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Internet 101

A College Student's Guide

Alfred Glossbrenner

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藏书章

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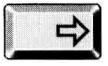
Introduction

WARNING: The Provost has determined that accessing the Internet can be hazardous to your grades. In extensive tests, the GPA of laboratory animals was severely affected by repeated exposure to the Internet. Their IQs, on the other hand, showed a marked rise.

"They don't tell us *anything*!" That's what my friend Will said. He was working at a local computer store for the summer, and I was in buying four megabytes of memory for one of my systems. Will goes to a good school, and he's got an Internet account on the campus system. But he and his friends are basically flying blind on the Net because the system administrators either aren't around or are too busy or don't know much about the Internet themselves.

"If only there were a course I could take," Will said as he put the memory modules in an anti-static bag. I smiled. Because at the time I had already begun writing this book. And when it comes out, I'm going to personally deliver an autographed copy to him.

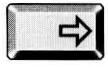


An incredible resource!

It would be a real tragedy these days to go through school without ever learning to use the Internet. Sure it's a hot topic. Sure it was on the cover of *Time* magazine. No question about it—the Internet is fashionable.

But it's also the most incredible storehouse of knowledge and information in human history. And for you, as a college student, it is almost certainly *free*! Learning to use the Net will not only help you with your research papers and coursework, it will also help you in your career after you graduate. For not only is the Net *everywhere*, it covers *everything*.

Of course, you can also have a lot of fun on the Internet—way too much fun, probably. It shouldn't be too long now before Internet addiction is officially recognized as a syndrome and treatments and various 12-step programs are created to cure it. Then magazines will do cover stories on *that*.



Teach a person to fish . . .

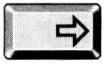
Meantime, this book is specifically designed to get you plugged in and up to speed fast. It begins with "The Internet 5-Minute University," a chapter that gives you instant Internet skills. That's followed by "10 Cool Things You can Do Right Now!," a chapter that will have you doing some pretty amazing stuff in seconds.

You can always use a computer or terminal at the campus computer to tap the Internet. But since that's not always convenient, the next chapters in Part One cover the hardware and software you'll need to tap your campus computer system, and thus the Internet, from your dorm room or any other location.

Then there are the basic skills chapters that show you how to find and get things, and how to deal with the many types of compressed and other files on the Net. There's also an important chapter that

teaches you how to capture, process, and view graphics and sound files from Internet newsgroups.

The Internet is not a simple place. It is largely the creation of computer programmers and others with minds that thrive on complexity and originality. The result is a veritable jungle of differing procedures and options and ways of doing things. The chapters in Part One of this book will guide you through. They're designed to do three things: make it clear, keep it simple, and teach you to survive on your own.



Are we having fun yet?

The rest of the book—the remaining 20 chapters—shows you how to use those skills to mine Internet goodies. You'll learn how to make the most of Internet e-mail and how to put your parents online so you can correspond with them (assuming you want to). You'll learn how to locate—and then get your hands on—books you find in the Library of Congress online catalogue.

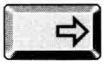
Foreign language practice, reference works online, music, the full text of hundreds of classic works of fiction and poetry—it's all just a few keystrokes away. You'll find that you aren't the only one with a "roommate from Hell," and you'll learn about resources like the recipe database that can help you find something creative to do with those eggs that are about to expire.

Then you'll see how the Internet adds a new twist to the mating and dating rituals we all go through. As if communicating by computer weren't insulation enough, you can also post messages and engage in discussions anonymously. Chapter 19 shows you how. Chapter 20 helps you get the inside info on a school before transferring, and Chapter 21 alerts you to sources of grants, funding, and scholarships for grad school.

The chapters in Part Five show you how to use the Net to find a summer job in the location of your choice, how to make the most of online travel information, and how to identify and investigate

opportunities to study abroad. If the first part of the book is the meat and potatoes (or the tofu and tomatoes), Part Six is the dessert. You'll learn all about the games you can play or download, movie information, television, jokes without end, and X-rated Internet.

I could go on and on—like some professors I know—but you're holding the book. Give it a good going over. Pick a page at random and read a couple of paragraphs. I think you'll like what you find. And there's just the possibility that you'll be amazed. I certainly hope so. And I hope you enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed writing it.



Final notes

The most important element that helped get this book done was Emily Glossbrenner, my uncredited coauthor. This is no mushy dedication. She did the research, editing, and coding. I did the writing. Movies watched included *Much Ado about Nothing* (12 times; still in love with it), *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, and *North by Northwest* (Are all Hitchcock movies this good?). Music: Enya (assorted CDs), Diva (Annie Lennox), The Future (Leonard Cohen), Mozart's Serenade in D (K185) performed by the Academy of Ancient Music, Jaap Schroder/Christopher Hogwood, and Respighi's Ancient Airs and Dances (Neville Marriner/Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra). Radio/tapes: "Whadayaknow?" with Michael Feldman, "Car Talk," and Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* read by Martin Starkie and Prunella Scales (Nevill Coghill translation).

Drugs of choice: Rolling Rock, St. Pauli Girl, and Becks. Grandma Utz's Handcooked Potato Chips. Blue Diamond Smokehouse Almonds. Herr's Extra Thin Pretzels. President's Choice cookies. (Every flavor is great, and they're an Acme house brand, if you can believe it!) Two Dark-and-Stormies (ginger beer and Gosling's Black Seal from Bermuda, if you can find it, Meyer's if you can't). General Tso's chicken, assorted fast foods. Note that no poison ivy medicine was applied during the creation of this book (there was no time to weed the garden and thus no poison ivy hazard), and fruits and vegetables were consumed in medicinal quantities only.

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The Internet 5-Minute University

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