

Internet Basics and Searching

Learning Objectives:

- Learn internet lingo.
- Increase familiarity with toolbars, menus, and bookmarks.
- Practice navigating the internet.
- Learn how to search efficiently and effectively.

1. What is the Internet?

The **Internet** is a physical network, made up of computers, and a virtual network of connected electronic files connected to each other by **links** or **hyperlinks**. It is also referred to as the **worldwide web** (WWW).

2. URL or Web Address is the location of a document, website, or web page on the WWW (similar to a postal address).

<http://www.mesacountylibraries.org>

The **http://** part of the web address stands for “hypertext transfer protocol”, and is a standard method of transferring data. The **www** indicates that it is a web page. You do not need to remember those parts of a URL. You can use a shorter version of the library’s URL address and get the same result:

mesacountylibraries.org

The last part of the URL (.org) is the **domain name**. Common domain names are:

.com: commercial, for-profit	.gov: government organizations
.org: service or non-profit organization	.net: networking organizations
.edu: educational institutions	.mil: military

The domain may help you decide which websites to look at. Would it be better to look for information about the FDA on a .com site or a .gov site? You may also see domains that relate to the state or country of origin. For example, Colorado officials may use state.co.us, while Iowa officials would use state.ia.us. A site based in England would end in **.uk** while one from Australia would end in **.au**.

Each URL is unique and identifies one specific file. A URL can be very long:

http://www.amazon.com/Shades-Moonlight-Karen-L-McKee-ebook/dp/B004FEFB60/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1440089133&sr=8-1&keywords=karen+mckee

This URL is for one specific book on the Amazon website.

Some Tips on Web Addresses:

- Web addresses must be typed *correctly*, with dots in proper places and no spaces, but you can use UPPER or lower case letters.
- Email addresses contain the @ symbol (example: johndoe@gmail.com). Web addresses do *not* contain the @ symbol.
- If you see 'https' at the beginning of a web address, that means the page is **secure**, and more likely to be safe to enter credit card and personal information on that page (see section 10 for more information about internet safety).

3. Internet Service Provider (ISP) – the company that provides the connection between the Internet and your computer, device, or modem. Consumers today have several technologies to choose from: telephone (e.g., CenturyLink), cable (Charter), satellite (Dish) and cellular (Verizon). ISPs charge for internet service. Public computers, like those at the library, and public **Wi-Fi** networks are two ways to get free Internet access. Wi-Fi is wireless data transmission. All of the library locations offer a public Wi-Fi network.

4. Web Browsers - A web browser is the software program you use to view and interact with text, images, videos, music and other information on a web page. Browsers can usually be found on the Desktop and/or the Start menu.

There are three main web browsers for PCs:



Microsoft Edge



Mozilla Firefox



Google Chrome

For Apple products (Macs, for example) the main web browser is Safari. Some people prefer one web browser over another. Beginning in 2015, with the release of Windows 10, Microsoft Edge replaces Internet Explorer. Microsoft will no longer support Internet Explorer, so while you can still use it, there will be no upgrades or technical help in the future.

Practice: Open up Google Chrome or Firefox from the desktop (teacher's choice)

At the top of the screen, you see an address bar with several icons. The browsers differ, but they have features in common:



- **Address bar** - type in the URL (web address) of the website you want and press [Enter].
- **Back** - click to return to previous web page.
- **Forward** - click to return to web page you were on before you moved back.
- **Home** - browsers have a home page setting – usually the page you use most. Click on the icon to go to the home page. See below for information on changing the home page setting.
- **Refresh** - reloads the page. Occasionally, pages do not load completely (e.g., images are missing). Click on the icon to refresh the page.
- **Bookmarks toolbar** - this handout addresses bookmarks below.


See *Reference 2: Browser Elements* on page 13 for diagrams of each browser's toolbar.


5. Getting around in your Browser

Practice: Go to the library's website – click on the address bar. Type in mesacountylibraries.org. Press [Enter].

Move the mouse slowly from left to right across the screen.

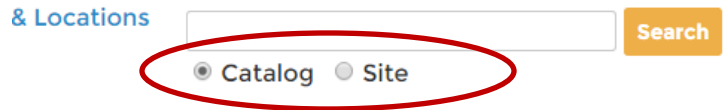
 As you move your mouse around you'll see that sometimes the cursor is in the shape of an arrow, and sometimes it changes to an **I-beam**. The I-beam is the browser's way of telling you that your pointer is in a spot meant for text. When you move away from an area meant for text, the I-beam turns back into an arrow. 

 Sometimes, your pointer appears as a hand with a finger pointing up. This indicates the area your pointer is on is a **hyperlink**. It may be an underlined word or phrase, a picture icon, or a button or bar with words. Clicking on a hyperlink will “take you” to another web page or web document.

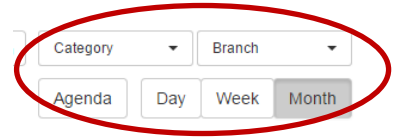
 Finally, sometimes your pointer appears as an **hourglass** or stopwatch. This indicates that the program is busy working and you must wait for it to complete its task before clicking on anything else.

Practice: Move your mouse around on the page and notice when the arrow turns into a hand or an I-beam. Click on a hyperlink on the library's website. Next, click the 'back' button to take you back to the library's home page.

There are other kinds of interactions available on websites. You may sometimes see **radio buttons**. These are choice buttons – One or the other is turned on.



You will also see **drop-down menus**. They typically have a small black arrow on the right. These drop-down menus give you a choice among several options. Click on the arrow and then click on the option you want to select.



6. Navigating in a Website

Websites are typically made up of multiple pages. Besides the home page, there are more pages you access by clicking on links on the home page. Well-designed web pages have these elements:

- **Link back to the website's home page** – usually the logo or name of the company or organization in the upper left-hand corner.
- **Search box for the website** – usually near the top with a button labeled search or a magnifying glass.
- **Log in and registration links** – usually at the top right of the home page.
- **Contact** - a link to a page that provides phone, address, email or other contact information.
- **Company information** - often, companies or organizations put the nitty-gritty information (hours, locations, jobs, volunteer opportunities) about the entity at the bottom of the page.

Practice: Go to Walmart.com. Locate some of the links and information described above.

7. Search Engines and Search Tips – Internet search engines are designed to help people find information stored on other websites. Search engines:

- Search millions of web pages based on keyword(s) you enter.
- Auto-correct for most spelling errors.
- Allow both simple and advanced searches.
- Display search results in order of relevancy.
- Deliver paid-for ads amid the search results. These are at or near the top of the search results but are marked so you can distinguish them from the other search results.

The web browser has a default search engine. If you enter something in the address bar that is NOT a valid URL, the browser will use the search engine to look for your entry. For example, if you enter the word Facebook (instead of Facebook.com), the browser opens the search engine

with a search for the keyword Facebook. You can change the default search engine for the browser(s) on your computer through the Settings (see Reference 3: **How do I** on page 14).

Some Major Search Engines are:

- Google: www.google.com
- Bing: www.bing.com
- MSN Search: search.msn.com
- Yahoo: www.yahoo.com

Practice: Use two or more of the major search engines listed above and try to find relevant websites for: 1) free computer tutorials and 2) hiking trails in Colorado.

Search Tips & Techniques

When to use – Use a search engine when you are searching for information about a topic. If you want to go to a particular website (and you know the name), it is usually faster to type the website URL in the address bar than to do a search.

How to start – when you are unsure about what type of material is available, or if you are unsure about where to begin on a topic.

- Ask yourself, “What is my question—what information do I need? What do I want to know?”
- Ask yourself, “What are the essential elements of my question?”
- Use those key parts as **keywords** in your search.

Use broad to narrow searching – Usually the most effective way to search for information:

- Begin searching with one broad topic (‘car comparison’)
- Use additional keywords to narrow your search (‘hybrid car comparison’).
- Narrow it down to the specific (‘hybrid car gas mileage comparison’).
- If you still have trouble finding the information you’re looking for, try using synonyms or similar terms for your topic, i.e. cooking/cuisine/recipes.

Search for an exact phrase - Use “quotation marks” to search for specific phrases. Google will search for that EXACT phrase. Helpful when searching for people or very specific things.

- Example: “1978 Raleigh sport bicycle”
- Example: "red fender Stratocaster guitar"
- Remove the quotes if you don’t get many results.

Either/or search – To find results that include either of two or more search terms to broaden your search, use uppercase **OR** (e.g, recipe brownie **OR** blondie).

Practice: Search for stores in Grand Junction that sell ukuleles. How many actual Grand Junction stores did you find?

8. Adding and Using Bookmarks

You can save website addresses with 'bookmarks', so that you don't have to remember the URL every time you want to return to the website.

Mozilla Firefox

- ADD - Click the star icon in the browser bar. You then have the option to name the bookmark and put it into a folder.
- USE – Choose 'Show Sidebars' icon at top right of browser window (*see page 13 for illustration of Firefox icons*).

Google Chrome

- ADD - Click the star icon in the browser bar. You then have the option to name the bookmark and put it into a folder.
- USE - Bookmarks are an option under the menu in Chrome (*see page 13 for illustration of Chrome icons*).

Microsoft Edge

- ADD - Click on the Bookmarks icon at the top right. Again, you get the option to rename the bookmark and put it in a folder (*see page 13 for illustration of Microsoft Edge icons*).
- USE - click on the Bookmarks icon.

Practice: Bookmark the site you're on. Close your browser. Re-open it. Then, use the Bookmarks menu to find the site you were on. Click to open.

9. Internet Printing Tips:

Before you print, you want to make sure you know what you are getting. Many web pages print out more than one page, and some omit or include information you don't want.

- Most browsers (except for older Internet Explorer) will automatically show you a preview when you initiate a print.
- If the print preview shows you that the printed version excludes information or wastes paper because it is misaligned, try copying the URL, going to the website [printfriendly.com](http://www.printfriendly.com), paste the copied URL into the box on the website.

- To print part of a page, select the portion of the page you would like to print by dragging your mouse over the text. The selection should be highlighted in blue. Then, when you click on 'print', choose 'selection.'
- To print a **page range**, fill in the pages 'from' and 'to' fields.

10. Internet safety - To stay safe online:

- Keep your computer software (browser software, operating system, virus protection) up-to-date.
- Do NOT respond to any suspicious email.
- Do NOT send personal information in an email (phone numbers, account numbers, social security numbers, ID numbers).
- Protect all of your devices – computer, smartphone, tablet.
- Provide personal information or make purchases only on websites that you trust.
- When you're shopping online (or doing anything that involves personal or financial information), always look for the small **padlock** icon on the left-hand side of your browser's address bar. This indicates that you are on a secure site which scrambles your information before sending it to a merchant. Also, when you reach a page asking for sensitive information, the address bar should read **https://** at the beginning of the web address. The extra **s** at the end of the http stands for **secure**.
- For more information, see the library's subject guide on internet safety <https://guides.mesacountylibraries.org/internetsafety>.
- Take the Introduction to Digital Privacy and Security Class through the Library. Sign up on mesacountylibraries.org

12. More Resources

- Tech Help at the Library
- Book a Librarian appointments

Reference 1: **Selected Websites by Subject** (note there is no need to type 'http' or 'www' in front of a website in the address bar—the browser fills it in for you.)

News

The Daily Sentinel: <https://gjsentinel.com>

CNN: <http://cnn.com>

NPR: <http://npr.org>

Health

Medline Plus: <https://medlineplus.gov>

Web MD: <https://www.webmd.com/>

National Institutes of Health:

<https://www.nih.gov/>

Entertainment

Internet Movie Database:

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

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/>

Shopping

eBay: www.ebay.com

Amazon: www.amazon.com

Overstock: www.overstock.com

Etsy: (handcrafted items) www.etsy.com

Government

State of Colorado: www.colorado.gov

Mesa County Govt.: www.mesacounty.us

City of Grand Junction: www.gjcity.org

White House: www.whitehouse.gov

Travel

Expedia: www.expedia.com

Travelocity: www.travelocity.com

Orbitz: www.orbitz.com

Priceline: www.priceline.com

Computers & Internet

PC World: www.pcworld.com

Tech Bargains: <http://techbargains.com>

HowStuffWorks: www.howstuffworks.com

Cars & Trucks

Kelly Blue Book: www.kbb.com

NADA: www.nada.com

Weather

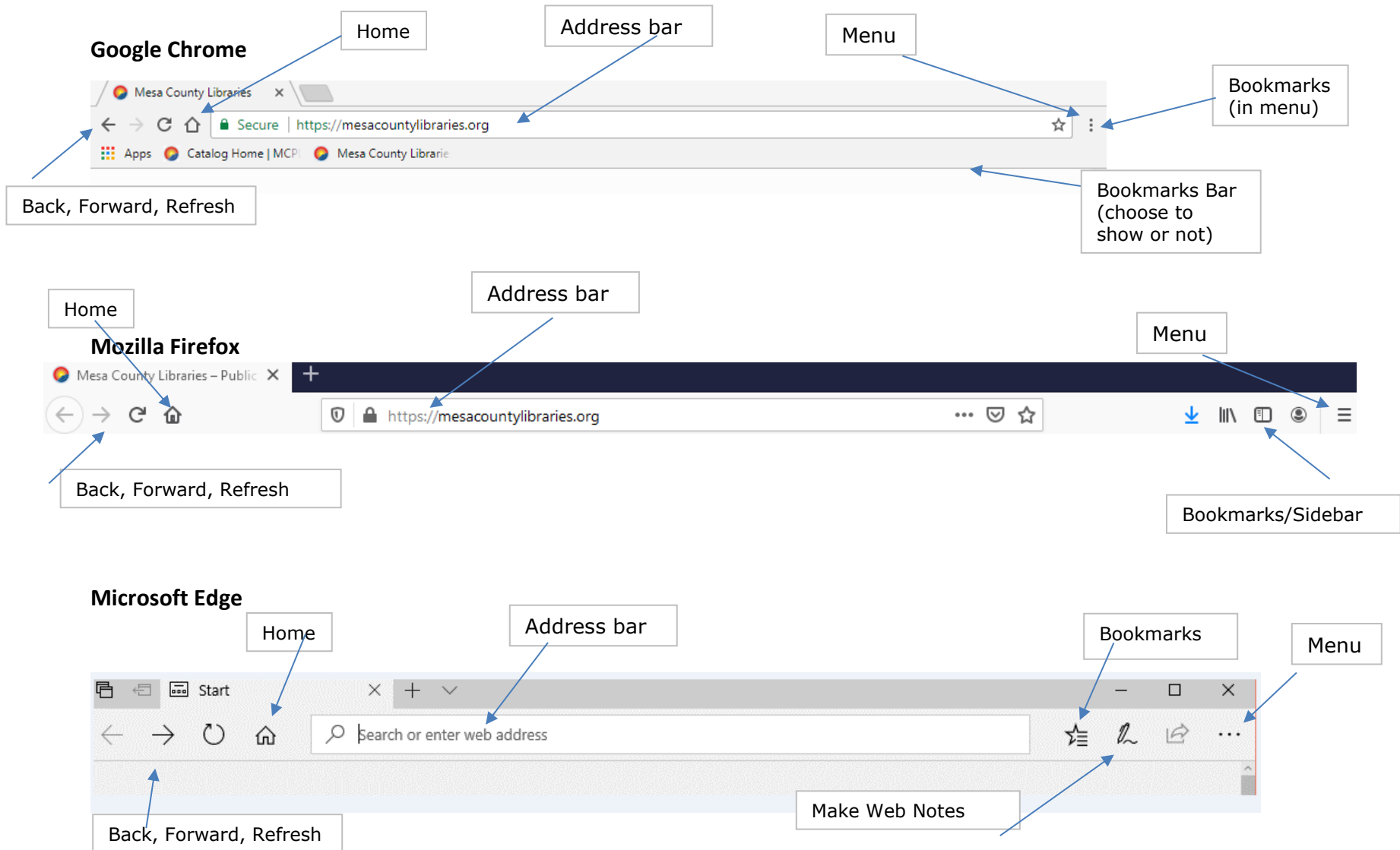
National Weather Service: www.nws.noaa.gov

Weather Underground:



www.wunderground.com

Weather Channel: www.weather.com

Reference 2: **Browser Elements** – note these might differ slightly depending on your software version















Reference 3: **How do I** (Note that on the library’s public computers, you will not be able to adjust some of these settings.)

	Why would I do this	Keyboard Shortcut	Menu Option or Right-Click
Copy and paste text	Copy text from a web page to another location.	CTRL + C	Click Menu – then Cut, Copy or Paste.
Change text size	Some web pages use small or hard-to-read print. Zoom in or out of the web page.	CTRL + ‘+’ or ‘-’	Click Menu - zoom ‘+’ or ‘-’
View history	Look at web pages you have been on recently	CTRL + H	 Click this in Firefox  Click this in Chrome
Add another tab	Keep the current web page open while opening up another web page.	CTRL + T	Click + sign at top of browser window
Find text	Locate words within a web page.	CTRL + F	Click Menu – ‘Find’ or ‘Find in this page’
Print	Print a paper copy of the web page you are on.	CTRL + P	Click Menu – Print
Change home page	The web page which is opened every time you add a new tab or open the browser.	n/a	In Firefox, click Menu - Options – Home. In Chrome, click Menu – Settings - Appearance
Change default search engine	Some people have a preference for a particular search engine.	n/a	Click Menu – Options– Search – Default Search Engine. Use drop-down menu to select search engine. In Chrome click Menu – Settings – Search engine

Some Common Internet Icons (from <https://smallbusiness.com/tech/what-mobile-icons-mean/>)

Often if you hover your mouse pointer over an icon, a tooltip will popout telling you what the icon means, but not always.

	<p>On an app or website, either of these typically means “settings.” Click it and you can adjust something.</p>		<p>This means “edit” pretty much anywhere you see it.</p>
	<p>This usually means “send”. “Send” might also be indicated by an open envelope.</p>		<p>This means “search.” Even if you don’t see a search box, click or tap on it and a search box will appear.</p>
	<p>Might be “email us” or may have a broader meaning, like “click on this to contact us.”</p>		<p>This is a “play” button icon, for sound/video.</p>
	<p>This means share. Click on it and you’ll likely see a list of ways to post the content you’re seeing onto social media sites or email it to friends or co-workers. Might also mean send.</p>		<p>When used as a navigational icon, either of these two “lists” mean there are lots of things the app or website couldn’t fit on a tiny screen and it functions as a menu.</p>
	<p>This one means “share” also., but wait, there’s more.</p>		<p>Another type of menu.</p>
	<p>Yet another sharing symbol.</p>		<p>This icon or some variation of a door with an arrow, means “exit” or “logout”.</p>