

BROWSING THE WEB

WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

The Internet (also called the Web or the Net) is a collection of millions of web sites. Each web site is made up of at least one web page – most sites have many pages though. The web's main goal is to provide information. Many companies, schools, organizations, stores, and even individuals have their own web sites to provide information to people who visit their sites. Some web sites even act as stores with on-line catalogs from which you can purchase items. As you become more comfortable with browsing the web, you will encounter a wide variety of pages and become familiar with the many different ways the net is used.

WEB ADDRESSES

Every web site has its own unique address, called a URL (Universal Resource Locator). Each URL is made up of several parts. We will use the URL for the popular web search site Google, as an example. Google's web address is **http://www.google.com**.

www which stands for world wide web is often included in web addresses. It is not always necessary though if the address begins with http:// or https://

http://www.google.com

A web address often begins with http:// HTTP stands for (Hypertext Transfer Protocol). This is the language computers use to share web sites among each other. Sometimes you may see https://, this is the secure version of http which is often used when a visitor to a site is asked to input personal information such as for on-line banking or on-line shopping. When www is part of a web address the http:// is usually implied and you need not type it.

The part highlighted in pink is called a Domain Name. The domain is never omitted from a web address. The italicized part of the domain is a unique word or phrase that serves to identify a specific site. The second half of the domain qualifies the site as belonging to a commercial entity (.com), a college or university (.edu), the government (.gov), an Internet Service Provider (.net), or a non-profit organization (.org). You may also see endings like .uk, .jp, .fr, .ca, and others that represent countries outside the US. (Respectively the above refer to the United Kingdom, Japan, France, and Canada)

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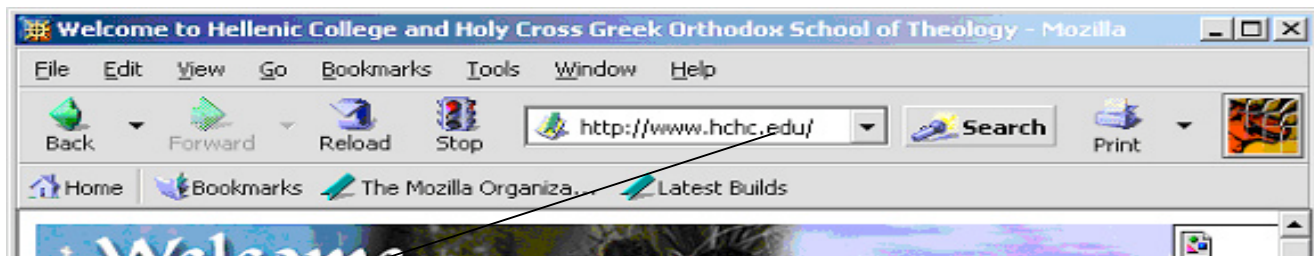
To visit web pages you need a special type of software called a Web Browser. There are many to choose from such as Netscape's Mozilla, Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Chimera (Mac only), Opera, and Apple's Safari (Mac only). All web browsers have an *address bar* in which you type the URL of the web site you wish to visit. On the following page are some examples of where you can find the address bar in several popular browsers.

Internet Explorer on Windows 2000



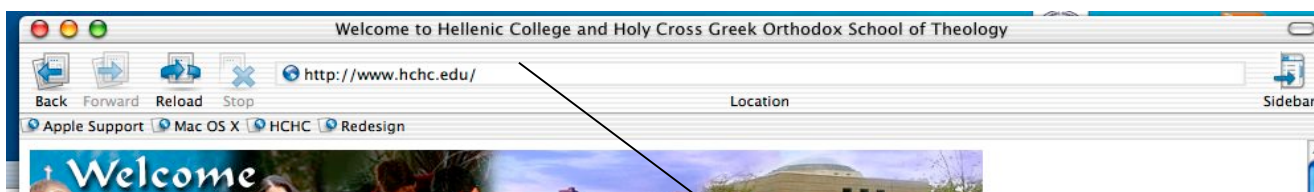
Address bar: Type in the URL (web address here)

Netscape Mozilla on Windows 2000



Address bar: Type URL here (web address here)

Chimera on Max OS X



Address bar: Type URL (web address here)

NAVIGATING THE WEB

There are several ways to navigate the web. Most web sites have hyperlinks (also called links) on them. These usually appear as underlined text, however, links can also look like normal text on a page or even pictures. Links can bring you to another page on a web site, a different web site all together, or a different section of the same web page. Click on a link once with the left mouse button to move to that link's target.

The web browser itself also provides several tools for navigating the web. As you have already learned, the address bar, is where you type the URL of the page you wish to visit, but there are several other useful features as well. These include the back button (returns to the page you visited before the current one), the forward button (allows you to return to the page you came from when using the back

button), the reload or refresh button (reloads the current site to update content changes), and the stop button (cancels the loading of a page). Some web browsers allow you customize which buttons appear in the toolbar or have additional buttons. Some the other buttons you might see are Print (prints the current page), Home (returns you to the page you set as your home page), History (shows a list of all the sites you have visited with a specified time period), and Favorites (shows a list of all the Favorites you have bookmarked).

BOOKMARKS/FAVORITES

Bookmarks (some browsers call them Favorites) allow you “bookmark” a page for future reference. For example, if there is a page that you visit frequently or a page that you would like to remember for future use, you can add it to your list of bookmarks (Favorites). Then, when you want to revisit that page, you go to the Bookmarks (or Favorites) menu and choose the page from the list. The web browser will bring you to that site you do not need to type in the address. To add a page to your Bookmarks (or Favorites):

1. Go to the site you want to bookmark
2. Go to the Bookmarks (or Favorites) menu and choose Add to Bookmarks (or Add to Favorites).
3. To visit that site in the future, go to the Bookmarks (or Favorites) menu and choose it from the list.

SEARCHING THE WEB

Of course you might also want to search for a page or topic on the web without knowing a specific address. Several special web sites provide *search engines* for looking up any topic on the web.

To search the web:

1. Go to a site that offers a search engine (see list below).
2. In the search box, type in the person, topic, place, etc. that you want to look up (do not enter articles such as “the” or “a”).
3. Press the enter key (or return key if you are on a Mac) on your keyboard.
4. The search engine will search the entire Internet and return to you a list of links to web sites that match the criteria you entered in the search box.

Note that the above steps work for most search engines. Some search engines allow for advanced searches with Boolean Operators and literal strings, searches by entering a question, or other special features. Experiment with the search engines below and find the one that best meets your needs.

Google	http://www.google.com
Ask Jeeves	http://www.ask.com
Alta Vista	http://www.altavista.com
Yahoo!	http://www.yahoo.com

ADVERTISING ON THE WEB

For better or for worse, the web has evolved from primarily an academic medium to a commercial one. This means that in addition to store catalogs and even stores themselves being accessible on the web, there are also ads. Ads on the web take several forms:

Text Ads These are the most unobtrusive type of ads found on the web. They are usually one or two lines of text linked to the advertiser's own page

Banner Ads These ads usually appear at the top of the page as rectangles that span across the page. They can consist of text, images, and even animations.

BEWARE because sometimes these ads are extremely deceptive appearing as images that look just like the real windows on your computer with messages like "Your computer may have a virus" or "Your computer is not running at optimal speed" or sometimes "Your computer is broadcasting an Internet IP address."

Pop Ups Perhaps the most annoying type of ad is the pop-up window. This type of ad creates one or more small windows that "pop-up" when you visit a web site. They sometimes hide themselves behind the current open browser window so that you do not see them until you close the window on top of them. Some browsers such as Mozilla and Chimera allow you to block pop up ads.

Marketing departments are always dreaming up new ways to get your attention on the web so the list of ad types above is by no means exhaustive. You may see other types of ads such as a large block image or animation in the center of a news article that is unrelated to the content of the article. In most cases, the best advice for handling ads on the web is to ignore them (or in the case of pop-ups, close the window). In general it is not a good idea to click on ads on the web. As you become more comfortable with the web, most likely you will learn to discern between ads for legitimate companies and services and those of less reputable sources.

SECURITY ON THE WEB

With many sites now requesting visitor's input for surveys and purchases, it is important to keep security in mind whenever giving out information over the web. Unless you know for certain that a site is a legitimate business site, you should not give out personal information such as your name, address, bank or credit account information, or phone number over the web. Some sites will ask for your email address, beware that these sites often collect lists of email addresses and sell them to other, usually less reputable, companies. These companies in turn will send SPAM (junk email) to your email account. Just be careful to whom you give personal information over the web.

On e-commerce sites (on-line stores) always look for and read their security and privacy policies before making a purchase from them. If you believe you have experienced credit or debit card fraud as the result of an on-line purchase contact your card issuer at once.

You may be wondering if you should avoid shopping or banking on-line at all given the risks. The answer is absolutely not. There are many good reasons to shop or bank on-line such as product availability, convenience, and in many cases tax-free shopping. When you do shop or bank on-line be sure that you are very familiar and comfortable with the site understand the site's security and privacy policies.

SOME USEFUL WEBSITES

Some Boston Area Universities and Colleges

http://www.hchc.edu	Hellenic College and Holy Cross
http://www.harvard.edu	Harvard University
http://www.bu.edu	Boston University
http://www.bc.edu	Boston College
http://www.newbury.edu	Newbury College

Theological Organizations

http://www.goarch.org/	Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
http://www.bostontheological.org/	Boston Theological Institute

News

www.boston.com	Boston area news produced by the Boston Globe
http://www.nytimes.com/	The New York Times
http://online.wsj.com/public/us	The Wall Street Journal
http://www.npr.org/	National Public Radio
http://www.bbc.co.uk/	The BBC

Computers and Hardware Sales

Note that many computer resellers offer academic discounts to educators and students

http://www.apple.com	Apple Computer (click on education for educational sales)
www.sunrem.com	Refurbished Macintosh Computers , Parts, and software
www.dell.com	Dell Computer
www.pcconnection.com	New Mac and PC computers, parts, printers, and software
www.microwarehouse.com	New Mac and PC computers, parts, printers, and software
www.bestbuy.com	New PC Computers, parts, electronics, and software
www.compusa.com	New Mac and PC computers, software, and parts

Miscellaneous

www.weather.com	Weather Reports
www.mapquest.com	Maps and Driving Directions
www.amazon.com	Largest on-line new and used book seller. (Also music, videos, appliances, electronics, toys, and clothes)
www.dictionary.com	On-line dictionary and Thesaurus