



Introducing the Internet

Part Two
Browsers and Searching the
World Wide Web

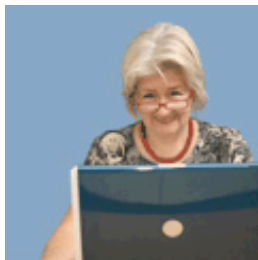


Introduction

Dear Friend,

Welcome to The Web on Wheels' Intro to the Internet, Part Two in this series! As we mentioned in Part One, the World Wide Web is only one portion of the Internet. Specifically, the World Wide Web comprises the software program you use to view websites – a browser and any pages that are viewed through the browser. In this part, we're going to explain browsers, give you confidence in searching the web, and connect you with some fantastic Internet resources we've found to be helpful.

Our main goal in this series is to help you to gain confidence with the World Wide Web, and make it into a useful everyday tool, rather than thinking of it as something rather frightening. Believe it or not, if you go through these Guides slowly and carefully, you will become competent at using the Internet, and firm in understanding what it is and how it can help you do what you need.



Part Two of this series involves browsers and surfing the web. Simple and straightforward, we'll lead you through what useful software programs are available, snapshot search engines, searches, and help get you started with some trustworthy sites. By the end of this chapter, you'll have some great bookmarked links that you may use to your advantage in the future. Enjoy!

First, let's briefly address a few important concepts regarding the Internet.

How Do I Connect to the Internet?

First, you need a live connection. There are many ways to connect to the Internet. The slowest is dial-up and the faster means are cable and FiOS (this stands for Fibre Optic Service). If you won't be using the Internet frequently, dial-up may be adequate; however, we suggest something a bit faster as, with dial-up, some web pages may take 10 minutes or longer to load.

To get a live connection running to your computer, you must first choose a company that provides Internet service (In Part One we gave some Aussie examples – Bigpond and Optus etc). You pay this Internet Service Provider (ISP) on an hourly, monthly or yearly basis. The ISP may also charge for a modem and router which are small boxes that you'll have attached to your computer to manage communications with the Internet.

Part 2

Browsers and Searching the World Wide Web

Part Two revolves around the World Wide Web and helps you learn how to effectively peruse it for information relevant to you. There's so much to learn, and we want to make sure you easily and confidently grasp the concepts without becoming overwhelmed. So, let's take some short steps and, at the end of this Part Two, you'll have the confidence and knowhow to navigate such a vast ocean of information as the World Wide Web.

Here's what we'll cover in Part Two:

1. The World Wide Web: What is the web? What is a website? What's a web address?
2. What's a search engine? Diving boards for jumping into an ocean of info
3. Browsers
4. 5 Tips for Successful Surfing
5. Trustworthy Resources
6. Funstuff

Since the World Wide Web is full of great information, we'll point you in the direction of some very helpful sites and videos that will maximise your understanding of the information we cover in this series. If you see some words underlined and in blue in this document, you can click on it, and you'll be taken to that place on the World Wide Web.



1. The World Wide Web:

What is the web? What's a website?

What's a web address?

What is the Web?

The World Wide Web, aka. the web, is sort of like a city with many places you can visit. There are hundreds of homes, buildings, parks, stores, monuments, and other places of interest to visit in this city; well, each one of these places, on the web, is a website.

What is a Website?

Think of a website as all the places you can stop in the city. Go to one of these places on the World Wide Web, and knock on the door... like a house with many rooms, inside a website are many pages. Just like the different purposes of rooms in a house, so too web pages within a website have different purposes. Here is a list of some common types of web pages you'll find in a website:

- **home page** – think of the home page as the main entrance to a house... you can see many of the rooms from there, and you may choose from this entrance which room you wish to visit first.
- **about page** – when a website has an about page, it's got background information about the company, people, or topic that explains how it all began or why it exists.
- **links page** – many websites offer recommended sites that are elsewhere on the World Wide Web, and they can be found on a links or resources page. If you like the site you've visited, then the makers of the site are interested in helping you find similar sites or sites that visitors like you may be interested in visiting as well.
- **contact page** – the contact or info page offers you a way to get in touch with the company, person, or topic of the site. It may offer an e-mail address (e.g: vivienne@thewebonwheels.com.au), a street address, a phone number, a fax number, etc.

Different rooms within a house are decorated in different ways and have different types of furniture and appliances; just so, the pages within a website have different types of information and may be presented in different forms of text, colours, pictures, links to other websites, videos, chat rooms, and so much more. All the information on a web page is called content, and it can be changed, just as furniture can be changed and rearranged. Now, like every house, building and even park, these websites have addresses.

What's a web address?

A web address is formally known as a URL (Uniform Resource Locator) and it does just that – locates a resource on the Internet by a uniform, or universally, accepted format, grabs the resource's information, and displays it for you.

This is what web addresses oftentimes look like:

<http://www.google.com>

www.google.com

google.com

All URLs end with a dot-something (a top-level domain name), that indicates what type of information will be accessed: .com, .mil, .gov, .biz, .tv, .net, .org, .edu, etc.

Any letters followed by the dot indicate a site's affiliation:

.com = commercial enterprise, business, or public

.org = non-profit organisation

.edu = educational institution

.gov = government agency

.mil = military agency

.net = commercial, business, or public

This can help in determining a site's credibility. Educational (.edu) and government sites (.gov) have requirements for posting on the Internet and such information is generally reliable, whilst a public site (.com or .net) may be trustworthy, but there is no guarantee just by looking at the end of the Web address.

Another point, like www.thewebonwheels.com.au, there's more than one top-level domain here... .com indicates that our site is a business, but what about .au?

.au = Australia

Countries across the world have physical location abbreviations, .ca for Canada, .au for Australia, .ie for Ireland, etc. This country abbreviation quickly groups websites that are relevant to your location without having to look in the website itself. As you can imagine, the fact that groups of sites are split up by countries helps, because there are millions upon millions of sites on the World Wide Web city.

With hundreds of thousands of addresses, how could it be humanly possible to find anything out there? The trick is, you want to look at just those sites that interest you, just as a tourist to a city only wants to see places of interest to him or her. This is where search engines come in.

2. Search Engines

Diving Boards for Jumping into the Internet

You've arrived at the World Wide Web city, wondering what you may find. You want to explore the city, but you don't have a lot of time, and you'd rather spend that time looking at places that interest you, but you're not sure where to start.

A search engine is a great place to start.

What's a search engine?

A search engine is a special type of website... it's simply a website that helps you sort through and find other websites. Search engines serve as a map for the World Wide Web, guiding and directing you towards the sorts of places you'd like to see.

When we talk about "surfing the web" or "browsing the Internet," we're talking about looking for information and searching for it.

The gurus call exploring the Internet "surfing" because the amount of information available on the World Wide Web is comparable to an ocean. And so, like the ocean, we may not be able to see everything available on the web, but it doesn't stop us from enjoying it.

If used to its potential, a search engine website's sole purpose is to help you sift through the beaches of sand on the World Wide Web and arrive at one, two, or three helpful sites just to your liking.

A search engine is your key to finding the information you want. Sometimes it's fun to think of search engines as big scavenger hunt games because you type in a word related to what you're seeking, and it returns all sorts of possible matches.

How does a search engine do this?

Internet search engines catalogue all the websites they know about in a very large database. You, the end user, can type in keywords that relate to the topic of interest you desire. For instance, you want to find the best steak restaurant near you, so you type in the keywords, "steak restaurant" and the name of the city in which you live. Then, the engine matches your words with the catalogue it has, and returns the most relevant results. You may get Kingsley's and Chophouse if your city was Sydney. Each search engine has different ways of doing the matching and returning results. Try out the same keyword search with a few different engines to get a feel for which engine you prefer using.

What are some great search engines I can use?

Google – www.google.com

Bing – www.bing.com

Yahoo – www.yahoo.com

Quite often, the search engine site will already recognise your geographical area based on your IP address. No worries, that's the smart part of the Internet. Otherwise, many search engine sites will allow you to choose to have your search results only come from Australia. All you need do is click the "local" button, and indicate your desire to only see Australia-based sites.

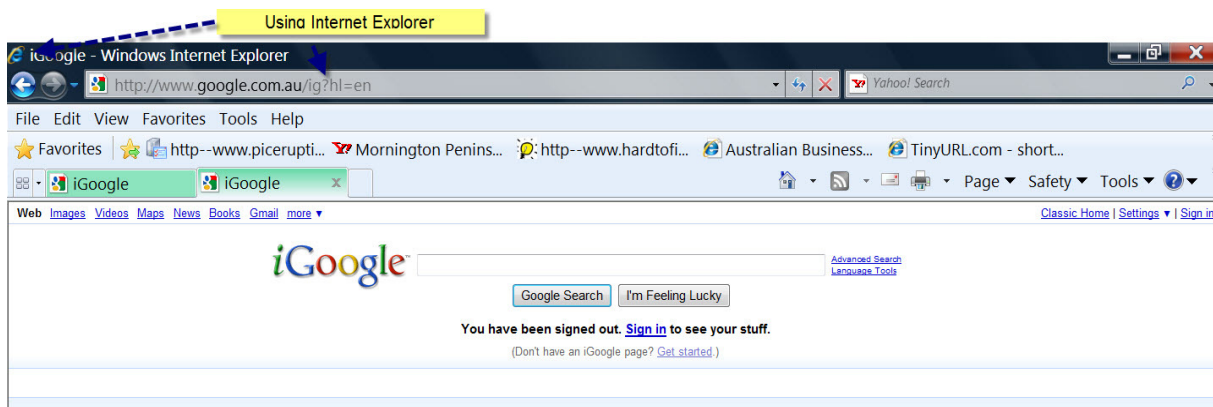
Well, that's a quickie overview of how search engines serve as your map or guide to getting the most out of the World Wide Web. Now that we've got our map on hand, how will we get to all these places in one day? We need some sort of quick transportation that gets us from point A to point B to point C and back to where we began. Well, transportation within the World Wide Web city rests on the shoulders of a browser.

3. Browsers

What is a browser?

Recall from above our analogy to the web as a city. Think of a browser as your means of transportation through the city. Without it, you won't be able to get very far very fast.

Simply put, a browser is software that is either already installed on your computer or that you download onto your computer. Through this software, you gain access to viewing sites and pages on the World Wide Web.



What does a browser do?

As discussed in the Getting to Know Your Computer series, software includes programs that interact with you, the end user. Browsers are software programs that allow you to interact, not only with your computer, but also with the Internet. The information highway is all stored in code; your browser does the heavy duty work of crunching the code and displaying it in the browser for you to see websites with text, images, videos and so forth.

How do I get a browser?

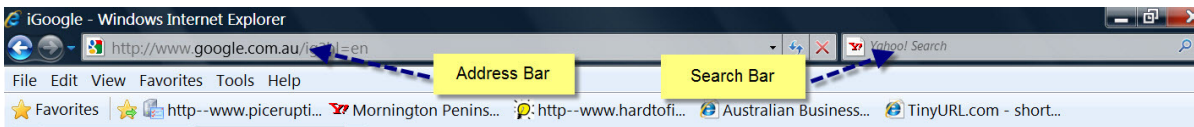
If your computer uses the Windows operating system, it probably already has the Internet Explorer program installed. All you have to do is find Internet Explorer in your list of applications, double click, and you're ready to access the Internet.

If you have a Mac, Safari is the pre-installed Internet browser. Although Internet Explorer and Safari are the default browsers, you have the option to try out other web browsers such as Firefox, Opera, Chrome, and perhaps others. Browsers are free software, so you don't have to pay for them. All you need is to search for the Internet browser you desire, go to its website, and download the software onto your computer. (email me if you need a hand!)

Every web browser has two toolbars: an address bar and a navigation bar. There are plenty of other bells and whistles available, but these are the two that you need in order to interact with the World Wide Web.

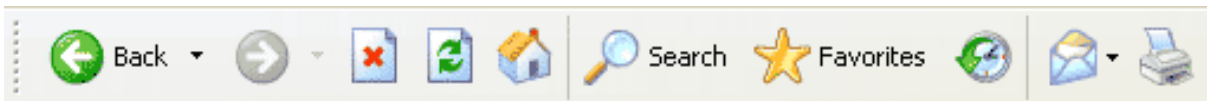
Address Bar

We use the address bar to go to a specific site. This is where the “www” comes into play. In the address bar, there must be a specific address typed in which usually begins with “www.” The proper format for web addresses is `http://www.` After that, it's customised to the individual website you're accessing.



Caution! Oftentimes, you'll find the web browser has a search field directly to the right of the address bar field. If you type your www address into the search field, you won't arrive at the site you intended. And conversely, if you type your search words into the address bar field, you may get an error.

Navigation Bar



The navigation bar helps you skip around the web quickly without having to type a specific address in the address bar every time. Most navigation bars have the following buttons:

- back – returns to the previous page you were viewing
- forward – if you've used the back button, the forward button will go to the page viewed after the current one
- home – the page you always want to have load when you start the browser program
- stop – if a site is taking a while to load, it helps to simply stop the process and start over again
- refresh – reload the current website you're viewing, this helps if the page took too long to load and you had to click stop or if you know the content has changed and you want it updated to the most current information

4. Five Tips for Successful Surfing

Here at The Web on Wheels, we want to make sure you've got the tools necessary to make the most of your time on the Internet. Since there is so much to offer on the World Wide Web, because it is literally world-wide, the sheer amount of information combined with the technology can quickly become overwhelming. We're happy to offer you 5 Tips the experts use when surfing the web. We hope they'll help you too.

1. Find a Search Engine You Love

Again, try the same search on three different search engine sites. You'll be surprised to find how different each one looks and how the results differ even with the same keywords. When comparing search engine sites, ask which one is easiest for you to read to find the site you want to click, which one seems to be less distracting in terms of ads and other busyness we oftentimes find on the web, and which site just feels more comfortable to your liking,

2. Keywords are King

You want to have the right keywords going into your searches; this is the main cause of frustration for many Internet surfers. If you type a full, grammatically proper sentence into a search field, the results will most likely be irrelevant.

Just like at the library, you want to think about what it is you want to find, and then identify the more general topic. Instead of typing "I want to find a steak restaurant in Sydney Australia, please." Use concrete nouns. "steak restaurant, Sydney, Australia" If your results are too generic, be more specific. Example of too generic, "steak restaurant, Australia." If your results seem too specific or off the mark completely, get more generic and use nouns. Example of too specific, "porterhouse steak with onions at 25 Arbor."

3. Use Your Internet Reading Glasses

Reading websites is far different from reading a book; the Internet has no beginning and no end and there's so much of it, one couldn't dream of reading it all. You've got to skim everything, looking for the main words, looking at the location, etc.

Ask yourself what you want from a website for which you're looking and look for that in the website title, page summary, or website address. If it's not really what you're looking for, don't waste time clicking on it, simply look at the next search engine entry. Oftentimes what you're looking for may be the fourth or fifth result the search engine returned.

4. Look After the Dot

When you see search engine results, you'll always be able to see the web address of the website you'll be clicking on if you so choose to click. For instance, if you're looking for a government site, and the search engine returns three sites that have .com at the end, it's not a government-run site, so skip it and don't even click. Instead, look for the sites that have .gov at the end. Basically, ask yourself what type of site is more reliable? Government? Nonprofit? Commercial? Educational? Which country? And choose which site to click accordingly.

5. Go With the Recommended Sites

It's best to skip all the hard work and find out what someone you trust already considers a great website. At www.thewebonwheels.com.au, in our member site, we have a list of websites and resources on topics that appeal to you. We encourage you to apply this same principle elsewhere. If you find a site that has a few helpful links on various topics, bookmark it.

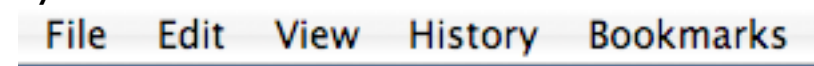
Why would I bookmark a site?

You'll want to bookmark sites, just like you want to put a bookmark in a book, because you plan on returning to that same place again. If you plan on returning to a website often, you can bookmark it so that you won't have to type in the entire address every time you want to visit.

How do I bookmark a site?

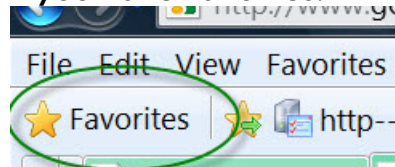
Up in the main menu bar of your browser should be a tab called Bookmarks, or Favorites.

If you have Bookmarks



Click 'Bookmarks', and click 'Bookmark this page', and it will appear in a list of bookmarked sites. When you want to return to that frequented site, click on the "Bookmarks" tab, and you should see a list of your bookmarked sites below.

If you have Favorites:



Click on 'Favorites' button – (with the Star) and click on 'Add to Favorites'. The webpage will then appear in a list of bookmarked sites. When you want to return to that frequented site, click on the 'Favorites' button, and you should see a list of your bookmarked sites below.

5. Trustworthy Resources

Whether or not you're a member of the Web on Wheels, we want to give you a list of trustworthy websites to jumpstart your successful experience on the Internet.

Safe Search Engines

We already covered reliable search engine websites in the search engine section of Part Two, but just for good measure:

www.google.com

www.yahoo.com

www.bing.com

General Interest Sites

If you're looking for sites that have a large variety of topics, issues, news, etc., consider the following:

www.msn.com

*for Australia-specific, www.msn.com.au which is TV station Channel 9.

www.yahoo.com

*for Australia-specific, www.yahoo7.com.au which is Channel 7.

These sites will show local weather forecasts, local TV guides, community events, theatre ticket sales, and of course, local ads.

Computer Company User Sites

Whether your operating system is Microsoft Windows or Mac OS, these companies provide their customers with a welcoming site for tutorials, troubleshooting, help support, and so much more.

<http://www.microsoft.com/athome/> if you have a Windows PC.

<http://www.apple.com/mac/> if you have a Mac.

Medical Sites

We all want to lead healthy, happy lives. It's important that, even if we're looking for a simple meal plan or something as complex as an undiagnosed illness or health concern, we look to the right source for medical advice or guidance. It is unwise to self-diagnose, but we want to recommend some generally reliable sites in case you're interested in looking up things online in the medical realm. There's a lot of poor advice on the Internet from folks who are not licensed physicians. Take care.

www.mdonline.com is a global site with general health information.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au is an Australian, nonprofit site with great health info.

6. Funstuff

Well, we wouldn't want to give you all this fantastic yet serious information about the web without touching on all the fun that's out there waiting for you.

Here at the Web on Wheels, we encourage you to visit the web on a daily basis, not just to keep up your exposure to the technology, but because the Internet provides a way for you to exercise your brain, to be curious, and to connect with many wonderful resources around the world. Most of all, we want you to be safe, so if a site or person on the web ever asks you for personal information, especially social security number, home address, phone number, credit card or bank number, kindly decline the request and leave the chat, or immediately close out the window.

Groceries

Our Aussie supermarkets will deliver right to your kitchen, and you can see it all online and order it either online or over the phone.

www.colesonline.com.au

www.safeway.com.au

Games

Stimulate your brain to promote mental health!

www.lumosity.com/ *Requires signup, and gives 30 days of access for free.

<http://zone.msn.com/en-us/home> Games are free as long as you don't sign up to play for cash. Some games require that you download a script, which is safe. Don't download the game itself unless you are willing to let it take up space on your hard drive.

Shopping

Some sites are trustworthy while others can certainly pull you in, but they're not legitimate. Exercise caution whenever shopping online.

www.eBay.com for the auctions and instant buys of new and used products.

www.amazon.com for new and used products – especially books.

www.lego.com check out what the grandkids may like, or relive a bit of your own childhood.

www.freemagicschool.com – learn magic tricks to delight and share with your grandchildren,

Other Funstuff

www.care2.com to send free e-cards, environmental/humanitarian issues, health and wellness, newsletters, etc.

www.wikipedia.org this site is open source, which means it's always changing and anyone can edit, so don't rely on the information as completely true or factual, but it's one of those sites that even university professors say is a good place to start in order to get a general idea of things and to find the more reliable sources on a topic of interest to you.

www.ancestry.com to begin the family tree.

www.youtube.com for videos ... use caution, as the search results are uncensored and the videos themselves run the gamut of possibilities for content. However they have loads of funny and interesting videos. Look for the Channels button to view videos in a particular category – such as Funny or Music.

Part 2 Summary

Whew! What an adventure!

We certainly packed a lot of information regarding what's out there on the World Wide Web, but there's so much more. If you're ever stuck, overwhelmed, or just wanting an encouraging voice to guide you through a particular topic, don't hesitate to give me a call or send me a quickie e-mail. I'm here to help you and give you confidence. In addition, I offer one-on-one coaching for those who would like to grow in their learning of technology with a kind, encouraging advocate.

Part Two covered the World Wide Web, search engine websites, browser software, tips for searching the web, links to trustworthy sites, and links to funstuff.

What's the World Wide Web? It's like a city because it has so many places to visit. The World Wide Web is only one part of the Internet, and it comprises all the websites one can visit.

What's a search engine? Search engines are websites that search the web and narrow down and return results of websites that relate to the topics you enjoy. As a metaphor, in the city of the World Wide Web, the search engine is your map that'll guide you to the places you want to go.

What's a browser? A browser is software on your computer that lets you see websites. Browsers are your means of transportation in the city of the World Wide Web, or rather, your surfboard for surfing the Internet.

With the 5 Tips for Successful Searching, Trustworth Sites, and Funstuff found in Part Two, we covered a lot of the basics that will give you the tools you need to spend hundreds of hours exploring what's available on the World Wide Web.

In Part Three, we'll begin to communicate over e-mail, one of the best and quickest ways to communicate in today's modern society. The World Wide Web is only one part of the Internet; e-mail comprises another section of the Internet that you don't want to miss. To begin writing electronic letters to virtually anyone across the globe, grab Part Three of the 'Intro to the Internet' series.

This concludes Part Two of the 'Intro to the Internet' series.

If you would like more help, or one-on-one coaching, please call Viv on: (03) 9787 7500 or email: info@thewebonwheels.com.au