

## 01 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.*

### 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 related text, images, and other resources. Websites can resemble 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 images, or an educational site like us!

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.



### 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, and it works a lot like your computer's hard drive. 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!

Play the video by clicking the link below:

## How the Internet Functions



Note: each video link in the course contains only one video.  
Each video is only a couple of minutes long

- Scroll down the webpage until you see the video.  
Click the **Play icon** on the web page to play the video.



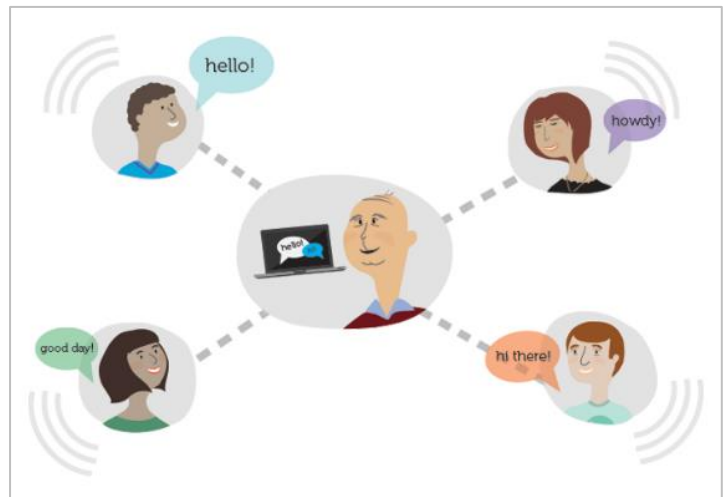
- After you watch the video, **read** the rest of the section on the following pages and **answer the quiz questions**.

### What Can You Do Online?

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. **Social media** allows people to connect in a variety of ways and build communities online.

There are many other things you can do on the Internet. There are thousands of ways to keep up with news or **shop for anything** online. You can pay your bills, **manage your bank accounts**, meet new people, **watch TV**, or learn new skills. You can learn or do almost anything online.



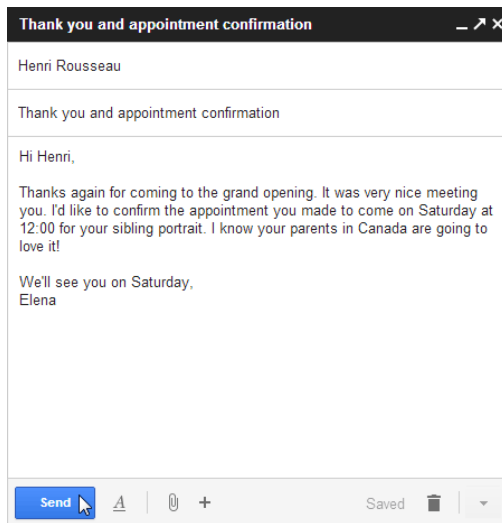
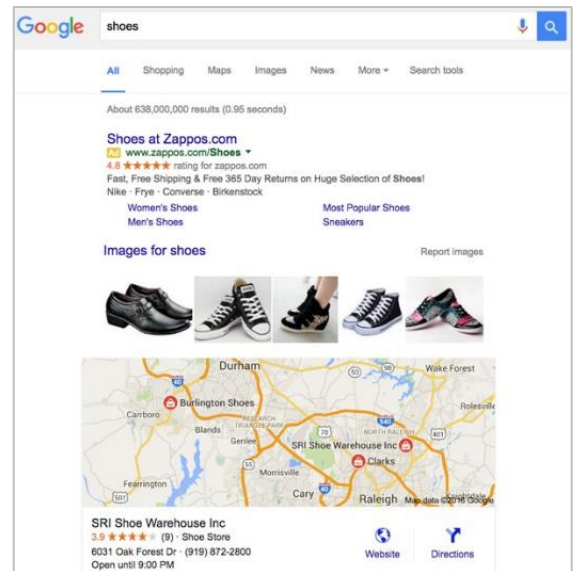
*Let's take a look at some of the ways the Internet is most commonly used today.*

### Finding information online

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**.

For example, let's say you're looking for a new pair of shoes. You could use a search engine to learn about different types of shoes, get directions to a nearby shoe store, or even find out where to buy them online!

There are many different search engines you can use, but some of the most popular include [Google](#), [Yahoo!](#), and [Bing](#).

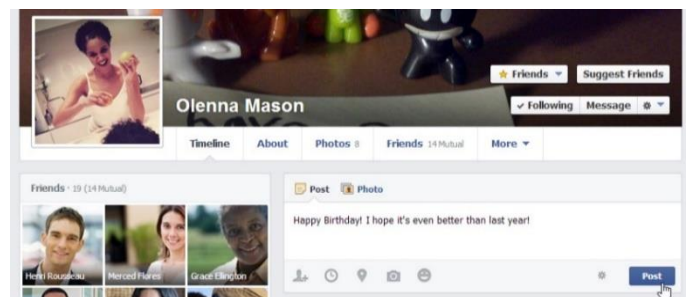


### Email

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 networking

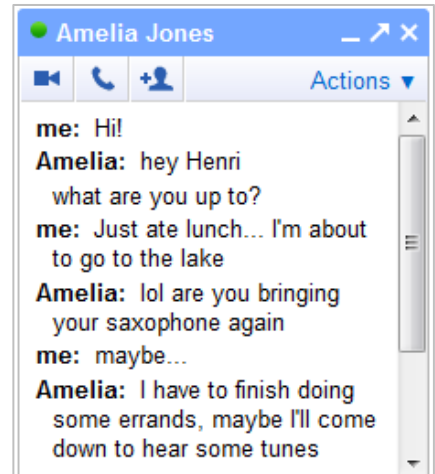
**Social networking websites** are another way to **connect and share** with your family and friends online. Rather than sharing with just a few people over email, social networks make it easier to **connect and share** with many people at the same time. [Facebook](#) is the world's largest social networking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



## Chat and instant messaging

**Chat and instant messaging (IM)** are short messages sent and read **in real time**, allowing you to converse more quickly and easily than email. These are generally used when both (or all) people are online, so your message can be read immediately. By comparison, **emails** won't be seen until recipients check their inboxes.

Examples of instant messaging applications include **Yahoo Messenger** and **Google Hangouts**. Some sites, like **Gmail** and **Facebook**, even allow you to chat within your web browser.



## 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 [CBC](#). Other services, like [Netflix](#) and [Hulu](#), allow you to watch movies and TV shows. And if you have a **set-top streaming box**, you can even watch them directly on your television instead of a computer screen.



## Everyday 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!