

Internet Basics - Updated

Terminology & Definitions:

THE INTERNET: *The Internet was first referred to as the "World Wide Web" (www). Most who connect to the internet use it to participate in two types of activities: (1) Type and send correspondences to others using an email software application. And, (2) use a web browser software application to visit websites "online" to learn, listen, watch, explore, buy, research, and play. Below are common terms and definitions for activities you do with email programs and when you go "surf" on the internet.*

Attachment: When a digital file is attached to an email you have received, it is said to have an "Attachment." An *attachment* is a *file/document* that you can "download" onto your computer. It can be an **image** (.jpg, .png, .tif, .bmp), a **text** document (.doc, .docx, .pdf, .rtf), a **spreadsheet** (.xls, .xlsx), an **audio**/music file (.mp3, .mp4, .wav) a **video** file (.mov, .mpeg, .wmv), or many other digital files.

Attachments & File Extensions: Depending on the email program you use and your computer settings (preferences), each file attached in an email or stored on your computer will have a three to four+ letter/number code associated with it. This is called a *file extension*. The *file extension* is like a key that opens the file. In the above example attachments, I've included common *file extensions*. Some applications/apps (also referred to as software programs) can open a variety of *file extension* formats. The most used *File extensions* for a Microsoft Word document, (a word-processor application), is **.docx** and **.doc**. Microsoft Word can also open up **.rtf** and **.txt** and other *file extensions*. Other applications are associated with proprietary file formats that can only be open if you own the application, such as the Intuit's *Quickbooks* (*file extensions*: .qbb, qbm).

Attachments & Viruses: There are many other types of *attachments*, including the malicious ones that have viruses, worms, and Trojan horses, etc. that can damage your computer. Before you open an *attachment*, make sure you know the recipient. Take an extra measure of precaution: If you hadn't expected an *attachment*, it may be best to email or call the sender to make sure that they actually sent you the email with the *attachment*. As with our street address and post office boxes, an email address can also be used to send junk email and emails with malicious content.

Browsers/Web Browsers: *web browsers* are software applications on your computer that allow you to visit websites (see: *Website* definition). Most computers come installed with free *web browsers*. You are not limited to the browsers installed on your computer; there are many free browsers available. There are two types of *web browsers*: (1) **The stand-alone:** those that work separately from email programs. Common stand-alone *web browsers* are: Microsoft's *Internet Explorer*, and Apple's *Safari*, Mozilla's *Firefox*, and Google's *Chrome*. (2) **The all-in-one:** This is a combination browser and email program. The most famous one is AOL. You can use any Web Browser to surf-the-web. Just like having two cars in the garage, it's good to have more than two browsers on your computer: If you have a problem with one, you can use the other.

FOR PC USERS: If you use the outdated Windows XP and older versions of Internet Explorer (IE): because of all the security problems known for IE, it's best to avoid using Microsoft's Internet Explorer as a web browser. Firefox or Chrome is your best alternative.

Download-What is it?: Download is the term used when you transfer a digital file or application from a website or an email attachment onto your computer. **FROM EMAILS:** When this digital file is attached to an email you have received, it's referred to as an *attachment* (see *Attachment* definition above). Depending on which email program you are using, there are a several ways to *download* the

attachment to your computer: (1) When you click (or double-click) to open up the attachment, you can click on the *download* button or icon, (2) or, you can go to the "File" menu and select, "Save Attachment(s)." Some email programs require more steps to determine where to save the document.

FROM A WEB BROWSER: A warning, just because it's free, doesn't mean it's good for you or your computer. Use precautions before downloading any file or application from a website as it may contain malware (virus, spyware, etc.). Most known companies/institutions are generally safe. Files that you may download from the internet could be PDF documents (.pdf) that include manuals, forms, invoices, flyers, order confirmations, you can also download free or paid computer utility applications/apps such as anti-virus programs. Do your homework: google the application and company and include the keyword "review" to help you determine if it is a legitimate program. When in doubt, don't download!

Downloads-finding them: Do you suffer from the "Where did it go syndrome?" Check your *Downloads* folder first. Both Macs and PCs have a *Downloads* folders as the factory "default" folder—the setting for a new computer. If you can't find the document, on your *Desktop*, look there. **NOTE:** You can change your email program and web browser settings (preferences) to a specific the location where files will be downloaded to. Common locations: the *Downloads* folder (the default setting), the *Desktop*, or your *Documents* folder.

Email Address: "Veronica 2000 at ggcs dot com" translates to: "veronica2000@ggcs.com". This is an email address. The "at" (@) is a key word that tells you it's an email address rather than a web address (see *Web Address* definition). The "at" is like saying, "my phone number is..." In this case you're saying, "my email address is..." Typing this email address in the "To:" text box of your email application will send the composed email message to the recipient when you press the "Send" button. The email address has to be exact, to prevent it from going to the wrong recipient. **RULES:** no spaces in the email address. It can be UPPERCASE or lowercase—it will still go to the same person.

Email Program/Application/Software: Common Programs include Microsoft's *Outlook*, Microsoft *Mail*, Apple's *Mail*, Google's *Gmail*, Mozilla's *Thunderbird*. Emails applications have three components: **(1)** An address book that allows you to enter email addresses as well as contact phone numbers, addresses, etc. **(2)** An email "stationary" pad where you compose your text and type in the email address(es) of the recipients. **(3)** A file cabinet system, where you can save copies of the email messages you've sent as well as the emails you have received.

Hyperlinks/Links: Hyperlinks act like doors that take you to another location. The location can be another webpage within the current website, or it can take you to a different website altogether. Some *hyperlinks* are easy to identify: it can be a word that is underlined and/or typed in color. Or it can be an image (icon, button) that when the mouse arrow moves over it, it becomes a hand with a pointed finger. When you click on the image or word once, it will take you to the new webpage or website. Be patient, sometimes it doesn't do it instantly.

ISP: Stands for "Internet Service Provider". This is the company you pay to give you access to the Internet for email correspondence and web surfing. Well known ISPs include Comcast, Verizon and AT&T. But, there are also many national and local ISPs (companies) that can provide the same services. Often times you pay more from small, independent & local ISPs, but you many also get more personalized attentions and technical support—and you are supporting the local economy. ISP options include dial-up, DSL or Cable service. The **dial-up service** is done through your phone line, is slow but costs only \$10-\$25/mo. A computer and a phone can use the same phone line but they cannot be used at the same time. **DSL and Cable** come from a separate line; this allows you to talk on the phone

while also going online to retrieve your email or "surf the web." *DSL* is very fast and cost \$25-\$40+/mo. *Cable* is the fastest of these three options and costs \$40-\$90+/mo. Not everyone has access to all Internet service options. *DSL* and *Cable* are now common options. Internet all started via *dial-up*. Now dial-up is generally used in rural and hard to reach areas when it's the only option. When you choose your ISP, you will be sent a modem. Some ISPs also give you a router to enable you to wireless access for your laptop and other devices. Other ISPs require you to purchase the router for wireless access.

Keywords: When you are looking for something specific on the internet use a search engine (*Google* www.google.com, *Yahoo* www.yahoo.com, *DuckDuckGo* www.duckduckgo.com, *Bing*, www.bing.com) and type *key words* in the *search bar* at the top to find the most relevant website. **EXAMPLE:** If you type: "computer, tutor, marin, microsoft word training" hopefully it will lead you to my website, www.ComputerTutorOfMarin.com" **EXAMPLE:** If you type: "IRS 1040 2014 tax form instructions" should lead you to www.irs.gov and to a webpage with all the forms related to 1040. You will also see millions of other webpages enticing you to click on them. Be careful.* You can also type questions, "What is a computer virus?" to find websites with definitions. Type anything, and you will find it. ***BE CAREFUL** on which website link you click on from your list of your results. Look at the Web Address (the URL). If it looks suspicious, has an odd name, you're not sure, then don't go there—you may get a "drive-by" virus or other malicious software on your computer. Known companies, nonprofits, government agencies, schools and internet organizations such as www.Wikipedia.com are generally safe.

Online: This is when your computer connects to the Internet using a dial-up, DSL, Cable or other connection. (See *ISP* definition). You will go *offline* and loose internet access if you have a power failure and your modem/router turns off. Or your ISP is having service problems in your area, or your router/modem is failing.

Password: To have access to your email account, on-banking, or other service or merchandise websites (Amazon, eBay, etc.), you are required to create a *password* associated to your email and/or *user name*. Passwords are your first line of defense to secure access to your personal/private information. Make sure you follow the guidelines at the website for making a strong *password*. It's easy to forget your password. Make sure you write it down and put it in a safe, accessible and memorable location. DO NOT use the same password over and over. If one account is hacked, the others are extremely vulnerable too.

Screen/User Name: a *screen name* generally is the first part of an email address. The *screen name* of veronica@ggcs.org is "veronica". *Screen name* sometimes is also referred to as "user name." But, beware, some online services ask you to create a *user name* that is different from your email.

Spyware/Adware: Adware and Spyware can hijack your web browser (Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox, & Chrome) and install pop-up ads, take you to undesirable websites, and monitor your behavior on the web and on your computer. Adware and Spyware can end up on your computer when you are downloading applications like shareware or freeware. You can also be "infected" by not paying attention to what you click on. Don't forget to read the conditions and privacy policies: you may be agreeing to allow for Adware or Spyware to be installed on your computer. **Free Adware/Spyware removal software can be found at:** Lavasoft for Ad-aware: www.lavasoftusa.com. SpyBot: www.safer-networking.org. **Free Online-only Spyware scans:** Spy Audit: www.webroot.com

Virus: A virus contains malicious computer programming code that can damage a document, your computer, and/or infect other computers. Often viruses are sent through email attachments (such as a Microsoft Word document, PDFs, JPG image files, & music files). Anti-virus software protects you from

computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses, etc. To reduce and eliminate the possibilities of getting infected you must have an anti-virus program. Also, do not download file attachments from unknown sources. Even the known sources (family, friends) can infect your computer if they do not adequately use anti-virus software and you fail to keep yours updated. To get the most out of your anti-virus software, make sure you update the virus definitions regularly (at least weekly). Better yet, set up your computer to automatically update the virus definitions when you go on-line. **Free Anti-virus Applications you can download and install:** AVG www.avg.com, Avast: www.avast.com. Make sure you click on the "free" version, not the "trial" version. Other free programs: MalwareBytes: www.malwarebytes.com Pest Scan: www.pestpatrol.com.

Web Address (URL): When you hear someone say "**www dot...**" This is the beginning of a website address. It's like saying, "my street is..." (The reference to "dot" is actually a period ".". It's linguistically easier to say "dot" than "period" – and it flows better.) When you type "**www.google.com**" in the address bar of your Internet browser application, the "**www.**" tells the computer to go to the address that follows: "**google.com**". The name between the two dots (periods) often is the company web name (www.ibm.com, www.dell.com, www.apple.com). **THE ENDING:** The ".com" indicates that it is a commercial website. There are several other web address endings that you will encounter:

- .org usually takes you to a non-profit organization.
- .net can take you to a business, non-profit or other institution.
- .gov will take you to a government agency (www.irs.gov).
- .edu will take you to an educational institution.

The web address also is referred to as URL (Uniform Resource Locator). At the "commercial" birth of the Internet, you would often ask, "What is your URL?" Back then it would start with: "http:\\www.amazon.com". Now-a-days, most browsers will let you type "amazon.com" without the "www." in front of it.

Website: Like books, websites can be about any topic. Websites can be learning institutions like schools, non-profit organizations, or medical institutions; virtual retail stores that may have a "brick & mortar" site (a store you can visit), a catalog business, or website business where you can order products and services online. Most businesses and organizations now create websites. It's like having an interactive brochure/slideshow presentation that tells visitors all about the organization. Individuals can also create websites to share information and pictures with family and friends. A Website is made up of "Web Pages", just like a book is made up of pages. The "Home Page" generally contains the Table of Contents and an introduction to the website. Commercial Internet websites also have ads throughout their websites—be careful what you click, they don't *scrutinize* their advertisers.

Web Search: To find websites that have information on a specific topic, you can use a "search engine" like **www.google.com**. Type in key words and press "go" or "search" for a list of websites that cover the topic. Results can be a few, a few hundred, to tens of thousands to millions. Learn how to refine your search using strategic *key words* to get the most accurate and helpful results.

Mouse and its Many Faces

Arrow ↗ : The mouse pointer's common face.

Hand/Finger ✎ : When the arrow turns to this, it indicates that this is a hyperlink. Click to go there.

I-Beam/Insertion Point: The I turns into blinking insertion point | that enables you to type text.

The Hour Glass/Spinning Ball/Circling Arrow, etc: Tells you the computer is processing: Please wait.