

# Glossary

Here are some terms and definitions to help you find your way around the Internet.

**ARPANET** The network funded by the Department of Defense and the National Science Foundation in the late 1960s, designed for sharing computing resources at universities and governmental research facilities. The name ARPANET is a combination of the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) and the word *network*.

**Attachments** Computer files that are appended to e-mail messages.

**AUP** Acceptable Use Policy: in schools, an agreement among students, teachers, and parents that sets the rules for Internet use in the school.

**Bookmarks** A feature of most Web browsers that allows a user to record the location of favorite Web sites for access at a future time.

**Browser** A software application that enables a computer to locate and view, or "browse," pages on the World Wide Web. The browser makes documents that are coded in the HTML programming language viewable on the screen. The two most popular browsers are Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer. Each is available for Windows and Macintosh.

**Chat Room** A location on the Internet where people exchange text messages in "real time."

**Classroom Web Page** A location on the Internet where teachers can display their students' work and provide links to useful resources.

**Cookies** Requests for information about an Internet user from Web site administrators. Sometimes this information is gathered to direct the user to sites that may be of interest; sometimes the information is gathered for statistical purposes.

**Cursor** A movable mark on a computer screen, indicating the point at which the displayed data may be altered or at which new data may be inserted.

**Cyberspace** A word coined by novelist William Gibson to describe the data created by the millions of computers connected worldwide via online communications.

**Direct Line** The connection of a computer to the Internet by means of a LAN (local area network).

**Download** To receive a file sent from another computer or copy a file from a server.

**E-commerce** Buying and selling over the Internet.

**E-mail** Electronic mail, or messages sent from one person to another via computer.

**Emoticons** Symbols made out of keyboard characters, used to convey emotions. Common examples include :- ) (smile), :-( (frown), and ;- ) (wink).

**Ethernet** A method of networking computers in a LAN (local area network).

**FAQ** Frequently Asked Question: FAQs are documents that list and answer the most common questions on a particular subject.

**Favorites** A feature of Internet Explorer that allows a user to record the location of favorite Web sites for access at a future time.

**Filtering Software** Programs that allow the user to block access to offensive or inappropriate sites.

**Flaming** Writing crude messages to provoke responses, especially in e-mail, listserv, and chat room messages.

**FTP** File Transfer Protocol: a common method of copying files via the Internet.

**Gateway** A special host machine that handles communications across network boundaries. Gateways mediate access to specific networks; therefore, bottlenecks sometimes occur at popular gateways.

**GIF** Graphic Interchange Format: a common format for image files (pictures) on the Internet.

**Home Page** The main page of a Web site. Also used for the Web page that a browser is set to load when it starts up.

**Hot Spot** A portion of an image or a piece of text that changes the arrow to a hand with a pointing finger, indicating the location of a hyperlink. You can click on a hot spot to go to a linked Web page.

**HTML** HyperText Markup Language: a programming language that relies on internal codes, or "tags," to indicate how documents should appear on the screen. Used for creating hypertext documents on the World Wide Web.

**HTTP** HyperText Transfer Protocol: a communication standard used by computers on the World Wide Web, seen at the beginning of most URLs (as http). Used for moving hypertext files across the Internet.

**Hyperlink** A connector that takes you to a different resource. Hyperlinks usually appear on the screen as colored or underlined text or are embedded in graphics. The new resource may or may not be a part of the original Web site.

**Hypertext** Any text that contains links to other documents—mostly associated with Web pages, but other documents can also contain hypertext links.

**Indexing** Behind-the-scenes creation of an ever-changing database based on the contents of Web documents; search engines and filtering software use indexing to find and/or block documents containing certain words or phrases.

**Instant Messaging** A combination of e-mail and chat room, often called simply IM. The user has a "buddy list" of online correspondents. He or she clicks on a name and types a message. The message pops up in a window on the buddy's screen. Other people on the list can join in, much like a telephone conference call.

**Internet** A global computer network that began in the late 1960s as a U.S. Department of Defense project linking university computer science departments. It has since grown to include millions of business, government, educational, and individual computers around the world. Often called the Net, for short.

**Internet Protocol** The standard format for data transmission via the Internet.

**Intranet** A private network inside a company or organization that uses the same kinds of software as the Internet, but which is only for internal use.

**ISP** Internet Service Provider: an organization that provides access to the Internet. America Online (AOL), Earthlink, MindSpring, and AT&T WorldNet are examples of ISPs.

**Java** A network-oriented programming language invented by Sun Microsystems, often used at Web sites to provide animations and interactive features.

**JPEG** Joint Photographic Experts Group: a format for images files on the Internet, most commonly used for photographs.

**Keypals** Pen pals who use e-mail for communication.

**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.

**LAN** Local Area Network: network in which groups of computers are connected within a small area, such as an office, campus, or building.

**Link** See *Hyperlink*.

**Listserv** An electronic mailing list of subscribers who have chosen to receive information about a specific topic.

**Login** The account name used to gain access to a computer system. Can also refer to the act of entering into a computer system: to *log in* or *log on*.

**Mailing List** See *Listserv*.

**Meta-search** A search of several Internet search engines from one typed query. An example of a meta-search engine is Dogpile ([www.dogpile.com/](http://www.dogpile.com/)).

**Modem** Modulator/Demodulator: a device or software that allows computers to communicate with one another via telephone or cable lines.

**Multimedia** Describes a computer or a software program that uses sound with animation and/or video.

**Net** Short form of *Internet*.

**Netiquette** The generally accepted code of behavior on the Internet.

**Newbies** Slang term for beginning Internet users.

**Newsgroup** An electronic bulletin board providing the ability to view and post messages without an e-mail account—usually related to a specific topic.

**Online** Connected to another computer.

**Password** Most e-mail users have a password of their choosing, to provide security for their e-mail account. It is usually a number, word, or combination of the two.

**Plug-ins** Software programs you can download from the Internet that allow you to add features to your software. For example, Shockwave, RealPlayer, and Java plug-ins allow users to view animations and other multimedia features.

**Post** To send a message to an Internet newsgroup or to place an HTML page on the Web or on an intranet.

**Protocol** Set of data transmission standards assuring that different network devices can work together. Any device using a given protocol should work with any other device using the same protocol.

**Real Time** Happening instantaneously—on the Internet, it means that as you type (for example, in a chat room), others are reading your message and can respond immediately.

**Scroll Bar** Usually a horizontal or vertical bar that contains a box that looks like an elevator in a shaft. Click on the bar to scroll the screen in the corresponding direction, or drag the box in the desired direction.

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

**Server** A computer in a network that contains information or programs that are shared with others or that manages network resources.

**Shareware** Shareware is software that is not free, but is available for a free trial period. You can download it and use it at no cost, with the understanding that you will pay for it if you like it and want to keep using it—or remove it from your system if you don't intend to use it.

**Signature File** A few lines of information that can be affixed to the end of e-mail messages, generally used to give additional information about the writer.

**Spam** An inappropriate attempt to use a mailing list or other networked communications facility by sending the same message to a large number of people who didn't request it. Essentially, it is electronic junk mail.

**Surfing** Slang term for scanning online material; originated from "channel surfing," the rapid changing of television channels to find something of interest.

**TCP/IP** Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol: a communications protocol for connecting computers via a network. TCP/IP is the standard protocol for the Internet.

**Telecommunications** Communicating information—including data, text, pictures, voice, and video.

**Thread** A series of messages, including an original message and its responses.

**Upload** To send or transmit a file to another computer.

**URL** Universal Resource Locator: a World Wide Web address. The URL is embedded within a hyperlink, so that when you click on the link, your computer knows where to find the file you want. You can also find a Web site by typing its URL in the location or address box.

**USENET** User Network: a public access network on the Internet that provides news and discussion forums. It began in 1979 as a bulletin board between two universities in North Carolina; today it holds more than 50,000 newsgroups. News can be read with a Web browser or via newsreader software.

**Virus** A program that can "infect" your computer with small problems, destroy files, or even cause a major crash. Viruses are spread by transferring files from an infected computer to another computer.

**Webmaster** A person who manages a Web site.

**Web Guide** Site that provide links organized into subject categories. Examples of Web guides include Yahoo! and About.com.

**Web Portal** A main gateway to the World Wide Web that includes resources such as a search engine, e-mail services, online shopping, or information forums, plus additional content such as news, weather, sports, and entertainment updates. Examples of Web portals are Yahoo! and Go.

**Web Site** A location on the World Wide Web, usually containing multiple Web pages.

**World Wide Web** Usually called the Web, for short; a system on the Internet that weaves information and resources together through the use of documents formatted in HTML. Allows text, graphics, sound files, and video clips (movies) to be mixed together.