

DU Learning Guide

Surfing the web

"So that's what they mean by surfing the web!"

To explore the World Wide Web you use a **web browser**, often called simply a **browser**. There are several browsers in common use, and their features are described in the handouts "What is a Browser?"

The browser displays a single web page; you move around the Web by following **hyperlinks**.

These are codes embedded in web pages which link to other web pages or other parts of the page that you are viewing.

The mouse pointer normally appears as an arrow



As you move the pointer around the screen you will see it change to a pointing finger.



You have located a hyperlink. Click the **left** mouse button **once** and a new page, or a different part of the page, will be displayed.

Moving between web pages like this is called "surfing".

Hyperlinks can be located in any part of a web page. In a well-designed web page the location of the hyperlinks will be clearly indicated, by underlined text, or via other clues: arrows, "menus", "tabs", or descriptive text within the page.

Hyperlinks may also be embedded in images, as in the SSD logo below.

See the examples below – <http://learning.digitalunite.com/>

The screenshot shows the Digital Unite Learning Zone website. Callouts point to various hyperlinks:

- Link in image:** Points to the Digital Unite logo.
- Link in tab:** Points to the 'Learning Zone' tab in the navigation menu.
- Link in text:** Points to the word 'here' in the text 'For help to view or print the Learning Guides click here.'
- Links in menu:** Points to a list of categories under 'Browse the Guides', including 'Beginners' Help', 'E-mail and Telephone', 'Finding Information', 'Games and Hobbies', 'Music and TV Online', 'Photos and Videos', 'Shopping and Banking', 'Social Networks and Blogs', and 'Web Tools and Security'.

The main content area includes a 'Welcome to the Learning Zone' section with a list of bullet points and a photo of an older man. The bullet points describe different levels of computer experience and the goal of helping people learn about the internet.

Web Addresses

You can also move around the web using web addresses. Every page has a unique address, called the Uniform Resource Locator, or URL.

The full address will look like this:

www.learning.digitalunite.com or <http://learning.digitalunite.com/>

Don't worry about the http:// bit, that's computer code and will be added automatically by your browser.

This address is for the **Home page** of the web site. Addresses for pages within the site may be much longer and more complicated.

You will often see the part that starts www. in advertisements or newspaper or magazine articles that suggest you look at the website for more information.

To use an address, you need to type it into the **Address Bar**. You'll find that near the top of your screen when you are using a browser.

The address of the page that you are viewing will be showing there.

- Place the mouse pointer on the address and left click once.
- This will highlight the address that is there.
- Type the new address and this will overwrite the old address.
- Press the **Enter** key on your keyboard and your browser will display the web page belonging to the new address.

Hyperlinks in e-mails

E-mails can also contain hyperlinks. They will normally appear in a different colour and underlined.

When you move your mouse pointer over the text, it will change to a pointing finger.

Click the left mouse button once. Your web browser will start and will display the page that the address belongs to.

This is a very useful feature, since someone can direct you to a website easily just by sending you an e-mail with the address.

But it is **very important** to be **careful** when you use this feature. It is easy to disguise a hyperlink in an e-mail so that it does not lead to the address that you read.

This trick is used by criminals in "phishing" (pronounced "fishing"). Their aim is to direct you to a website that they can use to fool you into giving them passwords or other confidential information.



Never click on a hyperlink in an e-mail unless you are quite certain that you can trust the person who sent the message to you.