

Structure of a Web Address

Here's a typical web address:

http://www.nypl.org

There are four parts to a web address:

1. a web address always begins with "http://" which stands for hypertext transfer protocol and refers to the manner (also know as the "scheme") in which web pages are sent over the Internet. In current versions of Internet Explorer, the *http://* is automatically inserted for you, so you don't need to struggle with typing it in.
2. a web address typically includes "www" which is short for World Wide Web. However, some web addresses (including those that allow you to access your e-mail over the web) do not have the www as part of their address. If you're not sure whether the web site you'd like to visit has a www as part of its address, try it both ways. One of the two is bound to work.
3. a web address includes a *site name*. In the example above, the site name is "nypl", which stands for New York Public Library.
4. a web address includes a *domain name*. In the example above the category is ".org". There is occasionally a slash ("/") and some text following the domain name. This typically represents a specific web page within the web site.

Some of the largest, most common domains are .com (commercial site), .edu (educational institution), .gov (government site), .mil (military site), .net (network site), and .org (nonprofit or private organization). So, when you next see a web address that ends in .edu, you'll know that web site belongs to an educational institution.

There are never any empty spaces in a web address but underscored spaces, i.e. "_" are OK. Also, don't worry too much about using capital letters. Very rarely is any distinction made between upper and lower case letters. However, if you want to visit a web site whose web server uses Unix (instead of the Windows operating system) then you will need to be mindful of the distinction between the upper and lowercase letters in the address.



Also, be careful not to confuse a web address with an e-mail address. An e-mail address always has an "@" symbol in it and is very unlikely to ever have a "[www.](#)" sequence.

Now let's get onto the Web.

Double left-click on the blue Internet Explorer icon on your desktop screen. If you can't find the Internet Explorer icon, try left-clicking on START and then left-clicking on PROGRAMS and then left-clicking on INTERNET EXPLORER.