Skills for Working with Internet Beginners

Basics Manual - 2012

Working with Internet Beginners

This reference guide accompanies the workshop, *iConnect: Skills for Working with Internet Beginners*. In this workshop, participants acquire the skills needed to explain basic Internet concepts and tasks to learners with little or no computer experience. For those who work in a town library, a senior center, a community organization, a state agency, or who simply want to help a family member, this session provides a good foundation for helping Internet beginners. Recommended online resources for continued learning are included.

Table of Contents

Many of the graphics used in this training are in the public domain and available at www.openclipart.org

Getting to Know and Use Your Computer

There are two types of computers:

Desktop Computer   *Laptop Computer*

Use the Power Button to turn your computer on. The power button is on the base of the desktop computer and on the keyboard of the laptop:

The Power Button

Use the Mouse to control and coordinate the cursor on your monitor:

The Mouse

Use the Keyboard to enter text or data into your computer:

The Keyboard

Basic Computer Navigation

The computer mouse usually has a left and right button to help you move a cursor around the computer screen. The cursor allows you to move and select items on the screen and open Internet links

As you move your mouse around the screen of your computer, the cursor may change depending on the task.

The Cursor Symbols

Clicking Your Mouse

Single-click with the left mouse button to select items on your screen by pushing the button one time only.

Double-click with the left mouse button to open selected items such as folders or Web links by pushing the button two times only.

Drag and drop to move a selected item on the computer screen from one place to another by holding down the left button on the mouse, then moving the mouse. The selected item will move on the screen with the cursor. Release the button when the item is where you want it to be.

Single-click on the right button to make visible a list of computer commands like save, copy, cut, and paste.

Using Your Keyboard

The following diagram illustrates the keys you will use to enter text and data into your computer.

Press **Letter** keys to type letters; press **Shift** key to capitalize; press **Caps Lock** key to type in all capital letters.

Press **Space Bar** to put one space between letters or words.

Press **Tab** key for larger spaces between words.

Press **Backspace** key to delete text.

Press **Return** or **Enter** key to move cursor to next line.

Use **Arrow** keys (instead of the mouse) to move cursor on the text page.

Understanding Your Desktop and Icons

The desktop on the computer is similar to an actual desk top, one that has important documents and information on it for you to work with.

On your computer desktop you will find:

- a **start button** to open programs on your computer;
- **icons** or small pictures representing computer files or programs;
- a **taskbar** at the bottom or top of your screen showing you which programs you have open.
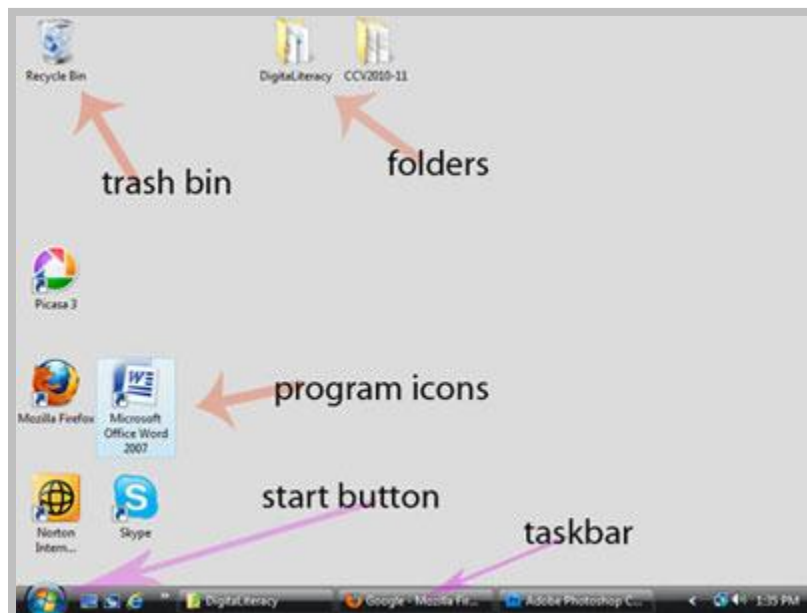

Opening Programs or Files on the Computer

Many of the graphics used in this training are in the public domain and available at www.openclipart.org

To open a file or program, double-click on its icon with the left mouse button. It is possible for you to have more than one document or program opened at a time.

When a program is open you will have **scroll bars** on your desktop, one on the right side of the screen to *move the screen up and down*, and one on the bottom of the screen to *move the screen left and right*. Each program has a **menu bar** that displays commands to use with your programs.

To hide a program or document without closing it, click on the **minimize icon** with your mouse and it will attach itself to the taskbar at the bottom. To make the program or document you are working on fill the entire screen, click on the **maximize** icon with your mouse. To close the program or document, click on the **close icon** with your mouse.
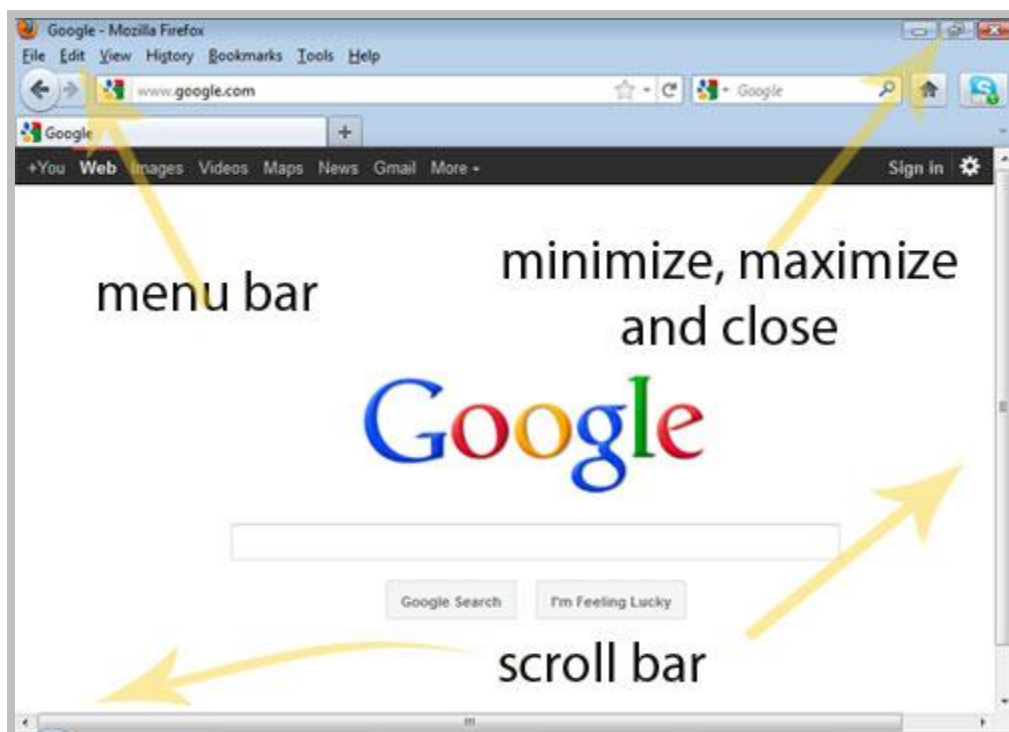
What is the Internet?

The Internet is a worldwide collection of computer networks, working together to exchange data and information. The Internet actually connects millions of computers together, creating a network in which computers can communicate with each other as long as they are connected to the Internet. This communication takes place through telephone wires, cable lines, and satellite links.

It is easy to connect to the Internet with a personal computer, or a computer in a public place like the library or an Internet café.

What is the World Wide Web?

The World Wide Web, or the Web, is an information-sharing system built on top of the Internet that uses the Internet to transmit data and information by utilizing browsers like Internet Explorer and Firefox to access information on Web pages. Web pages contain a wide variety of information including text, audio, videos, and graphics.

By using the World Wide Web you can:

- Send and receive emails among friends, coworkers, and colleagues;
- Post information for others to access and update it frequently through social media and other networks;
- Access multimedia information that includes sound, photographic images, and even video.

Navigating the World Wide Web
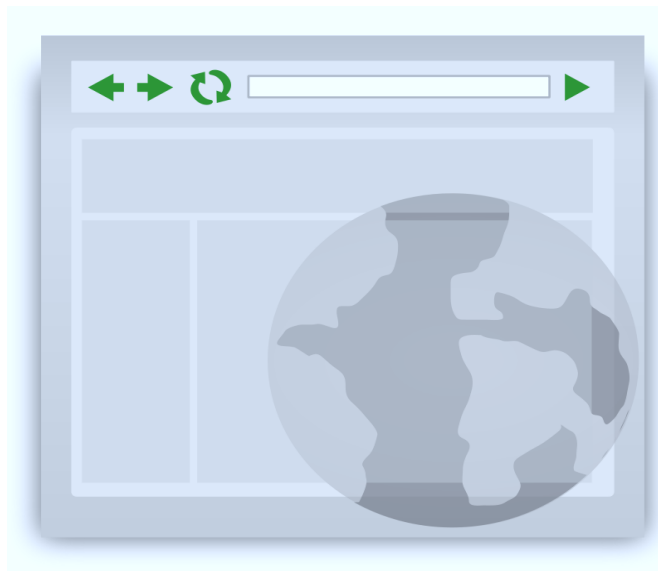

**Mozilla Firefox**   **MS Internet Explorer**   **Google Chrome**

A Web browser is a computer application used to find and display Web pages. Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Chrome are three of the most popular browsers. On the computer click the icon to open the browser.
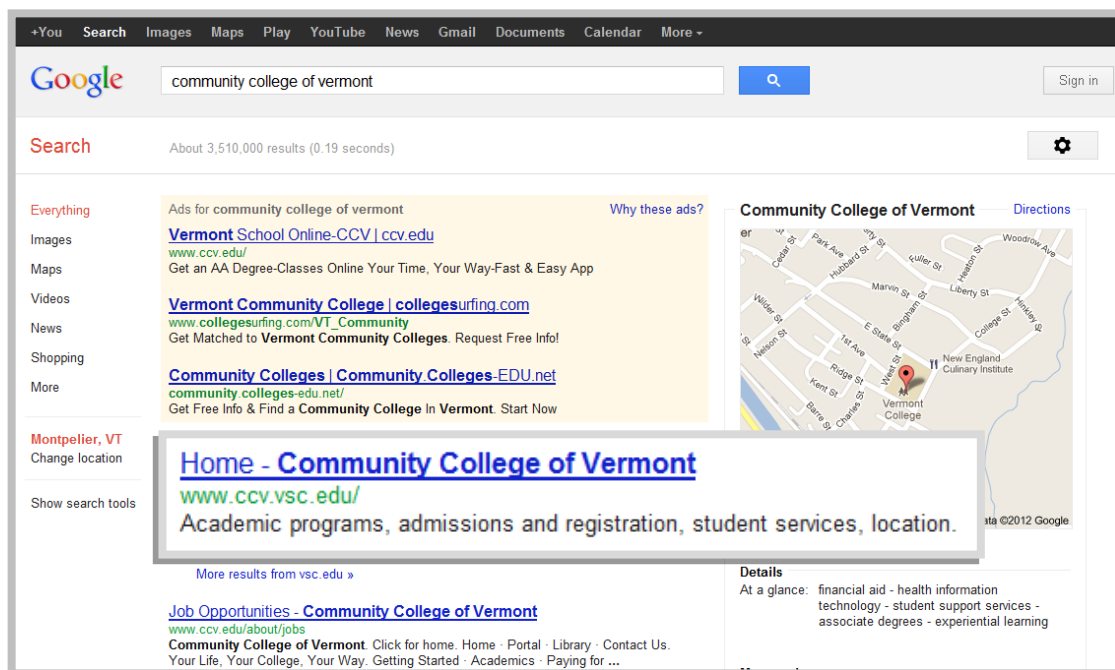
Layout of Web browser

The **address bar** on the top is for either typing in the Web address that you want to go to, or displaying the Web address of whatever site you are on. If you know the address of the website you want, it can be typed directly into the **address bar** (e.g., www.ccv.edu).
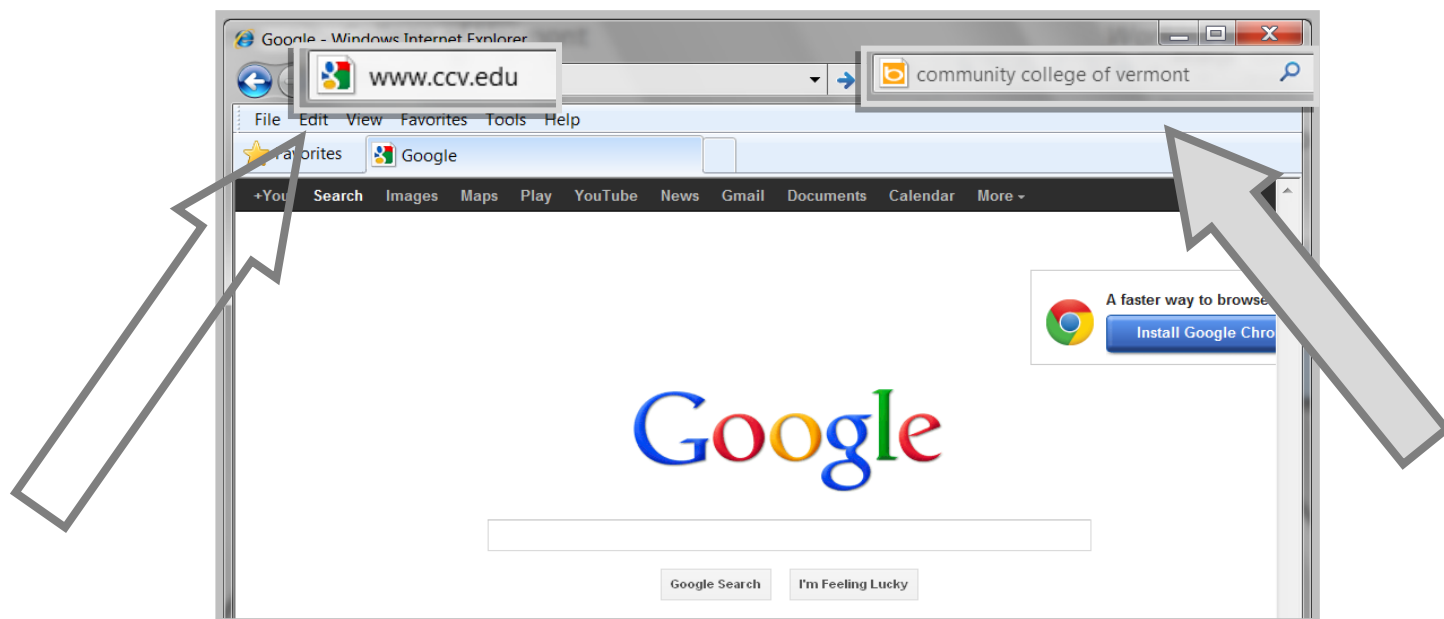

Otherwise, type a word or phrase into the **search bar** on the top right of the browser window and press enter. The most relevant websites will be shown in the main window.

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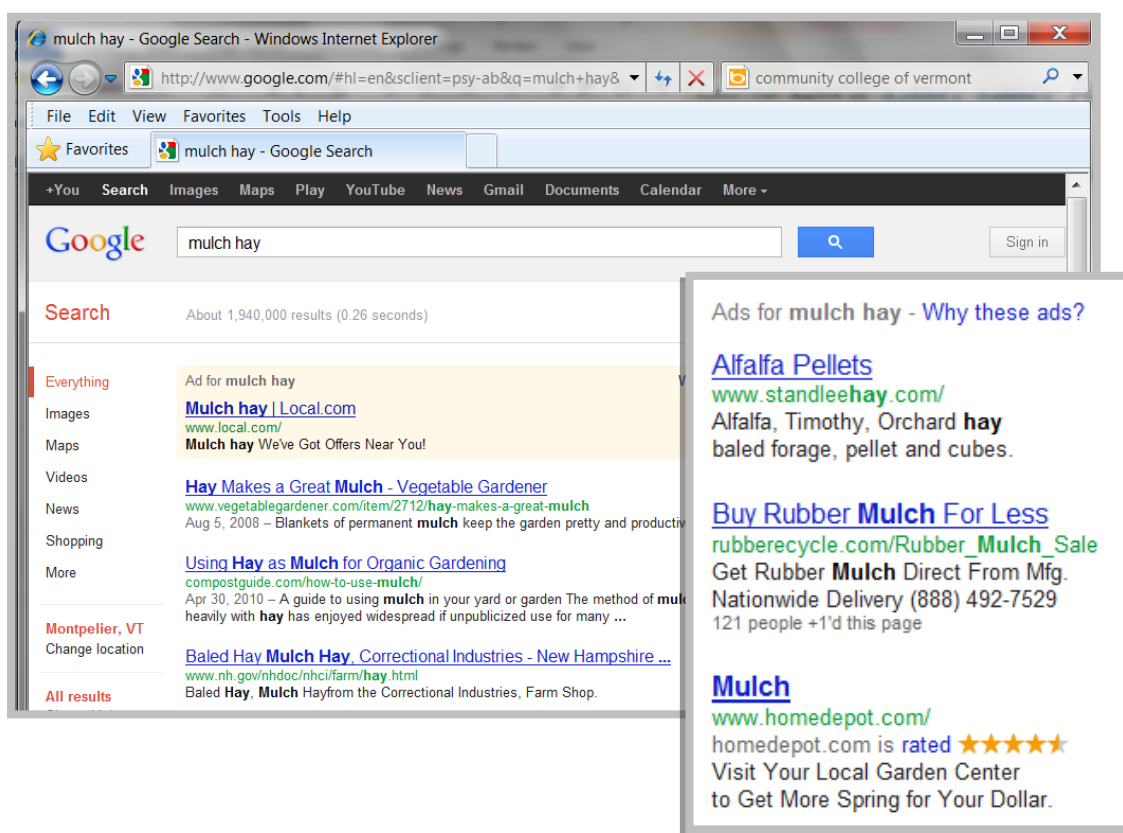
Most browsers will display websites with a link, a web address, and a blurb about the site, or text from the site. The link is the important part and it is usually larger, **colored blue**, and underlined. Click on the link that seems most relevant to what you want and hopefully you'll get where you want to go.
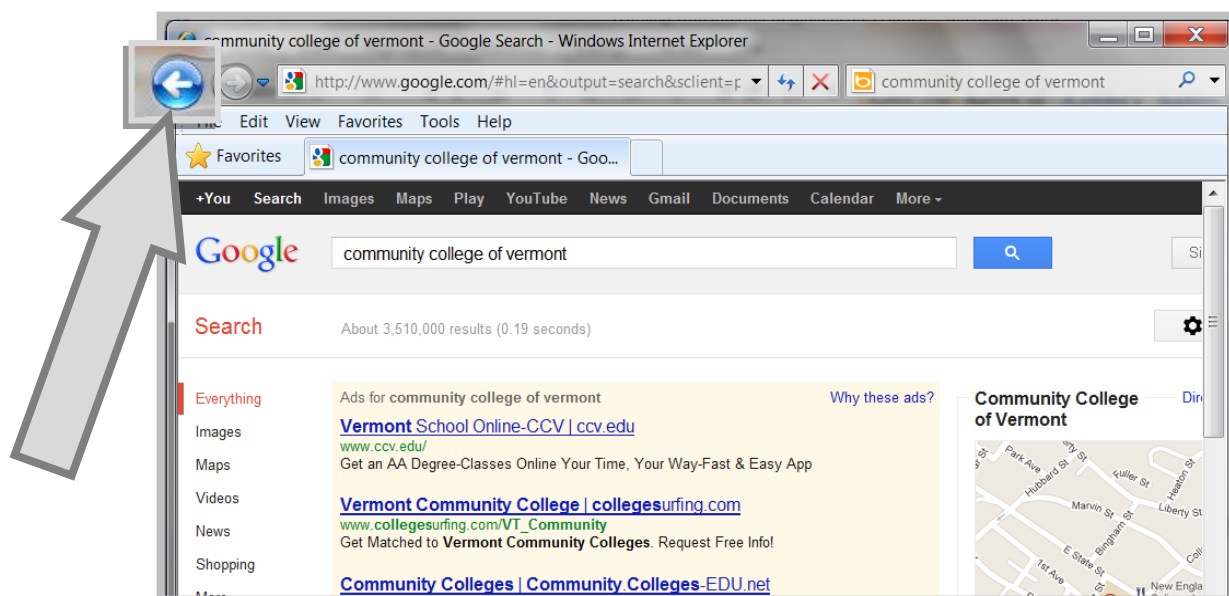
If you do not find what you want, you can always use the **back button** to return to the previous page.
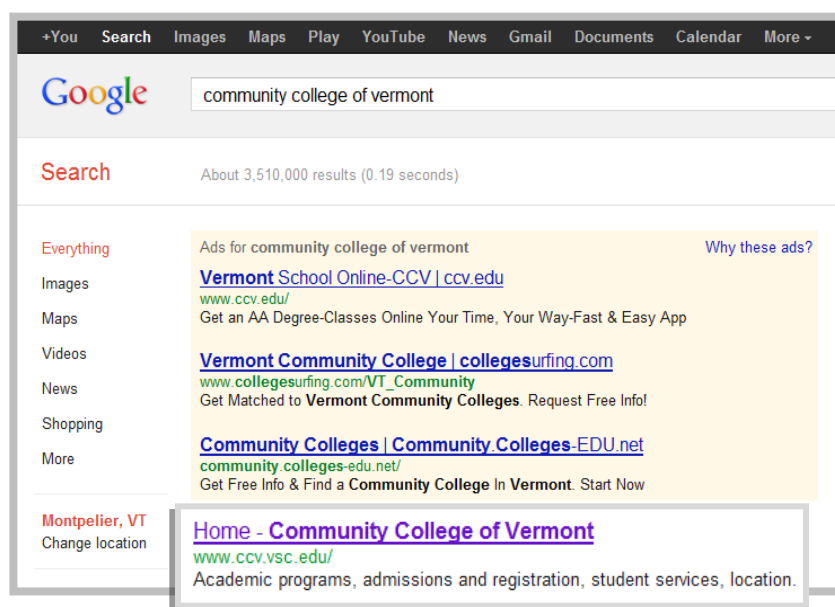
If you go back to the page of search results, you will see that the link that you clicked before is most likely **purple, indicating that you have already clicked it.** This can be very helpful if you visit a lot of different sites and can't remember which ones you have already visited. You can try another link or refine your search words.
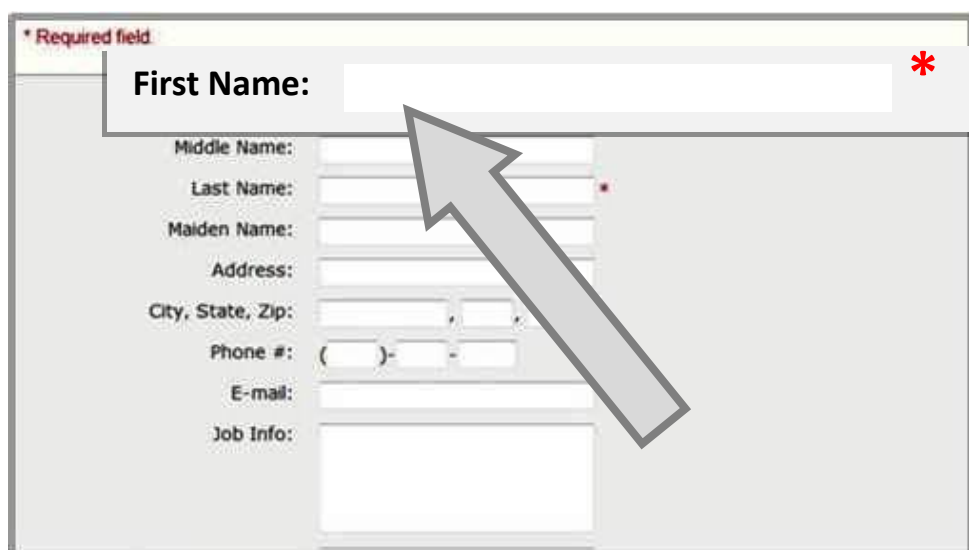
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In the above screen shot, we can see results for the search term: "mulch hay." Note that some results at the right side of the window are paid website links based on your search words. These may not be as relevant as the rest of the search results shown and sometimes can be misleading advertisements.

Filling Out Online Data and Registration Forms

NOTE: Make sure before entering any information into an online form that the URL (web address) begins with **https://** and not **http://**. When a website begins with https://, it means that the website is secure, and it will encrypt the entered data to keep your Internet transactions safe.

If you use the Internet to search for a job, gain access to social or health services, Internet banking, shopping, or to join a social networking site, you will need to know how to fill out registration forms online.
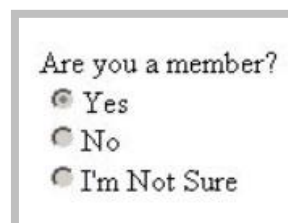
Online registration forms are very similar to paper registration forms, with a few differences worth noting. The online registration form utilizes **fields** or empty boxes to enter pertinent information like your name, address, etc. You will notice fields on the registration form marked with asterisks *. *These marked fields are required to complete the form.* Be sure to fill in this information or you will not be able to submit the form!

To enter information in a **field** on an online registration form, simply left-click your mouse with the cursor in the field, then type in the requested information, such as name, address, email, etc. To move from one field to the next efficiently, use the **Tab key** on your keyboard.

A radio button is a small circle on the registration form. This button is provided to choose only one option in response to a question. To fill in a radio button on a form, simply left-click your mouse on the button to select the option.

Online registration forms also provide **drop-down menus** to choose relevant information from a selection. To use a drop-down menu simply left-click on the arrow pointing down, and then left-click on your choice. When you do this, the selected information will automatically occupy the drop-down menu field.

Sample form page

Name:
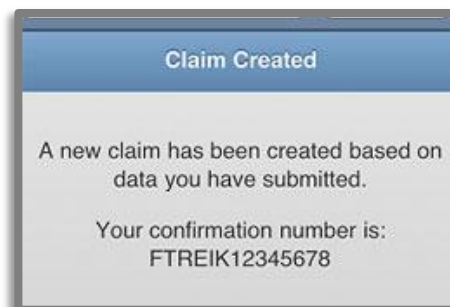
Email:
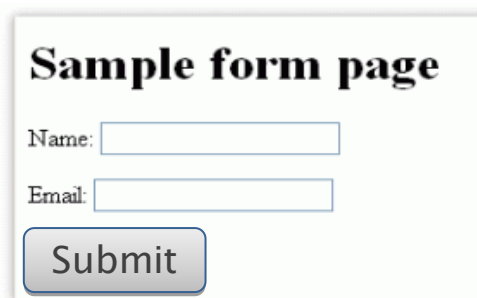
Submit

Do not forget to click the **submit button** at the bottom of the form. If you can't submit the form, look over the entire form to see if there is a message about required information that you did not enter. Enter the information and try submitting again.
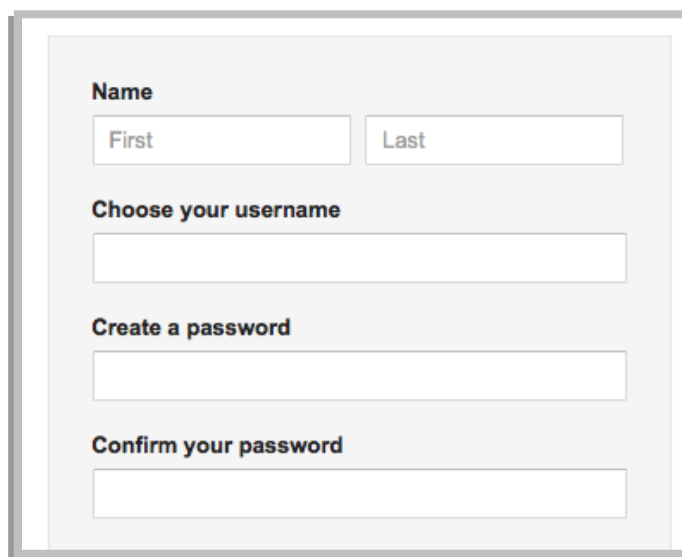
After you **submit** the form, look for your confirmation page to appear and write down any important numbers. Many forms also send confirmation by email.

Claim Created

A new claim has been created based on data you have submitted.

Your confirmation number is:
FTREIK12345678

Creating Usernames and Passwords

Most websites will not let you register until you have a valid email address to enter on the form. You will notice the email field usually has an asterisk* next to it. A working email address allows the recipient of the online registration form to confirm it has been received and filled out properly. When you register online you will often be asked to create a **username** and **password:**

Name

First   Last

Choose your username

Create a password

Confirm your password

Be sure to choose a username you will remember, but to protect your identity; do not

use your own name. You will also be asked to enter a password when registering online. If you need to write down your username and password in order to remember them, be sure to keep them in a safe place where others won't find them. Finally, you will most likely need to check a **tick box** to complete your online form.

Placing **tick** in the box usually means that you have agreed to the terms and conditions of the organization or website you are registering for. Left-click in the tick box to create a checkmark indicating your agreement.


Read all instructions carefully—sometimes tick boxes are used for marketing purposes, and by ticking the box, you may be agreeing to receive a lot junk mail!

How to Choose a Safe and Strong Password

The more you use the Internet, the more you will need to create passwords to access your accounts for email, shopping, banking, social services, social networking, etc.

You want to be sure that you choose a strong, secure password—one that is easy to remember and difficult for someone else to guess.
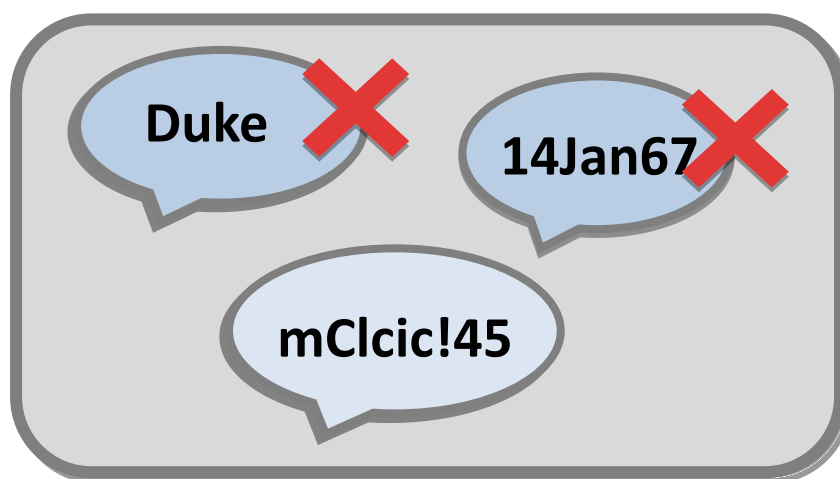
To create a strong password, choose a diversity of characters (capital and lower-case letters, numbers, and symbols like @ or =). Some websites require passwords with a minimum number of characters, often eight.

Many people choose a password like the name of their dog (Duke), their birthday (14Jan67) or a sequence like 345678. These are bad choices, because they are common words or names, they don't use diverse characters, they are too short, or they are easy to guess for someone who knows personal information about you.

A good technique for choosing a password is to think of a memorable phrase, then use the first letters of the phrase to create the password.

Memorable Phrase: **my Charlie loves coffee ice cream! at 45**
Password: **mClcic!@45**

You will notice that this password is made up of a mixture of characters—capital and lower-case letters, numbers, and symbols. These strong passwords help keep you and your information safe on the Internet. Use different passwords for different online accounts and be sure to safeguard your passwords if you need to write them down to remember them. It's best not to share passwords with anyone—even family and friends.

Setting Up an Email Account

Electronic mail or **email** provides a fast way of sending messages to people using the Internet.

An email address is made up of several parts, for example: **justin.tyme@ccv.edu**
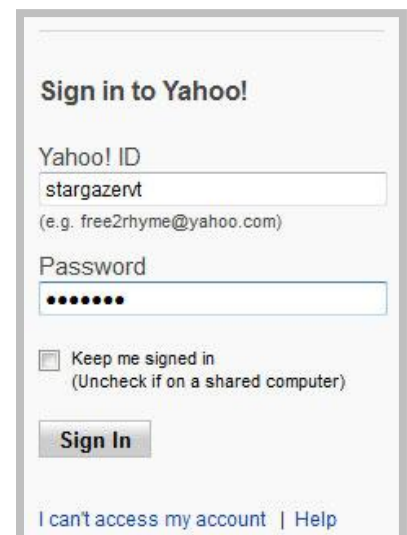
This address includes:
- a name or username
- **@** the symbol for the word "at"
- a company, institution, or organization your email address is associated with

Your Internet Service Provider (ISP)—such as Comcast, Verizon, or AOL—may provide you with an email address that is hosted by them, or you can create a free email address with a provider such as **Gmail** or **Yahoo.**

Be sure to select the **CREATE NEW ACCOUNT** option on the page and follow directions to set up your account. Always keep your username and password in a safe location.

Sending an email

When your account is set up, you can send and receive emails. To access your account find your email provider login and type in the username and password you created. Once logged in, you will have mailboxes for incoming mail (Inbox), for outgoing messages (Sent), and ones that you create for organizing messages that you receive, such as Family, Work, Friends, etc.

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You can also send email to others. To do this, click on the **new** or **compose email** button, type in the email address, type the subject of your email in the subject line, and type the text of the email in the main body.
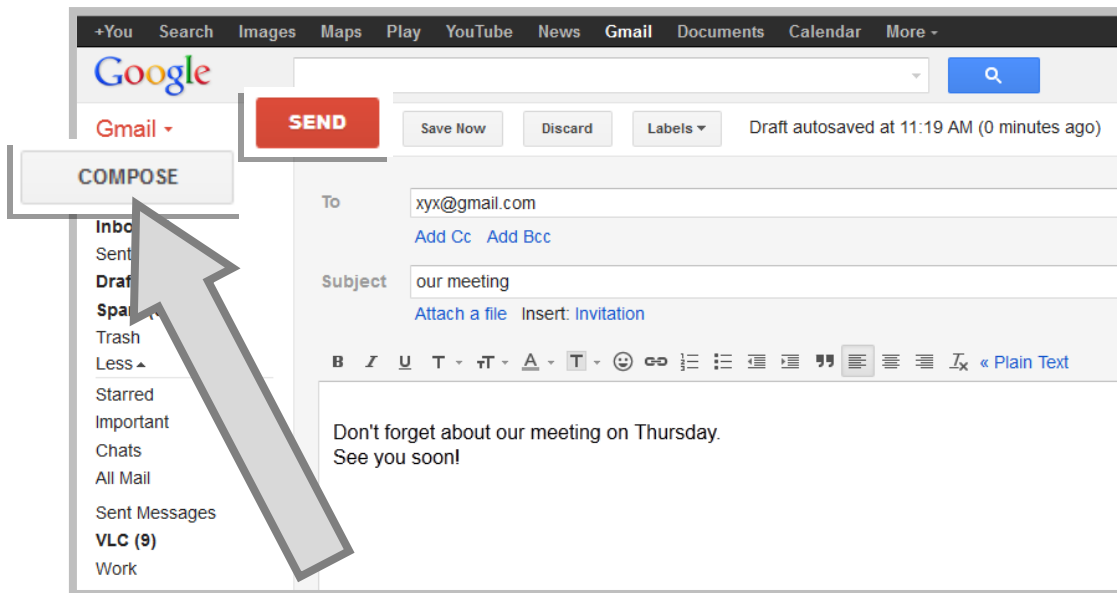
When you have finished writing your email message and proofreading it, click on the **send** button, and your email will be delivered immediately. It is customary to avoid using all capital letters in a message, as that is considered to be SHOUTING in the online world!

<u>Learning Online – Internet Basics</u>

The Internet has great resources for learning about. . . the Internet. Here are some recommended tutorial sites that can help beginners get more comfortable with the online world:

<u>WebWise – BBC</u>
http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/

<u>Teach Parents Tech</u>
http://www.teachparentstech.org/watch

<u>GCF Learn Free</u>
http://www.gcflearnfree.org/internet

There are many other tutorials out there – these three websites are highlighted because they have a simple design and are easy to navigate.

For more options, visit:

<u>e-Vermont Internet Basics</u>
http://e4vt.org/intro-to-the-web