.
- Directories are created by humans who assign submitted sites to an appropriate category or categories.
- Meta search engines are search tools that search several search engines at once.
- Examples: Search Directory – Yahoo, Search Engine – AltaVista, Meta Search Engine - Mamma.

You can browse through categories, such as arts or sports, to find information that interests you or you can search for a specific word or topic.

Limitations of Internet Research


- Information Available
- Amount of Time
- Quality of Information
 - There are limitations of using the Internet as a research tool. People often have the misconception that the Internet contains every bit of knowledge...every piece of information ever written, and that all they have to do is type in their subject and they'll be able to pull up exactly what they were looking for.
 - The Internet doesn't contain every piece of information ever written and probably never will. There have been millions if not billions of books and articles published over time and only a fraction of the information contained within them is on the Internet. The information doesn't magically appear, someone has to put it on the Internet.

- In addition, searching for information on the Internet often takes a great deal of time if you don't know of a site that contains the information. Depending on your subject and which search engine you use, you may pull up several thousand web pages. And you may look through all of the pages, which could take hours, and even then you may not find what you're looking for. On the other hand, you can sometimes find a great site with the information you need in only a few minutes.
- Also keep in mind that since no one controls the Internet, anyone can put information on it. Some of that information may be useful and some of it be garbage and useless as a source for research.

Evaluating Web Sites

- Evaluating the Source of Information
 - Who is the author?
 - Anyone can put material out on the Internet, so it's very important to determine the source. Credible individuals and organizations usually list their names on their Web pages. Information about Jupiter from NASA's Web page is more credible than information from a site named Fred's Theories on Jupiter.
- Evaluating Information: Currency & Bias
 - How current is the information?
 - Is a certain point of view being promoted?
 - How does the information compare to information from other sources? Is the information updated often? The date of any update is often included on the Web page. Web sites usually promote the point of view of the individual, group, or organization owning the site.
- Evaluating the Page: Appearance and Ease of Use
 - Does it load easily? Can you move around the site easily? Is it easy to read?
- Remember it's important to evaluate sites because while there are many very good sites there are also many sites that are garbage and are useless as credible sources of information.

Open Microsoft Internet Explorer

- The first thing you should see is the desktop with icons on it.
- Look for the Internet Explorer  icon.
- Double click on that icon.

Using Microsoft Internet Explorer

- Menu Bar
- Toolbar Buttons
- Address Bar
- Scroll Bar



Common Toolbar Buttons



- **Back** – Takes you to the last viewed screen.
- **Forward** – Returns you to the last page viewed before using the **Back** button.
- **Stop** – Stops the browser from accessing a link.
- **Refresh** – Updates the page you are currently viewing if the content has changed.
- **Home** – Brings you to the **Home** Page that you can choose and set in your browser.

- **Favorites** – Sites that you like to visit frequently can be added to this list so you don't have to type in the address every time you want to visit a site.
 - You can add, delete and organize your Favorites.
 - To *add* the current Web page as a favorite, click on **Favorites** and then **Add**. To choose the folder where you want to store this listing, click on **Create in** and choose the folder you want. At this point, you also have the option to create a new folder.
 - To *delete* a Favorite, simply right click on the item and choose **Delete**. Or, you can choose **Organize Favorites** select the desired item, and click on the **Delete** button.
 - To *move* a favorite to another folder, click on **Organize Favorites**, select the desired item, and click on **Move to folder**. In the pop-up window, select the folder where you would like to store this listing.
- **Print** – Prints the current Web page
- **History** – Allows you to view and select Web pages you have recently visited.
- **Search** – Opens up a window where you can use one or more Web search tools.

Moving Around on the Web

- Move your mouse pointer around the screen until you see the arrow turn into a white hand. Whenever you see that hand, it means that the pointer is on top of a hyperlink. Those are links to other pages on our Web site or to other Web sites. Go ahead and click on any of those links.
- You have now gone to another page. Now click on the **Back** button on the toolbar. You have now gone back to the previous web page.
- Now click on the **Forward** button. You've gone forward to the page you were just at.
- Now click on the **Home** button. You have now returned to your Home Page.

Searching the Web using Yahoo

- Type this address, www.yahoo.com, in the address bar.
- Type **recipes** into the search box on Yahoo and click **Search** button next to box.
- Click on **Recipes** under **Category Matches**.
- On next screen scroll down until you find this web site: **SOAR – Searchable Online Archive of Recipes** (usually under **Most Popular** category) and then click on it. (This site is also named *RecipeSource*).
- Once in RecipeSource click on the following links:
 - **Main Dishes**
 - Then **Fish and Seafood Recipes**
- Once on that page choose whichever seafood you want and then select a specific recipe on the following page.
- The point of this exercise is to familiarize you with using a search tool on the Web and with moving around the Web and within a Web site by clicking and following links to the information that you are seeking.

Search Directories

Ask Jeeves

<http://www.ask.com>

Ask Jeeves is different from other search directories because it allows you to ask questions using natural language, rather than special searching techniques.

Librarians' Index to the Internet

<http://www.iii.org>

Librarians' Index to the Internet is one of the best directories available. It provides links to the best web sites on a wide variety of topics. Librarians maintain it.

Yahoo

<http://www.yahoo.com>

Yahoo is one of the most popular search directories. Yahoo offers features such as search sites for different categories, such as restaurants, and for specific cities and regions.

Search Engines

AltaVista

<http://www.altavista.com>

AltaVista is one of the largest search engines on the Web in terms of pages indexed. It is available in many other languages, including Spanish, French, and Chinese.

Excite

<http://www.excite.com>

Excite offers many services in addition to a search engine, including free e-mail, shopping links, news, and daily horoscopes.

Google

<http://www.google.com>

Google has gained widespread praise for providing relevant results because the search engine ranks Web sites based on popularity.

Meta Search Engines

Dogpile

<http://www.dogpile.com>

Dogpile searches 20+ search engines and retrieves results separately and it offers custom search options.

Mamma

<http://www.mamma.com>

Mamma retrieves results in relevancy ranked order. It also has a power search that offers a user-friendly template for building a query.

Vivisimo

<http://www.vivisimo.com>

Vivisimo is quickly becoming popular for the way that it searches multiple engines and directories and organizes results into topical categories.

Glossary

- **Browser** - Short for *Web browser*, a software application used to locate and display Web pages. The two most popular browsers are Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer. Both of these are *graphical browsers*, which means that they can display graphics as well as text. In addition, most modern browsers can present multimedia information, including sound and video, though they require plug-ins for some formats.
- **E-mail (Electronic Mail)** - The transmission of messages electronically over communications networks. The messages can be notes entered from the keyboard or electronic files stored on disk. Some electronic-mail systems are confined to a single computer system or network, but others have gateways to other computer systems, enabling users to send electronic mail anywhere in the world.
- **FTP (File Transfer Protocol)** – A standard protocol used to send files from one computer to another on the Internet.
- **Home Page** - The opening page of a Web site. Typically, the home page serves as an index or table of contents to other documents stored at the site. This term also refers to the first page that appears when you open your browser.
- **Link** - In hypertext systems, such as the World Wide Web, a link is a reference to another document. Such links are sometimes called *hot links* because they take you to other documents when you click on them.
- **Hypertext** - A special type of database system, in which objects (text, pictures, music, programs, and so on) can be linked to each other. When you select an object, you can see all the other objects that are linked to it. You can move from one object to another even though they might have very different forms. For example, while reading a document about Mozart, you might click on the phrase *Violin Concerto in A Major*, which could display the written score or perhaps even invoke a recording of the concerto. Clicking on the name *Mozart* might cause various illustrations of Mozart to appear on the screen. The icons that you select to view associated objects are called *Hypertext links* or buttons.
- **HTML (Hypertext Mark – Up Language)** – The programming language used to create Web document.
- **HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol)** – An agreed upon format (protocol) used on the World Wide Web to retrieve HTML documents. HTTP defines how messages are formatted and transmitted, and what actions Web servers and browsers should take in response to various commands.
- **Internet** - A global “network of networks” connecting millions of computers worldwide

- **ISP (Internet Service Provider)** - A company that provides access to the Internet. For a monthly fee, the service provider gives you a software package, username, password and access phone number. Equipped with a modem, you can then log on to the Internet and browse the World Wide Web, and send and receive e-mail.
- **Meta-Search Engine** – A search engine that submits your search to several search engines at once.
- **Modem (Acronym for Modulator-Demodulator)** - A device or program that enables a computer to transmit data over telephone lines. Computer information is stored digitally, whereas information transmitted over telephone lines is transmitted in the form of analog waves. A modem converts between these two forms.
- **Search Directory** – Directories are human-compiled databases of web sites. Web sites are listed in categories.
- **Search Engine** - A Web searching tool that uses a computer program to search for documents by specified keywords and returns a list of the documents where the keywords were found.
- **URL (Uniform Resource Locator)** – A document address. The URL tells the computer how and where to look for a document. Example:
http://www.ascension.lib.la.us/apl
- **World Wide Web** - A system of Internet servers that support specially formatted documents. The documents are formatted in a script called HTML (*HyperText Markup Language*) that supports links to other documents, as well as graphics, audio, and video files. This means you can jump from one document to another simply by clicking on hot spots. Not all Internet servers are part of the World Wide Web.

Additional Resources

The following list of books and websites can provide you with additional information and training on the Internet. A video is also included. The books and video are owned by Ascension Parish Library and may be found using the call number and location provided. You may also request that books and videos be sent the Ascension Parish Library location closest to you. You can also search our catalog for additional resources. Visit us at www.ascension.lib.la.us and click on Search The Catalog.

- 300 Incredible Things To Learn On The Internet / Robyn Spizman & Ken Leebow 025.04 SPI (Gonzales)
- The Everything Internet Book / Sharon McDonnell 004.678 MCD (Donaldsonville, Galvez, Gonzales)
- How The Internet Works / Preston Gralla 004.678 GRA (Donaldsonville, Galvez, Gonzales)
- Internet : Browsing The Web / Annalisa Milner 025.04 MIL (Gonzales)
- The Internet (video) / V 004.678 INT (Gonzales)
- Internet Basics Without Fear! : Quick-Start Guide For Becoming Internet-Friendly In Just A Few Easy Steps / Shaun Fawcett 004.678 FAW (Donaldsonville)
- The Internet For Dummies / John R. Levine, Carol Baroudi, and Margaret Levine Young 004.678 LEV (Donaldsonville, Galvez, Gonzales)
- Online Family: Your Guide To Fun And Discovery In Cyberspace / Preston Gralla 025.04 GRA (Gonzales)
- Internet Information Websites
- <http://www.internet101.org/>
- <http://library.albany.edu/internet/>
- http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/computers/site-seeing/
- <http://netforbeginners.about.com/>