

Introduction to the Internet

This class is designed to cover the following basics:

- getting online
- basic terminology and toolbar buttons of the Internet Explorer program
- what a Web address is
- how to type a Web address into the address bar
- what a Web search engine is
- using search engines to find information and Websites
- adding a Web page to your Favorites
- evaluating Websites and online information
- using intermediate and advanced online tools and search features

The Internet

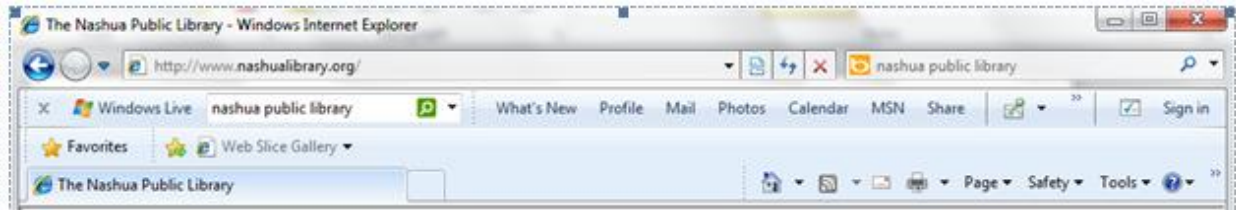
The Internet is a global system of interconnected computer networks that exchange data. To get on to the Internet, you need an Internet Service Provider (e.g. Comcast or Fairpoint) and software to access the Internet. This software is called a browser. There are different browsers you can choose from: Internet Explorer, Opera and Firefox to name a few. These different browsers basically do the same thing, they just look a little different. In this class, we will be using Internet Explorer.















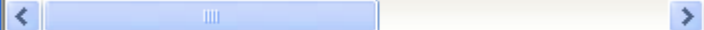
What you'll see on a webpage

Many webpages have similar layouts and similar information. Often times there is a **Header** or **Banner** across the top which tells you the name of website you're visiting. Under the header or along the left-hand side of the page there is frequently a series of **Links** or **Buttons** showing different pages you can access within the website. Many pages have a **Search Box** that lets you search within the website. There could be an "About Us" or "Contact Us" link or button with information about the organization (including address or phone numbers).

The screenshot shows the Nashua Public Library website in a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar at the top contains the URL "http://www.nashualibrary.org/". The website header features the library's logo and name, "Nashua Public Library", along with its address and phone number. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, Search, Events, Databases, Services, Contact Us, About Us, and Links. The main content area includes a "Babies & Books Storytime" advertisement, a grid of service buttons (Catalog, Manage My Account, Contact the Library, Local History & Genealogy, Computer Classes, iBrowse Databases, Live Homework Help, TEENS, KIDS, Museum Passes, Library Blog), and an "Upcoming Events @ your library" section listing events for May 26. At the bottom, there is a "Search the Library Catalog" section with a search box and a search button. Annotations with arrows point to the Address Bar, Header/Banner, Links/Buttons to other pages on the Nashua Public Library's website, and the Search Box and Search Button.

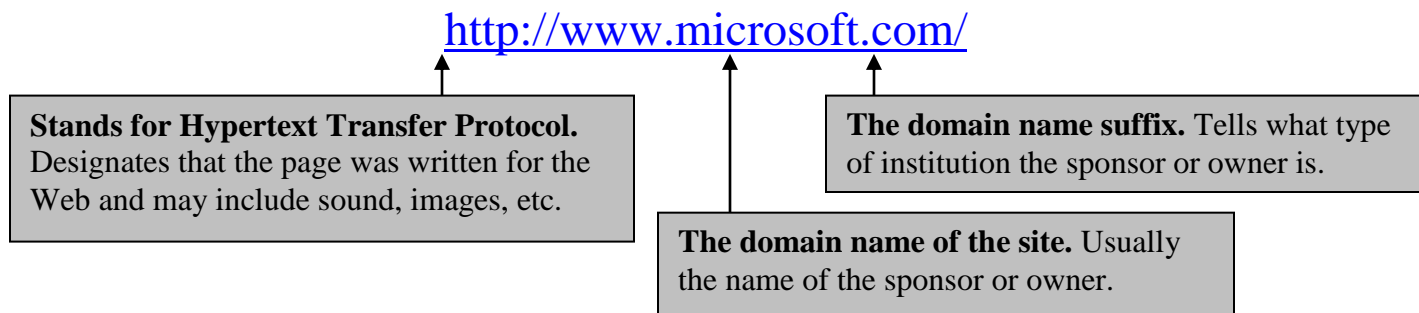
Elements of the Internet Explorer Browser



| | |
|---|--|
|  | Point and click with the left mouse button on Back to go back to the page you were looking at previously. |
|  | Point and click with the left mouse button on Forward to move forward to a page you were looking at previously. |
|  | Point and click with the left mouse button on Stop to cease the page loading. |
|  | Point and click with the left mouse button on Refresh to see a fresh copy of the page. |
|  | Compatibility view. Websites designed for older browsers will often look better and some viewing problems may be corrected. |
|  | Point and click with the left mouse button on Home to go back to the start page for the computer on which you are working. |
|  | Point and click with the left mouse button on Favorites to go quickly to a Website that you have saved as a favorite site. |
|  | Point and click on the minimize button  to reduce your window to a button on the taskbar. Point and click on Resize/Restore Down button  to resize the size of your window. Point and click on close button  to close the window and program. Point and click on the maximize button  to enlarge your window to full screen . |
|  | Browser: A piece of software, e.g. Firefox, Opera, Safari or Internet Explorer , that allows you to view pictures, read text, listen to audio, and see moving images on the World Wide Web. |
|  | Hyperlink (Link): When you point at an image or words on a Web page and the pointer arrow turns into a hand, you can click with the left mouse button and go to another Web page or piece of information. |
|  | When there is more information on a Web page than can fit on the computer screen, a scroll bar will appear in the margin of the window. Click on the arrows to move the page one line at a time, or click on the bar and hold down the left mouse button to <i>drag the bar</i> and move the page. |

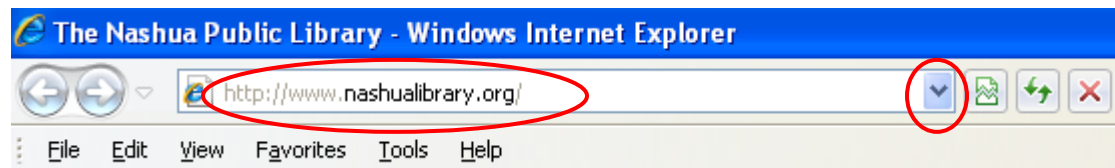
What's In a Web Address?

URL (Uniform Resource Locator): The address of a Website. Each page on the Web has an address. Note that when you type in a web address, you must include the periods (also called “dots”). There are no spaces in a Web address and there is not period at the end. A Web address is composed of the following:



| Suffix | This site is sponsored, or hosted, by... | Examples |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| .gov | U.S. government entity. | http://www.fbi.gov -The FBI http://www.nasa.gov -NASA |
| .mil | U.S. military entity. | http://www.army.mil -The U.S. Army http://www.navy.mil -The U.S. Navy |
| .edu | post-secondary educational institution. | http://www.harvard.edu -Harvard University http://www.ohio.edu -Ohio University |
| .us | a host computer in the United States. | http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ - NH General Court |
| .org | usually non-profit organizations. | http://www.mfa.org -Museum of Fine Arts http://www.nashualibrary.org - Nashua Public Library |
| .com .biz | commercial organizations but unrestricted. | http://www.aol.com -AOL http://www.nike.com -NIKE |
| .net | originally for network infrastructures but now unrestricted. | http://www.photo.net -Photo magazine http://www.classical.net -Classical music info |

Address bar: Type the address of the site in this space, press *Enter*, and off you go.



If you click with the left mouse button on the down arrow at the end of the bar you'll see the addresses that have been typed in recently. Highlight one of those, press *Enter*, and you will go to that Website.

Frequently companies will say something like: “You can find us on the web at Sears dot com”. This means their Web address would look like this: www.sears.com

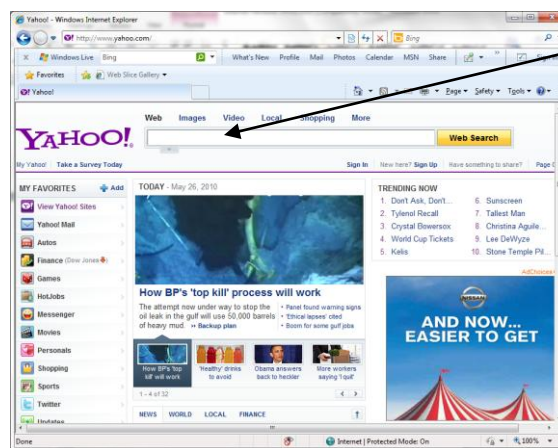
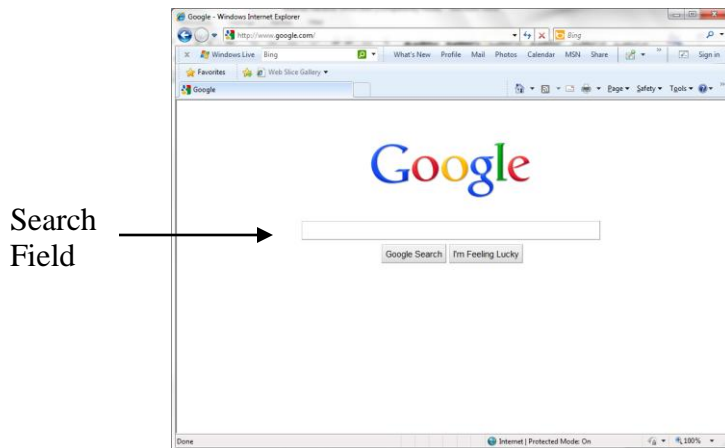
Try These Internet Sites – Just for Fun!

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| www.amazon.com | A huge online bookstore and much more! |
| www.weather.com | From the TV Weather Channel |
| www.bhg.com | From Better Homes and Gardens magazine |
| www.medlineplus.gov | Consumer information on health topics, diseases, drugs, wellness, etc. Sponsored by the National Library of Medicine and the National Institute of Health |
| www.mapquest.com | Maps and driving directions for the U.S. and Canada |
| www.boston.com | A Boston Globe Website |
| www.espn.com | Entertainment and Sports Programming Network |
| www.nashuatelegraph.com | Nashua Telegraph Website |
| www.pricegrabber.com | Comparison shopping |
| www.allrecipes.com | Search for recipes |

Search Tools

One of the most common search tools is a Web search engine. A Web search engine is a computer program designed to search for information on the Internet. Google is a very popular search engine. Once you've navigated your browser to www.google.com, you can proceed to search for Web pages, images, information and other types of files by entering keywords related to your search topic.

Another popular Web search engine is Yahoo. Their Web address is www.yahoo.com. Yahoo has more links (e.g. news, shopping, stock quotes, etc) and information on their page than Google. But, like Google there is a field in which you can enter your key words and search the Web.



Google and Yahoo aren't the only Web search engines out there. You can also try www.altavista.com, www.ask.com, www.clusty.com, www.dogpile.com, www.bing.com.

Practice keyword searches Try some of these searches in one of the Search Engines listed above and see what kind of results you get!

- I need to read up on the Jeep Grand Cherokee.
- What causes tornadoes?
- What is the phone number for city hall?
- What health problems do dust mites cause?
- Where can I get photos of the surface of the planet Mars?
- Who was Christa McAuliffe?

Evaluating Websites for Quality

When evaluating a Website, it's important to keep in mind the type of search you are doing and the information you need. What are you using the Internet for? Entertainment? Academic work? Hobbies or vocational interests? Scholarly sources are traditionally strongly text-based. The appearance and content of an academic journal is different from the appearance and content of a popular magazine. For example, compare to the **New York Times** (<http://www.nytimes.com>) to the **National Enquirer** (<http://www.nationalenquirer.com>). Also consider the following factors:

Accuracy:

- Does the Internet resource have an identified comparable print or CD ROM data set or source?
- Is the content verifiable and replicable?
- Has the site been reviewed in professional or scholarly sources?
- Remember that nearly anyone can publish on the Web.

Bias:

- Do you want biased, slanted information or objective, balanced information?

- From what domain does the site derive? .edu, .org, and .gov sites are (generally) reliable; .net and .com sites may require more scrutiny.
- Is it clear who is sponsoring the site? Is it an advertisement or propaganda?

Content:

- What is the author’s rationale for the creation of the site? The content should add to the existing body of knowledge in a unique way.
- Is the content “popular” or “scholarly”?
- Do the site’s graphics and sounds add to the value of the site? Are there spelling or grammar errors?

Documentation:

- Is there a bibliography or sources cited listing on the site? Are they full enough to allow you to access the cited source in print or electronically?
- Does the author display knowledge of theories, schools of thought, or techniques usually considered appropriate in the treatment of his/her topic?

Editorial Control:

- Who is the author or source of the site? Are their credentials listed on the site? Are they well known in the field?
- What is the authority or expertise of the individual or group who created the site? Information should be present to contact the author of a site.
- Is the site current? Is there a date of creation or most recent modification? Do all the links work properly?

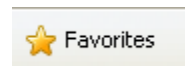
Gut Feeling:

- Look closely at these sites, *are they for real?*

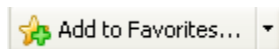
Adding a Web Page to Your Favorites List

1. Go to the Web page you would like mark/”bookmark” as a favorite.

2. Click on **Favorites** from the menu bar with the left mouse button.



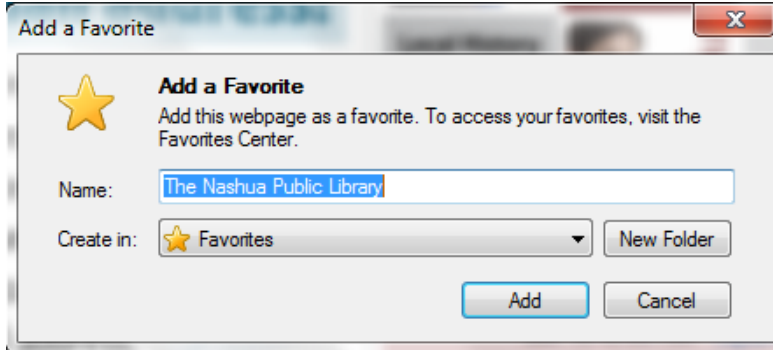
3. Select **Add to Favorites**.



4. The Add Favorite box appears and the name of your Web page will be displayed in the **Name** field. You can change the name by highlighting and deleting (or backspacing over) it and then typing a new one.

5. In the **Create In** drop down menu you can choose which folder to put the bookmark into. (Or, you can create a new folder by clicking on the **New Folder** button.)

6. When you are finished, click the **Add** button.



7. To select the favorite Web page, click on **Favorites** from the menu bar and click on the name of the Web page which you'd like to be displayed.

Need More Practice?

Try *Mousercise* at home...

<http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/mousercise.htm>

or try these other tutorial sites:

Palm Beach County Library System Mouse Tutorial

<http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/>

Ohio State University Libraries: net.TUTOR

<http://liblearn.osu.edu/tutor/>

USC Beaufort Library: Bare Bones 101

<http://www.sc.edu/beaufort/library/pages/bones/bones.shtml>

About.com: Internet Basics, The Essentials

<http://netforbeginners.about.com/od/internet101/u/inetbasics.htm>

Glossary of Terms

Address:

Internet users encounter two important types of addresses:

1. E-mail addresses, for sending e-mail to someone. E-mail addresses almost always contain an @. (Example: JohnSmith@aol.com)
2. Web page addresses; more properly called URLs. (Example: www.nashualibrary.org)

Advanced Search:

In a search engine, advanced search usually refers to added searching features that allow searches to create more precise searches.

Bookmark:

A URL that has been saved in some way so that you can quickly and easily return to a particular Web page.

Browser:

A program that lets you read information [HTML documents] and navigate the World Wide Web.

Chat:

A system in which people can communicate by typing messages. Unlike e-mail messages, chat messages are sent and received as you type.

Domain:

A name given to a host computer on the Internet.

E-mail:

Short for electronic mail, the system that lets people send and receive messages with their computers.

Help / FAQ:

An option on most Websites that gives instructions on how to use the site. It is sometimes called 'About This Site' or 'FAQ' (frequently asked questions).

Home page:

The Website your browser displays when you start the program or when you use the browser's *Home* command.

Keyword:

Searching for the key terms related to your topic. Usually keyword searching means that the search will find the terms you are looking for in a search engine or directory.

Metasearch Engine:

A special kind of search engine that allows you to search multiple search engines at one time.

Search Engine:

A tool that uses various electronic techniques to visit, search, and collect and organize data from Websites. Google, Alta Vista and Netscape employ search engines to help you search.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator):

Proper term for referring to Web page addresses.