

# Finding Information

## Search Engines and Web Guides

If you know the location of the place you want to go, typing the URL in the location box will take you there. But if you do not know where to go to find the information you want, you will need to use a search engine or



AltaVista home page

Web guide. Both are tools that can help you find information on the Web quickly.

A search engine uses programs that continually search the Internet for information. These

programs build a database, or index, of Web sites.

When you go to a search engine site and enter a keyword or phrase, you are actually searching the database built by the search engine.

There are many search sites to be found on the Internet. Popular sites include Lycos, AltaVista,

**Search engine**

A tool used to help locate information on the Internet. Examples include Infoseek, AltaVista, WebCrawler, and Lycos.

**Web guide**

Sites that provide links organized into subject categories. Examples includes Yahoo! and About.com.

**Indexing**

Behind-the-scenes creation of an ever-changing database based on the contents of Web documents.

**Keyword**

A word or phrase typed into a search engine's query field; the engine then searches the World Wide Web for documents containing that word or words.

and Excite. Many sites have specific search areas just for children. There are also “meta-search” search engines, such as SavvySearch, that simultaneously submit searches to multiple search engines.

Web guides are sites that have already organized links and articles into subject categories. Examples of Web guides are Yahoo! and About.com. However, many Web guides have search capabilities, and a number of search engines have added links; therefore, there is little difference these days between search engines and Web guides. Both are useful tools for finding information.



Yahoo! home page

## Web Portals

Many search sites that began as search-only sites have grown into what are called Web portals. This refers to a main Web gateway that includes resources such as a search engine, e-mail, online shopping, and information forums, plus additional content such as current news and weather, sports, and entertainment information. Examples of Web portals include Yahoo! and Go.

Most portals offer the user the ability to customize the portal page to deliver content that reflects the user’s interests. In addition, many other features are being added to these portal sites, including free Web-based e-mail and calendar accounts.



### Internet Safety

There are a number of search engines that are designed just for children. These sites attempt to weed out inappropriate sites. For a list of popular search sites for children, see pages 37–38. Remember, however, that no site can guarantee that children will not be able to view inappropriate material, because links within sites sometimes change on a daily basis.

### Web Portal

A main gateway to the World Wide Web that includes a search engine plus additional content such as news, weather, sports, and entertainment updates.

### Gateway

A special host machine that handles communications across network boundaries.