

Introduction to the internet

The **internet** is a worldwide network of computers all connected to each other by telephone lines, cables and satellites.

When you are connected to the internet you can find almost anything, it's like a huge library. You can read the news, find the latest sports scores, go shopping, pay bills, send emails and even watch television programmes.

To connect your computer to the internet you need an **I**nternet **S**ervice **P**rovider, or **I**SP. Your mobile phone company, home phone, cable television provider, or even your local supermarket chain can offer you an internet connection.

A **broadband** internet connection is one that allows you to access the internet quickly and view large files, such as watching television programmes or listening to the radio through your computer.

Safety is important when connecting to the internet. To protect your computer from viruses you can get **virus protection software**. Your **I**SP may supply you with some, or you can download it free from the internet, or buy additional software. To prevent someone accessing your computer when you are connected to the internet you should have a **firewall**. A firewall is just a piece of software that makes sure no programs on your computer try to connect to the internet without your consent.

For more guidance on getting online visit the WebWise guide: www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/broadbandguides