

## Searching the Web

Using a Search Engine is like using the Yellow Pages telephone directory. You need one when you kind of know what you're looking for but don't have the specific web address.

Let's say we're looking for a hotel in Las Vegas. In the "old" days, you'd pull out a copy of the Las Vegas Yellow Pages, flip to the "hotels" section and look for the name and telephone number of a hotel on "the Strip" that appeals to you. If you didn't live in Las Vegas, you'd have to go to a research library and hope that they carried a copy of the Las Vegas Yellow Pages in their stacks. Now, in the Internet age, you can go to a search engine web site like [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and type in the key words that you're looking for, namely, "Las" "Vegas" and "hotel". The computer will quickly provide you with a list of websites that will help locate a Las Vegas hotel to your liking.

There are many search engines out there. They're free to use and some of the best include:

- [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
- [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)
- [www.msn.com](http://www.msn.com)
- [www.askjeeves.com](http://www.askjeeves.com)
- [www.hotbot.com](http://www.hotbot.com)
- [www.lycos.com](http://www.lycos.com)

Just type one of these web addresses into the ADDRESS field of your web browser, left-click on GO and you'll be quickly taken to the search engine of your choice. There's no software to download and install. The web search is run on their computers and the results are presented to you in a list on your screen.

You may recognize some of these names from our e-mail chapter, e.g. [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com) and [www.msn.com](http://www.msn.com) (also known as Hotmail). These two companies provide many services, two of which are, Internet searching and e-mailing.

### ***When to Use Search Engines***



You only need to use a Search Engine if you don't know the name of the specific web address that contains the information you seek. If you have a specific web address, then simply type that web address into the ADDRESS field of the web browser and left-click on GO.

Let's say you're looking for the New York Public Library's web site but you don't know the web address. Here's where you'd need to use a search engine to help

you find the web address. With Google's help, you learn that their web address is [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

Several weeks later, you're on the Internet and you need to visit the New York Public Library's web site again. You remember the web address from last time, so you go directly to the ADDRESS field of the web browser, type in [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org) and left-click on GO. There's no need to use a search engine at all.

Many beginners make the mistake of entering web addresses into a search engine's key words field. Nothing terrible happens, but it usually adds at least one step to the process and can sometimes lead you astray.