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Using a web browser

You use a web browser to view web pages and browse websites. There are different types of web browser, but they have similar features.



In the address bar you can see the address of the website you are on. Every website has an address, the technical name for a web address is URL. The URL for the BBC website is:

www.bbc.co.uk

The www stands for World Wide Web. Most websites have this at the beginning.

The bbc is the name of the website.

The .co.uk gives you additional information about the site. For example the .co.uk shows that the BBC website is in the United Kingdom.

A web browser has a toolbar with buttons:



The home button takes you to the first page you see when you open your internet browser.

The back button takes you back to a page you have already visited.

The forward button takes you to the page you were on before you pressed the back button.

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The refresh button is used to reload a page that you are on. You might want to use this if a page hasn't loaded properly, or if you want to update the page. For example if you are on an auction website you might want to refresh to see the latest bid.

The history button is used to see what websites and web pages you have already visited.

Tip: If you are on a public computer, make sure you log out after use so people can't see the websites you have been visiting.

Browsing the internet

Websites are like books with a front cover (the homepage) and lots of other pages (web pages). To explore a website you have to click on a link and it takes you to another page on the website.

Links can also take you to other websites, this is called browsing or surfing the web.

A link can be text, a button or an image. They are often highlighted on a web page so they are easy to spot. Also, when you move your cursor over a link it changes from an arrow to a pointing hand.

