Tips for Tech Savvy Seniors

An Introduction to the Internet

Beginners Guide: Part 2

Once you have a home internet connection and you're comfortable with using the web browser on your computer, it's time to dive right in. It helps to know the best websites to visit and understand the great web browser features that can make your life easier.

Scrolling and navigating

Your computer's web browser allows you to navigate around the internet and provides some tools and controls to do this. All web browsers work in a similar way, and the following examples show Microsoft Edge on a Windows computer.

The main ways to move around on the web are:

- The **Address Bar** at the top of the browser, where you type in a web address to go to that site.

- **Links** appear in web pages, sometimes as blue text, or an image. You can spot a link when your mouse cursor changes as you move over it. Click a link to follow it.

- **Forward and Back** arrows let you quickly go one page back, or one page forward.

- **Refresh** reloads the current web page, so you know you are looking at the current version.

- **Favourites** lets you save web page addresses for later. Other browsers call these **Bookmarks**.

- **Scroll bars** appear on the side and sometimes bottom of the window if the web page is too big to fit on the screen. You can click these or use the scroll wheel on your mouse.

Downloading using your browser

You can use the web browser to download files to your computer, including apps. A download link is similar to a regular link, except instead of taking you to a different web page, it will start saving a file to your computer.

- **Downloading an app**, such as the desktop version of **Google Earth**, will put an install file on your computer. You can then use **File Explorer** to see the file (usually in your **Downloads** folder) and click the file to start the installation process. When this is finished, you can launch the app via an icon that appears on the desktop.

- **Downloading a file**, for example a **PDF** of the timetable for NSW regional trains, will save that file to your computer. Sometimes a PDF will open in the web browser first, but you can click the **Save** link to download it. When the download is finished, you can open the file on your computer by using **File Explorer** to find it, and then double-clicking the file.

Using browser tabs

You can open multiple web pages at once, in the same web browser window, by using **tabs**.

- **Tabs** appear at the top of the browser window, above the **address bar**.

- There will be a short description of the web page in the tab.

- You can open a new tab by clicking the **plus symbol** next to the rightmost tab.

- Switch between the tabs by clicking their title, and close individual tabs by clicking the little **X** next to the title.

- If you open a very large number of tabs, 10 or more, it may slow down your computer. Closing some tabs will fix this.

- To open a link in a new tab, **right-click** on the link and choose **Open link in new tab** from the menu.

Set your home page

The **Home page** is what loads when you first start the browser. By default, this is usually blank or shows a search page. The **Settings menu** lets you set a different home page.

Under the **Start, home, and new tabs** section, there's an option to turn on a **Home button** which will appear next to the address bar, so you can go to your home page with one click. Under this, enter a **home page web address** of your choice, such as **google.com** or **facebook.com**. This will now appear instead of the blank page, when you open the browser.

Enlarging a web page

Some web pages can be formatted with very small text. You can control this using **Ctrl** and the **+** key to increase the text size, and **Ctrl** and the **–** key to decrease it. You can also use the menu in the top right of the browser. Click the **three dots** to see a **Zoom control**, which shows the percentage you've zoomed in. When you change the zoom level like this, the browser remembers, so you don't have to do it every time.

Staying safe online

Always be careful when surfing the web via a web browser. Most web publishing is unregulated, and you should be wary of scammers. Remember these top tips:

- Don't give out your personal information unless you're confident the person or site asking is legitimate.

- Avoid downloading software from untrustworthy sites.

- Don't buy from online stores you don't trust.

- Be suspicious of strangers asking for personal information or offering free software.