INTERNET BASICS

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Presentation adapted from GCFLearnfree.org

"We are all now connected by the Internet, like neurons in a giant brain."

Stephen Hawking

WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

The Internet is a **global network of billions of computers and other electronic devices**. With the Internet, it's possible to access almost any information, communicate with anyone else in the world, and do much more.

You can do all of this by connecting a computer to the Internet, which is also called *going online*. When someone says a computer is online, it's just another way of saying it's connected to the Internet.

HOW DOES THE INTERNET WORK?

At this point you may be wondering, **how does the Internet work?** The exact answer is pretty complicated and would take a while to explain. Instead, let's look at some of the most important things you should know.

It's important to realize that **the Internet is a global network of physical cables**, which can include copper telephone wires, TV cables, and fiber optic cables. Even wireless connections like Wi-Fi and 3G/4G rely on these physical cables to access the Internet.

When you visit a website, your computer sends a request over these wires to a server. **A server is where websites are stored**. Once the request arrives, the server retrieves the website and sends the correct data back to your computer. What's amazing is that this all happens in just a few seconds!

Click the computer above to watch a short movie
by Tata Communications
https://www.youtube.com

HOW DO YOU CONNECT TO THE INTERNET?

Once you've set up your computer, you may want to purchase home Internet access so you can send and receive email, browse the Web, stream videos, and more. You may even want to set up a home wireless network, commonly known as Wi-Fi, so you can connect multiple devices to the Internet at the same time.

Types of Internet Service

DIAL UP: This is generally the slowest type of Internet connection, and you should probably avoid it unless it is the only service available in your area. Dial-up Internet uses your phone line, so unless you have multiple phone lines you won't be able to use your landline and the Internet at the same time.

Cable: Cable service connects to the Internet via cable TV, although you do not necessarily need to have cable TV in order to get it. It uses a broadband connection and can be faster than both dial-up and DSL service; however, it is only available where cable TV is available.

DSL: DSL service uses a broadband connection, which makes it much faster than dial-up. DSL connects to the Internet via a phone line but does not require you to have a landline at home. And unlike dial-up, you'll be able to use the Internet and your phone line at the same time.

Satellite: A satellite connection uses broadband but does not require cable or phone lines; it connects to the Internet through satellites orbiting the Earth. As a result, it can be used almost anywhere in the world, but the connection may be affected by weather patterns. Satellite connections are also usually slower than DSL or cable.

3G and 4G: 3G and 4G service is most commonly used with mobile phones, and it connects wirelessly through your ISP's network. However, these types of connections aren't always as fast as DSL or cable. They will also limit the amount of data you can use each month, which isn't the case with most broadband plans.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ON THE INTERNET?

One of the best features of the Internet is the ability to **communicate almost instantly with anyone in the world**. Email is one of the oldest and most universal ways to communicate and share information on the Internet, and billions of people use it.

Short for **electronic mail**, email is a way to send and receive messages across the Internet. Almost everyone who uses the Internet has their own email account, usually called an email address. This is because **you'll need an email address to do just about anything online**, from online banking to creating a Facebook account.

SOCIAL MEDIA & NETWORKING

Social networking websites are another way to connect and share with your family and friends online. Rather than sharing with just a few people over email, social networks make it easier to connect and share with many people at the same time. Facebook is the world's largest social networking site, with more than 1 billion users worldwide.

Social media can be used for many things: staying in touch with friends and family, promoting your cause, and keeping up with trending topics and news.

FACEBOOK

SNAPCHAT

PINTEREST
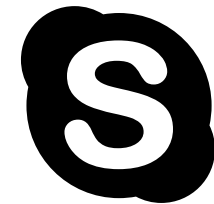
SKYPE

INSTAGRAM

LINKED IN

TWITTER

ONLINE MEDIA

There are many sites that allow you to watch videos and listen to music. For example, you can watch millions of videos on **YouTube** or listen to Internet radio on **Pandora**. Other services, like **Netflix** and **Hulu**, allow you to watch movies and TV shows.

EVERY DAY TASKS

You can also use the Internet to complete many everyday tasks and errands. For example, you can **manage your bank account, pay your bills, and shop** for just about anything. The main advantage here is convenience. Rather than going from place to place, you can do all of these tasks at home!
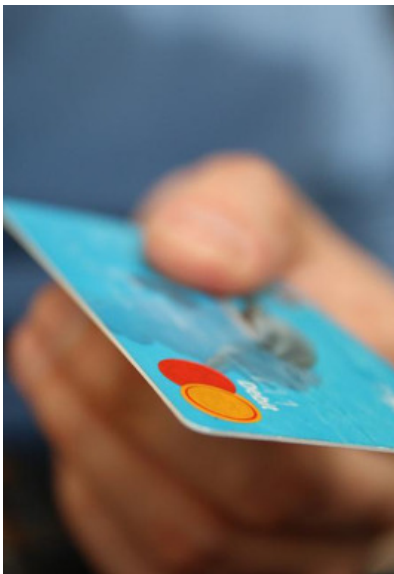
FINDING INFORMATION

With billions of websites online today, there is a lot of information on the Internet. **Search engines** make this information easier to find. All you have to do is **type one or more keywords**, and the search engine will look for relevant websites.

There are many different search engines you can use, but some of the most popular include **Google**, **Yahoo!**, and **Bing**.

WHAT IS THE WEB?

The **World Wide Web**—usually called the Web for short—is a collection of different websites you can access through the Internet. A website is made up of text, images, and other resources. Websites can look like other forms of media—like newspaper articles or television programs—or they can be interactive in a way that's unique to computers.

The purpose of a website can be almost anything: a news platform, an advertisement, an online library, a forum for sharing recipes, or an educational site.

Once you are connected to the Internet, you can access and view websites using a type of application called a **web browser**. Just keep in mind that the web browser itself is not the Internet; it only displays websites that are stored on the Internet.

USING A WEB BROWSER

A web browser is a type of software that allows you to find and view websites on the Internet. There are many different web browsers, but some of the most common ones include **Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, Safari, and Mozilla Firefox**.

No matter which web browser you use, you'll want to learn the basics of browsing the Web. In this lesson, we'll talk about navigating to different **websites**, using **tabbed browsing**, creating **bookmarks**, and more.

URLs AND THE ADDRESS BAR

Each website has a unique address, called a URL (short for Uniform Resource Locator). It's like a street address that tells your browser where to go on the Internet. When you type a URL into the browser's address bar and press Enter on your keyboard, the browser will load the page associated with that URL.

In the example below, we've typed www.bbc.com/travel into the address bar.
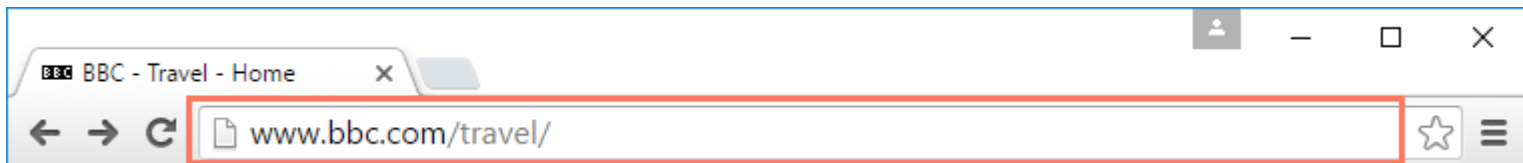
LINKS

Whenever you see a word or phrase on a website that's blue or underlined in blue, it's probably a hyperlink, or link for short. You might already know how links work, even if you've never thought about them much before.

Hey, I'm a link! Click me!

Links are used to navigate the Web. When you click a link, it will usually take you to a different webpage. You may also notice that **your cursor changes into a hand icon** whenever you hover over a link.

This turns into that!

If you see this icon, it means you've found a link. You'll find other types of links this way too. For example, **many websites actually use images as links**, so you can just click the image to navigate to another page.

Internet

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
(Redirected from The internet)

This article is about the worldwide computer network. For other uses, see Internet (disambiguation).
Not to be confused with the World Wide Web.

By clicking here...

...you will come here!

World Wide Web

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"WWW" and "The web" redirect here. For other uses of WWW, see WWW (disambiguation). For other uses of web, see Web (disambiguation). For the first web software, see WorldWideWeb. Not to be confused with the Internet.

NAVIGATION BUTTONS

The **Back** and **Forward** buttons allow you to move through websites you've recently viewed. You can also click and hold either button to see your recent history.
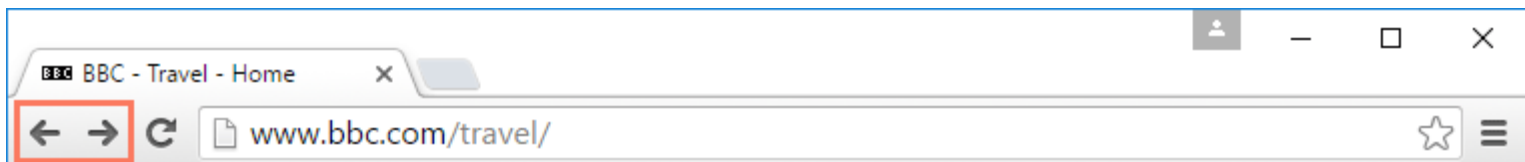
The **Refresh** button will reload the current page. If a website stops working, try using the Refresh button.
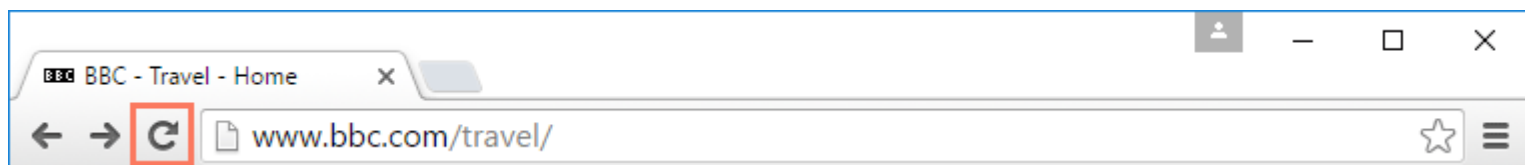
TABBED BROWSING

Many browsers allow you to **open links in a new tab**. You can open as many links as you want, and they'll stay in the same browser window instead of cluttering your screen with multiple windows.

To open a link in a new tab, **right-click the link and select Open link in new tab** (the exact wording may vary from browser to browser).
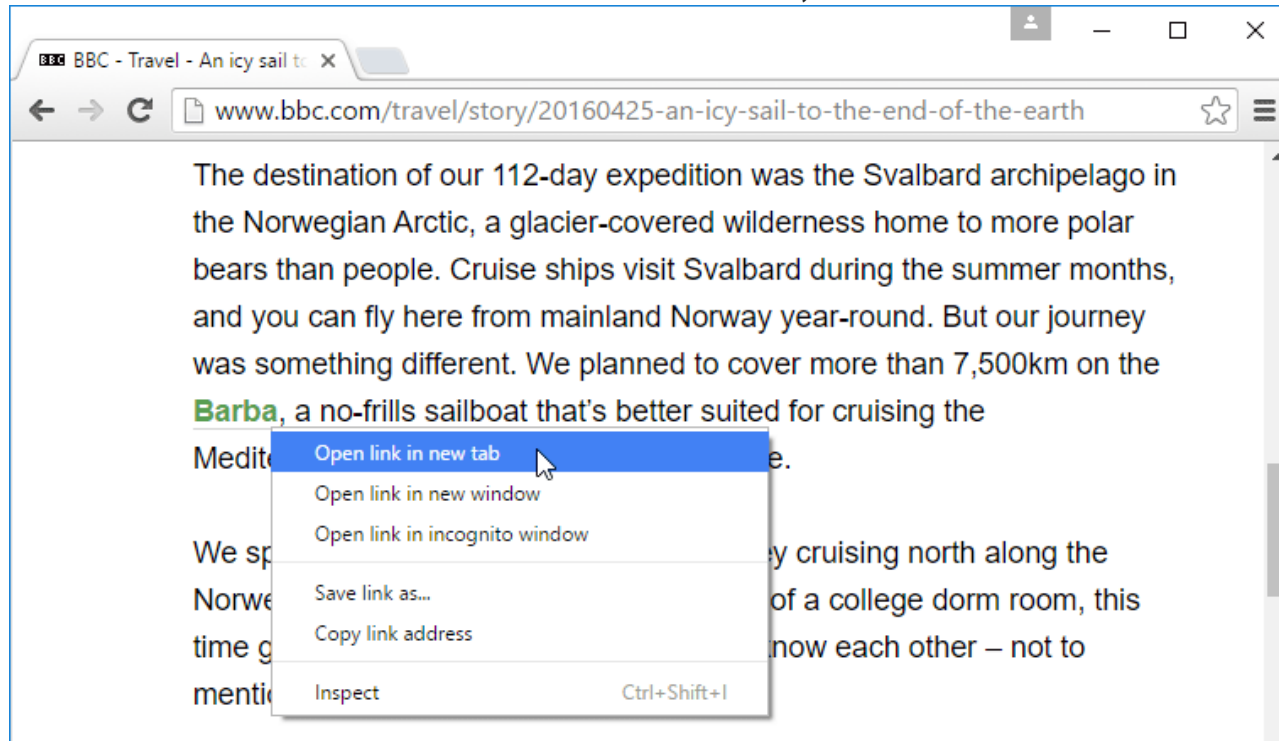
To close a tab, click the "x".

To create a new blank tab, click the button to the right.
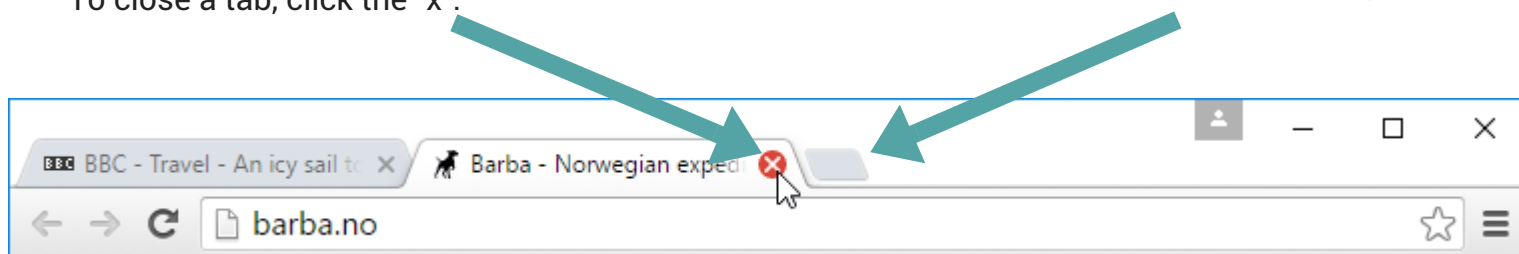
BOOKMARKS

If you find a website you want to view later, it can be hard to memorize the exact web address. **Bookmarks, also known as favorites**, are a great way to save and organize specific websites so you can revisit them again and again. Simply locate and select the **Star icon** to bookmark the current website.
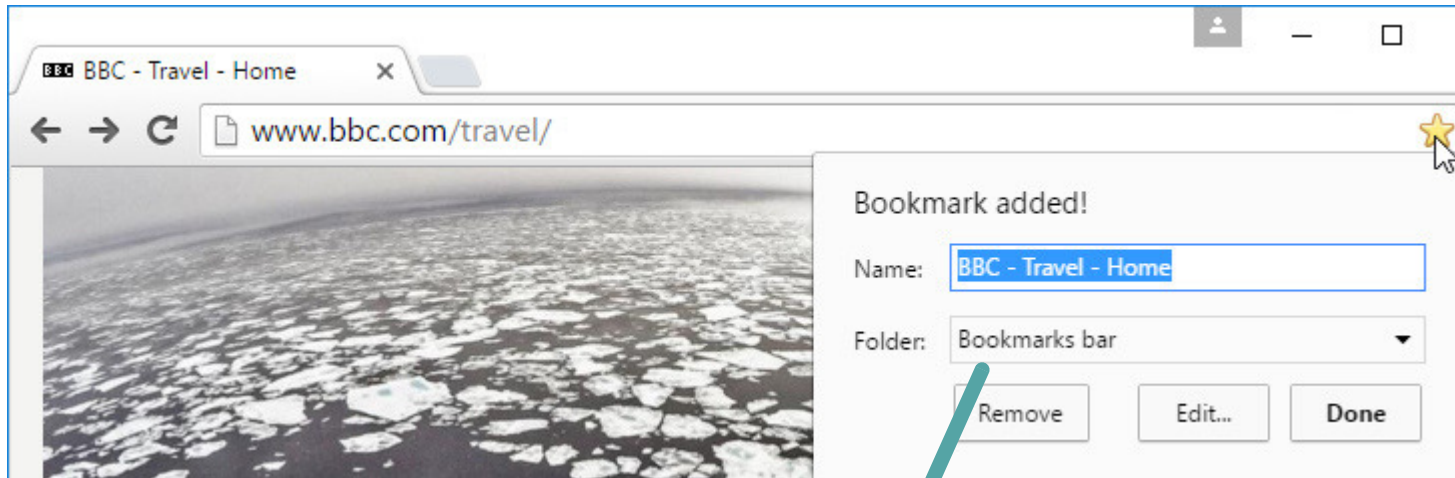
Bookmarks saved to the "Bookmarks Bar" will show up here, under the Address Bar.

USING SEARCH ENGINES

With billions of websites online today, there is a lot of information on the Internet. Search engines make this information easier to find. Let's look at the basics of using a search engine, as well as some techniques you can use to get better search results.

Click on the TV above to watch a short movie
about search engines by GCF Learnfree.

HOW TO SEARCH THE INTERNET

There are many different search engines you can use, but some of the most popular include **Google**, **Yahoo!**, and **Bing**. To perform a search, you'll need to navigate to a search engine in your **web browser**, type one or more **keywords**—also known as search terms—then **press Enter** on your keyboard. In this example, we'll search for recipes.

First, go to the website. In this example, we'll use Google.

Keywords go here!

This is called a "search bar."

G Google ×

https://www.google.com

Google

recipes

Google Search   I'm Feeling Lucky

After you run a search, you'll see a list of relevant websites that match your search terms. These are commonly known as **search results**. If you see a site that looks interesting, you can **click a link to open it**. If the site doesn't have what you need, you can simply **return to the results page** to look for more options.
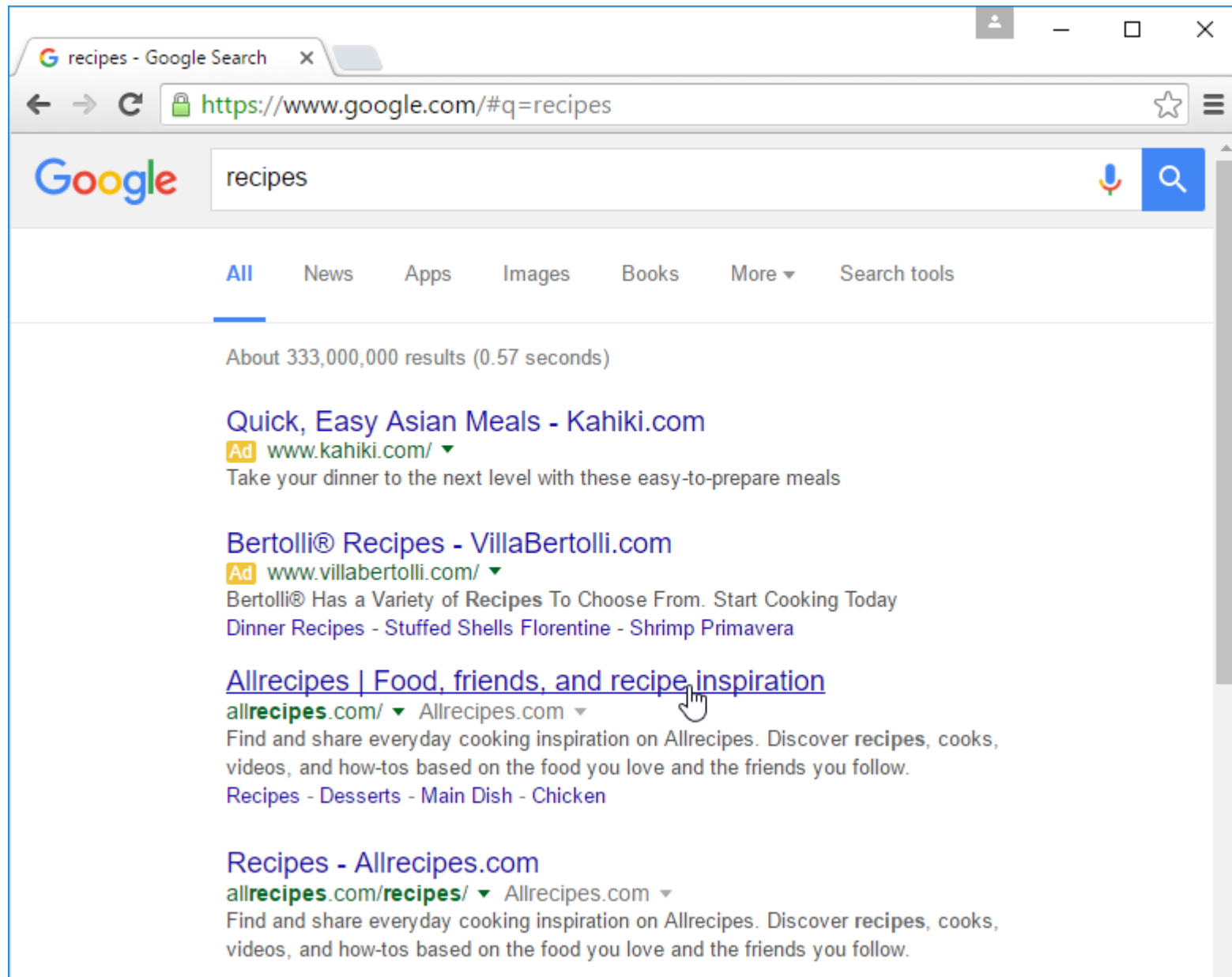
SEARCH RESULTS

If you don't find what you're looking for on the first try, don't worry! Search engines are good at finding things online, but they're not perfect. You'll often need to try different search terms to find what you're looking for.

If you're having trouble thinking of new search terms, you can use **search suggestions** instead. These will usually appear as you're typing, and they're a great way to find new keywords you might not have tried otherwise. **To use a search suggestion, you can click it with your mouse, or select it with the arrow keys on your keyboard.**
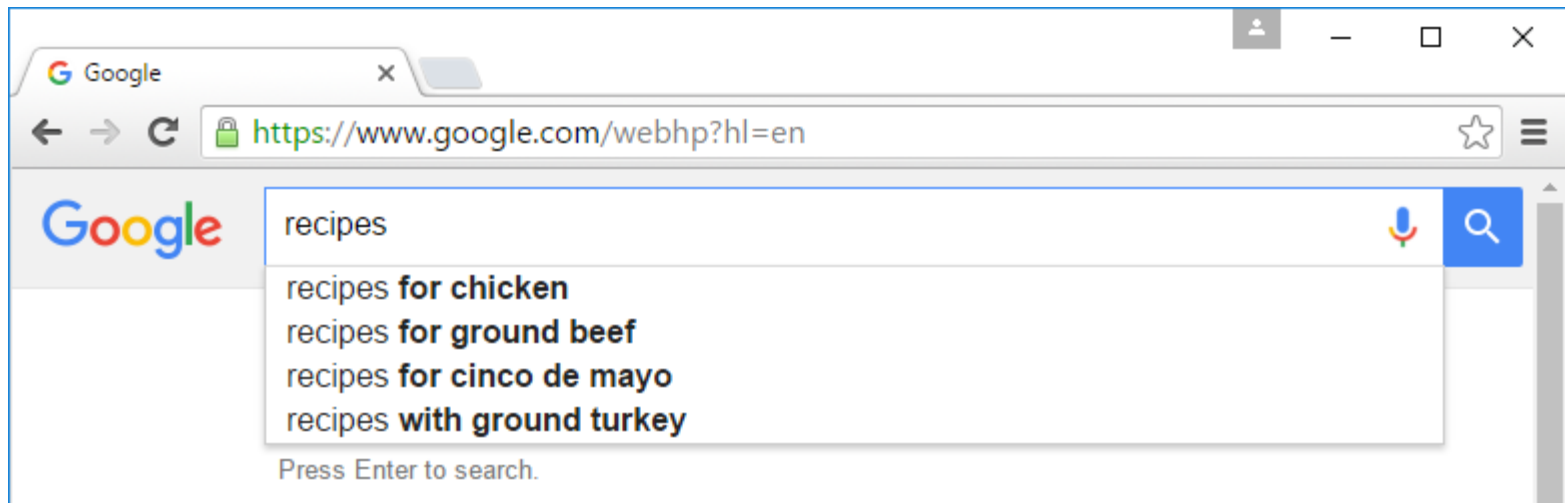
CONTENT-SPECIFIC SEARCHING

There may be times when you're looking for something more specific, like a **news article, picture, or video.** Most search engines have links at the top of the page that allow you to perform these unique searches.
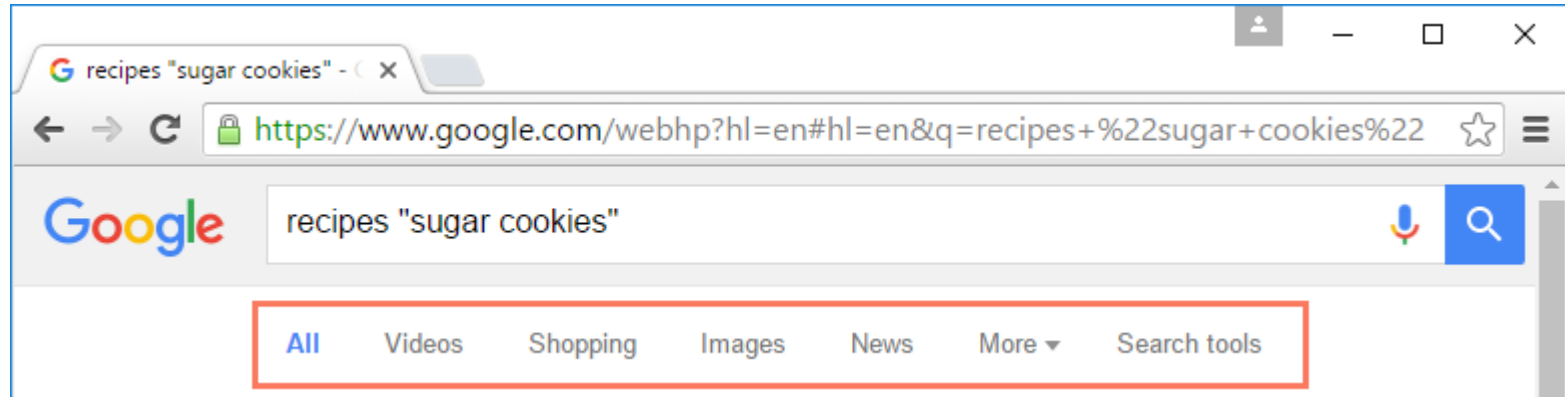
In the example below, we've used the same search terms to look for images instead of websites. If you see an image you like, you can click to visit the website it originally came from.
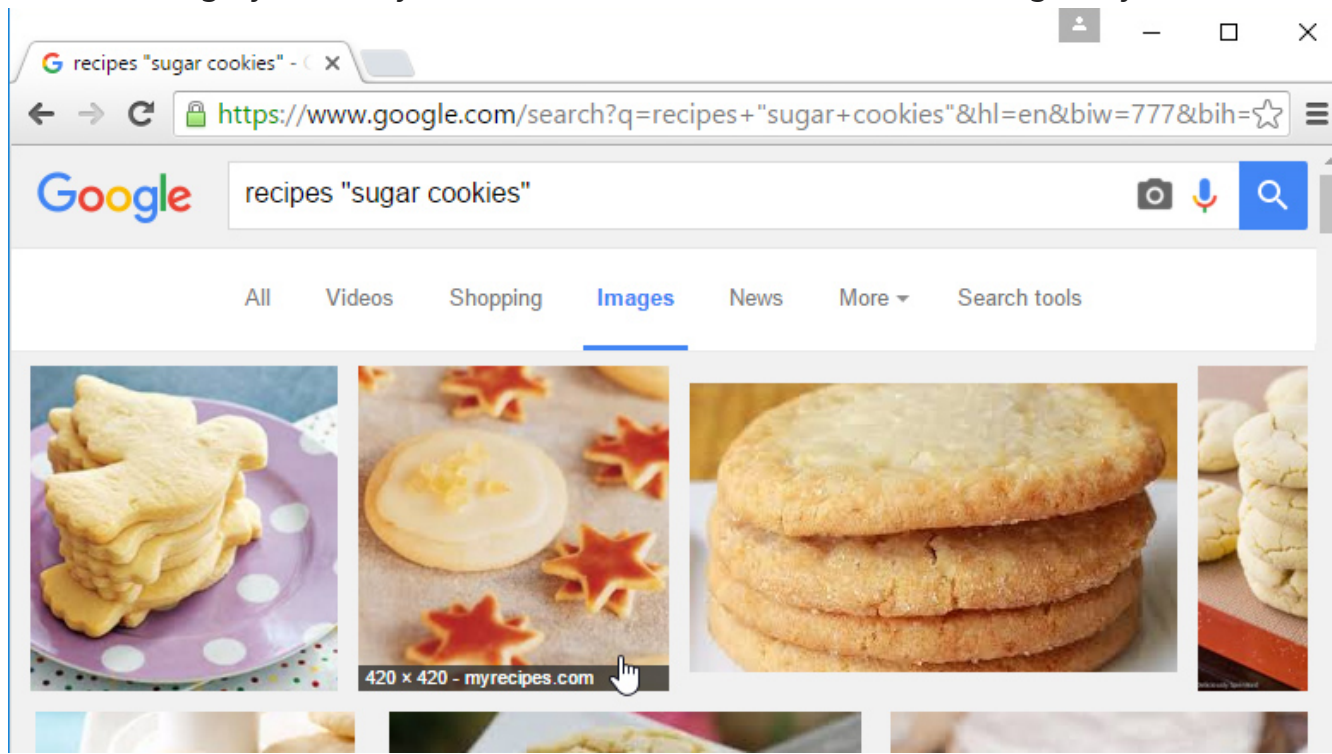
You can use the extra search tools to narrow down your results even more. These tools will change based on the type of content you're looking for, but in this example we can filter our images by **size, color, image type, and more**. So if you wanted to find cookies with pink frosting, you could search for images that are mostly pink.
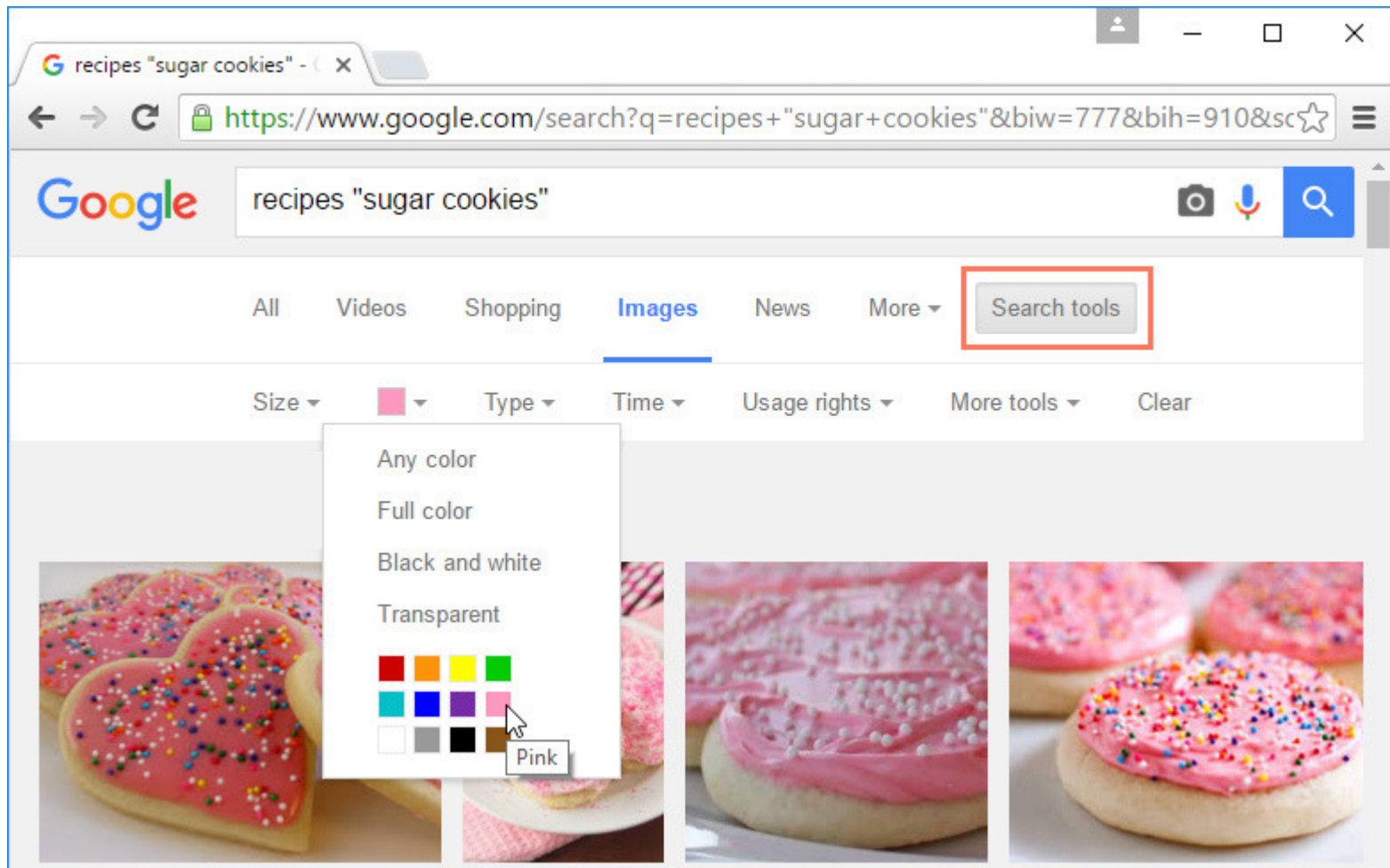
ADVERTISEMENTS

One final thing to note: Most search engines include advertisements with search results. For example, you can see advertisements at the top of the search results below.
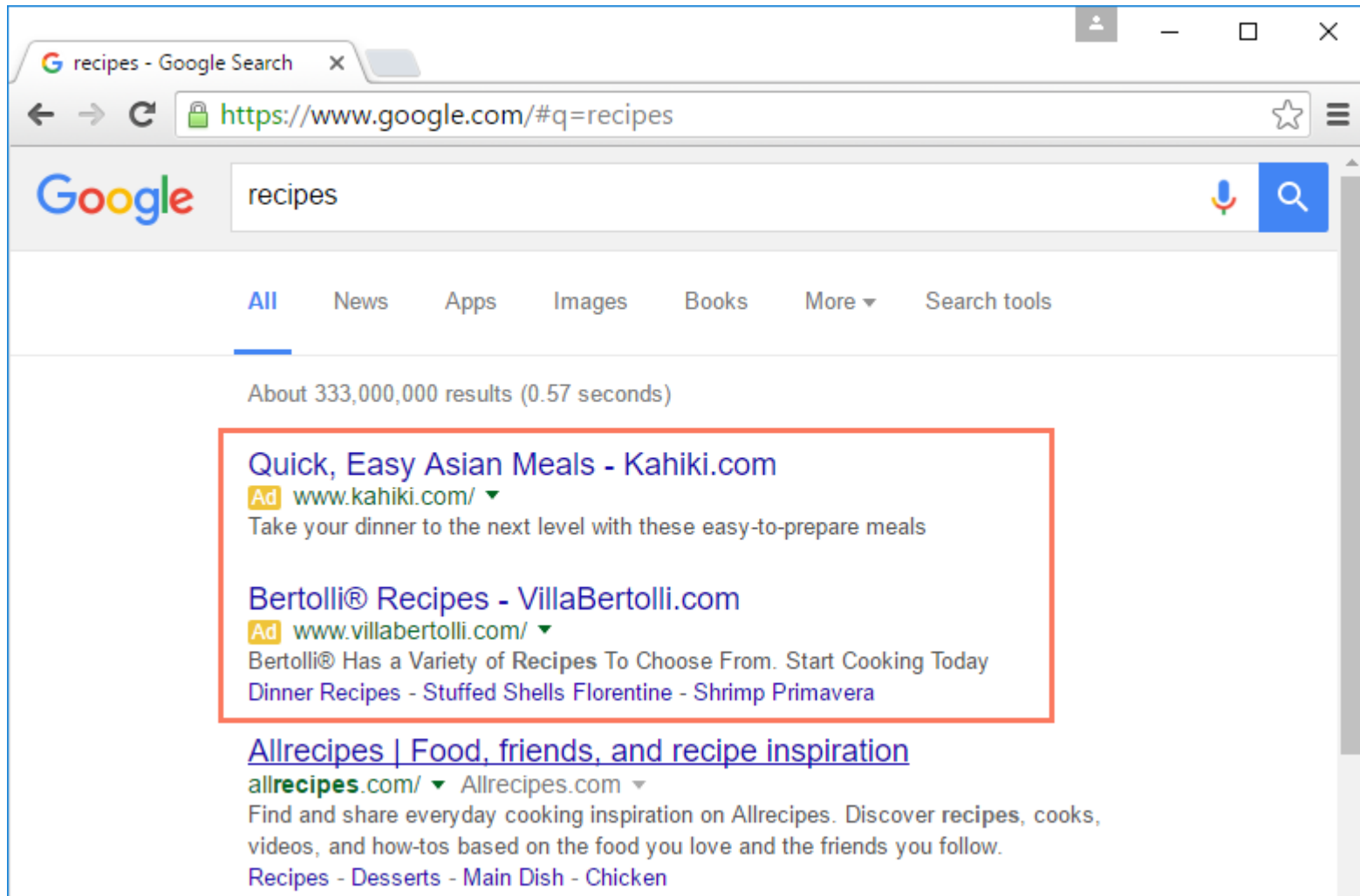
These ads are based on your search terms, and they often look similar to other search results. While they may be useful in some cases, it's usually more helpful to focus on the actual search results.

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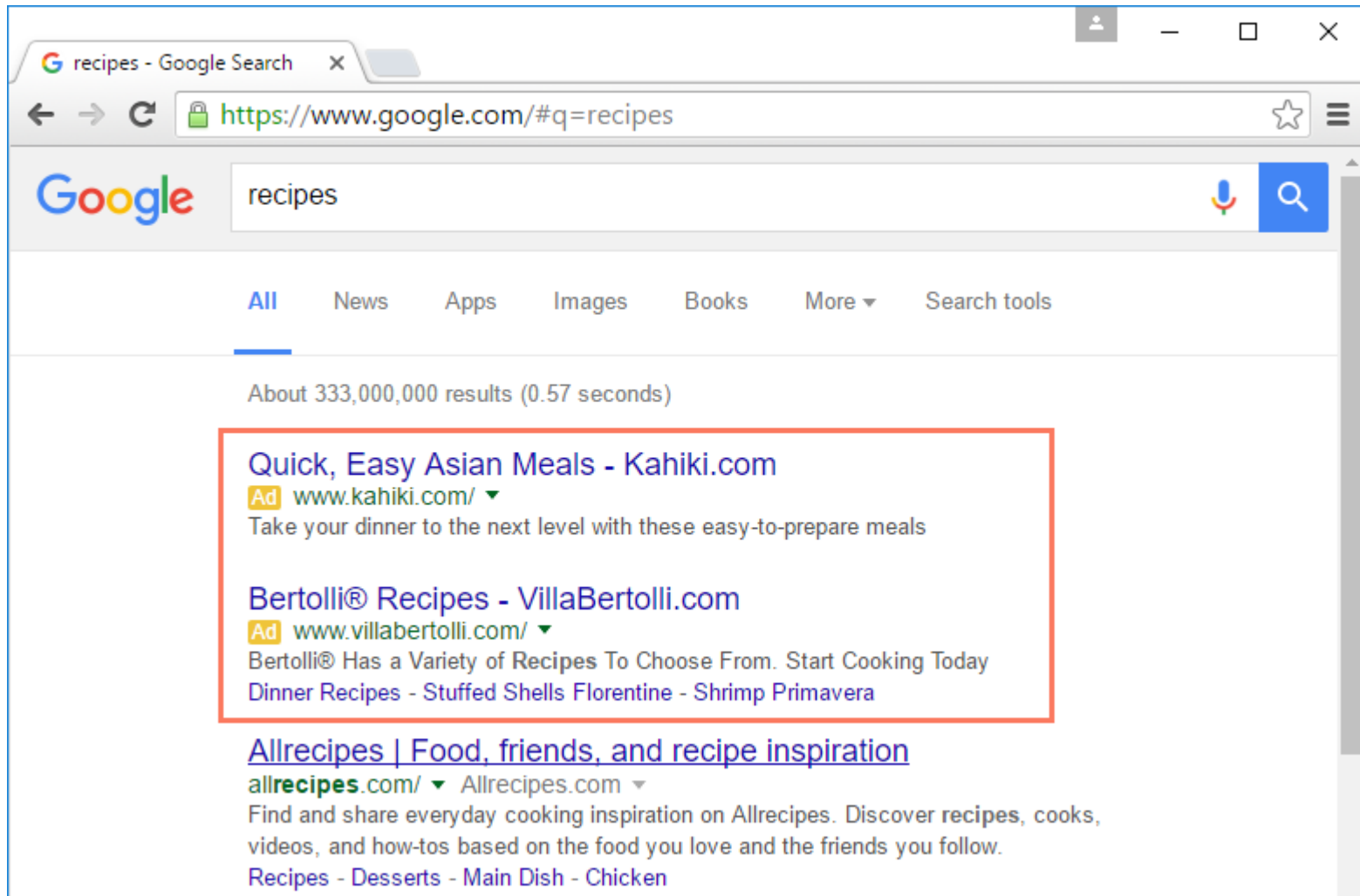
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HOW TO READ A WEBPAGE

Let's say you've found a webpage that might have what you're looking for. Should you just start reading the entire page until you find it? Well, no. Most of the time, you don't need to read the page from top to bottom. Instead, you should look for the most relevant parts of the webpage and ignore everything else. In this lesson, we'll show you some of the common parts of a webpage, as well as some tips for reading webpages more effectively.

THE ANATOMY OF A WEBPAGE

Every webpage is different, but there are some common elements you'll find on most pages. For example, the page might have the main content in the middle of the page, with ads on the left or right side. Almost every webpage will have some sort of navigation bar that lets you go to other parts of the website. By learning about some of these basic parts, you'll be able to find the information you're looking for more quickly.

HOW TO READ A WEBPAGE

Click the image below to be taken to in interactive website created by GCFlearnfree.org

Technology 1-on-1

Having trouble keeping up with new technology? Half-hour one-on-one Technology Help Sessions are being offered at the Salem Public Library! Need help with the new line spacing in Microsoft Word? Want assistance posting an online ad? Want to learn how to download eBooks and audio-books? We are here to help! Registration is required and begins on February 1st, 2017. Call the Reference Department at (978) 744-0860 to reserve your session.

Microsoft Basics

Learn Microsoft 2016 basics for composing letters, academic papers, and résumés. This open workshop is designed for people who are novice-to-intermediate computer users, though all are welcome. Workshop will include a mirror screen demonstration and Q&A time; all attendees may take home a free instructional docket. No registration is required.

Wordpress

Want to build a website? Interested in blogging? Try Wordpress! Using Wordpress, you can build websites and blogs for personal and/or professional use. This program includes four cumulative sessions that walk you through the entire process of creating and customizing a website. No experience is needed and no registration is required.

Email Basics

Are you intimidated by the prospect of using electronic mail (email)? Come learn what this tool has to offer and how to utilize it to suit your needs. We will help you to: create a free email account, navigate your inbox easily, and safeguard your account against malicious hacking. Registration is required and begins February 1st, 2017. Call the Reference Department at (978) 744-0860 to reserve your session.

THANK YOU FOR COMING!

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO FILL OUT AN OPTIONAL SURVEY
AND PLEASE LEAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IF YOU'D LIKE A COPY OF
THE PRESENTATION TO USE AT HOME.**

Still have questions? Call the Reference Dept. at (978) 744-0860 or email us at sal@noblenet.org

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