

Internet

What is the Internet?

The Internet is the large group of millions of computers around the world that are all connected to one another. The Internet is one of the most important changes that has happened to the way we live and work in the last fifteen years.

It began life in a small American laboratory; its inventors could never have foreseen how it would develop over time. The Internet now spans the world, connecting billions of people in their everyday lives.

How do you connect to it?

These computers are connected by phone lines, fiber optic lines, coaxial cable, satellites, and wireless connections. When you log on to the Internet you are given access to many of the other computers that are connected around the world.

Some common ways of connecting to the Internet include:

- Internet service provider (ISP) by modem
- Internet ready cable
- digital subscriber line (DSL)

Internet service providers are a company that provides internet access. For a monthly fee they will offer you a broadband connection to the internet, without this service most individuals and businesses would not be able to use the internet. Depending on this type of connection, a computer may be permanently connected to their ISP or will dial up over the phone line when the computer needs access to the Internet. Often, they also provide other services as well such as e-mail, web site building and web site hosting. Examples of ISPs are BTinternet, AOL, Tiscali etc.

Cable Internet allows you to connect to the Internet using your cable line. Cable is capable of sending more data in a shorter amount of time than a standard phone line, so cable Internet is much faster than both dial-up and DSL connections. Other forms of high-speed internet like FIOS and T-1 lines, are not as widely available as cable and are prohibitively expensive for most home users. If you need to transfer large amounts of data quickly or have multiple computers that will frequently be connected to the Internet, cable Internet is the best choice.

Digital Subscriber Line gives you broadband access over your existing copper telephone wires. A DSL connection to the Internet is high-speed, always on (you don't need to dial up your ISP each time you want to connect) connection that lets you use your telephone lines for making and receiving calls and for Internet access simultaneously.

Today you can even get a wireless connection to the Internet with a handheld PC or notebook computer. Once you are connected to the Internet you are able to do many things. You can send and receive e-mail. You can chat with text or voice. You can browse the World Wide Web. And you can perform countless other tasks with the appropriate software.

Uses of the Internet:

The Internet can be used for a number of things, one use is for business. This can be used for market analysis, product analysis, recruitment, attracting new clients, access to new information on a timely basis; rapid communications... its uses are - almost - limitless. As time goes on, more and more applications appear allowing new and unthought-of uses of the Internet. CU-See Me allows video conferencing; the Internet Telephone allows toll-free international telephone communications. Businesses use it to sell and buy products online and also to interact with other businesses. New business opportunities have sprouted because of the internet. Auctions take place and sites like e-bay provide the opportunity for everyone to put their things on auction.

The internet has developed to give many benefits to mankind. The access to information being one of the most important. Student can now have access to libraries around the world. Some charge a fee but most provide free services. Before students had to spend hours and hours in the libraries but now at the touch of a button students have a huge database in front of them.

Human beings cannot live without communication with friends, family and colleagues and the internet is the answer to those who need communication as a daily basis. The internet has created a countless ways of communication for example you can email, there are blogs, social networking sites such as Facebook and Myspace etc, forums and internet telephone. With these social networking Web sites people are able to stay in touch and for no expense at all.

Internet misuse/safety:

Even though the internet gives free access to online chatting, it has its own hazards. Because when one is talking to strangers one does not really know who they are. They can just be anybody pretending to be someone else and due to this many cases have been reported of child abuse happening this way. There is no way of verifying who the other really is.

Many industries have also suffered a loss, especially the music and movie industry. Movies and songs are available for free on the internet which has affected the sale levels of artists. People make their own cds and sell them. The phone industry has also suffered because more people are making calls through the internet.

There is also a certain loss of privacy because now most people store all their information on the computer and when you connect online, anybody can hack ones computer and get into it. This had already been done with many e-mail inboxes. Sites also have been hacked leading to major mishaps. Sending a virus on the Web has also been another way that people's computers have been infected.

However even though there are many dangers to using the internet, there are safety precautions one can take so that you can use the internet with no worries. For example you should remain as anonymous as possible, which means keeping all private information private. The information that you should never give out on the Internet are your full name, home address, phone number, social security number, passwords, names of family members and credit card numbers, unless you are completely sure it is a trusted and official websites.

To avoid getting a virus on your machine you need a virus protection software, you can also buy software that helps rid your computer of unwanted spyware available to protect you from these and other online annoyances, such as blockers for those in your-face pop-up ads. Although if you do invest in protection software you need to keep it updated to be sure it continues to do its job as new technologies evolve.

Future of the Internet: