

- a
- b
- c
- d
- e
- f
- g
- h
- i
- i
- k
- l
- m
- n
- o
- p
- q
- r
- s
- t
- u
- v
- w
- x
- y
- z

To see the definition for a common Internet term, click its entry below.

A

[anonymous FTP](#)

[Archie](#)

B

[bits per second \(bps\)](#)

[browser](#)

[Bulletin Board System \(BBS\)](#)

C

[chat](#)

[client](#)

client/server

cyberspace

D

database

dedicated line

dialup line

directory

DNS (Domain Name System)

DNS server

download

E

e-mail

e-mail address

emoticon

F

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

finger

flame

FTP (File Transfer Protocol)

FTP site

freeware

G

GIF

Gopher

Gopherspace

H

home page

hotlist

HTML (HyperText Markup Language)

HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol)

hypermedia

hypertext

I

information superhighway

Internet

ISP (Internet Service Provider)

InterNIC

IP (Internet Protocol)

IP address

IRC (Internet Relay Chat)

J

JPEG

L

LISTSERV

local system

login

lurking

M

mailing list

modem

Mosaic

MPEG

multimedia

N

navigate

Net

netiquette

News

newsgroup

news server

NIC (Network Information Center)

O

online

P

packet

password

ping

POP3 (Post Office Protocol 3)

PPP (Point to Point Protocol)

public domain

R

remote system

RFC (Request For Comments)

Rlogin

S

server

shareware

S-HTTP (Secure HyperText Transfer Protocol)

signature

SLIP (Serial Line Internet Protocol)

SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol)

T

talk

TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol)

Telnet

thread

TN3270

U

UNIX

upload

URL (Uniform Resource Locator)

USENET

username

UUCP (UNIX to UNIX Copy Program)

V

Veronica

W

WAIS (Wide Area Information Service)

Web page

Whois

WWW (World Wide Web)

Y

Yellow Pages

anonymous FTP

Using the File Transfer Protocol (FTP) to access files that are available to the public. Anonymous FTP sites do not require you to have an account or use a login ID and password to access files.

Archie

A program that helps you find publicly accessible Internet files that you can transfer to your PC. An Archie program searches other systems on the Internet for files matching the criteria you specify (for example, file name or file type), and provides you a list of the locations of those files, so that you can transfer those files using FTP.

Archie programs are usually found on publicly accessible archie sites that you access using Telnet.

bits per second (bps)

Also known as baud; the data transmission rate, usually on a modem or network connection. Modems usually support transmission rates such as 2400, 9600, 14,400 or 28,800 bps. The higher the bits per second, the faster you will be able to access and transfer information.

browser

A program that allows you to access information on the Internet through the World Wide Web. Mosaic and Lynx are examples of World Wide Web browser programs.

Bulletin Board System (BBS)

A forum for discussion in which users read messages left by other members of the bulletin board and provide, or post, their own messages. Bulletin boards cover many different subjects, from cats to politics to relationships. The Internet has a large-scale bulletin board-type system called USENET News, which consists of newsgroups containing messages from users all over the Internet and covering a wide range of subject areas.

chat

Conversing with groups over the Internet. Chat is similar to a telephone conference call, only you type your comments, and read others remarks from your computer screen. You can interactively chat with other users via a relay or chat server. Numerous Internet Relay Chat (IRC) applications can be found on the Internet and downloaded to your PC using FTP.

client

A program that requests information from a server. For example, a Mosaic browser is a client that displays Web pages that are located on a World Wide Web server. Likewise, an FTP client can be used to

download files from an FTP.

The interactions between clients and servers are referred to as client/server computing.

client/server

A style of computing that involves interactions between client and server programs. Clients request services, and servers provide them. For example, you can use FTP, which works on a client/server basis, to download a file from another system to your computer.

cyberspace

A term used to refer to the electronic universe of information available through the Internet.

database

A collection of information organized in a manner that makes it easy to access. There are many different ways to organize or structure the data stored in databases. There are thousands of databases on the Internet containing a wide variety of information.

dedicated line

A telephone or data line that is always available for use. For example, a leased telephone line can be dedicated for computer data communications. This line is not used by other computers or individuals, is available 24 hours a day, and is never disconnected (except for maintenance purposes). A switched, or dialup line, on the other hand, is used only for the duration of the connection and can be shared by many users.

dialup line

A method of network connection (often a connection to the Internet) that is accessed by dialing into a remote computer using a modem. As opposed to a dedicated line, which is a connection that is always available, you must dial the remote computer in order to establish a connection.

directory

A directory is like a folder that contains one or more documents or files. Typically, related files are kept in the same directory. For example, all the files for an application are usually kept in one directory. When accessing a file, you might have to specify the directory in which it is kept.

DNS (Domain Name System)

Domain Name System, a network service used to convert system names to numeric IP addresses. This allows you to use human-readable names rather than dotted decimal notation to refer to

systems and users. For example, DNS converts **www.spry.com** to **165.121.1.70**.

DNS Server

A server used to translate system names (like **www.spry.com**) to IP addresses (like **165.121.1.70**). You will need access to a DNS server in order to use applications like Mosaic and Gopher.

download

To transfer a file from a remote computer to your computer. You can download files to your computer using File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

e-mail (electronic mail)

A method used to send and receive messages over a network. You use an e-mail program to compose and send a message, and it is sent to a remote mailbox, where it can be retrieved and read by the addressee.

e-mail address

The location where e-mail messages can be sent to a user. An e-mail address consists of a username and an Internet address separated by an @ sign. For example, an e-mail address might be **lucy@narnia.com** where **lucy** is the username and **narnia.com** is the Internet address.

emoticon

A group of characters that when viewed in a particular way, such as sideways, looks like a face or an object. Emoticons are used to add expression to text. For example, the following group of characters when viewed sideways looks like a smiling face or smiley. :-)

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions, a document that covers a topic of general concern to many users. FAQs are a good way for new users to get information on various aspects of the Internet. For instance, you might find a FAQ on using IRC, a popular chat program on the Internet. Many USENET newsgroups request that you download, read, and understand the FAQ for that newsgroup before you begin posting.

finger

A program that displays information about users on a given system on the Internet. Finger can often be used to find someone's e-mail address.

flame

A tasteless statement, criticism, or angry opinion made about

another user's comments, most often taking the form of a direct personal attack. A user who is flaming is considered rude and immature. Flames can be found within newsgroups, e-mail, or chat sessions.

Two or more people exchanging rude, angry, furious, and sometimes violent dialogue during a chat session or newsgroup discussion is known as a flame war.

freeware

Free software distributed by the author. The author retains all copyright privileges.

FTP

File Transfer Protocol, a service used to transfer text and binary files between computers. Using FTP, you can copy files from a remote computer to your computer; you can also copy files from your computer to a remote computer, if that computer permits it.

ftp

The verb ftp means to transfer files from a remote computer to your computer using FTP (File Transfer Protocol). You will often come across this usage when traveling the Internet. For example, someone may direct you to ftp our new style guide from **ftp.narnia.com**.

FTP site

A computer which stores files that can be retrieved using FTP. FTP sites which allow anyone to retrieve files (without requiring you to have an account on that computer) are known as anonymous FTP sites.

GIF

Graphics Interchange Format; a graphics file format popularized by CompuServe and used heavily throughout the Internet. Most World Wide Web servers use GIF graphics to display graphical information. JPEG is another common graphics format.

Gopher

A program that displays information found on Internet Gopher servers. Gopher servers contain a wide variety of information and resources (such as programs and images) organized in menus, to make it easier to find information.

Gopherspace

The collection of all the information available through Gopher servers on the Internet.

home page

A commonly used World Wide Web (WWW) document. A home page often resembles a snazzy table of contents with hyperlinks to other WWW servers around the world. Mosaic is pre-configured with its own Home page. In addition, many companies, universities, and individuals have their own Home pages.

Host

A term that refers to any computer that you connect to over a network in order to access information.

hotlist

A file containing lists of Internet Web pages, allowing you to easily access your favorite Web pages. Mosaic has several pre-configured hotlists which you can edit, and you can create and save your own hotlists, too.

HTML

HyperText Markup Language, the document formatting language used to design most World Wide Web pages.

HTTP

HyperText Transmission Protocol, the protocol used to transfer World Wide Web (WWW) pages through the Internet.

hypermedia

Information that contains links to other related information. This is similar to hypertext but is not restricted to text only. Hypermedia includes text, graphics, images, and other types of information. The World Wide Web (WWW) is a hypermedia-based system that allows you to point and click on hyperlinks to go directly to related information.

hypertext

Text that is linked to other related text. For example, most Help information is hypertext based. Hypertext words are typically highlighted in some manner, either by being displayed in a different color or underlined (or both). Clicking on a hypertext word takes you directly to the related information.

information superhighway

A metaphor for the future worldwide network that will provide connectivity, access to information, and online services for people around the world. The Internet is a prototype for the information superhighway, and is often referred to as the information superhighway in the media.

Internet

The largest collection of interconnected networks in the world. These include university, corporate, government, and research networks around the world. Millions of systems and people are connected to the Internet through these networks. You can connect to the Internet through an Internet Service Provider.

InterNIC

Internet Network Information Center (InterNIC), an organization funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) that provides network information services to Internet users. InterNIC provides registration, directory, database, and information services.

IP (Internet Protocol)

Internet Protocol, the networking protocol used to route information through the Internet via numeric IP addresses.

IP address

The address of a machine on the Internet. IP address refers to a numeric IP address, such as **165.121.6.126**, but is also used to refer to a Fully Qualified Domain Name, such as **marshwiggles.narnia.com**.

IRC (Internet Relay Chat)

Internet Relay Chat, a program that allows users throughout the Internet to communicate live by typing messages to each other. IRC sites on the Internet have channels set up for different topics, similar to USENET newsgroups.

ISP (Internet Service Provider)

Internet Service Provider, a company that provides access to the Internet. An access provider acts similarly to your local cable TV operator, providing you access to Internet services. However, an Internet Service Provider does not dictate what information you see or what tools you use. There are several different types of access a service provider can provide; you can have simple dialup access, SLIP/PPP access, or use a dedicated line.

Typically, you pay the service provider a monthly subscription fee to access the Internet. This base fee usually allows you to use the Internet for a number of hours per month. If you exceed this number, you are typically charged extra for each additional hour of usage.

JPEG

A standardized image compression mechanism. JPEG stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group, the original name of the committee that wrote the standard, but is used to refer to a type of image format found on the Internet. Many World Wide Web servers contain JPEG images.

LISTSERV

A program on a mail server that manages an e-mail mailing list about a particular topic. A LISERSERV program allows you to automatically subscribe to or unsubscribe from a mailing list. LISERSERV programs eliminate the need for human administrators to manage mailing lists in some cases.

local system

The system you are using. Interactions between your computer and another computer on the Internet are sometimes described using the terms local and remote systems. The local system is your computer and the remote system is the other computer.

login

The act of signing onto a computer. You typically have to log into a computer before you are allowed to use it or access its programs or files. When you log in, you usually need to provide your name or identification and password. This prevents unauthorized users from accessing computers.

lurking

Listening in on mailing list, newsgroup, or bulletin board discussions without actively participating. When joining a newsgroup, you should lurk for awhile before joining in the discussion (lurk before you leap). This gives you an opportunity to see what's being written by other members of the group before you write your own thoughts, ideas, or comments.

mailing list

A list of e-mail users who are members of a group. A mailing list can be an informal group of people who share e-mail with one another, or it can be a more formal LISERSERV group which discusses a specific topic.

modem

A communications device that converts data between the digital format used by computers and the analog format used for transmission on telephone lines. The name modem is derived from the term modulation/demodulation, which is the process described above.

You can use a modem to connect your computer to another computer, an online service, and more.

Mosaic

A type of World Wide Web (WWW) browser, originally developed at NCSA (National Center for Supercomputing Applications).

MPEG

Moving Picture Experts Group. MPEG is a standard (set by the MPEG group) used for digital video, (movie) type compression. MPEG is used to refer to movie files commonly found on the Internet. You must have an MPEG player to view MPEG files; Shareware and freeware MPEG players are often available on anonymous ftp sites.

multimedia

Combining different types of data, such as text, graphics, sounds, and moving images.

navigate

To maneuver, move, or travel through the various areas on the Internet. You can navigate through the Internet in a variety of ways. You can move through a series of gopher menus by selecting entries on each menu. Also, you can navigate through World Wide Web (WWW) pages by clicking on hyperlinks on each page. Additionally, you can navigate directly by specifying the locations you wish to visit.

net

Another term for the Internet.

netiquette

A term coined to explain network etiquette. More specifically, this is your conduct, decorum, and attitude while working on the Internet. For instance, IT ISN'T PROPER NETIQUETTE TO TYPE IN UPPERCASE LETTERS WHEN SENDING A MESSAGE BECAUSE IT IMPLIES YOU'RE SHOUTING! An entire body of proper usage or etiquette has evolved since the Internet came into being.

News

A term often used to denote USENET news, a popular forum for discussion on the Internet.

newsgroup

A discussion group, usually found on USENET news. There are thousands of newsgroups available on the Internet. Each group devotes its discussions to a specific topic.

News Server

A machine that contains a number of USENET newsgroups, discussion groups on countless subjects. You can connect to a News Server and read and post network news. News Server administrators decide which of the thousands of USENET newsgroups to carry. News Servers may only allow access to certain individuals.

NIC (Network information Center)

Network Information Center, an organization that provides users with information about services available on a network. InterNIC is a NIC that provides information about Internet services.

online

The state of being actively connected to a network. While online, you may exchange data and interactively communicate with other users or computers on the network.

packet

A unit of data with attached headers containing addressing information. Packets are used to route information between computers through the Internet. For example, a packet might contain text from a document, a graphic, or the binary code for a program. All the information that flows through the Internet does so in the form of packets.

password

A word or sequence of characters that uniquely identifies you. A password is typically associated with your user name. The combination of your user name and password is used to verify that you are who you say you are, and that you are authorized to use certain systems or resources on the Internet. Typically, when you login to a computer, you must specify your user name and password.

ping

A program used to check if a particular system is up and running. Ping sends a sequence to the target system and looks for a response back. A response indicates that the system is available. Several shareware and freeware Ping applications are available on the Internet.

POP3 (Post Office Protocol 3)

Post Office Protocol 3, a popular method used for storing Internet mail. Many Internet mail applications require a POP3 mailbox in order to receive mail.

PPP (Point to Point Protocol)

Point-to-Point Protocol, a communications protocol that lets you access the Internet over a phone line. You can use a wide variety of applications over a PPP connection. In contrast, other types of dialup accounts such as shell or terminal access accounts allow you to get to the Internet, but often require you to use applications provided by the Internet Service Provider.

public domain

The term used to refer to software or information that is available for use by the general public without any copyright or title restrictions. The authors or creators of the software or information have relinquished their title and copyright rights.

remote system

Another computer on the Internet to which you connect. Interactions between computers are often described using the terms local and remote system. The local system is your computer and the remote system is the other computer to which you connect. Another common term for system is host (remote host, or local host).

RFC (Request for Comments)

A type of document that defines standards or provides information on various topics. Many Internet and networking standards are defined as RFCs. RFCs are available through the Internet.

Rlogin

A method used to access a remote host which does not require a login procedure. You can only use Rlogin if the remote host is set up to allow you access.

S-HTTP

Secure HyperText Transfer Protocol. A version of HTTP which includes the ability to perform secure transactions using public key encryption methods. S-HTTP servers on the World Wide Web are used for secure transactions such as credit card processing.

S-HTTP was developed by EIT (Enterprise Integration Technologies) using cryptographic algorithms from RSA Data Security, Inc.

server

A program that provides services to client programs. Different types of servers provide different types of services. For example, an FTP server allows an FTP client program to access files on that server. A Web server allows a Web client to view pages on that server, and get information from that server.

shareware

Freely distributed software that you may try before paying. If you keep the software and use the program, then you should send payment to the shareware author.

signature

Lines of text that are automatically added to the end of your e-mail messages. You might want your signature to include your real name

and address, or something you want to be noted for, such as a witty saying.

SLIP

Serial Line Internet Protocol, a communications protocol that lets you access the Internet over a phone line. You can use a wide variety of applications over a SLIP connection. In contrast, other types of dialup accounts such as shell or terminal access accounts allow you to get to the Internet, but often require you to use applications provided by the Internet Service Provider.

SLIP/PPP

SLIP (Serial Line Interface Protocol) and PPP (Point-to-Point Protocol) are communications protocols that let you access the Internet over a phone line. You can use a wide variety of applications over a SLIP/PPP connection.

In contrast, other types of dialup accounts such as shell or terminal access accounts allow you to get to the Internet, but often require you to use applications provided by the Internet Service Provider.

SMTP

Simple Mail Transfer Protocol, a method used for sending Internet e-mail.

talk

Real time chatting on the Internet. A talk application allows you to type a message to another user who is also active on his/her computer.

TCP/IP

Transmission Control Protocol and Internet Protocol, two communications protocols that are used to route information through the Internet. TCP and IP are also used for local area network (LAN) communications and tying networks together (internetworking).

Telnet

A terminal emulation protocol that allows you to connect to a remote computer as if you were standing in front of that computer. Telnet passes the keystrokes you type on your computer to the computer to which you set up the telnet connection. Using Telnet, you can access files or run programs on remote computers.

thread

A specific conversation topic in a newsgroup. News reader programs often allow you to sort news articles by thread, allowing you to more easily follow a discussion.

TN3270

A version of Telnet that is used to access IBM mainframes.

UNIX

A multi-user operating system developed by Bell Laboratories. UNIX runs on a wide variety of hardware platforms, and supports multitasking operations. Many of the systems on the Internet are UNIX-based.

upload

Transferring a file from your computer to another computer on the Internet. You can use File Transfer Protocol (FTP) to upload files from your computer to other computers on the Internet.

URL

Uniform Resource Locator, a string of characters that represents the location or address of a resource on the Internet and how that resource should be accessed. World Wide Web pages are assigned a unique URL. Each hyperlink on a web page contains the URL of the page to be linked to. A sample URL is <http://www.spry.com>.

USENET

A network of newsgroups. There are thousands of newsgroups available through USENET. Each newsgroup covers a specific topic or subject area.

username

The string of characters that identifies you. When connecting to a computer, you typically need to provide your user name and password. This information is used to verify that you are authorized to use the system.

UUCP

UNIX-to-UNIX Copy Program, a program that lets you copy files between UNIX systems. UUCP protocols are used to transfer news and e-mail messages through USENET.

Veronica

A tool you can use to search Gopher menu items for keywords that you specify. Using Veronica simplifies the search for information available throughout Gopherspace.

Web page

An HTML document found on the World Wide Web, also referred to as a home page. You can view a Web page using a browser such as Mosaic.

Whois

A database that you can use to locate people on the Internet. If found, the user's name, address, phone number, company, and e-mail address is typically displayed. Whois can be used to find someone's e-mail address. The Whois database can be accessed using a Telnet program.

Wide Area Information Servers (WAIS)

A distributed information system that allows you to search databases for information based on keywords that you specify. WAIS returns a weighted list of files that match your keywords. There are numerous shareware and freeware WAIS applications available on the Internet for anonymous FTP download.

World Wide Web (WWW)

A hypermedia-based system that makes it easier to browse for information on the Internet. Information available on the World Wide Web is presented on Web pages. A Web page can contain text and graphics which can be linked to other pages. These hyperlinks allow you to navigate in a nonsequential way through information.

Yellow Pages

A database of machine names and addresses on the Internet provided by the InterNIC Registration Services.

