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# Internet Basics

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# Course Objectives

- Be aware of the Library's Internet Policy
- Understand the basic concept of how to connect to the Internet
- Know what the Internet is—Web pages, email, chat
- Know how to launch a web browser
- Know how to navigate a Web page
- Use a Web browser
- Go to a web page by typing in the address
- Be aware of online security issues
- Perform a basic search using a search tool
- Know the fundamentals of printing a webpage

# Connecting to the Internet

To access the Internet you will need:

- A modem: Internal or external and connects your computer to the Internet through a phone line or cable connection.
- An ISP: an Internet service provider. A company that provides the link between your computer and the Internet. Such as Timewarner, BellSouth, Earthlink, AOL and NetZero.
- Browser: A browser, or web browser, is a type of software that allows you to view web pages. The two most popular browsers are Mozilla Firefox and Microsoft Explorer. Google has also released their own browser called Chrome.



## Types of Internet Connections

- Dial Up: Connects at a low speed over a standard telephone line. Netzero: \$9.95 to \$14.95 a month for 56 kbps.
- DSL: Always on, high speed connection via dedicated phone line. Bellsouth, \$14.95 to \$42.95 a month. Speed: 768 Kbps upload/128 Kbps download to 6 mbps/512 kbps
- Cable Modem: Always on, very high speed connection via cable. 768 Kbps download/128 Kbps upload to 7 Mbps download/384 Kbps upload \$24.95 to \$49.95

# What is the Internet?

**World Wide Web:** According to Encyclopedia Britannica: the leading information retrieval service of the Internet (the **worldwide** computer network). The **Web** gives users access to a vast array of documents that are connected to each other by means of hypertext or hypermedia links—*i.e.*, hyperlinks, electronic connections that link related pieces of information in order to allow a user easy access to them. Hypertext allows the user to select a word from text and thereby access other documents that contain additional information pertaining to that word; hypermedia documents feature links to images, sounds, animations, and movies. The **Web** operates within the Internet's basic client-server format; servers are computer programs that store and transmit documents to other computers on the network when asked to, while clients are programs that request documents from a server as the user asks for them. Browser software allows users to view the retrieved documents.


- A hypertext document with its corresponding text and hyperlinks is written in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and is assigned an online address called a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

**Electronic Mail (Email):** From the Encyclopdia American: a message consisting of text or multimedia materials or both, transmitted to an electronic mailbox stored in a computer or other microprocessing device. The expansion of email services since the late 20th century has produced significant changes in the ease and flexibility of both personal and commercial communications.

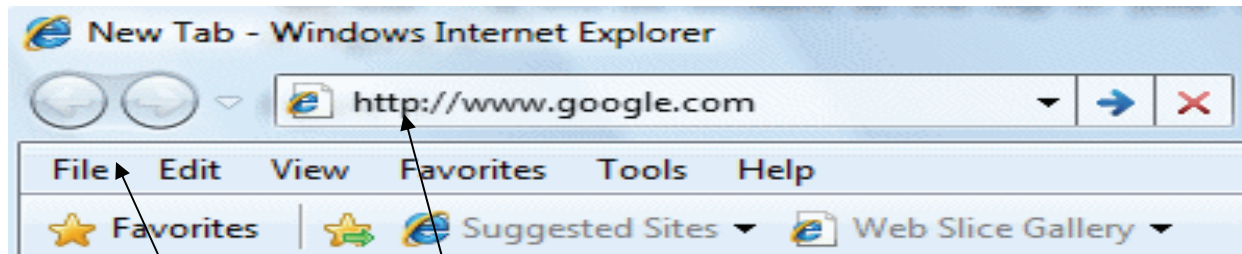
**Instant Messaging:** Instant Messaging, or IMing allows you to exchange real-time messages between two or more people based on typed text. The test is conveyed via computers connected over a network such as the Internet.

# Launching a Browser

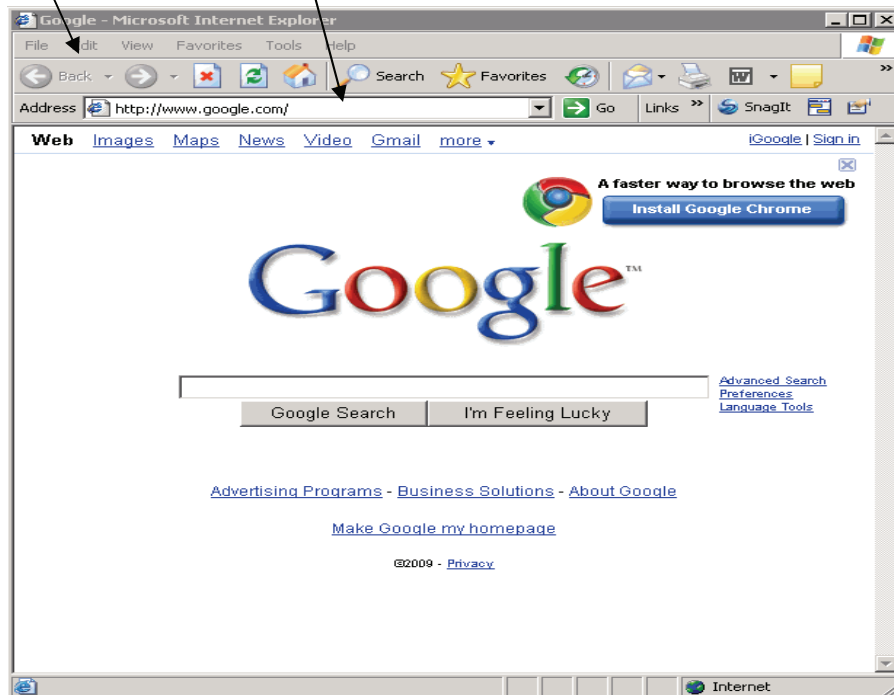
All PCs using the a Microsoft operating system will have Windows Explorer as the default internet browser. It is generally considered a good idea to download Mozilla Firefox. It is considered to be faster and more secure than Microsoft Explorer.

To launch Mozilla Firefox click on the Start button  and Choose the icon labeled Mozilla Firefox. The window you see below should appear.

The Address Bar: Located at the top of the browser, this area tells you what webpage you are currently viewing. You can also type a web address into this bar and go directly to that site.



Tool Bar: Gives you access to advanced options like copying, pasting, text size and text searching.



# The Mouse and Pointers



If you move the mouse pointer around the screen you will notice that it changes



**Arrow Pointer:**  
The default view for the pointer. No action is available on the screen when you see this.



**I-Bar:** Appears on the screen when the mouse is floating over an area with text or an area where you can enter your own text such as the address bar or a search box. If text is already on the screen this alerts you that this is text you can



The most important icon. When you see this on the screen then the text or object the mouse is floating over is a **link**. Clicking will then take you to another page on the website or to another website. Single clicking will do the trick. No double clicking required for links.

You will notice that most text links are underlined but not all are underlined. That is why it is good to know what the hand icon indicates.

## The Mouse



Left Button: The default button for most actions.

Roller Wheel: allows you to scroll up and down on the screen.

Right Button: Allows you to access options that are available on the tool bars.

# Browser Buttons



**The back Button:** The most used of all buttons. While surfing if you click on a link and visit another page on a site this will take you “back” to the page you just left.



**The Forward Button and History Arrow:** The forward button behaves like the backward button but takes you in the opposite direction. If it has a gray background it has nowhere to go forward to yet.

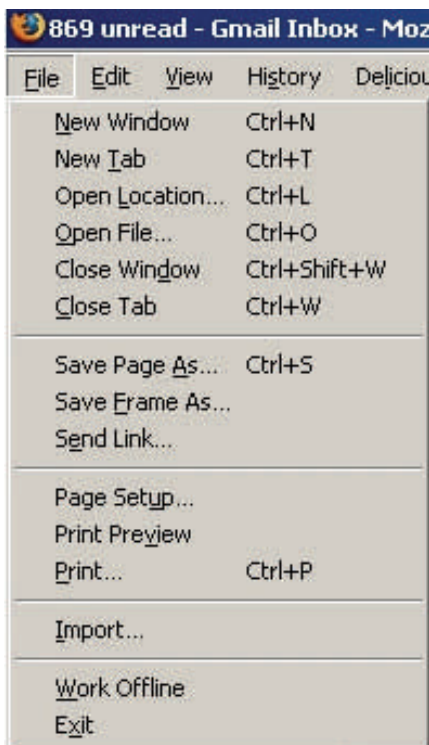
The history arrow allows you to view the last 15 pages you have visited and go back to one if you wish.



**The Reload Button:** Allows you to reload the current page. Useful for a slow connection or if your internet connection is temporary lost and the page doesn't load.



**The Home Button:** Takes you immediately back to your homepage. The homepage being the first page you see when you open your browser. You may also manually choose your homepage by clicking tools on the menu bar and going to options after that.



If you click in the upper left corner of your browser on the word “file” a menu will drop down.

**New Window:** Opens up a new that can be closed separately.

**New Tab:** Similar to opening a new window but it is a screen that opens in a tab tied to the current window.

**Open Location:** Moves cursor to the address bar and allows you to type in an address.

**Open File:** Allows you to open files stored on your hard drive or other storage devices.

**Close Window:** Shuts down the current browser window and all tabs.

**Close Tab:** Closes the tab you are currently viewing.

# Scrolling Up and Down

**Vertical Scrollbar:** This scrollbar allows you to see information that is not currently viewable. Many websites will have information that is off screen and you have to scroll to it. Much like following text to the bottom page of a book. You can click on the gray bar and drag it down or you can click on the small black arrows that point up and down and move the screen in those directions. You can also rotate the wheel on the mouse located between the two buttons and that will move the screen also.

**Horizontal Scrollbar:** On rare occasions there will be a similar scroll bar at the bottom of the page that moves the screen right and left. New web design has almost made this option obsolete.

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying the New York Times website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.nytimes.com/>. The website's header includes the New York Times logo and the date Monday, November 24, 2008. The main content area features several news articles, including "Markets Surge for a Second Day; Dow Up Nearly 400" and "Obama Unveils Team to Tackle 'Historic' Crisis". A vertical scrollbar is visible on the right side of the browser window, with an arrow pointing to it from the text above.

# Visiting a Website

- 1) Click on the address currently in the address bar.
- 2) When you click on the address bar it should automatically highlight all the text in the address bar. If all the text is highlighted, once you start typing the text should all be overwritten by what you type.
- 3) Type the address of the website you wish to visit.
- 4) Hit **Enter** on the keyboard.
- 5) Explore the website.

## Common Errors:

- 1) If you have trouble reaching a website be sure to check and see if you have entered the address exactly correct. The slip of one letter can cause an error.
- 2) Internet addresses never include spaces.
- 3) Internet addresses never have the '@' symbol included in them. That symbol is for email addresses only.

## Web Address Suffixes

- .com: Commercial businesses
- .edu: Educational Institutions
- .org: Organizations (nonprofit)
- .gov: Government Agencies
- .mil: Military websites

# Suggested Websites

- [www.metafilter.com](http://www.metafilter.com): A community blog that links to many interesting and useful websites.
- [www.lifehacker.com](http://www.lifehacker.com): Another community blog. This one focuses more on technology and efficiency.
- [www.thestate.com](http://www.thestate.com): The website for the local newspaper.
- [www.wistv.com](http://www.wistv.com): Local NBC affiliate. Good for local breaking news and traffic. They will often feature live video of local news happenings.
- [www.statelibrary.sc.gov](http://www.statelibrary.sc.gov): The library's website. Search the catalog or visit one of the library's family of websites.
- [delicious.com](http://delicious.com): Delicious is a social bookmarking site that allows you to store and tag book marks and visit sites bookmarked by others.
- [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com): The Internet Movie Database. It can answer just about any factual question concerning a movie and television show.
- [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com): A popular photo storing and sharing website. You can share photos with your friends and family or the whole world.
- [www.marines.mil](http://www.marines.mil): Official site of the Marine Corps.
- [news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk): The official site of the BBC news. News from all over the world and a nice international view of American news.
- [www.usps.gov](http://www.usps.gov): The United States Post Office. A good place to find a local office or to find zip codes for addresses.
- [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com): The leading online retailer.
- [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com): The most popular auction site on the internet.
- [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org): The publicly edited free encyclopedia. A good place to start searches.

# Online Safety

**Popup Windows:** Popup windows are just what name implies. Some websites, when you first visit them (www.thestate.com) will cause a windows about 1/4 the size of the normal browsing window to appear on your screen. The popup windows are advertisements, it is advisable to close that window immediately. Most of them are harmless but some can be less than beneficent.

**Sounds Too Good to be True?** Then it probably is. Stories occasionally appear about people that have been tricked online into giving out personal information that leads to identity theft. Oftentimes this happens to people who are of what can happen online. They let their guard down for a moment and gave out personal information even when they knew they probably shouldn't. Just like a TV advertisement or a telephone sales pitch, if it sounds too good to be true just close the window or move on to another web-sites or delete that email. Do not give out personal information to anyone you don't know or trust.

**Phishing:** Phishing is a type of deception designed to steal your valuable personal data, such as credit card numbers, email passwords, other account data and passwords, or other information.

How you might see a phishing scam:

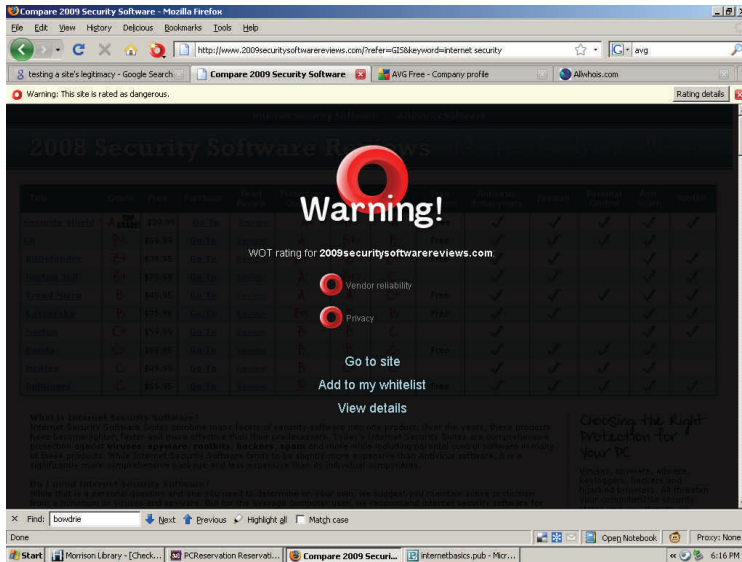
- In e-mail messages, even if they appear to be from a coworker or someone you know.
- On your social networking Web site.
- On a fake Web site that accepts donations for charity.
- On Web sites that spoof your familiar sites using slightly different Web addresses, hoping you won't notice.
- In your instant message program.
- On your cell phone or other mobile device.

# Free Security Tools

Web of Trust (www.mywot.com) A service that relies on the reports of its users. Requires the installation of a toolbar that then warns you if a site is dangerous or not. The ratings are done by other WOT users. If a site is considered dangerous you are told that by your browser and then asked if you really want to continue.



This is how the warning appears on your screen if you attempt to access a site that has been considered dangerous by the WOT users.



AVG, Free antivirus: free.avg.com. A free version of a commercial piece of software that came recommended by www.lifehacker.com It comes with protection against viruses, spyware, adware and identity-theft. It also updates periodically.



# Basic Searching

- 1) Go to the website [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
- 2) In the search box type in “gas stations charlotte.” Notice on searching that the case of letters is not a concern.

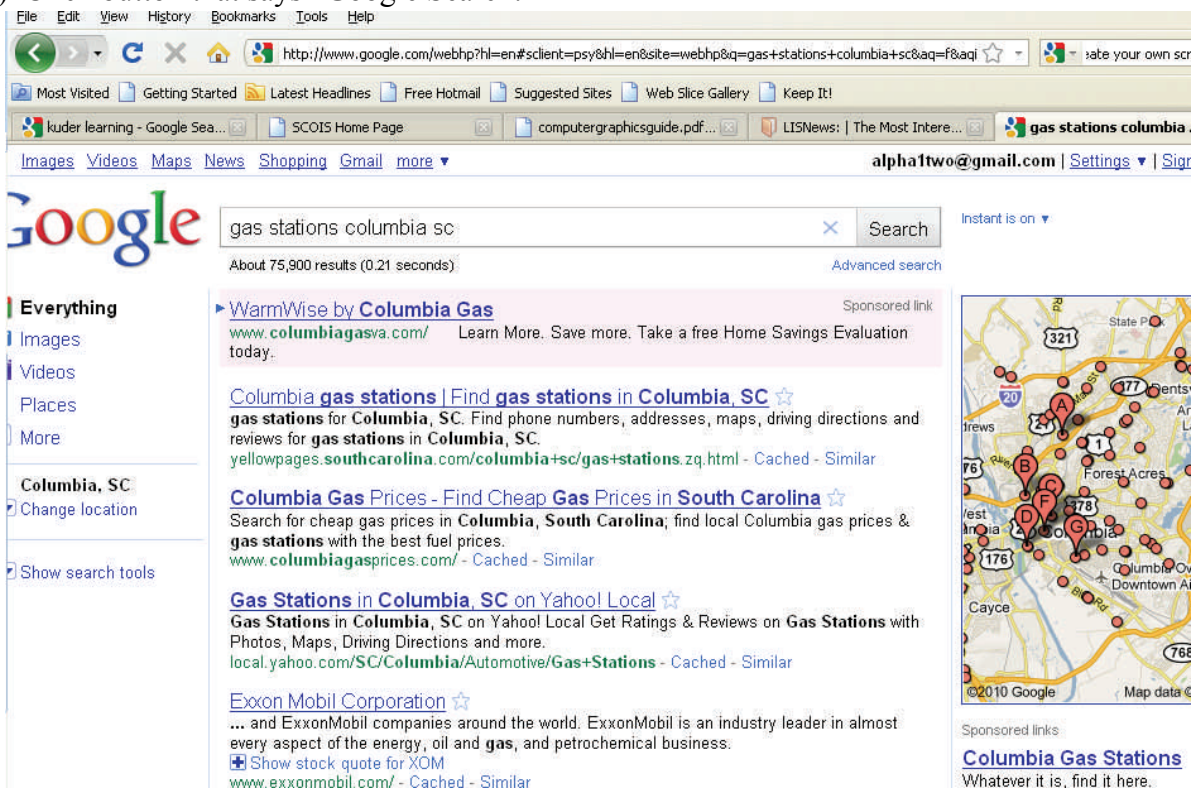


gas stations charlotte

Google Search I'm Feeling Lucky

[Advanced Search](#)  
[Preferences](#)  
[Language Tools](#)

- 3) Click button that says “Google Search.”



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the Google search interface. The search box contains the text "gas stations columbia sc". Below the search box, it indicates "About 75,900 results (0.21 seconds)". The search results are displayed in a list format, including a sponsored link for "WarmWise by Columbia Gas" and several organic results for "Columbia gas stations", "Columbia Gas Prices", and "Gas Stations in Columbia, SC on Yahoo! Local". On the right side of the search results, there is a map of the Columbia, SC area with several red circular markers indicating gas station locations. Below the map, there is a sponsored link for "Columbia Gas Stations" with the text "Whatever it is, find it here."

- 4) Notice the first listing is a small map with a list of gas stations in the Columbia area.
- 5) Clicking on individual letters on the map will show you the name of that gas station, its address and telephone number.
- 6) Along the right side, those links are paid advertisements. They may be helpful but know that they are ads.

- 7) Below the map you will notice a listing of search results.
- 8) Google ranks their results with an algorithm that computes a site's popularity.
- 9) You can refine this particular search by replacing Charlotte with a zip code.

[Web](#) [Images](#) [Maps](#) [News](#) [Shopping](#) [Gmail](#) [more ▼](#)

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If you notice across the top of the Google page there is a series of options. If you choose one of these options after a search it searches for the same terms in that category. If you have not searched yet clicking on one will just bump you over to that search option.

- 1) Images: Searches for pictures.
- 2) Maps: Does a search on the Google Maps server.
- 3) News: Does a search of only news sites.
- 4) Shopping: Searches only retail websites.
- 5) Video: Does a search for videos. This search is heavy on Youtube since Youtube is owned by Google.
- 6) Groups: Searches Newsgroups. Newsgroups are an older form of Internet communication where users post on what is essentially a bulletin board.
- 7) Books: Searches the Google Books server. There are full text of public domain titles available and Print on Demand available through the website lulu.com
- 8) Scholar: Google Scholar covers peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts, and other scholarly literature from all broad areas of research.
- 9) Finance: Searches the Google Finance servers. A good quick way to search stock prices, corporation and market news.
- 10) Blogs: Limits the search to blogs only. A good source for current topics.



Google isn't the only search engine out there but sometimes it feels like it ought to be. We at the reference desk use Google pretty much exclusively. There are other sites out there like:

www.yahoo.com  
www.dogpile.com  
www.alltheweb.com  
www.bing.com  
www.aol.com

# Printing

Printing webpages can be tricky. Many webpages are not formatted with printing in mind. If you print without paying attention you can end up with the information you want chopped off or end up with a completely blank page. There are three options for printing.

- 1) Printable view: The best way to print from a webpage is to look for a link on the page somewhere that says something like “printable view” or “print.” This will format the page to print properly. Clicking on file and then print will complete the process. Some sites will print without an onscreen reformat. The print window will open up on its own.
- 2) Print Preview. If printable view is not available then click on file on the browser and the print preview shows you what you would like printed on the screen properly then you can be almost assured that your printing will be successful. Be aware that you can limit the number of pages and specific pages you would like printed when the print window opens.
- 3) Highlighting and printing selection. If you are unsuccessful in printing or the print preview causes you some trepidation then there is the option of highlighting the text you would like to click and then choosing “selection” when the print window opens.
- 4) Take your time with printing and pay attention. The printer will only print what you tell it to print.

Print Window

