

What Are Web Browsers?

Web Browsers are the apps (short for application), or programmes you use to access the internet on your computer, tablet, or smart phone.

There are lots of different web browsers, and some are specific to the device that you are using.

Web browsers take you to anywhere on the internet. They let you access websites on your devices.

Often you will see some text in an email, message, or document that is [blue and underlined](#). If you click that text with your mouse, or touch with your finger on a touch screen device, it will open up your web browser and take you to a web site. This is called a hyperlink.

When you open a web browser there will be a white box at the top of the screen called the address bar. If you know the address to a particular website you want to visit, you can type that here and press the 'enter' key on your keyboard. This will usually be in the format [www.insertwebsitenamehere.com](#) or [www.test.co.uk](#). If you don't know the address of the website, or simply want to search for something, most web browsers' address bars also double as a search engine. By typing in key words or phrases and pressing the 'enter' key it will display websites that are relevant to your search. Some examples could be, "current affairs", "weather" or "sport"

What are Cookies?

You might notice a message that is shown on lots of websites that asks you to accept 'cookies'. Cookies are small bits of information that a website stores on your computer. These are used to keep track of your visits to websites and any preferences you have set on a previous visit. They can be used to tailor adverts while you are online. You may wish to decline marketing cookies to avoid targeted adverts.

Some Popular Web Browsers



Google Chrome Is a popular web browser that is often used on desktop and laptop computers. You can use it on both Windows or Mac computers. Chrome is not usually installed on most new computers so if you want to use Chrome you will need to download this from the Google website. You can download a Chrome app to use on your tablet or smart phone. This can be found on your phone's app store. Smartphones which use the Android operating system use Chrome as their default browser. On all devices the Chrome logo is made up of two circles – the middle circle is blue and the outer circle has yellow, red and green.



Microsoft Edge or Internet Explorer often comes ready installed on a new laptop or desktop computer. The icon looks like a lower case 'e' and can usually be found on the main screen of your computer. You can also download it to your smartphone through the phone's app store.



Apple Safari is the default web browser on an Apple iPad or iPhone. It is also used on Mac laptops and desktop computers (all these devices have an apple logo, that looks like a bite has been taken out). The safari icon looks like a compass and can be found on the main screen of your touch screen device, or the bar at the bottom of the screen of your computer.



Mozilla Firefox is the least common of the main web browsers. It has a logo that is an orange fox surrounding a blue circle. Firefox is popular with some people because it allows lots of configuration. It can be downloaded to your smartphone through the phone's app store.

Checklist ✓ ✗

Follow our simple Do and Don't checklist

Do

- *Try out a few browsers until you find one that works for you, on the device that you are using. There are pros and cons to all web browsers, and most of it is personal choice.*
- *Look for websites that have a padlock in front of the website address in the bar at the top of your screen, or start with https. This means the website is more secure than ones that do not show a padlock, or that start with http.*
- *Ensure that you have anti-virus software installed on your computer or device before browsing the internet.*

Don't

- *Store log-in details, usernames and passwords on a shared device. If lots of different people use a device you shouldn't save your details, but should enter them each time.*
- *Click on, or open up hyperlinks if you do not know where they are from*
- *Rush. Take your time to explore the internet.*
- *Assume that a website's content is always accurate – use a trusted source when searching for important facts (e.g. health or money concerns).*