

Glossary

If you find any unfamiliar terms this glossary will help you to work out what they mean.

A

3G

Third generation – a mobile standard that offers fast connections to enable you to make video calls or access the internet at broadband speeds.

Address

Generally short for 'web address' – where you find a particular web page or website on the internet, also known as a URL. May also be short for email address.

ADSL

Stands for 'Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line'. A fast way of sending computer data over an ordinary phone line - usually used to provide broadband internet access to homes, schools and offices. An alternative to a cable modem.

Adware

Computer programs that display adverts on the screen. Often installed without people realising. These can be malware.

Anti-virus software

A program that is used to detect, prevent, and remove malware, including viruses and Trojan horses, on your computer or sent to you in an email, chat message or on a web page.

Attachment

A file that is sent along with an email message. It can be any sort of file and often pictures are sent this way.

B

Bebo

A popular social networking website used by many people to share information, make friends and get in contact with one another. The term Bebo is an acronym for 'Blog early, blog often'.

Blacklist

A list of undesirable websites that you have blocked access to so that searching the internet is safer.

Block

To stop a computer reaching something on the internet, to stop a program running, or to stop someone from contacting you on a chat service. Websites that are blocked can't be viewed on screen; emails that are blocked will be automatically redirected into your junk mail; chat programs that are blocked can't be started; people that are blocked cannot reach you online through that particular chatting service.

Blog

A blog (short for web log) is a type of easy-to-maintain website, usually like an online diary, where the blogger publishes comments and discussions using a selection of templates. Most blogs let visitors to the site post their own comments in return.

Bluejacking

Some users with Bluetooth-enabled mobiles use this technology to send anonymous text messages to strangers. This has been nicknamed 'bluejacking'.

Bluetooth

A wireless way of exchanging data over short distances from fixed and mobile devices, including mobile phones and Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or card payment machines.

Bookmarks

Web addresses stored in your browser, letting you go directly to specific websites/web pages. Also known as 'favourites'.

Bot

A program that can do things without the user of the computer having to give it instructions. Many bots are malware as they are installed without people's permission and can be controlled over the internet and used to send spam or steal data. Also known as web robots.

Broadband

A relatively fast – above 512 kbps – connection to the internet. Most broadband connections are 'always on' so that your computer is connected to the internet all the time it is turned on.

Browser

A program that allows you to use the World Wide Web to view internet pages. Internet Explorer is the most commonly used browser but Firefox, Netscape, Google Chrome, Opera and Safari are also available. Also called 'web browser'.

Browsing

The act of looking around the internet, or a website, as you would do when walking through a shop.

Buddy

An online friend or contact. Usually used to refer to people who you let contact you in instant messaging or chat programs.

Burning

The act of copying information onto a compact disc (CD) using hardware called a CD burner.

Byte

A unit of digital information in computing and telecommunications.

C

Cable modem

A special piece of equipment that lets you use your cable TV connection to link up to the internet. An alternative to ADSL.

CD

Short for compact disc. A 12cm diameter plastic disc that can store relatively large amounts of data – around 650 megabytes. Originally used for music, CDs are also used for programs and other computer data files. Many home and office computers now have CD-writers as well as CD-readers and can write – or 'burn' – data to share with friends.

Chat room

A special place on the internet where you can chat to one or more people. – A 'virtual' room where users can 'talk' with each other by typing. Conversations can be one-on-one or can involve a number of people. Some chat rooms are moderated/supervised.

Chatting

Taking part in an online chat, either in a chat room or by instant messaging.

Click

To select something on your screen by moving your pointer over it and pressing your mouse button.

Code

In computer science this is the text, written and used by programmers and developers, that dictates the actions to be performed by a computer. Also known as source code.

Community forums

Websites that allow members to contact each other, take part in chats or create personal web pages.

Compact disc

Also known as a CD. A 12cm diameter plastic disc that can store relatively large amounts of data – around 650 megabytes. Originally used for music, CDs are also used for programs and other computer data files. Many home and office computers now have CD-writers as well as CD-readers and can write – or ‘burn’ – data to share with friends.

Computer network

A number of computers that are linked together so that they can exchange data. Local area networks link computers in the same building, wide area networks like the internet connect computers that may be far apart.

Content filter

A way of limiting access to material on the internet by examining it before it is shown to the user and deciding whether or not it is acceptable. Often used to restrict access to certain web pages when children are using computers.

Cookie

A cookie is a small file that is sent to a web browser by a server and stored on the user’s computer. It can then be read by the server every time the user revisits the same website and is used to keep track of personal preferences, shopping choices and other information. Sometimes called a magic cookie.

Creative Commons

Creative Commons (CC) licences build upon copyright law, signalling the owner’s permission that work can be used in a variety of ways, not automatically allowed under copyright law. Creative Commons search engines can help people discover materials that they can freely and legally share or build upon. See <http://creativecommons.org> for further information.

Cyberbullying

Bullying using technology, such as computers and mobile phones.

Cyberspace

This is a term for the internet, which is often viewed as a ‘virtual’ world.

Cyberstalking

The act of harassing someone over the internet.

D

Data

Information stored on a computer is often called data. The computer stores everything in files as a series of 1s and 0s. These files are read by programs.

Downloading

The transmission of a file from one computer system to another (often smaller) computer system. From the internet user's point of view, to download a file is to request it from one computer, or from one web page to another computer, and to receive it.

Download websites

A website that makes material available to download.

E

eBay

A popular e-commerce site where people can put items up for auction and others can bid for and buy them.

e-commerce

Buying or selling over the internet, usually from a website.

Electronic signature

A way of adding a code to messages you send so that they can be proven to have come from you.

Email

A way to exchange messages over the internet. Messages are written by one person and then sent to one or more people at their email address.

Email address

An email address tells your email program where to send messages. The first part of the address is the name of the person's mailbox, where messages are stored. The second part, after the '@' sign, is the name of the organisation where messages should be sent over the internet.

F

Facebook

A popular social networking website that lets users create their own homepages, set up weblogs and add contacts.

Family agreement

An agreement on how home computers, internet access and mobile phones will be used. Should be drawn up and agreed after discussion between family members and posted up next to the family computer or in a communal space. Create a family agreement [here](#).<link to family agreement>

Favourites

Web addresses stored in your browser, letting you go directly to specific websites/web pages. Also known as 'bookmarks'.

File

Some data stored on a computer. A file may contain any sort of digital content - a word processed document, a picture, some music or a film.

File sharing

Copying files over the internet by using software that enables you to use other subscribers' computers like a specialist library. Usually the files contain music, films or programs, but any sort of file can be shared. May also known as downloading.

Filter

A means of preventing certain types of material from reaching your computer.

Firewall

A program that can protect your computer from being accessed when you're online.

Flaming

Sending an offensive or aggressive message over the internet.

Forums

An online discussion group, much like a chat room.

Functional permissions

Functional permissions are the minimum permissions required by a social networking service in order to do its job: the permissions you need to give to service providers to store and access your data to use your account.

Sites may also request additional permissions, for example they might make it a requirement that you agree to let them reuse your content for purposes other than running your account.

You can find out what permissions you are agreeing to by reading carefully the terms of use and privacy policies.

G

Granularity

Granularity refers to the degree to which users can set permissions with regard to their information, the choices a member can make over who gets to see what information and data they upload or create on a site. Most services offer basic permissions within broad friend categories: you can share all your information with no-one, with all friends or with everyone (the public).

Granular services allow users more flexibility over what they make available and to whom. Members may be able to assign permissions to different areas of their on-site activity, make parts of their profile or particular blog posts available to specific groups.

Grooming

When a child abuser tries to start a relationship online with a child for unlawful purposes. Also see online grooming.

H

Hacker

Originally thought of as a computer enthusiast, but now a hacker is normally used to refer to computer criminals, especially those who break into other people's computer networks.

History

Your internet browser toolbar will have a button marked 'history'. If you click on it you can review which sites have been viewed.

Homepage

The page that appears when you type in an organisation's web address without any file name, for example, www.childnet.com. Also used to mean someone's personal web page.

I

Icon

A small picture used to represent an action or a file on a computer screen.

IM (Instant Messenger)

Technology similar to that of chatrooms, which notifies a user when a friend is online, allowing them to 'converse' by exchanging text messages. The difference between IM and chatrooms is that IM requires you to set up a list of contacts before you can chat.

Infrared

A type of invisible light that some handsets and other devices can use to communicate. Most TV remote controls use the same technology. It is an alternative to radio services like Bluetooth and Wi-Fi but requires direct line-of-sight to work.

Internet

A worldwide network which links together millions of computers and allows them to exchange data and work together.

Internet café

A public place, usually but not always serving refreshments, where you can pay to access the internet from a computer.

Internet Service Provider (ISP)

A company that connects computers to the internet for a fee. Abbreviated to ISP.

IP (Internet Protocol) address

Every computer connected to the internet is assigned a unique number known as an internet Protocol (IP) address. Since these numbers are usually assigned in country based blocks, an IP address can often be used to identify the country from which a computer is connecting to the internet. It is not possible to tell the exact address of an individual using the IP address.

IRC

Short for Internet Relay Chat. An old but still widely used way of having online chats with several people at the same time.

ISP

Short for Internet Service Provider. A company that connects computers to the internet for a fee.

iTunes Music Store

An e-commerce site set up by Apple Computers which allows you to buy songs which you can listen to using the iTunes software (also provided by Apple) or transfer to your iPod personal music player. Songs bought from the iTunes Music Store can't be played on other MP3 players such as those from Creative or Sony.

K

Kbps

Kilobits per second. A way of measuring the speed of a network by counting the number of bits – a single 1 or 0 – sent each second. A kilobit is a thousand bytes.

L

Laptop

A laptop is a small computer that you can carry around with you and that runs off batteries. It has a screen and a keyboard built in.

Learndirect

A training organisation that offers online training courses for people, either on their own computers, at work or in an online learning centre.

Link

A connection between two web pages. A link on one page, often shown underlined in blue, will take you to another page or even another website when you click on it.

Login

A login is a name you use to tell a computer or a website who you are.

Log off

To disconnect from a computer, network or online service.

Log on

Identify yourself to a computer, network or online service, usually using a user name and password.

M

Malware

Short for 'malicious software'. Programs that damage your computer (viruses), steal your personal information (spyware), display unwanted adverts (adware) or expose your computer to hackers (Trojan horses).

Mbps

Megabits per second. A way of measuring the speed of a network by counting the number of bits – a single 1 or 0 – sent each second. A megabit is a million bits.

Messenger

A program provided by Microsoft which lets people send messages and files to each other using Microsoft's network, MSN. Commonly known as MSN.

Minimise

To shrink the window that a program is using to an icon.

MMS

Multimedia messages, most commonly picture messages and video you can send and receive with a mobile handset.

Modem

A device that connects a computer to the telephone network so that it can link to an ISP and access the internet.

Moderated chatroom

A chatroom or other service where an adult is watching the conversations to make sure they do not break the hosting company's policy on online behaviour. This may include inappropriate language, the disclosure of personal information or behaviour which is considered dangerous. Some chatrooms do not have a person watching all the time, but rely on a program that monitors all of the chats and alerts a moderator when particular words appear.

Moderation

Supervising what goes on in a chatroom, newsgroup, social network or other online service. Online moderation of members' activities and uploaded files can be provided by social networking services in a number of ways. The **Home Office Task Force for Child Protection on the Internet** (2005) defined these as including:

- **Pre-moderation:** in a pre-moderated service, all material supplied by users is reviewed by the moderator for suitability before it becomes visible to other users;
- **Post-moderation:** in a post-moderated service, all material supplied by users is reviewed after it becomes visible to other users. The length of time between the material becoming visible and being checked may vary;
- **Sample moderation:** a moderator may "patrol" a number of spaces or otherwise examine a sample of content, but not all content is reviewed after publication.
- **Reactive moderation:** in a service of this type, moderation takes place only after a request for intervention is made.

Mouse

A small device connected to a computer that is used to control the position of a pointer on screen and has one or more buttons that can be used to make selections or carry out actions like clicking.

MSN

Abbreviation of 'Microsoft Network'. Often used to refer to Microsoft's Instant Messenger.

MySpace

A popular social networking website that lets users create their own homepages, set up weblogs and add contacts.

N

Navigation – These are the buttons on a web page that enable you to move around a site. A site's quality can often be ascertained by how easy it is to navigate.

Net

Abbreviation for internet.

Network

A number of computers that are linked together so that they can exchange data. Local area networks link computers in the same building, wide area networks like the internet connect computers that may be far apart. Also known as a computer network.

Newsgroup

A USENET bulletin board on a single topic.

O**Offline**

Not online. Not connected to the internet.

Online

If you are online you are connected to the internet and can share data with other computers.

Online grooming

Online grooming is defined by the UK Home Office as: "A course of conduct enacted by a suspected paedophile, which would give a reasonable person cause for concern that any meeting with a child arising from the conduct would be for unlawful purposes."

Operating system

The main program that controls the operation of a computer and lets the user call other programs and gain access to files and other data. The three most common operating systems are Microsoft Windows, Apple's Mac OS and Linux.

P**P2P**

An abbreviation of peer-to-peer. Software (often free) which allows you to download files directly from a single computer anywhere in the world that also has the same software installed. Sometimes known as P2P, this is a commonly used way of accessing music, software and films.

Parent control software

Programs that can be installed on computers to limit what children - or anyone else - can do. Often used to restrict access to lists of inappropriate websites, block chatrooms and other potentially dangerous programs and even keep a record of all email and other messages sent and received.

No parental control software is completely reliable and it should only be used as part of a broader approach to online safety which involves talking to children and sharing online activities with them.

Password

A word or series of letters, numbers and characters that only you know, which you use to log on to computers, networks or online services. Learn more [here](#). <[link to passwords page](#)>

PDA

Short for Personal Digital Assistant. A small, handheld computer.

Peer to Peer

Software (often free) which allows you to download files directly from a single computer anywhere in the world that also has the same software installed. Sometimes known as P2P, this is a commonly used way of accessing music, software and movies. Sometimes referred to as P2P.

Personal firewall

A firewall used for a home computer.

Personal Identification Number (PIN)

A number, often only four digits, used like a password.

Pharming

Pronounced 'farming', this is a method by which scammers try to get personal/private information from users by directing them to false – or 'spoof' – websites which look legitimate in your browser.

Phishing

Pronounced 'fishing', this is an attempt to trick people into visiting malicious websites by sending emails or other messages which pretend to come from banks or online shops. The emails have links in them which take people to fake sites set up to look like the real thing, where passwords and account details can be stolen.

PIN

Short for Personal Identification Number. A number, often only four digits, used like a password.

Podcasts

An ongoing series or episodes of a particular programme that can be downloaded automatically or manually.

Pointer

Most commonly the arrow that appears on your computer screen and moves when you move your mouse or touch your trackpad.

Post/ Posting

To add a contribution to a forum/chat room/blog/web page.

Program

A program – spelt the American way – is a collection of instructions to a computer that get it to do something useful, like show a picture or display a web page or change a document. Every time you want to do something on a computer you need to use one or more programs.

R**Ringtone**

The old fashioned phone ring has been replaced on mobiles by a wide range of sounds from pop songs to actual recordings of tropical parakeets. Some are free, but most must be downloaded and paid for.

RSS feed Web /Feed

RSS feeds are a great way of accessing frequently updated information. Feeds allow users to share (syndicate) their content, and allow other people to subscribe to updates. This means new content is delivered to your feed reader as soon as it is published. You can get web feeds for all kinds of content: updates to websites, new posts to blogs, picture or video feeds, or audio feeds (audio files that are syndicated in this way are called podcasts).

S**Screensaver**

This is the often animated picture shown on computers and phones that are switched on – but not in current use. These can be chosen and paid for.

Search engine

A website that lets you search other websites by typing in the words you are looking for. Most search engines do not filter the results they return, so children should use more child-friendly ones like Ask Kids.

Security updates

New versions of programs to fix problems that have been found. Often sent out automatically, it is important that security updates are installed as soon as they are released as hackers and malware often try to make use of the errors that are to be fixed.

Server

A program that manages a website and sends web pages to people's browsers when they ask for them. Also known as Web Server.

Sexting

When a young person takes an intimate or indecent image of themselves and sends it to their friends or boy/girlfriend by mobile phone.

Site

Short for website. A site is a collection of web pages, usually all located on a single web server, and usually about the same topic.

Skin

Slang term for a site template. The skin of a blog, website or profile is the design element that determines how web pages look. Many social networking sites offer users a wide variety of skins allowing members to customise their spaces to better reflect their interests and aesthetic preferences.

Skype

A program that lets you make phone calls over the internet. You can also view users on webcam, chat to them through an instant messenger service and send files. You can talk to other Skype users for free, or pay if you want to call ordinary telephones.

SMS

Short for 'short message service'. The correct name for text messages.

Social networking sites

Websites aiming to build online communities of people with similar interests, providing users with different ways of communicating with each other online. Popular examples are Facebook, Twitter and Bebo.

Software

Programs that run on your computer.

Spam

An email message sent to a large number of people without their consent, usually promoting a product or service. Also known as Unsolicited Commercial Email (UCE) or junk email.

Spimming

Sending spam using instant messaging (IM).

Spyware

A general term for a program that secretly monitors your actions. While they are sometimes sinister, like a remote-control program used by a hacker, software companies have been known to use spyware to gather data about customers. The practice is generally frowned upon.

Stranger danger

The concern that an unknown person might do some harm to a child. This is seen as a significant problem for online activities like chat and email as it is comparatively easy for people to pretend to be someone else online.

Streaming

A method of showing video clips/films online and also of listening to music online.

Subscribe

To sign up for a service or website. Usually you will be asked to set up a username and password, and may be asked for personal information like your name, address and age. It is important to check a site's privacy policy before you do this, as the information may be used in ways you do not expect.

Surf

To look at or search for web pages, usually when you are browsing from one page to another quickly by following links.

Tagging/tag

Tags are the keywords given to content – web pages, posts, pictures, videos, music or files – by a user or by other people. Tags aren't predefined – they are chosen by the user to best describe the content. Tags offer a way of informally classifying and organising content that makes it easy for users to find and share information.

Text

Also called 'short message service' or SMS, a text is a way to send a short message from one mobile phone to another.

Third party applications

Third-party applications are elements of any service which aren't produced by the host service but by another company or individual. Widgets are often created and managed by other services. All third-party applications have terms of use that are separate to the main provider's, and these should be carefully checked, particularly when the application requires you to give access to the data and to friend connections you have on a social networking service.

Trackpad

An alternative to a mouse often found on laptops. It is a small rectangle of touch-sensitive material, so you can move your pointer and/or click by touching it with and moving your.

Trojan horse

A malware program that is not what it seems to be. Trojan horses pretend to be useful programs like word processors but really can enter your computer, access files and then pass on information about data, or install spyware or adware or open up your computer to hackers. This is especially a threat when using 'always on' email connections like cable modem or ADSL phone lines.

U

Uniform Resource Locator

Where on the World Wide Web to find a particular website or web page. A URL or web address has three parts to it: **http://server/page/** they are:

http:// tells the web browser that this is a web address

server is the name of the computer to be contacted, like bbc.co.uk or childnet.com

page is the name of the web page to be read, like index.html. If no page is given then the server sends back the homepage.

Often abbreviated to URL. Also see 'web address'.

Upload

To copy information from your computer to another, usually over the internet.

URL

Short for 'Uniform Resource Locator'. Where on the World Wide Web to find a particular website or web page. A URL or web address has three parts to it: **http://server/page/** they are:

http:// tells the web browser that this is a web address

server is the name of the computer to be contacted, like bbc.co.uk or childnet.com

page is the name of the web page to be read, like index.html. If no page is given then the server sends back the homepage.

Also see 'web address'.

USENET

A type of online bulletin board where anyone can post a message on any topic. Divided into thousands of separate newsgroups, each of which is supposed to be about a single topic, though in practice the rule is often broken.

V

Video hosting sites

Websites where you can view video clips and movies, often submitted by other internet users, for example, YouTube.

Virtual

This is a common term on the internet. It means a simulation of the real thing. The internet itself is often seen as a virtual world where you make virtual friends and become a part of virtual communities.

Virus

A malware program that can potentially destroy all of your files and operating system by hiding on your computer by making changes to another program, and which can then make copies of itself. A virus can do lots of different things, like delete your files, steal your data or even take over your computer and let hackers control it. Viruses find their way into your computer via email, from a file downloaded via the internet or from a disc. You need to install anti-virus software to protect your computer.

W

Walled garden

An online environment only containing child-safe content. It offers a high level of security for younger users but may be a bit too restrictive for older members of the family.

Wallpaper

The usually still image on a computer or phone screen. It can be changed and paid for.

WAP

Stands for 'Wireless Application Protocol'. This allows users to receive information instantly via handheld wireless devices such as mobile phones, pagers, two-way radios and communicators.

Web

Abbreviation for World Wide Web.

Web address

Where on the World Wide Web to find a particular website or web page. Also called Uniform Resource Locator or URL the address has three parts to it: **http://server/page/** they are:

http:// tells the web browser that this is a web address

server is the name of the computer to be contacted, like bbc.co.uk or childnet-int.co.uk

page is the name of the web page to be read, like index.html. If no page is given then the server sends back the homepage.

Web browser

A program that allows you to use the World Wide Web to view internet pages. Internet Explorer is the most commonly used browser but Firefox, Netscape, Google Chrome, Opera and Safari are also available. Also called 'browser'.

Webcams

A camera, either built in or that can be plugged into a computer, used to send images and video over the internet. Webcams are most often used for video chat.

Web Feed / RSS feed

Web feeds are a great way of accessing frequently updated information. Feeds allow users to share (syndicate) their content, and allow other people to subscribe to updates. This means new content is delivered to your feed reader as soon as it is published. You can get web feeds for all kinds of content: updates to websites, new posts to blogs, picture or video feeds, or audio feeds (audio files that are syndicated in this way are called podcasts).

Weblog

A website that is made up of a selection of separate entries, or 'posts', usually shown on the home page with the most recent first. Many weblogs are used by people to keep online diaries or write about areas of interest. Often shortened to 'blog'.

Web page

A single screen of material stored on the World Wide Web and sent to a user's computer to be displayed by their browser.

Web server

A program that manages a website and sends web pages to people's browsers when they ask for them.

Website

A Website is a collection of web pages, usually all located on a single web server, and usually about the same topic.

Whispering

When 'groomers' pretend to be children in supervised chat areas, then continue a relationship in personal conversations.

Whitelist

A list of trusted websites you have allowed access to so that searching or surfing the internet is safer.

Widgets

Widgets are chunks of code that have been designed to be added easily to a user's website or profile page. They usually add an interactive or automatically updated element to static web pages, bringing information which is generated or stored on one part of the web to another. They allow you to decorate your space with fun and/or useful content, or bring in content and links to other sites or social networking services you use. Widgets come in all shapes and sizes: a widget might be a mini computer game, a video clip which is uploaded to a video-hosting site, or an update of the latest music someone has listened to or sites they have bookmarked. Widgets are often third-party applications – content from a source other than the web or social networking service.

Wi-Fi

A wireless network that allows specially equipped computers to connect to the internet without any cables.

Wikis

A website that allows the easy creation and editing of any number of interlinked web pages, using a simplified markup language or a What You See Is What You Get (WYSIWYG) text editor, within the browser.

World Wide Web

An online service which allows people to put up web pages containing all sorts of information including words, images, video, sound and even programs like word processors. The Web is made up of many billions of separate web pages each stored on a web server. Each web page can link to other pages, creating a single vast library.

WWW

Abbreviation for World Wide Web.