

THE INTERNET GUIDE

For English Language Teachers

Inside you'll find everything you need to:

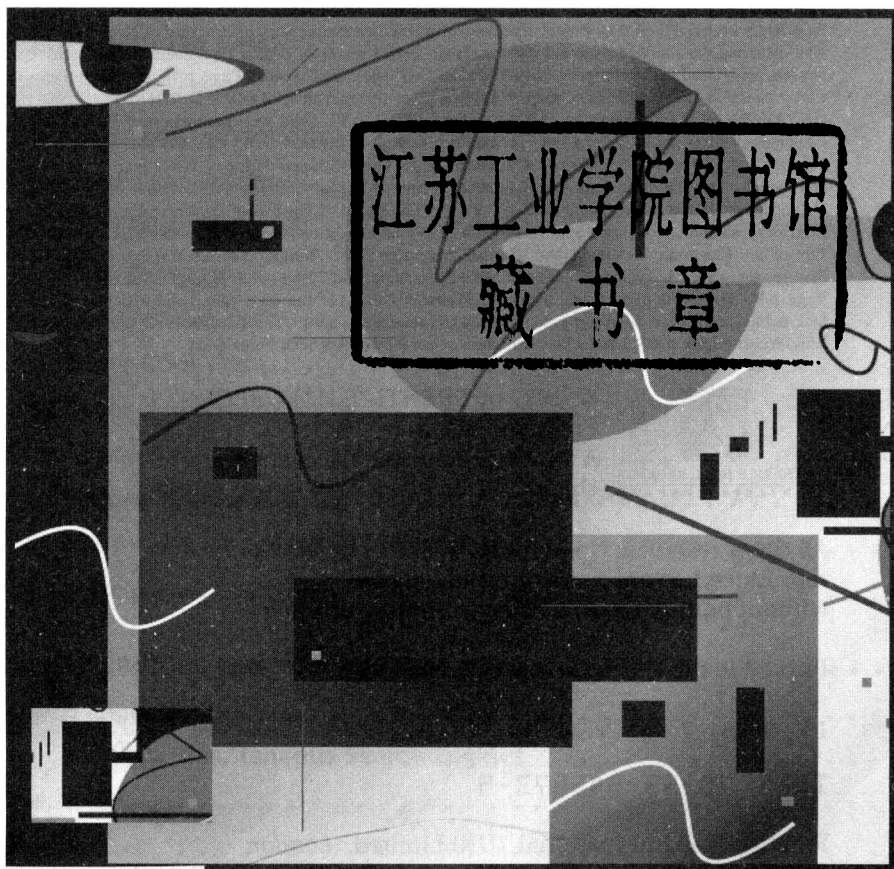
- get connected to the Internet
- surf hundreds of ESL/EFL Web sites
- share ideas with other language teachers
- get free lesson plans
- send and receive e-mail from around the world
- create your own Web page
- find a teaching job!



DAVE SPERLING

THE INTERNET GUIDE

For English Language Teachers



Dave Sperling

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For Benjamin,
who wants to be a teacher like his Daddy.

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Introduction

My love affair with the Internet began back in 1992 when, with my trusty Mac and a very slow modem, I managed to send my first e-mail message from my house in Los Angeles, all the way to a friend across the world in Thailand. And when I received a message back from him in a matter of minutes, you can't even imagine my exhilaration!

Four years later, to my astonishment, I'm still excited. In this book I'll try my best to share with you some of my enthusiasm by showing you how to :

- **Navigate the World Wide Web**
- **Send electronic mail**
- **Find the information you're looking for**
- **Locate and download software**
- **Meet and communicate with people from around the world**
- **Use the Internet in your teaching**
- **Create and promote your very own Web page**
- **Even find a job**

And if that's not enough, I'll also share with you several hundred of my favorite ESL/EFL Web sites, gathered from my voluminous journeys (and several hundred hours) across the World Wide Web.

Remember: Things Change

I've tried my best to keep everything as up-to-date and accurate as possible, but the Internet is a dynamic entity where things are continuously evolving—addresses change, sites close down, technology becomes outdated, and products come and go. If you have any problems, spot any errors, or just feel like saying hello, please feel free to e-mail me at:

sperling@eslcafe.com

In addition, I'll be keeping things current on my Update Page located at:

<http://www.eslcafe.com/book/>

You'll also find a bulletin board where you can give me instant feedback for future editions of this book. It's located at:

<http://www.eslcafe.com/book/wwwboard.html>

I'd love to hear from you!

Dave Sperling

California State University, Northridge

March 10, 1997

Contents

Acknowledgments	viii
Introduction	ix
Remember: Things Change	ix
1 Welcome to the Internet!	1
The Internet: What's in It for Me?	1
A Brief History of the Internet	2
Internet 101: The Basics	2
Getting Connected	3
Types of Connections	3
A Peek into the Future	4
The World Wide Web	4
Web Browsers	5
The Web Address	7
Some Cool Tips	7
Terms You Should Know	8
Beyond the Web	8
Helper Applications and Plug-ins	8
Kids Will Be Kids: A Lesson in Cybersafety	10
Further Help	10
2 Finding Resources and Information	11
Search Engines	11
Multiple Simultaneous Search Engines	13
Directories	15
Libraries	16
White Pages: Finding People	18
Finding Software	19
Language Learning Software	20
More Places to Search	22

3 Communicating on the Net	24
E-mail	24
Using E-mail in the Classroom	26
Mailing Lists	28
Finding a List	28
Student Lists	29
Teacher Lists	30
USENET Newsgroups	34
Finding a Newsgroup	34
ESL/EFL-related Groups	35
Web Discussion Boards	36
Live Chat	37
Internet Relay Chat (IRC)	37
Web Chat	38
MOOs	39
Audio	40
Videoconferencing	41
Netiquette	42
4 Creating a Basic Web Page	43
Starting Up with HTML	43
Doing More with HTML	44
Text	45
Heads	45
Paragraphs and Lines	46
Links	47
Color and Background	47
Pictures	49
Common HTML Tags	49
HTML Editors to the Rescue	50
Onto the Net	51
Promoting Your Web Page	51

5 Dave's Guide to the Best of the Web	52
Articles	53
Associations	54
Bilingual Education	56
Bookstores on the Web	57
Business English	57
Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)	57
Conferences	58
✓ Dictionaries	59
Disabilities	60
Distance Education	60
Drama	61
Electronic ESL/EFL Publications	61
6 Encyclopedias	62
English for Specific Purposes (ESP)	63
Games	63
Grammar	65
Lesson Plans and Material	67
✓ Libraries	69
Linguistics	70
Links	70
Listening and Speaking	71
Literacy	72
Literature	72
✓ Magazines	73
Meeting Other Teachers	74
Movies and Screenplays	74
Multicultural Issues	74
✓ News and Newspapers	75
Online Help	76
Poetry	77
✓ Pronunciation	77

Proverbs and Quotations	78
Public Speaking	78
Publishers	79
Quizzes	80
Resources	81
School Directories	82
Schools — Individual ESL Programs	83
Songs and Music	87
Student Internet Projects	88
Teacher Training	89
Testing and Assessment	90
Theatre and Drama	91
TOEFL	91
Tongue Twisters	92
U.S. Immigration	93
○ Video	93
Vocabulary, Idioms, and Slang	93
Writing	96
 6 Jobs on the Net	 99
Africa	99
Asia	100
Canada	100
China	101
Czech Republic	101
Europe	101
General (ESL/Education Related)	102
Hong Kong	104
Indonesia	104
Information	105
Japan	105
Job Interview	106
K-12 Overseas	107

Korea	107
Latin America	108
Middle East	108
Miscellaneous	108
Resumé	109
Singapore	109
Taiwan	109
Thailand	110
Volunteer	110
 7 Copyright Law on the Net	 111
 Appendix A: Country Codes	 115
 Appendix B: Error Messages	 119
 Appendix C: Netspeak	 121
Slang	121
Smileys	122
Other Conventions	123
 Selected Bibliography	 124
 Glossary of Internet Terms	 128
 Index	 135

“The Internet to me is like a library which is five minutes old. People who say they can find things quicker with a stroll to the local library are missing the point. The Net is young—one day it will be complete. It’s a vibrant place, particularly with regard to ESL/EFL teachers and what they are doing. Also a great place for those of us who need access to ‘pop culture’ information for our students.”

Gavin Dudeney
International House, Barcelona, Spain
dudeney@encomix.es

The Internet: What’s in It for Me?

Everyone (and I mean everyone!) seems to be getting onto the Internet on-ramp these days, but what exactly is this so called “Information Superhighway?” That’s not an easy question to answer but try visualizing it as a magnificent global network with millions and millions of computers (and, of course, people) connected to one another, where each day people throughout the world exchange an immeasurable amount of information, electronic mail, news, pictures, resources, and, more importantly, ideas.

But how does all this help you and your class? Well, imagine an infinite number of resources available for your students to improve their skills in reading, writing, grammar, listening, pronunciation, vocabulary, idioms, slang, Test of English as a Foreign Language, and even conversation. Or contemplate your class sharing their creativity with the entire world—essays, poems, recipes, biographies, or even art work. Or perhaps communicating—with text, voice, and live video—with ESL/EFL classes from all parts of the world. Astounding, isn’t it?

And what’s in it for you, the teacher? Well, you’ll find the Internet to be an exhilarating tool for meeting and brainstorming with other teachers and students from around the world, locating and gathering class material, reading the latest journal articles and publications, accessing language learning software, and even finding a new teaching job. Sounds wonderful, doesn’t it? It is!

A Brief History of the Internet

The history of the Internet dates back to 1969, when the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency decided to create a way for computers to “talk” to one another over standard telephone lines. Their network of computers was called DARPANET (soon to become known as ARPANET), which quickly grew as more and more computers became a part of this expanding network.

The idea of a network soon became a popular means for scientists and researchers to communicate and share ideas with one another. In 1984 the National Science Foundation started the NSFNET network, which linked five supercomputer centers. Universities were then able to easily enter this network by accessing one of the five supercomputer centers.

NSFNET grew rapidly, as every school and government agency wanted to become part of this exciting international network. As more and more computers became interconnected, NSFNET became known as the ***Inter-Net-Network***, otherwise known as the **Internet**. Today there are millions of computers from nearly every country in the world connected to the Internet, and many more millions of Internet users.

Internet 101: The Basics

A lot of people think that the Internet is just a single entity, but the truth is that the Internet is made up of a combination of various software applications, each with their own unique function. Once on the **Net** (as the Internet is often called), you'll be able to enjoy such goodies as:

- **E-mail** — Electronic mail allows you to instantly send and receive messages from around the world.
- **World Wide Web** — With its colorful mix of hyperlinks, text, graphics, images, sound, and video, the **Web** is where it's at!
- **Gopher** — Another way of exploring the Internet to find information.
- **File Transfer Protocol (FTP)** — A way to transfer files from one computer to another computer over the Internet.
- **Telnet** — An application that enables you to log in to another computer system on the Internet.
- **USENET Newsgroups** — A network of more than 20,000 discussion groups on thousands of specialized topics.
- **Chat** — A way to communicate in real time with other users whereby those users type simultaneously.
- **Audio** — Communicating as with a telephone over the Internet.
- **Videoconferencing** — Voice and video communication.
- **And More!**

Getting Connected

Now that I've got you all excited about what the Internet's all about, let's learn a little bit about how to get you and your class up and running. Here's what you need:

- **A computer** Of course you'll need a computer in order to hook up to the Net, and almost any one will do. However, in order to take advantage of the latest and greatest Internet software (like **Netscape Navigator** for exploring the Web), you'll need a late-model Macintosh or a PC running Microsoft Windows or Windows 95. Lots of memory (RAM) helps, too.
- **A modem** It's the modem that enables your computer to transfer data over the phone lines and therefore connect you to the Internet. Modems come in various speeds measured in **bps**, or **bits per second**. Do yourself a favor, however, and buy the fastest modem possible (I suggest 28,800 or 33,600 bps) because it will make your journey a lot more pleasant.

Types of Connections

Dial-up Accounts

Now that your computer and modem are set up, you'll need an Internet connection. The most common type is through a **Dial-up** account, where you dial into your Internet account through your modem. There are three types of dial-up accounts:

1. **Terminal Connection** Also called a **shell account**, this is the most basic type of Internet access, giving you a text-only environment with little or no **graphics** (images and pictures). Use only as a last resort!
2. **SLIP/PPP Connection** Slip (Serial Line Interface Protocol) and PPP (Point-to-Point Protocol) are quickly becoming the most common way for people at home to access the Internet. This type of connection enables you to directly connect to the Internet via an Internet Service Provider (**ISP**), enabling you to use the newest and best graphical Internet software.



Tip: For the world's most comprehensive and up-to-date listing of Internet Service Providers, surf over to *The List* (<http://thelist.iworld.com/>), where you can search a database of thousands of ISPs from around the world.

3. **Commercial Online Access** Millions of users have Internet access through large commercial online companies, which usually simplify the process of installing and configuring Internet software, as well as provide access to their own services and forums. Remember, however, that you might be limited to using only their Internet software (which is not always good), and the cost is also often more expensive than local or national Internet Service Providers. You'll find that it pays to shop around.

The four online giants are:

America Online

(800) 827-6364

(<http://www.aol.com/>)

\$19.95 a month for unlimited access.

CompuServe

(800) 848-8199

(<http://www.compuserve.com/>)

\$9.95 a month for 5 hours, \$2.95 for each additional hour; \$24.95 a month for 20 hours, \$1.95 for each additional hour.

Prodigy

(800) 776-3449

(<http://www.prodigy.com/>)

\$19.95 a month for unlimited access.

Microsoft Network (MSN)

(800) 386-5550

(<http://www.msn.com>)

\$19.95 a month for unlimited access.

Dedicated Connections

Most colleges, universities, and schools offer a high-speed dedicated connection, where the computers on campus are permanently connected to the Internet. This type of connection is fast, doesn't require a modem to dial, and is always linked to the Internet, 24 hours a day.

A Peek into the Future

There's no doubt that the Internet will become increasingly faster, with graphics, sound, and video images instantly flashing across the screen. **ISDN** (Integrated Services Digital Network) is already available in many places, and offers a high-speed digital telephone connection to the Internet, with speeds of 56,000 to 128,000 bps (and that's fast!). At this time, however, ISDN is still expensive in many areas, so call your local telephone company for more information.

Also keep an eye out for satellite connections, with speeds hovering around 182,000 bps, and cable modems, with lightning speeds starting at a whopping 500,000 bps!

The World Wide Web

The World Wide Web (also called **WWW**, or the **Web**), is fast becoming the most popular area of the Internet. With its mix of text and multimedia—and user-friendliness thrown in—the Web is a magnificent collection of interconnected documents (called Web pages) from around the globe.

The Web began in Switzerland at CERN (The European Laboratory for Particle Physics), where scientists developed **hypertext**, an easier method of navigating the Internet, where text is used to link documents. With hypertext, a simple click of the mouse enables you to easily jump around the world: to read the latest news in *The New York Times*, search for teaching material in Australia, chat with friends in South Africa, view paintings from art galleries in Paris, listen to pop music from Korea, download the newest software in California, and even participate in live videoconferencing with an ESL/EFL class in another country.

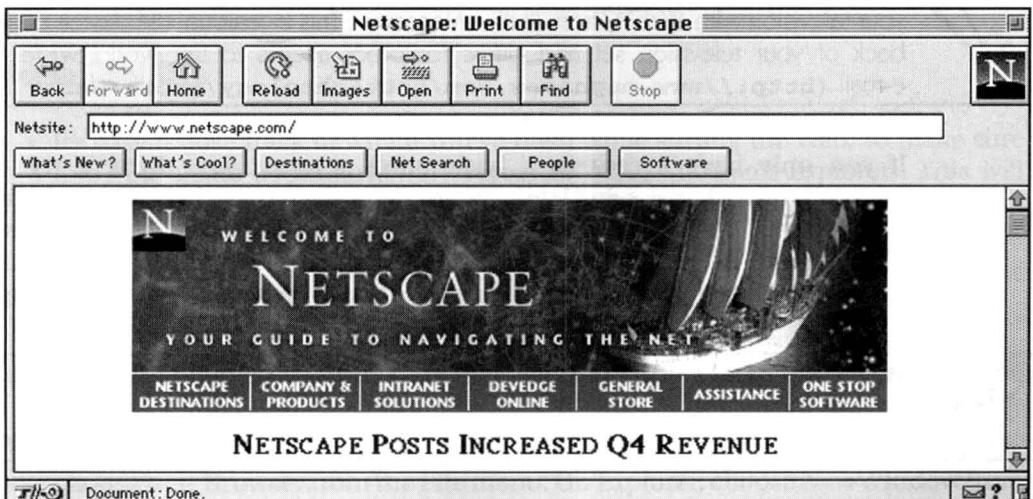
Web Browsers

To access the Web, you'll need a **Web browser**, which is the software through which you navigate the World Wide Web. There are lots of Web browsers on the market, but the two most popular are **Netscape Navigator** and **Microsoft Explorer**.

Netscape Navigator

(<http://home.netscape.com/>)

My personal favorite, it's powerful, easy to use, and performs equally well on the Mac, Windows, and UNIX.



Microsoft Explorer

(<http://microsoft.com/>)

Also very easy to use. It does have an advantage, however, over most of the competition: all versions are free.



Check this out: No access to a computer? You can now surf the World Wide Web right from your television with WebTV from Philips Magnavox. This ingenious little device plugs into the back of your television set and offers foolproof access to the World Wide Web and e-mail (<http://www.magnavox.com/hottechnology/webtv/webtv.html>).

If you only have access to a basic shell account, give **Lynx** a try (http://kufacts.cc.ukans.edu/lynx_help/lynx_help_main.html). It's a text-only Web browser, but it's fast and fairly easy to use. And, if you are using Windows, you can supplement it with **SlipKnot** (<http://plaza.interport.net/slipknot/slipknot.html>), which magically allows you to view graphics while using Lynx.



Tip: If you have access only to a text-only terminal connection, don't despair; TIA has arrived! *The Internet Adapter* is a program that emulates a SLIP/PPP connection, providing access to all the fun and exciting Internet software (<http://marketplace.com/>).

The Web Address

Accessing another Web site is as easy as a click of your mouse. However, there may be times when you will need to manually enter a **URL**, or Uniform Resource Locator (pronounced U-R-L). Here, for example, is the URL, or Web address, to my home page, The ESL Cafe:

http://www.eslcafe.com

http stands for Hypertext Transfer Protocol and is necessary for connecting to Web pages across the globe.

:// comes next and is an essential part of the address.

Finally comes the site where the Web page is actually located, as in **www.eslcafe.com**



Tip: If you're not able to connect to a site and you believe that the address might be wrong, don't give up. Try connecting to the site again. Once connected, enter the remaining directory names one by one until you find a link to the correct URL.

Some Cool Tips

- It's easy to lose track of where you've been while surfing the Web, so make sure that you create **bookmarks** (or "**favorites**" with Microsoft Explorer). This will enable you to effortlessly return to your favorite sites on future visits.
- When you get tired of waiting for a page to load, try pressing the **Stop** button.
- Take advantage of the **Back** and **Forward** buttons for easier navigation.
- With Netscape and Explorer, you don't need the **http://** when manually entering a URL. For example, just typing **www.eslcafe.com** gets you to my home page.
- You can have more than one browser open at the same time. For Netscape, choose **New Browser** from the **File** menu. On Explorer, choose **New Window** from the **File** menu.
- Looking for some particular text on a Web page? Go to the **Edit** menu and choose **Find**. If it's there, you'll find it.