



Parts of a Web Address

You might have noticed that our example web address, `http://www.cnn.com`, has a number of different parts. It's important to understand what those parts mean.

- The `http://` stands for HyperText Transfer Protocol. This helps your web browser locate the web page or web site, and to display it for you to see. Most browsers will automatically add this prefix, so you don't have to worry about typing it every time.
- The `www` stands for World Wide Web. This means that the page you're looking for is somewhere on the World Wide Web.
- The next section, which is `cnn` in this example, is the name of the web page or web site. It is flanked by dots, which separate it from other sections of the web address.
- The `.com` here is the domain name. This tells you where the web page is registered, and often tells you what kind of web site it is. For instance, `.com` usually means that you're looking at a commercial site, or a site that someone has paid to use. Some other common domain names are `.edu` (sites for educational institutions), `.org` (sites belonging to organizations), and `.gov` (sites sponsored by local, state, or federal governments).
- Sometimes, there will be a slash (`/`) following the domain name. For instance: `http://www.cnn.com/WORLD`. The `/` followed by another word or words lets you know that you are going to a different area or page on that web site. In the example, you will be taken to the World News page on CNN's web site.

Three Parts of an E-mail Address

Your e-mail address has three parts.

✖ The first part is your username. You set up the username with your Internet provider or e-mail service. It might be a form of your name. It might be a nickname. If you are an antique collector, your username might be *antiquefan*. It is at this point that your provider or service makes sure no one else on their system already has that name.

✖ The second part of your e-mail address is the @ (at) symbol.

✖ That divides the username from the third part, which is the name of the computer that handles your mail. The computer is also called a server. Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or e-mail service has a particular name for their server - like aol.com for America Online or yahoo.com for those who go through the Yahoo service. Hotmail.com is an example of a free web-based e-mail service.