
INTERNET BASICS

Navigating the web with ease and safety.

What is the internet?



Today, people use the internet for everything from communicating with friends and relatives to scheduling doctor's appointments. Although we tend to imagine the internet as an invisible source of information it is actually a physical connection of cables, servers, modems, routers, and computers. These connections form a huge network in much the same way phone lines have connected the world. The world wide web is the digital collection of websites and webpages that can be accessed by using the internet. Each website is made up of files stored on computers. Using web browsers allows us to access these files over the internet. Using the internet is commonly referred to as being "online."



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www.poudrelibraries.org

What is a web browser?

A web browser is software designed to navigate the world wide web via the internet. Web browsers use special transfer protocol (http) to send and receive information. They convert the web markup language, HTML, into a visual display on computer screens. Many software companies have designed different web browsers. Some of the most popular are Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, Apple's Safari and Brave. Each web browser looks a little different but they share many of the same features.



TIP

Looking for strong online privacy features?
Try Brave or Firefox.

Use the following navigation tools to browse the web:

Tabs: Keep more than one webpage open by using multiple tabs. The Add Tab button is located to the right of open tabs.

Back/Forward: The right and left arrows on the toolbar move forward or backward through your internet trail. Once the browser closes, this feature resets.

Refresh: The refresh button reloads a webpage. When a webpage has not loaded or is not functioning as expected, press the refresh button to reload the page.


Stop: While a webpage loads, an "X" will replace the refresh symbol. This stop button can be used to abort loading a webpage.

Menu: A button in the shape of three lines or three dots indicates the

location of the menu. The menu provides options for printing, viewing search history, and accessing settings.

Address bar: The address bar lists the web address of the current website. Clicking in the address bar allows you to type in a new web address or a web search.

Bookmark: To save a website location for easy access create a bookmark. Click the star icon located at the end of the address bar and save the bookmark on your toolbar or another folder. To access bookmarks, visit the menu and select "Bookmarks."

 **Home:** Many browsers have a house-shaped button which returns to the browser's homepage. The homepage is the webpage that appears when you open the browser and is customizable in settings.



Understanding web addresses

Website addresses indicate where a website “lives.” Each address is in the form of a URL (Uniform Resource Locator). Every website has a unique URL. URLs have the following parts:

Scheme: The scheme tells the web browser the type of web address being entered. The most common schemes are `http://` and `https://`. The latter is the secure version. Browsers indicate secure websites with a padlock symbol.

Domain: The website domain is the key part of the web address. It is broken up into the Subdomain, the Second-level Domain, and the Top-Level Domain.

Subdomain: The most common subdomain is `www` which stands for World Wide Web. This indicates where the website is located.

Second-level domain: The second-level domain is often the company’s name. Keeping an eye on the domain name can help you evaluate a web-

TIP

Web browsers flag insecure webpages. If you see any of these indicators, do not enter personal information on that webpage as it may be able to be retrieved by a third party.



site’s legitimacy.

Top-level Domain Extension: Extensions identify the website type. Look at the following examples:

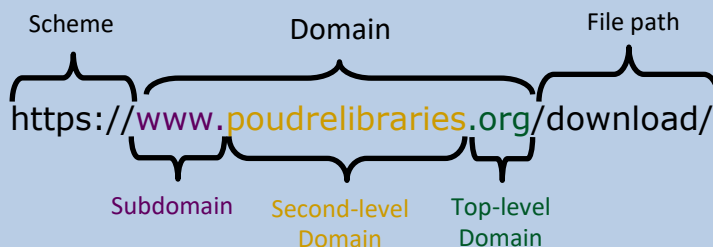
- .com = commercial
- .org = organization
- .net = network
- .edu = educational
- .mil = military
- .gov = governmental
- .eu = European
- .uk = United Kingdom

Extensions can help you identify a website’s validity or authority. For example,

only government websites are able to use `.gov`. A scam website attempting to look like a government site will not be able to use this extension. This is good news for web users. If you are able to identify the extension, you will be a long

`www.poudrelibraries.org`

Anatomy of a URL

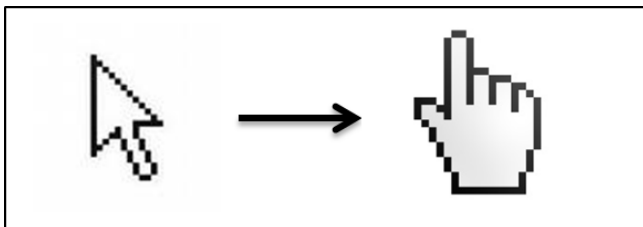


way towards determining the safety and validity of the website you are viewing.

File path: Each page of a website has a file location indicated in the file path. Remove the file path, and the browser will return to the website's homepage.

Understanding hyperlinks

While navigating online, you will encounter buttons, text, and images that take you to other webpages. These links to other webpages are called hyperlinks. Many hyperlinks show up as blue underlined text, but they may also be located in images or words. To tell when you are encountering a hyperlink, watch your mouse cursor. It will change from an arrow to a hand when you encounter a hyperlink. When you hover over a hyperlink, the location it will take you to is listed in the bottom left-hand corner of the browser window. Hyperlinks are an important part of navigating the web. Each time you choose an option that navigates to another webpage, you are using a hyperlink.



TIP

Web browsers automatically enter the scheme and subdomain "https://www." Simply, type in the base of the web address, like "poudrelibraries.org", and the web browser will navigate to the website.

Examples:

VISIT US AT

<https://www.poudrelibraries.org>

Clicking on the blue text hyperlink will open the library's homepage.



Clicking on the logo hyperlink will open the library's homepage.



Clicking on this image hyperlink will open the library's webpage on technology tutorials.

Website Layout

With the increase of online activity, website design has grown more robust. Despite the variety of designs, most websites share similar layouts and features.

Search box: A website search box searches within the website. Look for a magnifying glass and/or the word "Search" to access a website's search box.

Navigation menu: Pages on a website can be found in the navigation menu which is usually located at the top of each webpage.

Body: The main part of the webpage will contain the content for

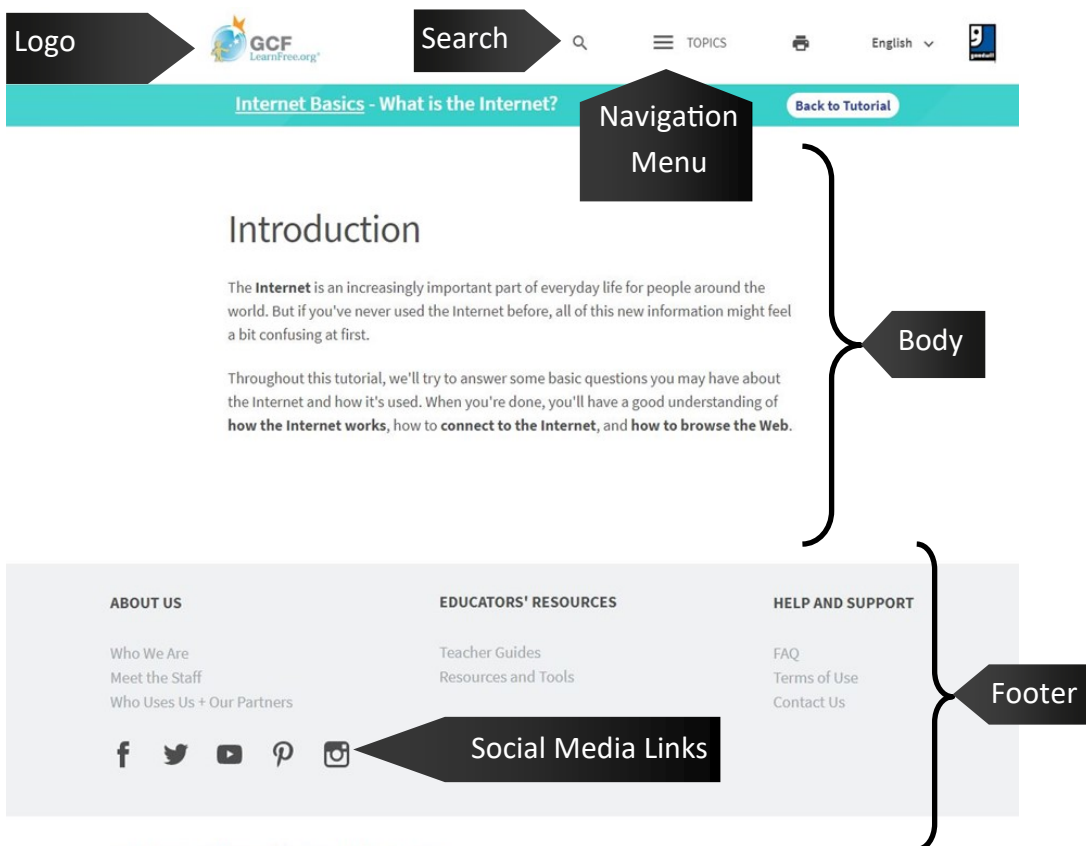
that page whether it be an article, a recipe, or a video.

Logo: The organization or company's logo will appear somewhere along the top of each webpage. Clicking on the logo will return you to the website's homepage.

About us: The about us page gives information about a company or organization. The about page can be found either in the navigation menu or in the website's footer.

Footer: The footer is the area along the bottom of a webpage. Websites often have extra links and copyright dates listed in the footer.

Social media links: Many websites feature icons from social media websites which link to their company's social media profiles. See the facebook symbol in the example? This links to the organization's facebook page.



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How do I search the web?

When you are ready to access information on the web, you have two options:

- 1) If you know the specific web address you would like to visit, type it into the address bar and press enter. The web browser will then load that website.
- 2) If you want to search for a topic or you do not know the web address for a company you want to access, go to a search engine like DuckDuckGo or Google and type in your query.

TIP

Web browsers include the search feature in the address bar. You can use the address bar to type in queries as well as website addresses.

 Search with DuckDuckGo or enter address



YAHOO!



Google

Aol.

What is a search engine?

Search engines are an extremely useful online tool. With search engines, you can enter a word or question and it will search the web bringing back results for any websites that seem relevant to your word or question. The most commonly used search engine is Google. It has become so commonly used that the term "google" has been added to the English dictionary as a verb. Other search engines include bing, YAHOO!, Ask, Aol., ECOSIA, and DuckDuckGo. Most web users visit search engines first before navigating to other websites. Devices like smartphones, Amazon's Alexa, and Google Home all use search engines to answer questions.

TIP

Looking for a search engine that will block tracking and protect your privacy? Try DuckDuckGo. It is specifically designed with user privacy in mind. Enjoy your search!



DuckDuckGo

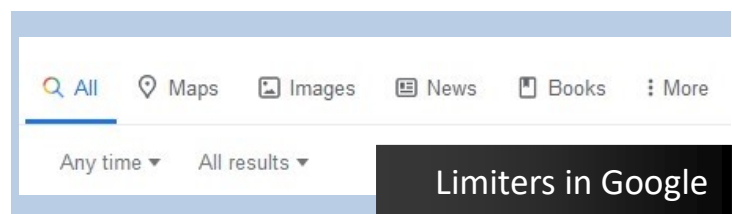
Tips for Searching

Use the following tips to efficiently search the web:

- ◆ **Identify keywords.** Start by determining your search terms. If searching for ways to keep bugs out of a home using natural methods, the search terms “natural,” “home,” and “pest control” could be keywords.
- ◆ **Be specific.** With the wide variety of information available on the web, a general search will bring back a dizzying amount of results. Using specific terms narrows results and retrieves more relevant information. Continuing with the example search for pest control, it could be more specific by adding the unwanted pest, such as, odorous house ants. It could then be changed to “natural home pest control odorous house ants.”
- ◆ **Use synonyms.** If a search is not bringing back relevant information, substituting synonyms for keywords can change the results. For example, the word “car” could be changed to “sedan” or “automobile” to get a fresh set of results.
- ◆ **Use quotation marks.** Each term in a search is looked for separately by a search engine. For example, if I type in “home pest control,” the

search engine retrieves results on homes, pests, and control. Since it should have luck finding all of these in one search result, relevant results will appear. But, in certain cases, this can cause results to split a phrase you want to keep together. For example, if I want to find a poem from one remembered line, I can combine the phrase with quotations in my search bar and the search engine will only bring back results that contain the full line of words side-by-side.

- ◆ **Conduct several searches.** With the wide variety of information online, desired results do not always show up on the first try. Keep changing up search terms and refining keywords until you start seeing the results you want.
- ◆ **Use search limiters.** Search engines often have limiters available to refine a search. Tabs for images, news, or shopping will show results related to your search in those categories. Limiters may also include filters for content or time. Look for limiters on the results page underneath the search bar.



After conducting a search, the results page will display. At the top of results pages in many search engines, like Google, advertisements will display first. These can be identified by the small word “Ad” attached to the corner or the word “Sponsored” underneath. Depending on your search, a map with businesses may be listed, or videos and images with an overview on the topic

may appear. Underneath these items, search results will show the name of the page in blue. The website’s address (or, URL) will be listed above or below the title of the page. Underneath the URL, will be a small paragraph of sample text from the page or a description of the page. Occasionally, a result will list subpages from the website in blue within the search result.

<https://www.artistsnetwork.com> › [art-mediums](#) › [easy-w...](#) ⋮

Search Result

Gorgeous & Easy Watercolor Flowers Perfect for Beginners

Apr 24, 2019 – Lovely and Easy **Watercolor Flowers** · View from above Start with the center of the rose using a well-pigmented mix. · Side view Start from the ...

Evaluating websites

Websites can be created by anyone whether or not they are an expert on a topic. Here are some tips for evaluating websites to make sure you are getting the best source of information.

- ◆ Determine authorship—Look for author names or clearly visible organization information.
- ◆ Review the “About us” page—The about us page will include information on the organization’s values or goals. This will reveal any potential biases including a commercial slant.
- ◆ Scan for incorrect information—If

you are reading a webpage and find inaccurate information, view the rest of the page with suspicion.

- ◆ Watch for product placements—If you are reading an article and there is a plug for a specific product, beware. The whole article may have been written for the purpose of making that product look good. For instance, I recently searched for tips for polishing stainless steel appliances. While reading one article, I realized they were recommending a specific brand of microfiber cloth for the job and ended with a link to a page selling the cloth. This alerted

me to the fact that the page was created to sell the microfiber cloth and I may be able to find better tips elsewhere.

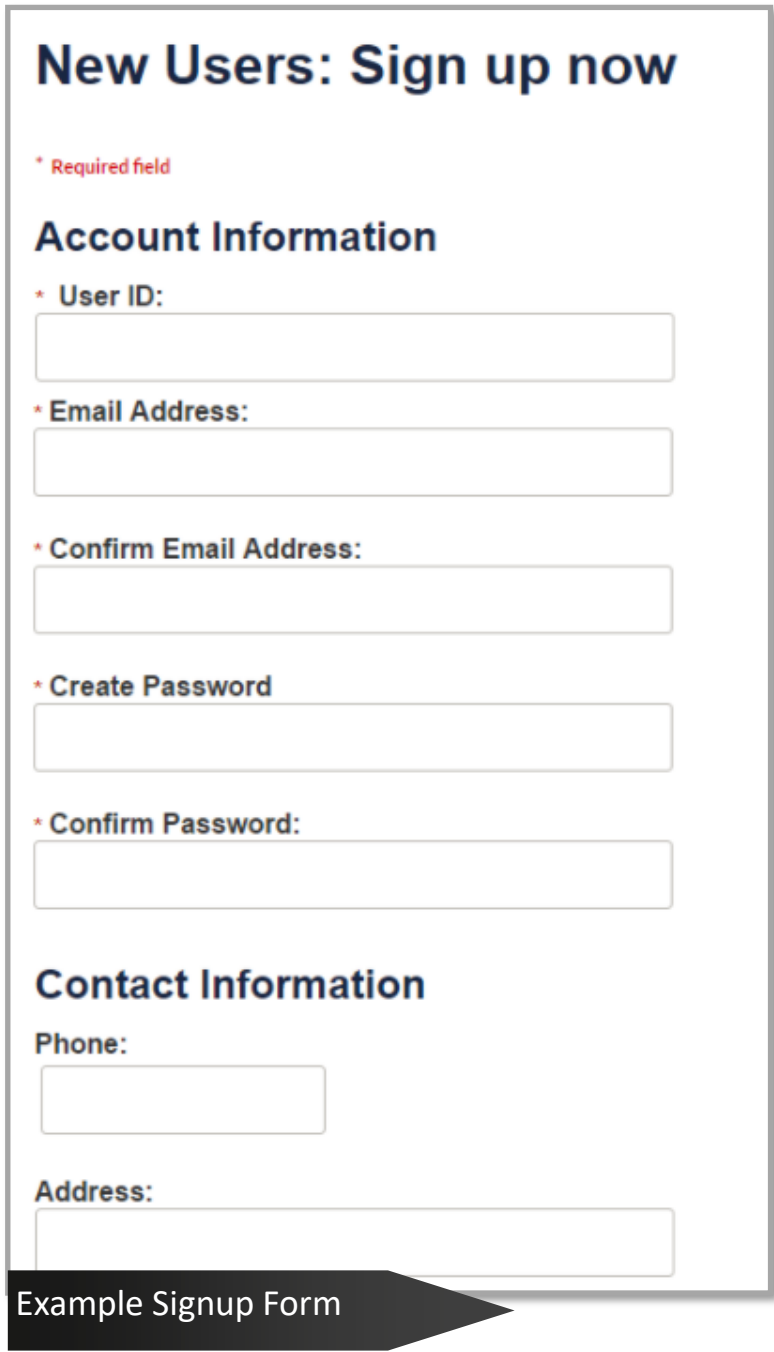
website. If it is several years old, depending on the topic, it may be outdated information.

Use the form below to help evaluate websites.

- ◆ Search for page dates—See if there is a page date or copyright date for the

Authority	Yes	No
1. Is the author’s name on the page?		
2. Does the author list their experience, position or education?		
3. Is there contact information for the author?		
Currency		
1. Is there a date for when the page was made?		
2. Is there a date for when the site was last updated?		
Design		
1. Is the website easy to use?		
2. Can you easily find information?		
3. Does the page take a long time to load?		
Content		
1. Is the information correct?		
2. Is the information easy to read and understand?		
3. Are there links to more information?		
Overall		
1. Does this website provide better information than you would get from books or other sources?		
2. Is the website interesting and engaging?		
3. Is this website helpful for your project?		

Many online services offer or require an account to access information or track work. Online accounts can conveniently provide access to bank accounts, billing services or health provider communication. They can also offer personal or professional communication through email and social media accounts. Signing up for online accounts only requires a few steps. Items frequently asked for in online signup forms include name, birthdate, account number, and email address. They may require you to create a username and password. Required fields on signup forms often have a red asterisk or the word "required" to indicate which fields cannot be skipped. If a field is not required, you do not have to fill it out. The username (User ID) and/or email address are unique to you. They are used to identify your account. Many accounts will use your email address as your username.



New Users: Sign up now

* Required field

Account Information

* User ID:

* Email Address:

* Confirm Email Address:

* Create Password

* Confirm Password:

Contact Information

Phone:

Address:

Example Signup Form



TIP

Passwords are case sensitive meaning they must always use the same combination of upper and lowercase letters. They may also include numbers and symbols. Some accounts may have password requirements to increase account security.

Continue developing computer skills with the following resources:

Poudre River Public Library — We are committed to supporting you as you Connect to Curiosity in technology tools. Take advantage of our free assistance at a class or by stopping by a help desk.

Recommends: Computer Courses and Tech Tips video collection. Visit our resources at <https://read.poudrelibraries.org/research/z264.html>

GCF Learn Free — Quality collection of technology tutorials free of advertisements and free to use.

Recommends: Using the Web to Get Stuff Done, Email Basics, and Internet Safety. Check out all they have to offer at <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/subjects/tech/>

TechBoomers — This website's collection of insights and tutorials are valuable for anyone working on strengthening their tech skills. They house a great collection of tutorials on specific websites and apps.

Recommends: Gmail tutorial, Ancestry tutorial, and Internet 101 courses. Access their robust course directory at <https://techboomers.com/courses>

NorthStar Digital — Tutorials and assessments for a variety of computer skills. Earn badges and certificates.

Recommends: Internet Basics. Access on our computer resources page: <https://read.poudrelibraries.org/research/z264.html>

LinkedIn Learning— Access to this database of computer and business classes is offered with a library card.

Recommends: Internet Safety for Students. Access this database on the library's Research page: <https://read.poudrelibraries.org/research/eresources.cfm?fltr=all>

Digital Learn — Easy to follow courses for learning important computer skills.

Recommends: Accounts & Passwords. View courses at: <https://digitallearn.org/>



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