

# Best Web Sites and Search Engines 2005

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Discovering good Web sites is addictive. Usually, the best are hidden treasures uncovered by using a tool we all know as a search engine. However, just as there is what seems like an infinite number of Web sites, there are many search engines beyond “Google.”

A search engine is actually a Web site. It is a Web site that lists other Web sites it has found for you by going through the Web itself. It is able to locate, within its database, the sites related to the information in which you are interested. The same keyword(s) typed into the search box of one search engine might bring up different sites than another search engine. Most search engines place what their site considers most relevant first. Most likely, though, you will have to sift through endless pages of results.

[www.clusty.com](http://www.clusty.com) is a newer search engine. It “clusters” or organizes site results into “subject folders” to permit you to get an overview of the types of information available on a topic. Then, you select your focus of interest, the specific kind of material you need on the topic.

[www.alltheweb.com](http://www.alltheweb.com) is gaining grounds on Google. After you key in your word or topic, you can select to locate Web sites, current News on the subject, refreshingly great and definitely related Pictures or photos, Videos, or Audios.

[www.starware.com](http://www.starware.com) is a free download search engine with unique features. When you type in your keyword(s), you can select: 1) FIND IT for Web sites, or 2) REFERENCE and then choose dictionary, encyclopedia, history. There’s also a HIGHLIGHT feature that allows you to highlight a term in a Web site and have it referenced with a click on FIND IT.

The most incredible search engine for kids' sites is

[www.ivyjoy.com/rayne/kidssearch.html](http://www.ivyjoy.com/rayne/kidssearch.html), a site that allows instant input to major Internet search engines for kids, provides links to additional top search engines for kids, as well as specialized search engines for kids. This is the ultimate connection for the best for kids on the Net. Under the section "Web Guides for Kids," I clicked on K.E.W.L. (Kids Excellent Web Links) that I cannot rave enough about! Its URL is <http://raven.cybercomm.net/~teach/index.html>. As you scroll down, it will link you with [www.factmonster.com](http://www.factmonster.com) where I love the "Cool Stuff" link – and recently enjoyed its "20<sup>th</sup> Century Toys and Games Timeline." Another of my favorite search engines that it connects you with is [www.tekmom.com/search/](http://www.tekmom.com/search/).

With the assistance of search engines and by referencing Web site guidebooks, I have compiled a new listing for 2005. To have past Web site guides sent to you, E-mail: [evalkaplan@cs.com](mailto:evalkaplan@cs.com).

### **For Youth**

[www.eduweb.com](http://www.eduweb.com) provides "Educational Web Adventures." You can select adventures by subject or by grade. I recommend connecting with the link to Kids Design Network ([www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org/kdn](http://www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org/kdn)) in the grades k to 3 section. In the grades 4 to 8 division, I recommend "Where in the World and What in the World is Money?" (The International Monetary Fund site: [www.imf.org/external/np/exr/center/students/money/index.htm](http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/center/students/money/index.htm).) Similarly, the grades 9 to 12, offers "Trading Around the World." (The International Monetary Fund site: [www.imf.org/external/np/exr/center/students/trade/index.htm](http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/center/students/trade/index.htm).) Eduweb is a must site!

### **Even adults will love**

[www.thunderbirds.com/site/](http://www.thunderbirds.com/site/)

The year is 2065. You'll want to enter the **IR Agents Zone** (International Rescue Team).

In the area of **The Arts**, there is  
For the *younger surfer*:

[www.moma.org/destination](http://www.moma.org/destination) is the Museum of Modern Art's new Web site where in a most entertaining way you learn about works of art, how to look at art, learn about artists and do online activities. With a sweep of the mouse over a canvas' image, a very simple explanation is given about what you are viewing. Under "tools," you can compare a photograph with the artist's representation. Under "about," you get acquainted with key information about the artist. Finally, there is a "light bulb" to click for extended activities as a follow-up. You discover art can be exhibited on the floor as well as a wall. Just click the forward arrow to continue your virtual museum visit.

And [www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/art/activities](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/art/activities)

For the *middle grade set* (and even adult "kids"):

[www.artsconnected.org/toolkit](http://www.artsconnected.org/toolkit) allows its visitor to first "**watch**" how an artist like Leger uses line as outline, then "**find**" edges and outlines in works such as Ellsworth Kelly's sculpture "Double Curve," and finally "**create**" art using lines. Similarly, it addresses geometric and organic **shape, color**, symmetrical and asymmetrical **balance**, visual **rhythm**, and **space** –negative and positive, linear and aerial perspective, and depth.

Another absolutely superb site to check out is [www.nga.gov/kids/kids.htm](http://www.nga.gov/kids/kids.htm). Our National Gallery of Art publishes it. The site's River Run is an interactive flowing canvas that permits you to alter shapes, colors, etc., with a click of the mouse. Or try the "3-D Twirler!" You can also visit the Gallery's Sculpture Garden, and other "spaces" through its text links, or do interactive art on line, etc. There's just too much to list.

And for the *Teen and Adult* browsers, there is the site of The Technical Director of Pixar Animation Studios where you have a phenomenal tutorial for creating computer animation:

[www.3drender.com/models/index.htm](http://www.3drender.com/models/index.htm). There's also a section on lighting and rendering.

And for kaleidoscope fanatics, create your virtual one at

[www.permadi.com/java/spaint/spaint.html](http://www.permadi.com/java/spaint/spaint.html)

[www.members.aol.com/wmjbkr/confections.html](http://www.members.aol.com/wmjbkr/confections.html) brings computer art well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century - beyond “Beyond The Mind’s Eye!” These non-edible confections are dazzling – tantalizing to one’s palette. The magic of what can be pixilated is displayed. “Groovy Doodle” allows hands-on.

Moving into the **Music** arena, there’s

[www.contmplator.com/america](http://www.contmplator.com/america) for Popular Songs In American History.

Here you’ll hear the tunes, have access to the lyrics, and discover the background of the selection.

<http://www.sci.mus.mn.us/sound/> is definitely an innovative concept for music experiences. Just hearing the sounds of “soundcards” that you can send is worth visiting this site. Suggested off line activities highlight found sound experiments. Have a virtual visit to the orchestra pit.

<http://www.classicalarchives.com/> has a free membership permitting 5 selections per day. The midi and live recordings of great composers is exceptional. Also available is an introduction to classical music and bios.

They say that music and math are akin to each other; that if you are musically inclined then you’ll be “appetite” will be wetted by math, too.

Therefore, some **Math** sites include

Harvey Mudd College’s “Mudd Math Fun Facts” at

[www.math.hmc.edu/funfacts](http://www.math.hmc.edu/funfacts) . This site, for advanced placement high school students or the college set, is designed to “generate interest, arouse curiosity, and cause students to look at mathematics differently. Not a math person, and choosing easy level, I tried out the area of geometry. “Bike with Square Wheels” caught my fancy, followed by “Football Field.” Under the area of Number Theory, I checked out a probability problem – “How many people do you need in a group to ensure at least a 50 percent probability that 2 people in the group share a birthday.”

[www.mathsyear2000.org](http://www.mathsyear2000.org) has activities for all ages. For teens and adults, “The X + Y Files” is recommended. Most of the “X + Y Files” inclusions are from “Symmetry +,” a publication of The Mathematical Association. There are online, interactive games for early and middle grades, too. The many truly fun choices in that age category range from “Shape Invaders,” and “Who wants to be a Mathonaire” to higher challenges such as “Othello,” similar to Reversi and GO.

[www.mathcats.com](http://www.mathcats.com) is another entertaining site. In its [www.mathcats.com/explore/mathcatgames.html](http://www.mathcats.com/explore/mathcatgames.html), you’ll find: “Math Mystery Words,” a version of “hangman,” with links to other math glossary sites; “Guess A Number”; “3D Tic Tac Toe”; “Jumping Cats”; etc.

When we say math, we usually add **Science** – math and science.

For science,

<http://members.aol.com/bats4kids> is visually enticing and immensely informative.

[http://www.inchinapinch.com/hab\\_pgs/index.htm](http://www.inchinapinch.com/hab_pgs/index.htm) (**underscore between hab and pgs**) presents information on global habitats – coral reef, still water, flowing water, tidal pool, tidal marsh, wetlands, open ocean, coniferous forest, deciduous forest, evergreens, kelp forest, rain forest, woodland, grassland, savanna, desert, tundra, estuary, Antarctica, and shrub land. Did you think there were that many? It also covers biomes and ecosystems and much more! The home page is [www.inchapinch.com](http://www.inchapinch.com).

And don’t forget to visit [www.tryscience.org](http://www.tryscience.org)!

There are myriads of other science sites, but you might want to start with the above.

For **History** let me recommend

The British Museum’s site: [www.ancientcivilizations.co.uk](http://www.ancientcivilizations.co.uk)  
as well as [www.pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse/history](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse/history)

And for simply good laughs, visit [www.dumblaws.com](http://www.dumblaws.com)!

For innumerable other sites from Robots to ....

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