What is the web?

The part of the Internet that most people are familiar with is the *World Wide Web* (usually called the *Web*, or *web*). The web is so popular that people often use the terms *Internet* and *web* to mean the same thing.

What can I do on the Internet?

Find information. The web contains a vast amount of information—far more than even the world's largest libraries.

Most companies, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, museums, and libraries have websites with information about their products, and services.

Note

Even though the web is great for research, not all information on the web is reliable. Information on some websites might be inaccurate, out of date, or incomplete.

Before you trust information, make sure it comes from an authoritative source, and check other sources to verify the information.

You can communicate. E-mail is one of the most popular uses of the Internet. You can send an e-mail message to anyone with an e-mail address, and it will arrive almost instantly in the recipient's e-mail inbox—even if he or she lives halfway around the world.

Share. You can *upload* (copy) pictures from your digital camera to a photo-sharing website. Invited friends and family members can then visit the website to view your photo albums.

Shop. The web is the world's biggest shopping mall. You can browse and purchase products—books, music, toys, clothing, electronics, and much more—at the websites of major retailers (usually a credit card is required). You can also buy and sell used items through websites that use auction-style bidding.

Play. You can play games of every type on the web, often against other players—no matter where they are in the world. Many games are free, and you can download others for a fee. You can also listen to Internet radio stations, watch movie clips, and download or purchase music, videos, and even some TV shows.

Entering a web address

Just as every residence has a unique street address, every webpage has its own web address. That address is called the URL.

> URL is the abbreviation for *Uniform Resource Locator* - it is the global address of documents and other resources on the World Wide Web.
>
> > For example, the URL for the Microsoft main website is http://www.microsoft.com.

If you know the URL for a page, you can type it directly into Internet Explorer:

1. In the **Address** box, type the URL.

2. Click the **Go** button or press ENTER to go to the website.

Tips

- You don't have to type **http://** or www. For example, you can type **microsoft.com** and Internet Explorer will fill in the rest.

- To quickly enter a URL ending in ".com", type the part between "www." and ".com" and then press CTRL+ENTER.

Basic navigation

Using links. Most webpages have dozens or even hundreds of links. To get from one page to another, click any link. However, figuring out which things on a page are links isn't always easy. Links can be text, images, or a combination of both. Text links often appear as colored and underlined, but link styles vary among websites.

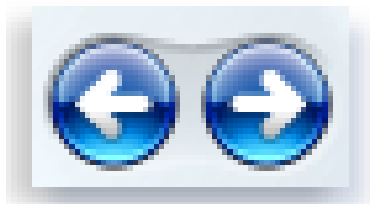To test whether something is a link or not, point to it. If it's a link, two things happen:

- The mouse pointer changes to a hand with a pointing finger.

- A URL appears in the status bar of your web browser. This shows the website you'll go to if you click the link.

1 Link   2 URL of link

Pointing to a link changes the mouse pointer and displays the webpage's URL in the status bar

Using the Back and Forward buttons. As you go from page to page, Internet Explorer keeps track of your trail. To get back to the previous page, click the **Back** button. Click the **Back** button several times to retrace your steps even further. After you've clicked the Back button, you can click the **Forward** button to go forward in the trail.

Back button (left); Forward button (right)

Saving favorite webpages

When you discover a website that you'd like to return to regularly, save it as a favorite in Internet Explorer. That way, when you want to return to the website, you can click it in your Favorites list, without having to remember or type its web address.

To save a webpage as a favorite in Internet Explorer 8

1. In Internet Explorer 8, go to the webpage you want to save as a favorite.

2. Click the **Favorites** button, and then click **Add to Favorites**.

3. In the **Name** box, type a name for the webpage, and then click **Add**.

To save a webpage as a favorite in Internet Explorer 7

1. In Internet Explorer 7, go to the webpage you want to save as a favorite.

2. Click the **Add to Favorites** button 🎇, and then click **Add to Favorites**.

3. In the **Name** box, type a name for the webpage, and then click **Add**.

To open a favorite in Internet Explorer 8

1. In Internet Explorer 8, click the **Favorites** button.

2. Click the **Favorites** tab if it's not already selected.

3. In the **Favorites** list, click the webpage that you want to open.

To open a favorite in Internet Explorer 7

1. In Internet Explorer 7, click the **Favorites Center** button ⭐.

2. Click the **Favorites** button if it's not already selected.

3. In the **Favorites** list, click the webpage that you want to open.