

## Glossary of Internet Terms

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Perhaps the biggest difficulty for those who are new to computers and specifically the Internet is the terminology and jargon which comes with it. It's almost like learning a new language. Just remember that you do not have to remember every single term. Simply use this glossary when you forget what something means or to review the terms covered in class. (*Note: Acronyms are displayed in uppercase*)

**Address:** Each site on the Internet has a unique address. The address for the Milwaukee Public Library is <http://www.mpl.org> and [webmaster@mpl.org](mailto:webmaster@mpl.org) is an example of an email address. Addresses have no spaces and are usually typed in lowercase.

**ARPA:** This acronym stands for Advanced Research Projects Agency. ARPA was created within the Department of Defense as a response to Sputnik being launched by the USSR. By the late 1960s ARPANET was created, a precursor to the Internet. The main goal of this project was to create a network that would be resistant to enemy attack.

**BPS:** This acronym stands for bits per second. BPS is the measurement of the speed at which data can be transmitted.

**Browser:** (See Web Browser)

**Chat Rooms:** Places on the web that allow users to communicate in "real time." Chat rooms are usually topic specific with many different conversations taking place simultaneously. Some chat rooms are monitored to make sure the conversation stays on topic or to prohibit offensive language.

**Cookie:** A cookie is a small file that is created when you visit particular web sites. The cookie is stored on your hard drive and can be used to collect information about your online user behavior. When you access the web site again the cookie "remembers" information about your visit. For instance many web sites use cookies to remember user preferences or make recommendations based on prior purchases.

**Download:** Downloading is simply the act of saving a file onto your computer. For instance, you may wish to download a picture you like or an article you have read. Downloading is simply transferring files from one computer to another.

**Email:** Email stands for Electronic mail and has become the most common form of online communication. You can compose a message and send it to one person or a group of people. You may reply or forward messages to other people.

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**FAQ:** This acronym stands for Frequently Asked Questions. Usually Internet sites will have a FAQ section provides answers to commonly asked questions. It is always best to consult the FAQ section of a site before posting or sending a question.

**FTP:** This acronym stands for File Transfer Protocol. FTP was the standard means for transfer of files on the Internet before the World Wide Web and hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP).

**Gopher:** Gopher space was created by the University of Minnesota. Many large governments and universities maintain gopher sites to store text files. Now many have replaced their gopher sites with web sites.

**Home Page:** The home page refers to the first page of a web site. However, home page has been used generically to refer to any web site or web page. It has also been used to refer to the page that loads when the web browser is first launched. For example, the Milwaukee Public Library web site loads when the web browser is launched.

**HTML:** This acronym stands for Hypertext Markup Language. HTML is a coding language for all web pages. The code instructs the web browser on how to display the page.

**HTTP:** This acronym stands for Hypertext Transfer Protocol. Most web sites that we visit abide by this Internet Protocol.

**Hyperlink:** Hyperlinks can be detected in a web page when the cursor changes from an arrow to a pointing finger. Hyperlinks may be text or graphic elements on the page, that when clicked take you to a different location. They may take you to a different page within the web site, a spot within a long page, or a different Internet site altogether.

**Internet:** The Internet has been described as a huge "network of networks" hooked together worldwide.

**ISP:** This acronym stands for Internet Service Provider. ISPs provide a dial-up service to home users that allow for Internet connection.

**Listserv:** Listservs are huge mailing lists for email users. Listservs are topic specific. There are listservs on such subjects as books, cooking, health, parenting, sports, and politics. When you subscribe to a listserv, you will begin to receive email messages from other subscribers regarding the discussion topic. Some estimate that there are over 100,000 different lists to which you can subscribe. Listservs are an important method of sharing information, receiving answers to questions, and meeting others that share your interests.

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**Modem:** This acronym stands for modulator-demodulator. The modem is device that allows computers to transmit data over the phone lines. The modem is a converter, or translator. Computers transmit data digitally and phone lines transmit data in the form of analog waves. The modem is continually converting data from one format to another.

**Netiquette:** The term Netiquette is created from the two words Internet + Etiquette. Netiquette is simply the unwritten rules of proper online behavior. For example, one rule is to not type in all caps when composing an email message. This is known as SHOUTING! Another rule is to read FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) sections before asking a question in a newsgroup, listserv, or chat room.

**Network:** A network is a number of computers that are connected so that they may communicate with one another and share data. Local area networks found within the same building are known as LANs. WANS, or wide area networks, are computers connected across many buildings throughout the city, the country, or the world. The Milwaukee Public Library has a wide area network.

**Newbie:** Someone who is a new Internet user.

**Newsgroup:** Newsgroups are gigantic, subject specific, global bulletin where users can read posted messages and post responses that everyone can read. Newsgroup subjects vary from scholarly discussions to those that are related to hobbies or entertainment.

**Packet Switching:** A process by which data is transmitted over the Internet. Data is divided into packets and labeled with the address of its destination and origin. Each packet is transmitted individually and can even follow different routes to its destination. Once all the packets forming a message arrive at the destination, they are recompiled into the original message.

**Telnet:** A program that allows remote access to another network. The Milwaukee Public Library offers access via telnet to the CountyCat online catalog, so that you can search for materials and place holds on items from a non-library computer.

**URL:** An Acronym that stands for Uniform Resource Locator. A URL (pronounced U-R-L or “earl”) is a web address. Each Internet site has a unique address. The first part of the address is known as the protocol, and the second part is generally referred to as the domain. For the Milwaukee Public Library web site the “http://” is the protocol and the “www.mpl.org” is the domain.

**Web Browser:** A Web browser is software program, or application that allows you to browse the Internet. Popular web browsers include Netscape Navigator, Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE), or America Online (AOL).

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**Web Page:** A web page is simply an Internet document with a unique address. Just as a page belongs to a book, a web page belongs to a web site.

**Web Site:** A web site is a collection of web pages, similar to pages in a book. Usually the first page is referred to as the home page with a list of links to supporting pages. There also may be an area of related links to other web sites with similar subject matter or themes.

**WWW:** This acronym stands for World Wide Web which is the fastest growing area of the Internet. WWW sites may contain text, graphics, audio, video, and interactive elements.