



Introduction to the Internet

What is the Internet?

A "network" is a group of computers that are connected to each other so that they can communicate with each other and share and exchange information. The Internet is a global "network of networks," made up of computer networks of all sizes plus individual home computers all over the world.

The World Wide Web

The World Wide Web (WWW) is the biggest, most popular, and fastest growing part of the Internet.

Text, images, sound, and video can be incorporated into documents called "Web pages." These documents are connected with "links" so that you can move quickly from document to document with the click of a mouse.



The information on the World Wide Web is constantly changing as new Web pages are created, existing Web pages are updated, and old Web pages are taken down.

Web Pages & Web Sites

A Web page is a single document available on the World Wide Web. Web pages may be more than one screen long and more than one page if printed out.

A Web site is a collection of Web pages that are linked together, similar to how a book is a collection of paper pages that are bound together. The introductory or first page of a Web site is called a "home page."

Links

Links, also called "hyperlinks" or "hotlinks," are what connect Web pages to each other and allow you to jump from one to another quickly. To follow a link, you simply use the left mouse button to click on the link once.

Often, links on a Web page are easy to recognize because they are represented as underlined blue text, which turns purple once you have clicked on the link. But links can also be other colors, and sometimes they are represented by buttons, pictures, or other graphics instead of text.

The Middleton Public Library has several different types of links on its Web site's home page.

The screenshot shows the Middleton Public Library website home page. Annotations identify various link types:

- Links represented by text:** Points to the "Reference Links" menu (Internet Search, LINKcat, BadgerLink, Directories, Email Services) and the "Events at the Library" section.
- Links represented by buttons:** Points to the "Search" and "Clear" buttons in the search bar and the "LINKcat" button.
- Link represented by picture:** Points to the "The Bookworm" newsletter logo.

Reference Links

- Internet Search
- LINKcat
- BadgerLink
- Directories
- Email Services

Events at the Library

| Today | Sun 8/15 | Mon 8/16 | Tue 8/17 | Wed 8/18 | Thu 8/19 | Fri 8/20 |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 68°F / ☀️ | 76° / 54° ☀️ | 76° / 59° ☀️ | 76° / 57° ☀️ | 81° / 61° ☀️ | 80° / 57° ☀️ | 76° / 54° ☀️ |
| 10:00 Friends Book Sale | | | | 6:30 Friends Book Sorting | | |

MIDDLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY
 Find out how to reach us at our [Contact Information](#) page. It has [Library phone numbers](#), [Hours of operation](#), [Map & driving directions to the library](#) and a [Suggestion Box](#). Our [Library Information](#) page has links to our [Meeting Room Schedule](#), [Library User Guide](#) and [2003/2004 Library Renovation Info](#). Find [Library Events & Programs](#): [Programs for Children](#), [Teens](#), [Friends Book sorting & Sales](#) and a [Monthly Calendar of events](#)

The Bookworm
 BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
 • [Current Issue](#)
 • [Archives](#)

You can usually tell if some text or an image is a link by holding the mouse pointer over the text or image. If the pointer shape turns from an arrow into a hand, then the text or image is a link and can be clicked on.

Types of Addresses

Like locations in the real world, locations on the Internet all have unique addresses so that you can easily find them. When using the Internet, the two main types of addresses you will come across are "e-mail addresses" and "Web addresses."

E-mail addresses are what allow you to send a personal message to a specific person or group of people over the Internet. It works a lot like the postal address you use on a paper letter. The e-mail address of the Middleton Public Library looks like this:

mid@scls.lib.wi.us

Username ↑ Domain ↑

An e-mail address is always made up of a username, the @ symbol, and a domain name. The username is the unique name assigned to the person who has the e-mail account and the domain name tells where that account is located.

Navigating the World Wide Web

Web Browsers

A Web browser is a computer program that allows you to view, save, and print Web pages and navigate the World Wide Web. The most common Web browsers are Internet Explorer (IE) and Netscape. We have our own browser here at the library.

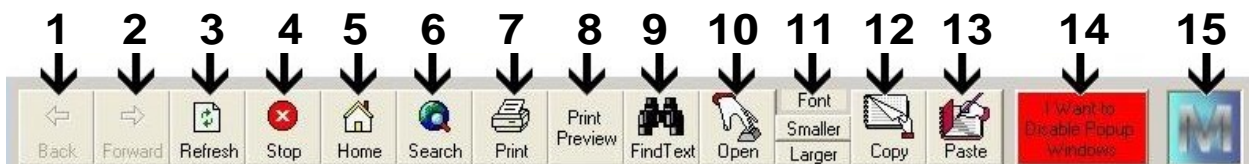


← When you are using the computers at the Middleton Public Library, this is the button you click on to open up the Web browser.

The Toolbar & Navigation Buttons

The Web browser's toolbar, located at the top of the browser window, contains navigation buttons that allow you to move between Web pages, as well as buttons for other helpful tools like searching and printing.

1. Back – Takes you back to the last Web page you visited
2. Forward – Moves you forward to the Web page you went back from
3. Refresh – Loads the current Web page again
4. Stop – Stops a Web page from loading
5. Home – Takes you to the Middleton Public Library's home page
6. Search – Takes you to the library's list of search engines
7. Print – Prints the current Web page, which may be more than one printed page
8. Print Preview – Provides a preview of how the current Web page will print, including the number of pages that will be printed
9. FindText – Brings up a search box that allows you to find specific words or phrases on a Web page
10. Open – Brings up a box so you can type in a Web address and go to that page
11. Font – Adjusts the size of text on a Web page, making the font larger or smaller for easier reading
12. Copy – Makes a copy of selected text for pasting
13. Paste – Inserts (pastes) copied text wherever the cursor is located
14. Popup Windows – Suppresses or allows popup windows
15. Activity – Tells you when the computer is loading a page and when it is finished



The Address Bar

The address bar allows you to go to a Web site by typing in its unique Web address. It looks like this:



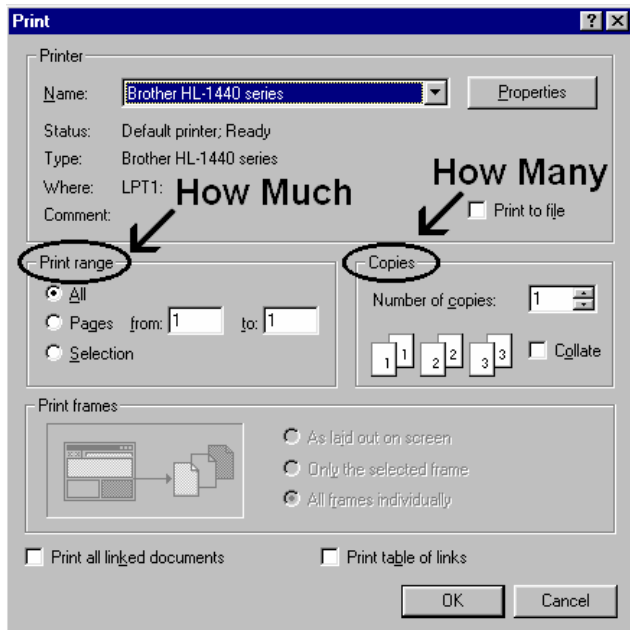
You simply type the Web address of the Web site you want to go to into the white box, then press the Enter key on the keyboard when you have finished typing.

Some things to remember when you're typing Web addresses:

- If there is already a Web address in the address bar, you must erase it before you type in the new Web address.
- You do not need to type "http://" when you type an address; you can start with the "www."
- You need to make sure you type the Web address exactly as it is written, including upper and lower case letters, dots, slashes, and underscores.

Printing Web Pages

If you want a paper copy of a Web page, you can print it. When you press the Print button, the box shown below will appear on the screen.



You can control how much of the Web page you print by using the options in the "Print range" section. You can choose "All" to print the entire Web page, or you can set a range of pages to be printed if you only want to print certain pages. If you just want to print a portion of text or images, you can highlight exactly what you want to print with the mouse, click on the Print button, and choose "Selection" in the "Print range" section.

You can control how many times the Web page will be printed using the options in the "Copies" section. Just choose the number of copies you need.

Many Web pages are more than one page long when printed. It is a good idea to use the Print Preview button to see how many pages will be printed. You may not need the information on all of the pages, and you can choose which pages to print.

Search Engines

When you do not already know the exact Web address of a particular Web site you wish to visit or when you do not know what Web site will have the information you are looking for, you can use a search engine. Search engines help you find Web sites and specific information on Web sites by matching words you choose to represent what you are looking for with words that are on Web sites.

You can find a list of links to some of the many search engines available by clicking on the Search button on the toolbar of the Web browser. You can also go directly to a search engine's Web page by typing the Web address into the address bar.

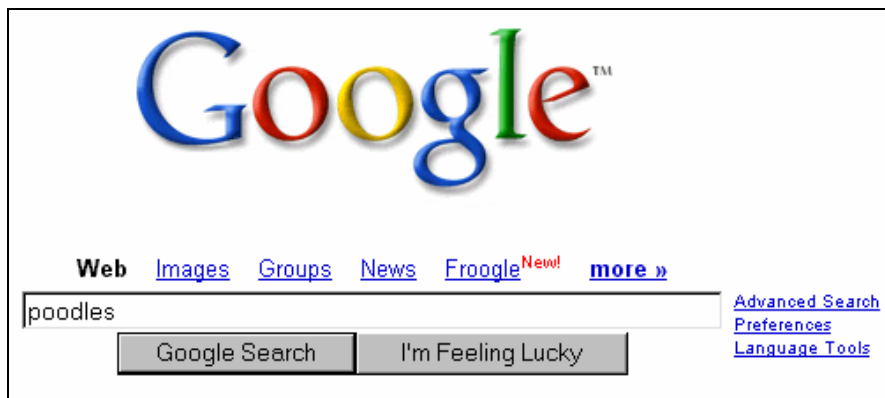
Some of the most popular and useful search engines are:

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| Google | http://www.google.com |
| Yahoo! | http://www.yahoo.com |
| AltaVista | http://www.altavista.com |

"Meta search engines" search the World Wide Web by using more than one search engine at once. Some good meta search engines are:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Dogpile | http://www.dogpile.com |
| MetaCrawler | http://www.metacrawler.com |

As an example, here is what you'll see on the basic search screen for Google:

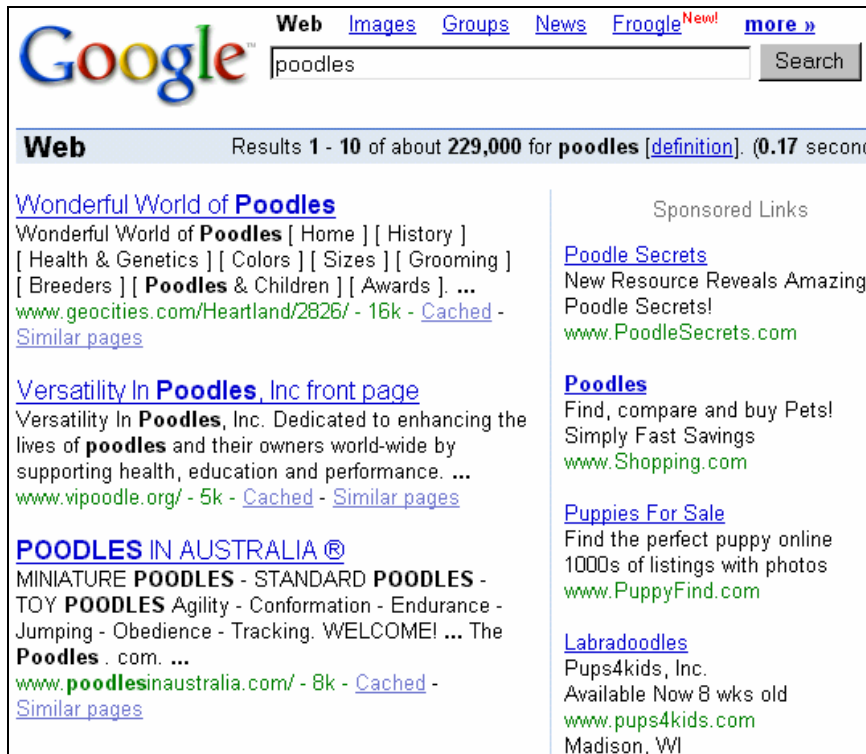


HINT: If you just want to search for pictures, you can click on the [Images](#) link right above the search box.

Steps in doing a basic search using Google:

1. Decide what information you want to find and what words best represent that information.
2. Type those words into the search box—like "poodles" in the image above.
3. Click on the Google Search button below the search box to get a list of Web pages that match the words you typed in. These are called "results" or "hits."
4. Look through the list of results, read the descriptions, and click on the links for those that look like they might have the information you're looking for. The most popular and relevant sites are often listed first.

This is what the list of results will look like if you do a search using the word "poodles":



Each page will contain 10 results. You will have to click on the Next link at the bottom of the page to get to the next 10 results.

The column on the left is the list of results for your search. Click on the titles to go to the Web sites.

The column on the right is a list of advertisements, or links to Web sites that paid Google to include them in your results.

Here are some tips that will help you use Google:

- Be as specific as possible to get the most accurate results. If you don't get any results, however, you may have to pick more general words to search with.
- You don't need to use capital letters. Ex. dane county humane society, wisconsin, george w. bush
- It's not necessary to use common words like "how," "a," "an," and "the."
- If you are searching by using a phrase, you should place that phrase in quotation marks. Ex. "middleton public library"
- Google will often tell you if you've made a common spelling error. If you don't get any results, however, it is a good idea to check your spelling.

Evaluation of Web Resources

Anyone anywhere can create a Web site and publish it on the World Wide Web. When you're searching for information online, you need to examine Web pages to make sure they have reliable information.

Questions to ask when evaluating Web sites:

- Who created the Web site? Are they experts? What are their credentials?
- Is this an official or unofficial Web site? It is biased?
- What is the purpose of the Web site? Are they trying to sell something?
- Is the site current? When was it created? When was it last updated?

E-mail

E-mail is short for "electronic mail," and you can use it to send messages to and receive messages from friends and family very quickly using a computer. You can sign up for a free e-mail account from a number of different services on the World Wide Web, which will allow you to send and receive messages using any computer with a connection to the Internet anywhere in the world.

Some of the most popular free e-mail services are:

| | |
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| Yahoo! Mail | http://mail.yahoo.com |
| Hotmail | http://www.hotmail.com |
| Lycos Mail | http://mail.lycos.com |

Signing Up for a Free Yahoo! E-mail Account

To sign up for a Yahoo! e-mail account or to log in to one you already have, go to the Yahoo! Mail Web site listed above. This is what you will see on the screen:

The screenshot shows the Yahoo! Mail website interface. On the left side, there is a section titled "New to Yahoo!?" with a "Sign Up Now" button. On the right side, there is a sign-in section titled "Enter your ID and password" with input fields for "Yahoo! ID" and "Password", a "Remember my ID on this computer" checkbox, and a "Sign In" button. Arrows point from the text on the right to the "Sign Up Now" button and the "Yahoo! ID" input field.

If you already have a Yahoo! e-mail account and you want to access it, type your ID and password in the box on the right, then click on the Sign In button.

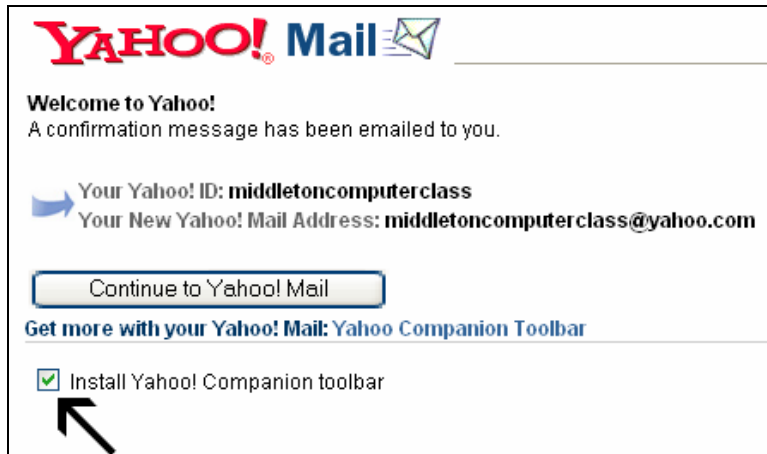
When you type your password in, it will appear as dots or stars.

To sign up for a new account, click on the [Sign up now](#) link on the left. You will be taken to a Web page with three options. To sign up for a free e-mail account, click on the [Sign up now](#) link in the Free Yahoo! Mail box on the left. Fill out the sign up form and click on the Submit This Form button at the bottom of the page.

Tips for filling out the sign up form:

- Your Yahoo! ID can be any combination of letters and numbers, but cannot include spaces or symbols.
- Capitalization matters for your password. Pick a password that is hard to guess. You can use any combination of numbers, letters, and symbols.
- It's a good idea to write down your ID and password so you don't forget them.
- What you enter in the First Name and Last Name boxes will be what appears when you send others messages.
- If you don't want to get e-mail advertisements, be sure to uncheck those boxes.

After you click on the Submit This Form button at the bottom of the sign up page, you will see the following on the screen if you filled out the sign up form correctly:



This screen tells you what your new e-mail address will be. You should write it down so that you can give it to the people you want to get e-mail from.

Make sure to uncheck the box next to the words "Install Yahoo! Companion toolbar," then click on the Continue to Yahoo! Mail button under your new e-mail address.

Now you are logged in to your new e-mail account and should see the welcome screen for your mailbox. It will look like this:

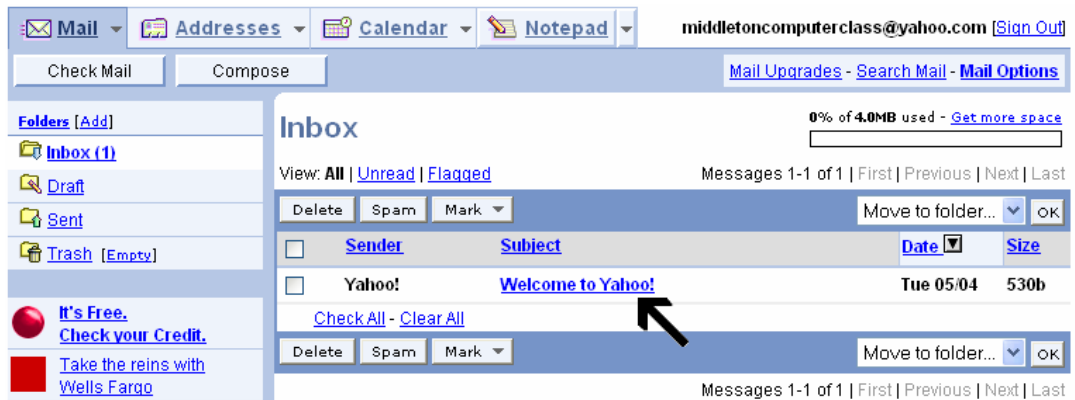


The number of new messages you have will appear in the center of the screen. To get to your inbox, which is where your new messages will be, click on the Inbox link.

When you are finished using your e-mail account, make sure to click on the Sign Out link in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.

Reading E-mail Messages

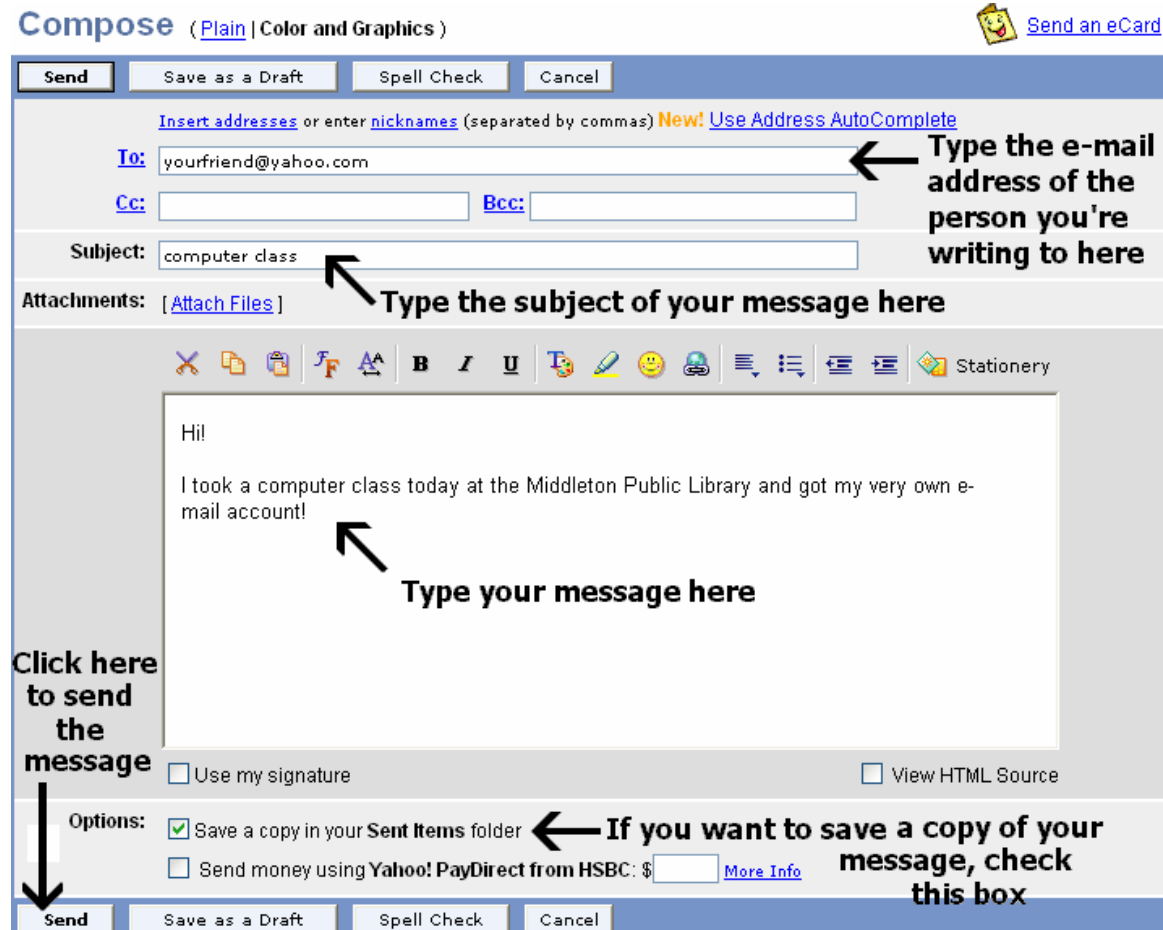
Your inbox screen should look like this.



To view an e-mail message, click on the subject. In this example, you would click on the Welcome to Yahoo! link to read that e-mail message.

Sending an E-mail Message

After clicking on the Compose button, you'll see the following screen:



Suggested Web Sites to Visit

Middleton Public Library <http://www.midlibrary.org>

Check out the Library's Web site for some great links. We have collected the most interesting and useful links we could find in a variety of subject areas, including Directories, Health, Consumer, Career, Education, News, Community, and Government.

Online Internet Tutorials

Internet 101 <http://www.internet101.org>

net.Tutor <http://gateway.lib.ohio-state.edu/tutor>

Other Fun and Interesting Web Sites to Browse

Comics.com <http://www.comics.com>

Elvehjem Museum
of Art <http://www.lvm.wisc.edu>

Epicurious <http://www.epicurious.com>

HowStuffWorks <http://www.howstuffworks.com>

Metropolitan Museum
of Art <http://www.metmuseum.org>

Milwaukee County Zoo <http://www.milwaukeezoo.org>

New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com>

Olbrich Gardens <http://www.olbrich.org>

PBS <http://www.pbs.org>

Science Magazine <http://www.sciencemag.org>

Time Magazine <http://www.time.com>

Weather Channel <http://www.weather.com>

Yahoo! Games <http://games.yahoo.com>

Glossary of Other Internet Terms

| | |
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| Attachment | A file sent along with an e-mail message. An attachment could be any number of things, such as a resume, a photograph, or a video clip. Some attachments are actually computer viruses, so care must be taken when opening them. |
| BCC | Stands for "blind carbon copy." It is used when you are writing an e-mail message and you don't want one recipient to know that you have also sent the message to another person. |
| CC | Stands for "carbon copy." It is used when you are writing an e-mail message and you want to send a copy to another person. |
| Dead Link | An Internet link that does not lead to a Web page or Web site. The Web browser may give an error message. This happens when a Web page has moved or no longer exists or when the computer the Web site is hosted on is not working correctly. |
| Directory | A directory will allow you to browse the World Wide Web by broad subject categories. Yahoo! has an excellent subject directory. |
| Emoticons | Also referred to as "smilies," they are faces created by typed symbols that are used to express emotion when communicating online. :-) Smiling, happy :-(Frowning, sad ;-) Winking :'-(Crying |
| Forward | The term used for when you send an e-mail message you have received on to another person. |
| HTML | Stands for "hypertext markup language." The computer language most often used to write Web pages. |
| ISP | Stands for "Internet service provider." ISPs sell access to the Internet. Examples are America Online and Earthlink. |
| Modem | An either internal or external hardware device that enables a user to connect to the Internet through telephone wires, cable lines, or satellite transmissions. |
| Netiquette | The unwritten rules of proper online behavior. |

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| Shouting | When you're writing an e-mail or otherwise communicating online, if you type in all capital letters it is considered the online equivalent of shouting. It is considered bad netiquette. |
| Spam | Unsolicited junk e-mail. |
| Ranking | The order of Web sites or Web pages in a list of results after a search is performed, usually showing the most relevant results first. |
| Reply | The term used for when someone has sent an e-mail message to you and you wish to respond to that message. |
| Traffic | The visitors to a Web page or Web site, often measured over a given period of time. |
| Virus | A computer program that has been created to damage or otherwise cause problems with a computer. They are often spread through e-mail attachments. |

Further Reading

These books, available from the library, will help you learn more about the Internet and how to use it:

Communicate and Connect to the Internet published by Gateway

E-Mail for Dummies by John R. Levine

Google for Dummies by Brad Hill

The Internet for Dummies by John R. Levine

The Internet for Dummies Quick Reference by John R. Levine

Internet Privacy for Dummies by John R. Levine

Mr. Modem's Internet Guide for Seniors by Richard A. Sherman

Want to know more about specialized topics? Check out these books:

The Complete Idiot's Guide to MP3 by Rod Underhill

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Online Auctions by Michael Miller

Finding Statistics Online by Paula Berinstein

Genealogy Online by Elizabeth Powell Crowe