Getting Information from the Web

For both businesses and individuals, the Web can be a valuable source of up-to-date information. You can get the latest news, print a map of your neighborhood, find a local business, and even reconnect with long-lost friends. You can access much of this information from the home pages of many search engines and directories. For example, the Yahoo! directory’s home page includes a collection of hyperlinks to general news stories, sports scores, stock market reports, and weather. In this unit, however, you will learn how to use specialized search engines and Web sites to search the Web for current information. You will also learn how to evaluate Web pages and how to cite Web resources.

You have just been hired by Cosby Promotions, a public relations firm. You are responsible for helping staff members stay current on news items and for providing up-to-date travel information to staff and clients.

OBJECTIVES

Get the news
Obtain weather reports
Obtain maps and city guides
Find businesses and people
Find online reference tools
Evaluate Web resources
Evaluate user-generated content
Understand copyright and cite Web resources
Getting the News

You can easily find current news stories on the Web by using a news search engine. A news search engine searches only online news sites. All the major U.S. broadcasters, including ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, MSNBC, and National Public Radio (NPR), maintain Web sites that carry news features. Broadcasters in other countries, such as the BBC, also provide news reports on their Web pages. Major newspapers, such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Times in London, offer Web sites that include current news and many other features from their print editions. News search engines also search the Web sites of wire services. A wire service (also called press agency or a news service) is an organization that gathers and distributes news to newspapers, magazines, broadcasters, and other organizations that pay a fee to the wire service. Although there are hundreds of wire services in the world, most news comes from the four largest wire services: United Press International (UPI) and the Associated Press (AP) in the United States, Thomson Reuters in Great Britain, and Agence France-Presse in France. Some new search engines also search blogs, Web sites that contain commentary on current events written by individuals. Marti Cosby, the president of Cosby Promotions, wants you to find recent news stories about NASA because a technical company heavily involved with the space program might become a client of Cosby Promotions. You decide to use a news search engine to look for recent news articles that mention NASA.

1. Go to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links to a news search engine under Lesson 1. Some of the news search engines listed are Web sites devoted strictly to searching news sites; others are general search engines that have a page devoted to searching news sites.

2. Type NASA in the search expression text box, then click the appropriate button to start the search. The search results page returned by the news search engine you chose lists articles related to NASA. See Figure E-2 for the results page in the Yahoo! news search engine. Note that on the results pages of some news search engines, you can click a link to sort the results by date instead of by relevance.

3. Explore two links that you believe will provide interesting information about NASA. When you click one of the links, a story opens from the publication’s Web site, similar to the one shown in Figure E-3.

Understanding RSS

Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is a file format that makes it possible to share updates, such as headlines, weather updates, and other Web site content, via a feed, which is simply a file containing summaries of stories and news from a Web site. Most RSS feeds must be read through a program called an aggregator that lets you receive feed content. Internet Explorer and Firefox, and some email programs, have a built-in aggregator. For Internet Explorer users, Web sites can also provide an RSS update on a section of a page via a Web slice. You can use an RSS search engine to search the Web for feeds relevant to your search expression; to find sites that offer Web slices, you can look on the Internet Explorer 8 Add-ons Gallery Web page at www.ieaddons.com, and then click Web Slices. Figure E-1 shows the page listing feeds available from Yahoo! News. To subscribe to a feed, click the Feeds button on the Command bar in Internet Explorer or in the Location bar in Firefox. To subscribe to a Web slice, click the Add Web Slices button on the Command bar in Internet Explorer.

![Figure E-1: Subscribing to Yahoo! News](image-url)
You can search the archives of most online news sources. Look for a search text box on the home page of the news Web site. Usually the site will return a list of links to relevant articles. Most online news sources allow you to view recent articles without registering or paying, but many require that you register or pay a fee for access to older articles. This is often indicated in the list of results.
Obtaining Weather Reports

You can obtain up-to-the-minute weather reports in destinations all over the world. This information is particularly useful for travelers. You can use the Web to check the weather report to find current local weather conditions and forecasts. Marti is planning two trips in the near future. She is going to Nashville later in the week to meet with some new country music artists whom she hopes to sign as clients for the agency. Next week, she is going to Europe where she will visit clients in Venice. She wants you to check the local weather conditions in both cities.

1. Go to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links to a weather service under Lesson 2

2. Type Nashville, TN in the text box labeled “Forecast,” “City, State,” “Local Weather,” or something similar, then click the button next to that text box or press [Enter] to start your search

Depending on the Web site you chose, the current forecast for Nashville, TN, or a list of cities appears.

3. If a list of cities appears, click the Nashville, TN or the Nashville, Tennessee link

A Web page showing current weather conditions in Nashville appears. Figure E-4 shows this information on the Weather.com Web site. Now you need to find the local weather conditions in Venice, Italy.

4. Return to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click a link to a different weather service under Lesson 2

Choose a different weather service than the one you chose in Step 1.

5. Type Venice in the text box labeled “Forecast,” “City, State,” or something similar, then click the button next to that text box or press [Enter]

Depending on the Web site you chose, you may see a page showing the current weather conditions in Venice, Italy; a page showing the current weather conditions in a U.S. city named Venice; or a page listing links to weather conditions for a number of cities named Venice.

6. Click Venice, Italy in the list of cities, or if the page that opens shows only links to cities named Venice in the United States, click a link on the home page for World Forecasts or World Weather. If necessary, type Venice, Italy in a text box labeled “City, Country” or something similar, then click the appropriate button or press [Enter] to start the search

7. If the page that opens shows a list of links to weather conditions for a number of cities named Venice, click the Venice, Italy link

Compare your screen to Figure E-5, which shows the weather for Venice, Italy on AccuWeather.com.

Searching for Web sites that have been modified recently

Sometimes you might want to find information about a topic on sites that have been recently modified because you want only the latest and most up-to-date information. Many search engines allow you to choose a date range when you enter a search expression. Some search engines let you choose preset time range options, such as “in the last week” or “in the last 3 months,” to limit your search to sites that were last modified within the selected time period. Other search engines let you limit searches to dates before or after a specific date. And some search engines provide a way to search for sites within a specified date range; for example, you could limit a search to sites modified between April 24, 2011 and November 11, 2011.
**FIGURE E-4:** Weather.com results for Nashville, TN

Type city here to get forecast

Click to see extended forecasts

**FIGURE E-5:** AccuWeather results for Venice, Italy

Type city here to get forecast

Click to see extended forecast
**Obtaining Maps and City Guides**

The Web includes a number of Web sites that provide maps and driving directions. Some sites allow you to email the map image or download it to your computer or a handheld device such as a personal digital assistant (PDA) or a mobile phone. These sites usually include links to terms and conditions that govern your use of any maps you download, print, or email. Be sure to review those terms and conditions for your chosen site. You can also use the Web to find a wealth of travel information, such as hotel and restaurant listings and sightseeing guides. Marti is in Nashville, she wants to stop at Ryman Auditorium, the original home of the Grand Ole Opry. Marti gives you the address, 116 Fifth Avenue North, and asks you to find a map of Nashville on the Web that shows the location of Ryman Auditorium. She also asks you to look for additional information about Ryman Auditorium.

**STEPS**

1. **Go to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links under Map Sites in Lesson 3**
   The home page of the site you chose appears.

2. Type 116 Fifth Avenue North in the text box labeled Address or something similar, then type Nashville (the city) and TN (the state) in the appropriate text boxes, or type 116 Fifth Avenue North, Nashville, TN in the Search box
   The completed page on the Google Maps site is shown in Figure E-6.

3. **Click the appropriate button to start the search, usually Get Map, Go, or Find**
   The map appears for the address you entered. If you used Bing Maps, you will see a map similar to the one shown in Figure E-7. The exact location of the address you searched for—Ryman Auditorium—is marked on the map. On some sites it is marked with a red star, circle, or other indicator, and on other sites with a text box containing the address. Most maps include navigation tools that you can use to zoom in or out on the map, a link you can click to view a printable version of the map, and a link you can click to obtain directions to the address. Now you will use a city guide to obtain additional information about Ryman Auditorium.

4. **Return to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links under City Guides in Lesson 3**

5. Type Nashville, TN in a search text box, then click the appropriate button to start your search

6. **Click the Attractions or Things to Do link or type Ryman Auditorium in a search text box**
   More detailed information about Ryman Auditorium appears.

**Using satellite view**

Some map sites offer a satellite view of a location—the location shown in pictures taken from a satellite. To see the satellite view, click the Satellite link or button on the map. On most sites that offer satellite view, you can see the street names overlaid on the satellite image if you want. To use this feature, click the Labels link button or check box. Bing Maps also offers a bird’s eye view of some locations. If this button is available on a map, you can click it to see a lower angle, higher resolution satellite view of the area.
**FIGURE E-6:** Address entered in Google Maps

- Address entered
- Click to get map
- Navigation tools to zoom in or out on map

**FIGURE E-7:** Map from Bing Maps showing the location of Ryman Auditorium

- Click to print map
- Click to get directions
- Location of 116 Fifth Avenue North
Finding Businesses and People

Yellow page directories are search engines that specialize in finding businesses; the businesses are grouped by type and location as in the yellow pages phone book. White page directories are search engines that enable you to search for addresses and telephone numbers for individuals as you would in a white pages phone book. In fact, this information is usually based on the printed telephone directory. Most sites that offer these types of directories offer both yellow and white pages directories. In addition, you can search for information about a person by simply typing the person's name into the search expression text box in a search engine. Marti needs to develop reciprocal relationships with public relations firms in Nashville. She wants to contact a few of them on her trip, so she asks you to use a yellow pages directory to find public relations firms in Nashville. She also asks you to become more familiar with methods of searching for people on the Web.

STEPS

1. Go to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links under Yellow and White Pages Directories in Lesson 4
   All of these links are to sites that offer both yellow and white pages searches.

2. Click the Yellow Pages or Business link, if necessary
   The page that contains search text boxes for the yellow pages directory on the site you chose opens.

3. Click the Category option button or Category link, if necessary, then type public relations in the Category, Business Type, or Keyword text box

4. Type Nashville, TN in the appropriate text box or boxes, then click Search (or something similar)
   A results page opens. This page might display a listing of results or additional categories that you can click to filter the results further. Figure E-8 shows the results pages for SuperPages with a list of categories on the left.

5. If a list of categories appears on the results page, click Public Relations Counselors or Communications & Public Relations Consultants or something similar
   The listings include a name, address, telephone number, and link to a map and driving directions. Most yellow pages directories also provide links to the Web sites of firms (if the firm has one).

6. Return to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links under Yellow and White Pages Directories in Lesson 4

7. Click the White Pages or People Pages link, if necessary, then type your first and last names, address, city, and state or province in the appropriate text boxes
   Figure E-9 shows the People Search section on WhitePages.com.

8. Click Search (or something similar)
   Look for your name in the results pages.

9. Return to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links under Search Engines in Lesson 4

10. Type your name in the search expression text box of the search engine you chose, then click the appropriate button to start the search
    A search on your name might result in many hits or no hits at all.
Many people expressed concerns about privacy violations when white pages information became easily accessible on the Web. (In fact, in the Google search engine, you can type a phone number in the search text box and get the white pages listing and a link to a map to the person’s address.) Some Web sites make unpublished and unlisted telephone numbers available for public use. In response to these privacy concerns, many white pages sites now offer individuals ways to remove their listings. If you want to remove your listing from a white pages site, check out the Web site’s Help or FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) links. Of course, many companies allow anyone who pays for their services to access more information about individuals than most people ever imagined would be available to the paying public. Even if you do not purchase goods or services online, credit card companies store consumer information in computers that are connected to the Internet. Also, businesses, whether online or in the mall, are using more sophisticated technology to track and record what consumers buy and sell. Consumers should be vigilant about guarding their personal information.
Finding Online Reference Tools

The Web is full of pages that contain many useful items of information; these pages form an online library of sorts. Some Web sites collect links to many references in one place. For example, the LibrarySpot and Internet Public Library Web sites are collections of hyperlinks to reference materials, electronic texts, and other library Web sites. Another useful resource is the U.S. Library of Congress Web site, which includes links to a huge array of research resources, ranging from the Thomas Legislative Information site to the Library of Congress archives. In addition, the Web contains many text resources, including dictionaries, thesauri, encyclopedias, glossaries, grammar checkers, rhyming dictionaries, and language-translation pages.

In preparation for her trip to Venice, Marti asks you to find some information for her. First, she wants to know how Venice is connected to Italy's mainland. She also wants you to find some general information about the culture and history of Italy. Finally, she would like to know how to say “I don’t speak Italian” in Italian. You decide to use some of the Web’s library and text resources to find this information.

1. Go to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links under Internet Libraries in Lesson 5
   The home page of the Web site you chose opens.
2. Click the References link (or something similar), if necessary, then click the Encyclopedias link
   The Encyclopedias page opens.
3. Click one of the links to a general encyclopedia
   The home page for the encyclopedia you chose opens.
4. If there is an option to search the encyclopedia you chose or another source, click the option to search the encyclopedia, type Venice in the search expression text box, then click the appropriate button to start the search
   A list of articles appears. Some will be labeled as available only to paid subscribers or members of the site.
5. Click an article that is not labeled as a subscriber or member article and that contains general information about Venice
   The article opens. Somewhere in the article, it should state that Venice is connected to Italy’s mainland by a railroad and highway bridge.
6. Return to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click the U.S. Library of Congress link under Lesson 5
   The home page of the U.S. Library of Congress Web site opens. See Figure E-10.
7. Click the Research Centers link, click the European link, look for and click a link to a page about European countries, then click the Italian Collections link
   A page containing information describing the collections of books and documents concerning Italy that are available at the Library of Congress opens. You note the URL for Marti.
8. Return to the Online Companion page for Unit E, then click one of the links under Translation Tools in Lesson 5
   The home page of the Translation site you chose opens.
9. Click English to Italian in the list box or click English as the source language and Italian as the target language, then type I don’t speak Italian in the appropriate text box
10. Click Translate (or something similar), if necessary
    Figure E-11 shows the phrase translated on the SYSTRANet site. The phrase “I don’t speak Italian” is “Non parlo italiano” in Italian.
Internet

Getting Information from the Web

The Web itself has become the subject of archivists’ attention. The Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine (www.archive.org) provides researchers a series of snapshots of Web pages as they were at various points in the history of the Web. The name “Wayback Machine” is from an old cartoon in which the characters used the Wayback Machine to journey to a historical event. The archive has over a petabyte (a petabyte is approximately 1,000,000,000,000,000, or 10^15, bytes) of data stored and is growing at the rate of 20 terabytes (one terabyte is approximately 1,000,000,000,000, or 10^12, bytes) per month. To use the Wayback Machine, you type a URL, and then select a date from a list that opens. The archived version of the Web page you selected opens in your browser.

Archiving the Web

FIGURE E-10: U.S. Library of Congress Web site home page

FIGURE E-11: Phrase translated in SYSTRANet translation Web site
Evaluating Web Resources

When using the Web for important research, there can be significant risks of obtaining and relying on inaccurate or unreliable information. As a result, it is important to evaluate and verify the information you view. You are asked to conduct research for the Cosby Promotions client, Tax Reform for Americans Now, a nonprofit group promoting a change in the federal tax system. You found a Web page created by a professor at San José State University which lists summaries and links to reports and Web sites related to tax reform. Figure E-12 shows the top and bottom portions of this Web page. Before you pass along your findings, you need to evaluate the quality of the Web site you found.

To evaluate a Web site, consider the following:

- **Author Identity**
  Research published in scientific journals, literary journals, books, and research monographs is subjected to peer review or edited by experts in the appropriate subject area. Information on the Web is seldom subjected to that type of review and editing process. The Web page shown in Figure E-12 has links at the top and bottom that bring you to a page listing the qualifications of the person who created the page.
  - **Author identity**
    A Web page that presents empirical research results, theories, or other information that is the result of a research process should identify the author and provide the author’s background and credentials.
  - **Author affiliations**
    Information about the author’s affiliations will help you determine the level of independence and objectivity that the author can bring to bear on the research questions or topics.
  - **Author qualifications**
    The author’s qualifications should pertain to the material that appears on the Web site. For example, does the author have an advanced degree in the field about which he or she is writing?
  - **Author contact information**
    The Web site should provide author contact information so that you can contact the author or consult information directories to verify the contact information.
  - **Domain identifier**
    Examine the domain identifier in the URL. If the site claims affiliation with an educational or research institution, the domain should be .edu for educational institution. A nonprofit organization would most likely have the .org domain, and a government unit or agency would have the .gov domain.

- **Content**
  Read the content critically and evaluate if the included topics are relevant to the Web site. Assess the depth of treatment the author gives to the subject.

- **Form and Appearance**
  Look at the design critically; Web page design elements that suggest low quality include loud colors that distract the user, graphics that serve no purpose, flashing text, grammatical and spelling errors, and poor organization. A Web site that is a legitimate source of accurate information presents information in a professional format that helps convey its validity.

- **Objectivity**
  Evaluate how the Web site presents its information. Factual information should not be presented with emotional language designed to sway your opinion.

- **Currency**
  If the Web page has a clearly stated publication or revision date, you can determine the timeliness of the content. Older Web pages might contain outdated information.
FIGURE E-12: Tax reform Web site

Tax Reform Information

The purpose of this web page is to objectively note reports and websites related to tax reform and provide links to further information from members of Congress and others. The focus is on federal tax reform, but there are also links to some state tax reform activities.

Compiled by Professor Annita Nellen

**Visit Professor Nellen’s Tax Reform Blog - click here**

Background Information on Tax Reform

- President Bush’s Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform (part 1) (11/97) and (part 2)
  - W.J. Goodwin - Brief overview to tax reform and Panel’s proposals
- Treasury Department reports on business competitiveness
  - Business Taxation and Global Competitiveness (7/2/07)
  - Secretary’s task force to improve the competitiveness of the U.S. Business Tax System for the 21st Century (12/07)

- Legislative proposals (summary) and hearings of the 110th Congress
  - A variety of hearing either directly on tax reform or related topics (such as health care reform or small business reform) were held in the 110th Congress. Some of the hearings in the Senate Finance Committee were labeled as ‘in advance of tax reform.’ As it looks like the topic will get more attention in 2009. Part of the reason for interest is the expiring 2001 and 2003 tax cuts, AMT problems, the tax gap and international competitiveness
  - Click here for a list with links to key tax reform-related hearings of the 110th Congress
  - Click here for a list with links to key tax reform-related hearings of the 110th Congress

- Congressional Research Service report on Tax Reform: An Overview of Proposals in the 110th Congress (1/08)
- H.R. 2645: Freedom for All Taxpayers!
- H.R. 27: Tax Cut and Jobs Act (unremarkable title)
- H.R. 3803: the Temporary Choice Act of 2007: repeals the individual AMT and gives taxpayers a choice of filing systems: the current one with its various phase out rates, credits, and a simplified one with a 20% structure and deductions only for personal and dependency exemptions and a standard deduction. Also see alternative house rules 110th Study Committee.
- H.R. 35: The Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act - sets standards for how the IRS must interact with taxpayers
- S. 35: To repeal the individual AMT starting in 2007. While this might not sound like a tax reform, it affects a lot of individuals and will likely result in more significant changes to the system and the tax system.

- Call for Fix of AMT. In 1997, Senator Kyl introduced S. 7 to repeal the corporate alternative minimum tax (AMT). Senator Kyl points out that the corporate AMT is not really a tax, but instead serves as a siphon of resources from a corporation’s regular income tax. He calls this practice one of businesses being “helped to make money” due to low federal government under the guise of the AMT. The Senate AMT repeal proposal has been repeatedly successful. In addition, Senator Kyl points out that AMT causes corporations to minimize assets of the AMT.
- S. 35: To repeal the individual AMT. The Senate has passed a bill to repeal the AMT.

To obtain copies of the bill listed above:
- Congressional Record Legislative Proposals

Comment Letters Submitted by Joint Venture’s Tax Policy Group For Tax Reform Hearings Held by the House Ways and Means Committee in 1996

- Impact of Tax Reform on State and Local Government
- Impact of Tax Reform on International Competitiveness
- Impact of Fundamental Tax Reform on Domestic Manufacturing

More about...
Evaluating User-Generated Content

User-generated content is content on Web sites created by the user. Web 2.0 is a term coined during a brainstorming session between Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty of O'Reilly Media and representatives of MediaLive International to describe user-generated content. During the session, they were characterizing the change in the way people use and access the Web and the change in the technology used on the Web itself. They described Web 2.0 users as people who not only interact with content, but who also use applications to create it. Using Web sites that consist primarily of user-generated content as a primary resource for formal research is generally not good practice, although these sites can be good places to discover new ideas and opinions. 

A colleague suggested you use Wikipedia as a resource for some of your research for the Cosby Promotions client, Green for Our Children. Wikipedia is a user-generated site, so you decide to research that site, and user-generated sites in general, before you use them as primary sources in your work.

Consider the following if you use user-generated sites to gather information:

• Wiki Sites
An example of user-generated content is a wiki site. A wiki is a Web site that is designed to allow multiple users to contribute content and edit existing content quickly. (Wiki is a Hawaiian word that means “fast.”) The information on wiki sites is the result of collaborative work from any interested user. This contrasts with blogs (online journals), which are usually focused on the opinions of the blog owner, who controls the site.

• Wikipedia
Wikipedia is a wiki site that hosts a community-edited set of online encyclopedias in more than a dozen different languages. The concept behind Wikipedia is similar to that behind the Open Directory Project. Instead of hiring experts to review and edit entries, which is what print encyclopedias do, Wikipedia relies on contributions from anyone for its entries. Those entries then can be edited by anyone else who reads them and thinks they should be changed in some way. The idea is that with enough people reading, editing, and re-editing the entries, the information on the site will evolve to a higher degree of accuracy. The homepage of Wikipedia is shown in Figure E-13 and the About page for the Web site is shown in Figure E-14.

• Authorship of a Wiki Site
Because of the open nature of wiki sites, the information stored on them is only as good as the contributors, and consequently, some of the information on these sites can be potentially inaccurate, incomplete, or biased. On many wiki sites, including Wikipedia, contributors may post and edit articles anonymously, in which case the author is identified only by the IP address of his or her connection to the Internet. Even when the author of an article chooses to be identified, it is often through an account name, and the biographical information included with the account is entered by the account holder. That is, the information can be as limited or incorrect as the account holder chooses.

• User-Generated Sites as Primary Sources
If you are looking for tips on good places to visit on vacation, a user-generated site can be a great resource. For example, Wikitravel is a wiki site that invites travelers to share their experiences in a collaborative world travel guide. However, user-generated sites should not be relied upon as primary sources for serious research. Think about it this way: If you want to travel to Nova Scotia, and someone said “My friends, Sam and Sue, said the Courtyard in Halifax is wonderful,” you would probably consider staying there. But if you were writing about the effects of nuclear waste on people, someone saying “Sam and Sue said not to worry about it, there really aren’t any negative effects,” you might not accept this opinion so readily. Very few teachers or employers accept a research project that references a user-generated site as a primary source.
FIGURE E-13: Wikipedia home page

Figure showing the Wikipedia home page with various language links and a search bar.

FIGURE E-14: Wikipedia About page

Figure showing the Wikipedia About page with text about the purpose and history of Wikipedia.

Getting Information from the Web
Understanding Copyright and Citing Web Resources

If you use portions of Web page text or an image from a Web page as support for a topic in a research or business document or in a Web page, you must treat it like any other published source and get permission to use it and cite it appropriately. Some files on the Web are in the public domain, which means that you can freely copy them without requesting permission from the source. If you cannot find a clear statement of copyright terms or a statement indicating that the files are in the public domain, you should not use them. Marti reminds you to collect information about the sites you visit so you can include a proper reference to your sources in any report you write. You decide to learn more about how to properly cite Web resources.

Things to consider when citing Web resources are described below:

- **Copyright**
  
  A copyright is a right granted by a government to the author or creator of a literary or artistic work, which is defined as the tangible expression of an idea. This right gives the owner sole and exclusive rights, such as printing, publishing, reproducing, or selling the work. Creations that can be copyrighted include virtually all forms of artistic or intellectual expression, including books, music, artworks, recordings (audio and video), architectural drawings, choreographic works, photographs and motion pictures, product packaging, and computer software. In the United States, the creator of a work does not need to register that work to obtain copyright protection. In other words, a work that does not include the words “copyright”, “copyrighted”, or the copyright symbol (©), and that was created after 1989 is copyrighted automatically by virtue of the copyright law.

- **Copyright and Ideas**
  
  The idea contained in a work is not copyrightable; instead, the particular form of expression of the idea is the work that can be copyrighted. For example, you cannot copyright the idea to write a song about love, but you can copyright the song you write. If an idea cannot be separated from its expression in a work, that work cannot be copyrighted. For example, mathematical calculations cannot be copyrighted. A collection of facts, however, can be copyrighted, but only if the collection has some degree of creativity: it must be arranged, coordinated, or selected in a way that causes the resulting work to rise to the level of an original work.

- **Fair Use, Plagiarism, and Stealing**
  
  The fair use of a work includes copying it for use in criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, or research. When you make fair use of a work in academics or reporting, you should always provide a citation to the original work. Failure to cite the source of material that you use (whether it is in the public domain or it is protected by copyright) is plagiarism and can be a serious violation of your school’s academic honesty policy. Using or reproducing a copyrighted work for other uses, such as putting someone else’s comic strip on a Web site owned by a business, is not considered fair use, and you must ask the copyright holder for permission to use the work, and in some cases, pay a fee in order to use it. In this case, using the copyrighted work without permission is stealing the copyright holder’s work. A useful Web site for learning more about respecting copyrights is the Stanford University Copyright & Fair Use site, shown in Figure E-15.

- **Citation Formats**
  
  For academic research, the two most widely followed standards for print citations are those of the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Modern Language Association (MLA). Their formats for Web page citations are similar to each other and both include the following elements: name of the author or Web page creator (if known), date of the article or date the Web page was last updated (if known), title of the Web site or a description of an untitled page, Web site name, name of the site’s sponsoring organization (if any), date the page was retrieved, and the URL. Figure E-16 shows examples of Web page citations.
A Web page exists only in an HTML document on a Web server computer. If that file's name or location changes or if the Web server is disconnected from the Internet, someone looking up your reference will not be able to locate the page at the URL you listed. When a page does not exist on a Web site, a page displaying an error message appears when the URL for that page is typed into a browser. These error messages are called 404 error messages because 404 is the status code in HTTP that tells a user the requested Web page was not found. If you get a 404 page, try going to the home page of the Web site by deleting all the text after the domain name in the Address or Location bar and then pressing the Enter key. You can also use a search engine to search for the page you want.

CrossRef.org, an independent registration agency, assigns digital object identifiers (DOIs) to provide a uniform way to identify scholarly academic journals and similar documents and provide a persistent link to their locations on the Internet.

Moving and disappearing URLs