



The Internet Primer
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Andrew Malek



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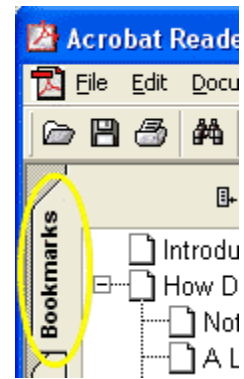


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Chapter 1: Introduction



How do some people "get it" when it comes to the web?

You know what I mean. Many people barely know how to turn on their machine, much less get on the "information superhighway". Others barely know how to access a few web sites, and some others may have a listing of five or ten sites they go to on a regular basis for getting information.

Yet there are others, and you know who they are, who are whizzes when it comes to the Internet. These are the people that, whenever a question comes up, be it about basketball statistics, stock market prices, recipe ingredients, or technical computer knowledge, always exclaim, "I'll find the answer!" These people then rush on the Internet, magically peck away a few keystrokes, and then with a few subtle clicks of the mouse, grab the information that would take most people hours, days, or even weeks to find, if at all.

Confronted, these people would probably say "Aww, it was nothing. I just used (insert the name of an Internet site here such as AltaVista, Yahoo, or Google - yes, Google) and I combined a Boolean algebra equation with a phrase search, combined with a proximity filter."

Boolean algebra? Proximity filter? Google? Strange words for a strange environment, but that is the Internet.

For those who "get it", this new digital world is an exciting, fast-paced, and full of challenges that can be overcome. For others, it's a scary, seemingly meaningless hodgepodge of inarticulate phrases, baffling acronyms, and mystifying instructions that are enough to make a rocket scientist's head spin. Besides, they (the proverbial 'they') did not teach this stuff to you in school, right? How are you supposed to be one with "HotBot (sounds like a sexy android)" and "Google", a master of the "Boolean Algebra", able to yell "Yahoo!" when you can actually navigate "Yahoo!" and find what you need?

Isn't the whole goal of using the Internet actually finding "stuff"? Do you really care about the technology if it doesn't work for you? How come no one can explain how to get the most out of the tools the Internet provides other than ways 'geeks' can understand?

That, my fellow Internet venturists, is why **Find Stuff on the Net** exists. **Find Stuff on the Net's** goal is three-fold. First off, you will become comfortable with actually using the web. When you hear about "URLs", you'll know what they mean and how to enter them into your browser to get where you want to go. Next, you'll learn about the funny-sounding words I mentioned earlier such as "Boolean Algebra" and "Google", and how they can help you use the Internet. Lastly, you'll find out about a hidden, secret, almost

“invisible” web and some sites you can use to navigate resources that many people may not know about. That’s right; you may be a beginner now, but after reading this e-book, you may know tips and tricks the more ‘advanced’ Internet users have not heard about!

Along the way you’ll learn about many of the Internet secrets. Can you actually find everything on the web using search engines? What make certain sites stand out as “**featured**” or “**hot**”? How do sites actually make it into directories and search engines? How can I find out how others search the Internet?

Plus, this book contains a large glossary of Internet-related terms. Don’t let geeks try to impress you with their knowledge of arcane acronyms; find out what they really are talking about and how their terms can help you **find stuff on the net**! Plus all of the web addresses mentioned in this e-book are available in one appendix for convenient browsing and printing.

There is a lot of material in this e-book. It should not scare you. You do not have to learn all of the Internet secrets in one sitting. Rather, read this e-book over time, pick up a few tricks from here to there, and before you know it, you’ll be navigating the Internet with ease!

So lets start this journey together. Learn how to save **time and money** by navigating the somewhat rough seas of the Internet.

Chapter 2: How Do Some People Naturally “Get It”?

Before I start to show how you, yes you, can **FIND STUFF ON THE NET**, I'd like to talk a little bit about how some people just 'get it' when it comes to the computers and the Internet. This e-book will show you how to 'get it', but I'm sure you know what I'm talking about when you think about others who already understand the Internet 'like the back of their hand'.

You know ... computer programmers, kids, kids, teenagers, and kids...

It's true that younger people seem to understand the Internet a lot better than ... ahem ... the rest of us. Just why is this? Aren't older people supposed to be wiser? Since we have more experience in life, shouldn't that transcend computers and allow us to understand these machines (yes, computers are just complicated machines, after all)?



After discussions with many kids, twenty-somethings, thirty-esques, and older individuals, I have my own theory on how kids sometimes understand computers more than adults. This is not a scientific study, nor is this a breakthrough sociological finding. In fact, it's rather simple.

Kids have grown up with computers all around them pretty much their entire lives, so they're not used to anything different. Due to school, they are used to being in a learning environment, experimenting, and quickly coping with failure and moving on. With this more computer use comes experience, thus more understanding.

Not Used to Anything Different

This first part is very important, and I need to illustrate this point even though it scares me, and I'm definitely not old. I'm writing this in the year 2002. A 14-year old teenager, born in 1988, was 6 years old in 1994. 1994. Since they were 6 years old, the Internet was really starting to get in full swing. Thus, they don't remember things any differently. To most kids, the Internet is just another part of their lives, like a television or a telephone, and most can't even comprehend how life existed without these things!

If you haven't heard of instant messaging, it's kind of like e-mail, except the recipient gets the message almost instantaneously. Instead of waiting minutes, hours, or days for an e-mail to reach its recipient, instant messengers can talk in almost real-time. Businesses are starting to use it, but its mainly attracted teenagers who, it's predicated in five years, will "talk" to their friends (on what are called "buddy lists") via instant messaging more than they will by using the telephone.

Scary. Teenagers using something more than the telephone.

Many adults find this preposterous. Why spend time typing on a cold, unemotional keyboard when you can spend time engaging in a fun conversation? And whatever happened to mailing letters - does anyone do that nowadays?

Compare how kids act with this antidote about how adults reason. I was watching a television show just today about instant messaging in the workplace. Legal issues aside, some people wonder why this is catching on in the office. They thought that if you need to ask an officemate or cubicle-mate a question, isn't it easier to just call them or walk over to their desk and ask them in person? Why resort to the computer for communication? Using a phone or talking is how matters have always gotten settled, and it works, so why change?

See? Adults, with their knowledge and experience, use reason and logic to question the usefulness of machines against how things "have always been done" without the use of these tools. Kids and teenagers, though, usually don't worry as much about tradition, or don't *seem* to do so. In actuality, according to kids, using computers is a tradition; these tools have been around "forever" and are how things have "gotten done" in their short lives. Therefore, kids and teenagers, when prompted about their constant use of these tools, ask, "What's the big deal?"

A Learning Environment

I hope people do not take offense to this section, as this is just my experience with talking to some people.

Kids and teenagers have, virtually their entire lives, either been in classrooms or other sorts of learning environments (camps, educational field trips, etc.) Their minds are almost trained to learn, to study, and to think. Kids are constantly pressured to learn more, to do better in school, and a lot of their time is not spent in performing the same work-related duties every day, like many adults, but to accumulate knowledge.

In a sense, younger people are in a "learning mode".

Adults, on the other hand, are not always in this mode of thought. Many (not all, but many!) adults believe that they've paid their dues. They've spent their time in school and they can now enjoy a "retirement" from constant learning. Their experiences and wisdom will guide them in their daily life. Sure, adults realize they must occasionally partake in a trade show, a workshop, or a seminar, but this is only a small part of their busy lives. Juggling bills, possibly a spouse or kids, and other day-to-day headaches that younger people can avoid, many adults neither have the time nor desire to always be in a "learning mode".

Combine this idea with the fact that most kids and teenagers have had some experience with, or at least have been familiar with, computers most of their lives. While younger

people are in a "learning mode" and receiving their education, they are more willing to spend time learning about computers.

Adults, on the other hand, can grow frustrated with computers because *they* have spent their time in school getting their education, but they were never taught how to use these machines. They don't spend the time learning computers, thus they don't have much experience with them (and, most importantly, they don't have experience dealing with computers when things go wrong). This inexperience can quickly grow to resentment and confusion.

Adults may think they are supposed to know everything, not kids, so why do kids pick up these things? Because, while adults have experience with many other facets of life, they don't have experience with computers. And yes, experience does mean a lot.

Experimentation

I'm not talking about substance experimentation. Kids experiment in a lot of different ways. They experiment to see how much they can get away with from their parents. They experiment by being around different people - forming a variety of peer groups. They experiment with clothing. Kids and teenagers are new to the world and like trying different things (especially if it makes their parents mad! <grin>).

Adults experiment and try new things as well, but we are guided by knowledge, reason, and experience. We are more likely to use our previously gained knowledge to solve a problem and not "try something new". While adults are bounded by what we know to be correct, kids don't have the experience to make these judgments. Sometimes adults pigeonhole themselves into their idea of how the world works, while kids usually don't feel this constraint.



This spirit of experimentation directly translates into younger people generally picking up computers faster than their older counterparts. Kids don't seem to mind trying something new; thus, they gravitate towards computers as they open up a whole world of opportunities for experimentation. And, unlike adults who may get frustrated when computers fail to work properly, kids seem to shrug their shoulders and just get back to work as if nothing happened.

Try this experiment to see what I mean. Sit five children and five adults, all with little computer experience, next to their own machines. Sit and watch while the children play around by clicking on icons, menus, and buttons. They don't seem to care if they do something wrong because their minds are not cluttered with the pains of consequences of improper actions.

Meanwhile, the adults may carefully try one or two items. They'll look around for help. They'll probably talk to others and leave their computers, chitchatting about what

happened at work the day before. They'll quickly grow frustrated and confused, especially if they do something that pops up an error or warning dialog. Kids, on the other hand, upon seeing the dialog would just close it and try something else.

Result - More Computer Use = More Understanding

I know these are generalizations, but what I have been saying is based on discussions with many people and by observing computer usage patterns. Adults are usually more worried with failing or causing damage by their computers. They are scared of the technology because they don't understand it and don't know why they don't understand it (they spent their time in school, you know!) Kids, on the other hand, don't mind that they don't understand computers at first, so they are more willing to spend time learning about the machines.

Many adults think that kids just sit down in front of a computer their very first time and know everything. This is not the case. Kids can operate the computer and do a few things quickly because they are willing to try things at a faster rate than adults, not worrying about outcomes if they accidentally delete a file or trash a hard drive. And, since computers are more familiar to them, kids are more willing to spend lots of time playing with computers.

Kids are used to being around computers, as computers have existed throughout their entire lives. They are used to being told they must learn new things, placing kids in a "learning mode" that adults tend to forget after leaving school. And, by not having the experiences of life to bog them down, kids do not worry as much about experimentation and the consequences of their actions. Thus, this familiarity with machines, spirit of learning, and rebelliousness result in kids willing to spend lots of time with computers. Obviously, as they spend more time with machines, their skills increase, results in kids "getting it".

How Can This Knowledge Help You Learn Computers?

So, now that you have an idea (at least the author's idea!) on how kids understand machines quickly, how can you use this to help you FIND STUFF ON THE NET?

First, you have to realize that, no, you were not taught this stuff in school. Surprise - life teaches us many lessons that can't be explained in the classroom. Learning the computer and the Internet is just like learning how to write in cursive the first time. It's different, sometimes it makes absolutely no sense (Look at the cursive uppercase 'Q', for example), and it can be frustrating. You must look beyond the fact that you are an adult, experienced in the ways of life, and realize that it's OK to be new at this! It's perfectly fine! Everybody is a beginner sometime.

To learn how to use computers, and, for the purposes of this book, FIND STUFF ON THE NET, you must retrain yourself and get into a "learning mode". Buying this e-book is a great start; by purchasing this material, you have shown the desire to learn. Now, like any great endeavor, studying, comprehending, and using this material will take time. You

should not try to cram this material in before lunch, in between meetings, before picking up your kids at school, or right before your favorite television show. Set aside some time, rid yourself of all distractions (I know, easier said than done!), and read what's presented.

Last, but just as important, **RELAX!** Searching the Internet is not brain surgery. It's not rocket science. By just browsing a few web sites you won't send your credit card number to everyone in the world. More than likely you won't destroy your computer - if it happens to crash browsing web sites, and, sorry, it will, just restart your web browser and/or your computer and try again. If this happens, **IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT! COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE IS NOT FOOLPROOF AND MAY CONTAIN BUGS THAT MANIFEST THEMSELVES ALMOST RANDOMLY NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO!**



(Sorry for the caps, but I'm tired of people saying it's their fault and feeling hopeless whenever their computers crash! I'm a programmer as well, so don't anyone complain when I say that computers and software have bugs! They don't work perfectly all the time! Just learn to accept these bugs for what they are and restart your computer when needed).

By just browsing a few web sites, especially by starting only at well-known sites, you should not cause any irreparable harm (yes, there is a VERY remote chance bad things could happen, almost as remote as bad things happening driving a car or just crossing the street – but I will discuss this and try to alleviate any remaining fears in the next chapter). Backup your data if it is important, but try to stay calm. Learn to become a little adventurous! In order to tame the Internet, you must be willing to explore its nooks and crannies. In this e-book, I will help be your guide through this adventure. I will try my best to steer you away from dead-ends and towards your destination - **finding stuff on the net!**

Chapter 3: Staying Safe Online



Computer Viruses. Trojan horses. Internet worms. Credit card information stealing. Identity theft. E-Mail scams.

Chances are you've heard of some of these terms. Unfortunately, many media outlets tend to focus on the negative aspects of the Internet. And why not? Bad news sells papers and gets people to watch the nightly news.

Unfortunately there are bad elements on the Internet. People with destructive tendencies and those "just a little curious" do try to break into machines. Although the Internet hosts many legitimate businesses, there are those online who just want to make a quick buck, no matter how immoral or illegal the methods.

Yes, the Internet does have a dark side. But it has a good side as well. The Internet opens up almost limitless sources of information for research and entertainment. Huge distances between people are virtually eliminated through the use of electronic mail and instant messaging (one way people can talk to each other over the computer – text messages can be written and delivered almost instantaneously to millions of people around the globe).

Just because there are some miscreants on the Information Superhighway does not mean the Internet should be avoided. Don't be afraid to surf. There **are** ways you can better your chances of staying safe online.

Software Fears and Realities

Unfortunately, software is not perfect, so developers work to find ways to make the software better. One of these ways of making software better is to better protect it against perpetrators that find and exploit security holes in the programs.

Keep Your Operating System Updated

As your operating system is a piece of software, more often than not, the one you buy or download (unless it was just released yesterday) has been updated.

I'm not going to explain what security holes are, but I will mention that if you leave your operating system un-patched, you increase the chance that, especially when on the Internet, people will find ways to break into your system. What can people do when breaking into your system? I'm not trying to scare you; here are real possibilities:

- They might be able to print text or images on your printer, potentially embarrassing text or images.

- They might find private information or delete files off your hard drive.
- They might put programs on your computer (back-door software) that logs all of your keystrokes. That way, if you type a password to a system or your credit card number, that information could be recorded and used against you.

Doesn't sound like a lot of fun? While keeping your operating system up-to-date cannot guarantee your operating system won't get hacked, it does lessen the chance considerably.

To update your operating system, refer to its manual to see if it's possible to do so automatically. Those running Windows-based operating systems can open up Internet Explorer, choose "Tools", then "Windows Update". This service will let you follow onscreen prompts to download patches that keep Windows up-to-date.

Other Software Updates

Just as your operating system should be kept up-to-date, your email software (such as Outlook), your word processor software (such as Microsoft Word), your web browser (such as Internet Explorer or Netscape), and other major applications should be regularly patched and updated. Again, refer to your application documentation to see if updates are available online and how they can be downloaded and installed. On Windows, an unpatched copy of Outlook or Microsoft Word may lead to trouble down the road.

Protecting Against Rogue Software

Just as regular viruses can cause sickness, your computer can also get "viruses" and other rogue software programs that can make it "sick".

What Can Rogue Software Do?

Here are some examples:

- Render your operating system unusable.
- Delete all of your files.
- Open up a backdoor on your system so that whenever you type in passwords someone else will see them as well.

How Can My Computer Get Infected?

- Reading an infected e-mail attachment can cause your computer to become infected. With today's advanced viruses, sometimes these e-mail attachments may appear to come from people you know.

- If you download and run infected software, your computer could get infected.
- Transferring programs to your computer via floppy disks, CDs, or other media may infect your computer.

How Can I Prevent This From Happening?

There are several ways to help prevent viruses and other rogue software from infecting your PC.

- Practice safe surfing – don't download software unless you trust the source.
- Be careful when opening e-mail attachments.
- Purchase (or download) and use anti-virus software, and **keep it updated!**

Yes, anti-virus software is a type of software package that will help prevent viruses and other rogue software from entering your machine and doing damage. These software programs are usually inexpensive relative to the time and monetary costs that you may incur if your computer becomes infected.

Anti-virus software usually runs transparently in the background. Once you install the software you hardly need to know if it is running. If the software catches a known piece of rogue software trying to infect your machine, it will stop it from doing its damage.

One important thing about anti-virus software is that you have to keep the software updated on a regular basis! Unfortunately, miscreants create rogue software constantly, meaning that anti-virus software must keep up-to-date with the newest threats to your computer. Luckily you can update most software easily over the Internet; I recommend updating anti-virus software at the **very least** once a month; if you can, update your software at least **once a week**.

Here are some links to anti-virus software programs you can download and/or purchase. I will not recommend any program over another as all seem to do a good job at blocking rogue code from your computer.

McAfee.com – Anti-Virus

<http://www.mcafee.com/myapps/antivirus.asp>

Norton AntiVirus™

http://www.symantec.com/nav/nav_9xnt/

Trend Micro

<http://www.antivirus.com/>

Chatting, Messaging, Email Security

Besides keeping software up-to-date there are other things you should do to maintain safety and privacy when using the Internet, especially when chatting, sending messages, or using e-mail.

Be Wary When Giving Out Personal Information!

Be **very wary** when sending out personal information anywhere on the Internet. Only send information when it is absolutely necessary and to resources that you trust. If you're sending information to a web site, make sure the site is trusted and check to see if it has a privacy policy.

With e-mail, **never, never, never, never, never** send your user ID and password information to online services! Again, **never, never, never, never, never** do this! Constantly people are getting scammed out of their login information, especially to online services such as MSN, AOL, and CompuServe. The service administrators should never ask for personal information via e-mail, so if you get an e-mail asking for your personal information, why not give the service a call? These services have support numbers, so call them and see if they actually did ask for your information? I'm going to bet they didn't and the e-mail was fake.

Also, never give credit card information by e-mail. More about this is below in section "Credit Card Security".

Hoaxes and Scams

Watch out for hoaxes and scams that may appear in your in-box! Some of these may be harmless and may only con you into redistributing chain letters. Others, especially the Nigeria banking scam, can bilk you out of hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars!

If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. And if someone wants you to forward e-mail to a dozen of your "closest friends", check it out against some of the scan and hoax-busting sites listed below. If you catch a hoax, be polite to the recipient (especially if it's a friend, family member, or coworker!); let them know that their e-mail is a hoax or a scam and provide them with an URL to a web site that debunks the information.

Internet ScamBusters™

<http://www.scambusters.org/>

Snopes – Urban Legends Reference Pages
<http://www.snopes.com/>

Symantec Security Response – Hoax Page
<http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/hoax.html>

Urban Legends Research Centre
<http://www.ulrc.com.au/>

The AFU and Urban Legends Archive
<http://www.urbanlegends.com/>

Credit Card Security

The only time you should enter credit card information over the Internet is on web sites where you can trust the site is who they say they are. The site also must be secure. Period. Sending credit card information over insecure sites is almost asking, begging, for trouble.

How do you know if a site is secure? Here are some tips that should help to ensure that you are entering information on a secure site, but I cannot say that these tips alone 100% ensure a site is secure. Always proceed with educated caution when keying in personal information on the Internet.

URL starts with https

Does the URL start with **https://** instead of **http://**? If so, it may be secure. If not, it is definitely **not secure**.

No Certificate Warnings

If you visit a web site that you think should be secure and your web browser says its certificate is invalid, don't go any further! If you truly believe the site is from a trusted source, contact them with and ask what is happening. It may just be because you are using an older version of your web browser and need to update.

Padlock Icon On Your Web Browser

Check your web browser window. You should see a locked padlock icon. It may look like one of the following images:



This is taken from the bottom right-hand area of an Internet Explorer window. Note the locked padlock icon.



This is taken from the bottom right-hand area of a Netscape 6.x window. Note the locked padlock icon.

Double-Click the Padlock

Double-click the padlock to bring up more information about the page's security. This should bring up information that verifies the true identity of a remote computer. Check to see if this looks legit.

Filtering Content

There is information on the web that you wouldn't want your kids to see (you may not want to see it either!) Many search engines and directories have built-in filters that help to stop you from accidentally visiting inappropriate sites – I will discuss some of them in later chapters.

You can also download and install software that will help filter out inappropriate content. Be forewarned that:

1. No filter is 100% effective in blocking inappropriate material. If you're concerned about what your kids see on the Internet, you may want to consider using the net with your kids.
2. Material some filters deem inappropriate may not actually be inappropriate. For example, some health web sites discuss "breast cancer", and this term may cause the site to be blocked.
3. Just as with virus scanners, firewalls, your operating system, and other software, you must keep filters updated or they will become ineffective against newer

Internet resources.

Here are some web sites to Internet filter software. I make no claims about the usage of such software but list these sites purely for informational purposes.

Cybersitter

<http://www.cybersitter.com/>

Security Software Systems

<http://www.securitysoft.com/>

SurfControl

<http://www.surfcontrol.com/>

Protect Yourself

Yes, the Internet has some “bad seeds”. There are scammers, computer virus makers, and those who want nothing better than to break into computers. However, this is a small portion of the Internet. The Internet is largely a great resource to explore for information and entertainment. Don’t be scared away from using all of the amazing resources the Internet has to offer. Use some common sense, install protective software, and keep your operating system and software up-to-date and you will greatly increase your chance of staying safe online.

Chapter 4: Don't be Scared – Surf the Net!



So are you new to the Internet or still need some help getting around? If you are a net beginner, this section of the book is for you! Intermediate and advanced users – you should just skim this section ... but don't be surprised if you still learn something in this section!

Congratulations! By coming this far, you've taken an excellent **first step** in learning how to actually use the Internet. You will no longer be held captive by boring start pages, featured links sections and places on the

Internet that guides claim you should visit. Now it's time for you to get outside the boundaries, smell the roses, and see what really is on the Internet!

This e-book mainly covers the world-wide-web (what you see using a web browser), a part of the Internet. You probably are a little familiar with using the web if you have downloaded and purchased this e-book, but most of your experiences have probably been clicking on links that get you where you want to be. The secret to leaving this link-trapped world is in understanding URLs and how they take you to new and exciting places online!

What's an URL – the Basics?

Ok, ok, I'll try not to bore you with acronyms. URL is just a fancy way of saying "a web address", and if you're interested in what URL stands for, read the glossary. An URL basically lets your web browser tell computers on the Internet where you would like to go, such as an entertainment page, a search engine, a sports site, a news and reference portal, or wherever.

You're used to reading real-world addresses. If you see the following addresses, you can read road signs or maps and figure out how to get there.

- 123 Any Street
- 45 Broadway SE
- 11 W. Main Street
- 1485 Commerce Avenue
- 3622 Arbor Circle

The Internet, being created by computer geeks <grin>, has addresses that look a little bit different than what you're normally used to. Here are some example 'addresses' on the web, or URLs:

- <http://www.aol.com>
- <http://www.microsoft.com>

- `http://www.netscape.com`
- `http://www.yahoo.com`

(Yep, I intentionally did not highlight these addresses. I don't want you clicking them just yet).

Let's look at these web addresses and try to see if we can make sense of them. They all start out with this weird "`http://`" thing at the front. All this means is that the address is a web address. If addresses start with other weird symbols like "`mailto:`" or "`ftp://`", they are not web addresses. Why these weird symbols and not something that seems to make sense, like "Web:" or "Web Address:"? Again, remember that computer people developed the Internet, and these people like to think in acronyms and terms that mean something to computer people. For example, "http" is actually an acronym (check the glossary) that has a special meaning to the web.

The next part of the addresses all start with "www." Not all addresses start this way, but most do. This part of the address just means the location is on the world-wide-web. The period is just a delimiter between parts of the address, just like a space is a delimiter between words.

After the "www"'s come the main part of the address. This next part is the main name of the service, computer, company, etc. You've probably heard of AOL, Microsoft, Netscape, and Yahoo!. As you can see, the next part is just those company names, lowercased and minus any punctuation. This is not always the case, but many times these parts of web addresses are just company names! So, for example, if you want to access Fed-Ex's page, this part of the address would just be "fedex". Pretty simple, no?

A street address usually ends in a word such as Avenue, Circle, Place, Parkway, Street, or Road. While there isn't much difference between a street or a road, web addresses have endings that mean something.

The last part of these addresses are another period (a delimiter), and the strange three letters "com". This "com" stands for COMmercial, and just signifies that the address is a commercial site. There are several other types of web address endings, such as "edu" for EDUcational, and "gov" for GOVERNment. There's also a "net" ending for NETwork, and other types of endings for individual states and countries. Plus, more URL endings are being developed, such as ".name", ".biz", and ".info".

But, for the most part, the most popular web addresses, especially those of businesses, end in "com".

Lots of web addresses also contain slashes, weird phrases such as "index.html" or "home.asp". Don't worry about that. For now, knowing what you know about web addresses puts you ahead of the game!

So now that you know about URLs, don't you want to know how you can visit new websites using these addresses instead of just clicking on links? I'm sure you do.

Typing in different URLs – AOL

Ah, America Online. Either you love it or you hate it. Some love AOL for its graphics, user-friendly interface, and content that you can't get anywhere else. Some hate it because people claim AOL shields you from the rest of the Internet. Shield you? Maybe these people don't know how to visit different URLs!

Say you're on AOL and you want to buy some books using the Amazon service. Do you need to navigate AOL and try to find a link to Amazon? No! There should be a box near the top of AOL's window and a "GO" button. Just type in the URL to Amazon in this box and press the "GO" button. That's right... click in the white box and type the following:

`http://www.amazon.com`

Note that I'm using AOL 7.0 – it has a blue "GO" button. If you're using an earlier version of AOL, the box may not say "GO" but it may say "Submit" or something like that. It should still work. Just find the white box and the button next to it. The box may say something like "enter keyword or web address here" or "enter keyword here".

Be sure to type the URL (web address) EXACTLY as presented above. All lowercase.

This is Amazon's URL. Once you're done typing, press the "GO" button. If all goes well, a new window should pop up, and momentarily, you'll be at Amazon's website! No clicking required. No navigating required. Just type in the URL and GO, GO, GO!

Here are some more random URLs you can try. Just type in the address and click "GO" like you did with Amazon.

CBS Television Network
<http://www.cbs.com>

Dodge (Cars and Trucks)
<http://www.dodge.com>

Oprah Winfrey (Oprah.com)
<http://www.oprah.com>

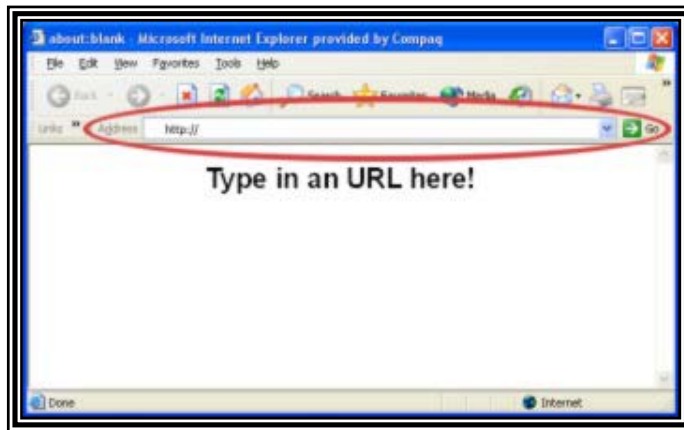
National Basketball Association
<http://www.nba.com>

You don't need to go to another web address first. Do not pass Google. Don't fetch Lycos first or try screaming Yahoo! Lots of people do this. It's not necessary. Just type those above addresses straight from within AOL.

Hmm... do you feel shielded now? No.. you should feel LIBERATED and ready to surf the net with reckless abandon, throwing caution to the wi....

Ok, ok, I'm getting a little carried away here. But you now have the power to go just about anywhere on the web!

Typing in different URLs - Internet Explorer



Are you not on AOL? Do you use another Internet service provider and get around the web using Internet Explorer? Don't fret. It's easy, if not easier, to use Internet Explorer to venture the web!

Open up Internet Explorer. MSN or another web page may come up. Forget about the page for now. You don't need to click

anywhere. Just look near the top of the window for the word "Address" and a white box next to it. Click your mouse in the white box and enter in a web address, such as:

<http://www.cnn.com>

When you're done, press the "ENTER" key on your keyboard, or, if there's a button called "Go", click it.

That's it! Momentarily, the CNN website should appear. It couldn't be easier! Have fun entering all kinds of URLs. There's an appendix in this e-book with plenty of sites to visit, but I strongly encourage you come back and read the rest of this e-book to find out how to better search the Internet.

Typing in different URLs – Netscape

Ok, so you're using Netscape and think you're left out. Don't feel so lonely! Open up your web browser and look for the white box near the top of the screen. Depending on what version of Netscape you have, the box may be next to buttons labeled "Reload" and "Stop", or it may be next to circular buttons showing arrows or an 'X'. Click inside the box.



Now, type in a web URL, such as:

`http://www.nasa.gov`

Yes, the address ends in ".gov" instead of ".com". This is not a commercial site. Can you guess what it is?

When you're done typing the above address EXACTLY as presented, press the ENTER key. Soon, NASA's webpage should appear. Have fun exploring outer space, and enjoy exploring other web sites as you find more URLs to try.

Typing in different URLs – Other Services

If you use another online service or web browser, just look for the section of the service or browser that lets you enter in keywords. Or look for a blank white box near the top of the browser/service window. Enter in an URL and press the ENTER key and see if that works. If not, please contact me and let me know what browser or online service you are using.

Now That You Know About URLs, How Do You Find More?

Congratulations! By getting this far, you now can explore the web in ways you never could before. Forget relying just on start pages and online services; you can go where you want as long as you know the address.

So... how do you find addresses for other websites? Perhaps you have some friends that also go on the Internet – you might be able to get addresses from them. Besides those URLs, here are other resources you can use to find places to surf.

Newspapers, Books, Magazines

Newspapers, books, and magazines are great places to search to find new URLs. Perhaps your local newspaper has a technology section on Sundays that offers new web addresses. As far as magazines – you can check out computer magazines for some addresses, but take a look at the magazines you read regularly. With the popularity of the net exploding

at an amazing rate, more and more magazines and companies that sponsor them are turning to the Internet to offer information.

When it comes to books, there are plenty of them to find that offer URLs for you to visit. While this e-book has an appendix with lots of places to surf, there are many “Internet Yellow Pages” books available – just check your local library or bookstore in the computer or Internet section. And as you buy new books on just about any subject, be sure to check the inside covers. More publishers and authors are creating home pages for their books, either to advertise related works, offer corrections, expand upon information, or just to keep in touch with their fans.

Television and Radio

Television and radio are also great sources of URLs. Many advertisements and shows now have their own web address, and just spending a few minutes watching TV or listening to the radio can result in dozens of sites to visit on the Internet. You may want to keep a notepad and pencil handy so you can scribble down addresses as you learn about them.

Guessing a Company's URL When You Don't Know it

As you've seen above if you visited the web sites I mentioned, a lot of web sites look awfully familiar to the companies or organizations that they represent. This is no coincidence. Many companies and organizations intentionally stake out web addresses that closely reflect their true identity. This is obvious – it makes them easier to find, increasing the chances to gain your business!

While this trick does not work for every company or organization name, it works for many of them! If you can think of a well-known company, organization, or product's web site that you want to visit, just do the following.

1. Write down the exact proper name
2. Lowercase the name
3. Remove all punctuation, copyright symbols, trademarks, etc.
4. Surround the result with the characters “http://www.” at the beginning and “.com” at the end.

I'll give you a couple of examples. Let's say you're enjoying a Dr. Pepper© drink and was wondering if they had a home page, perhaps with history about the drink, maybe even some screensavers and wallpaper that you can download. Using the steps I mentioned above, we have:

1. Dr. Pepper©
2. dr. pepper©
3. drpepper
4. http://www.drpepper.com

Enter in the address <http://www.drpepper.com> into your browser and you'll be whisked away to the "Dr. Pepper" home page!

Here's another example. After playing the game Monopoly©, I was wondering how many different editions of the game exist. I know there are additions for cities, cartoons, and even an edition for the .com generation (look at this and see how many companies have folded! Astounding – and scary!) But I knew there had to be other editions of the game, perhaps even some electronic editions. So, using the above suggestions, I got:

1. Monopoly©
2. monopoly©
3. monopoly
4. <http://www.monopoly.com>

If you enter in the address <http://www.monopoly.com> you can answer my question about how many editions exist! You can also read the history of the game, get some tips and tricks, and more.

Note that this does not work in every case. I tried to go to the Survivor TV show home page by entering in <http://www.survivor.com> and did not go where I wanted. (If you're curious, you can get to the Survivor home page by this URL - <http://www.cbs.com/survivor> - it should automatically take you to the current season. And yes, as you probably can guess from the URL, this is on CBS's official homepage.)

Also, be forewarned, there may be some web site owners with less than moral intentions who register well-known brand names. These sites may take you to... well... places you wouldn't want your Momma to see. If this happens, just quickly close the browser window and any popups that appear. I hate to bring up the 'seedy' side of the Internet, but it is out there. Don't worry – more than likely you will never accidentally access these sites, and even if you do, just close the browser window, take a deep breath, realize you made a "wrong turn", and start exploring again!

Search Engines and Directories

Ah, yes, search engines and directories. There are tons of sites on the Internet whose sole purposes are to educate you about other places to visit. Whether they are start pages such as AOL or MSN, directories like Yahoo! and DMOZ, or search engines including Lycos and Google, these websites can provide you with millions (!) of websites to find on the Internet. You just have to know how to ask them for information...

... and that is what this e-book is all about! **FindStuffOnTheNet** will teach you HOW to find websites using the Internet, HOW to ask search engines and directories for the web pages you want, and HOW to save time doing it!

Have Fun Exploring!

Wow – you’ve learned a lot! Not only have you learned what an URL is, you’ve seen how to enter them into your favorite web browser or online service and access the Internet in ways you may have never thought possible! Plus, you’ve seen some great ways to find new web addresses, and pretty soon you’ll find even more ways to “find stuff on the net”!

Enjoy the rest of this e-book, and happy exploring!

(BTW: The definition I gave for URLs was pretty basic – I intentionally left out a lot of information. If you’re curious and you’ve just got to know more... there’s an appendix in the full version of this e-book that explains what URLs are in **much** greater detail.

Chapter 5: For the Full Version

Hello, this is Andrew Malek, and I'd like to say "Thanks" for reading this sample copy of FindStuffOnTheNet!

I hope you've seen how this book is arranged, how it is easy to navigate and that it was written with the beginning computer user in mind.

I could put a huge sales letter here encouraging you to purchase the full version, but why? I believe this book sells itself. If you disagree, I would love to hear why. You can e-mail me at email@findstuffonthenet.com.

However, if you like what you've seen and are curious enough to learn more about the Internet, is **\$19.95** all that much to spend considering Internet classes and courses could cost hundreds of dollars?

Take the next step. Learn more about what the Internet has to offer. Order your full copy of FindStuffOnTheNet today!

Just visit:

<http://www.findstuffonthenet.com/order.html>

And you will be redirected to the secure online order page, hosted by the RegNow site.

Good luck in your Internet research!

Andrew Malek
FindStuffOnTheNet