

Internet Basics

Terminology & Definitions:

THE INTERNET: The Internet is also referred to as the "World Wide Web". Connecting to the Internet enables you to do two things: (1) Type and send correspondences to others using an email software application. And, (2) use a web browser software application to visit websites "online" to learn, explore, buy, research, and play. Below are common terms and definitions.

Attachment: When a digital file is attached to an email you have received, it is said to have an "Attachment." An attachment can be an image (jpg), a word-processing document, a spreadsheet, a music file, or a video file. There are many other types of attachments, including the malicious ones that have viruses, worms, and Trojan Horses that can damage your computer. Before you open an attachment, make sure you know the recipient. As an extra measure of safety, if you hadn't expected an attachment, it may be best to email or call the sender to make sure that they actually sent you the email with the attachment—as with our street address, email addresses can be used to send junk emails and emails with malicious attachments.

Browsers/Web Browsers: Web Browsers are software applications on your computer that allow you to visit websites (see: *Website* definition). Most computers come installed with free web browsers. You are not limited to the browsers installed on your computer; there are many free browsers available. The browser that comes with Microsoft Windows is called Internet Explorer. The browser that comes with a Apple/Mac is Safari. You are not limited to these browsers: others that you can have on your computer are Firefox, Netscape and AOL. You can use any Web Browser to surf-the-web. Just like you can use any car to drive on the freeway. They all work a little differently, you just need to learn where and how the controls work.

Download: Download is the term used when you transfer a digital file or application from a website or email onto your computer. When this digital file is attached to an email you have received, it is said to have an "Attachment." You can either just view the attachment in your email program or you can "download" it onto your computer. (See *Attachment* definition.)

Email Address: "Veronica at ggcs dot com" translates to: "veronica@ggcs.com". This is an email address. The "at" (@) is a key word that tells you it's an email address rather than a web address (see *Web Address* definition). The "at" is like saying, "my phone number is..." In this case you're saying "my email address is..." Typing this email address in the "To:" text box of your email application will send the composed email message to the recipient when you press the "Send" button.

Email Program/Application/Software: Common Programs for the PC include Microsoft Outlook Express, Microsoft Outlook; For an Apple/Mac computer Apple Mail, and Microsoft Entourage. Emails applications have three components: (1) An address book that allows you to enter email addresses as well as contact phone numbers, street addresses, etc. (2) An email "stationary" pad where you compose your text and type in the email address(es) of the recipients. (3) A file cabinet system, where you can save copies of the email messages you've sent as well as the emails you have received.

Hyperlinks/Links: Hyperlinks act like doors that take you to another location. The location can be another webpage within the current website, or it can take you to a different website altogether. Some Hyperlinks are easy to identify: it can be a word that is underlined and/or typed in color. Or it can be an image (icon, button) that when the mouse arrow moves over it, it becomes a hand with a pointed finger. Click on the image or word once and wait as it takes you to the new webpage or website.

Web Address: When you hear someone say "**www dot...**" This is the beginning of a website address. It's like saying, "my street is..." (The reference to "dot" is actually a period ".". It's linguistically easier to say "dot" than "period" – and it flows better.) When you type "**www.google.com**" in the address bar of your Internet browser application, the "**www.**" tells the computer to go to the address that follows: "**google.com**". The name between the two dots (periods) often is the company web name (www.ibm.com, www.dell.com, www.apple.com). The "**.com**" ending indicates that it is a commercial website. There are several other web address endings that you will encounter:

- .org** usually takes you to a non-profit organization.
- .net** can take you to a business, non-profit or other institution.
- .gov** will take you to a government agency (www.irs.gov).
- .edu** will take you to an educational institution.

The web address also is referred to as URL (Uniform Resource Locator). At the "commercial" birth of the Internet, you would often ask, "What is your URL?" Back then it would start with: "http:\\www.amazon.com". Now-a-days, most browsers will let you type "amazon.com" without the "www." in front of it.

Website: Like books, websites can be about any topic. Websites can be learning institutions like schools, non-profit organizations, or medical institutions; virtual retail stores that may have a "brick & mortar" site (a store you can visit), a catalog business, or website business where you can order products and services online. Most businesses and organizations now create websites. It's like having an interactive brochure/slideshow presentation that tells visitors all about the organization. Individuals can also create websites to share information and pictures with family and friends. A Website is made up of "Web Pages", just like a book is made up of pages. The "Home Page" generally contains the Table of Contents and an introduction to the website. Commercial Internet websites like AOL, Earthlink and MSN also have ads throughout their websites.

Web Search: To find websites that have information on a specific topic, you can use a "search engine" like **www.google.com**. Type in key words and press "go" for a list of websites that cover the topic. Often times the results can be in the tens of thousands. Learn how to refine your search to get the most accurate and helpful results.

Mouse and its Many Faces

Arrow ↗ : The mouse pointer's common face.

Hand/Finger ✎ : When this appears it indicates that this is a hyperlink.

I-Beam/Insertion Point: The **I** turns into blinking insertion point **|** to enter text.

The Hour Glass : Tells you the computer is processing: Please wait.