IGCSE ICT – SECTION 9a
USING THE INTERNET

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STEP BY STEP GUIDE

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Using The Internet

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9.10 – **Using the Internet**

- The Internet is a **Wide Area Network** made from lots and lots of **linked** individual computers and networks.
- It is worldwide and can be accessed by anyone with an Internet connection.
- Anyone can add information to the Internet which means that some things you read online are not necessarily correct or reliable.
- There are 2 ways of locating information on the Internet:
  - The first is by accessing sites by typing in the **URL** (web address)
  - The second is find information using a **Search Engine** (useful when you do not know the exact URL)

9.11 – **Opening a website from a URL (web address)**

**URL** is short for **Uniform Resource Locator**, which is the individual address given to any document found on the Internet.

The URL contains two parts:

- The first is the name of the **protocol** being used (e.g. http://)
- The second is the **name of the computer** which is storing the document (e.g. www.cesegypt.com)

**How to open a website from a URL**

Open Web **Browser** (Internet Explorer for example).

Type the URL of the site you wish to access in the **Address Bar** then press enter.

In this example the address used is the address for the homepage of the **Amazon Shopping Website**.
If you know the URL for a particular page within the website, you can type the full address into the browser to get to a that exact page. For example if you wanted the watches page on Amazon you would enter this URL:


9.11a – Storing and Accessing Favourite Websites

To avoid having to retype long URLs like this you can use the View Favourites icon to store individual URLs into your web browser.

You can then open your stored favourites without having to remember any URLs.
9.12 – Using a Search Engine

A Search Engine is useful if you do not know the URL of a website or if you want information and do not know where to look.

There are many search engines to choose from and they all perform a similar job.

Search engines take the words that you enter and try to match these to their database of web pages.

**NOTE:** words you enter in a search engine are known as a “Search String”.

The more detail you include in your search string the more likely it will be that the search engine can find exactly what you are looking for.

**Task A**
Search the Internet for information on “Learning to Scuba Dive” in your country in preparation for a diving trip to the Red Sea.

**How to do it**

Open a webpage with a search engine. In this case you are going to enter a search string into http://www.google.co.uk.

To search for a topic enter the search string into this box:
Your choice of search string is very important. If you only type in the words “Scuba Dive” then click on Google Search, the search engine will find way too many results.

You can see from the picture below that the Google search engine has found over 63 million possible web pages about scuba diving. Web pages located by a search engine are known as hits.

By adding some extra search string key words we can refine the search and narrow down the number of hits. This helps us ensure that we can easily locate the page we are looking for. In the screenshot below I have changed the search string to “learn to scuba dive” and this has lowered the number of hits to about 21 million.
The search could be refined further by adding the name of the local town or city into the search. In this example I have changed the search string to “learn to scuba dive in Cairo”. This reduces the hits substantially to less than 800 thousand.

9.12a - Advanced Searches

Another way to reduce the number of hits further is to use the Advanced Search option. Google’s advanced search is activated in the Options Menu which is shown in the screenshot below:
The **Advanced Search Window** looks like the one below:

Placing **exact words** into the **Exact Wording or Phrase box** ensures that the search will find websites relating to the “Red Sea” but dismiss websites that contain only the word “Red” or the word “Sea” on their own.

If there are words that you need to have **one OR another** included in the search these can be placed here. These will return websites that contain **either keyword**.

If there are words that you want **excluded** from the search you can place these here. I have excluded the words **“Snorkeling” and “Swimming”** as I am only interested in learning to scuba dive.

Clicking **Advanced Search** will activate the search.

**NOTE:** Search engines can also be used in a website to search only within that site. These are sometimes used in the practical examinations. If this comes up in your exam make sure to use meaningful search strings taken from the information given in your question paper.
Our Advanced Search has left us with a refined list of useful websites all containing information about scuba diving in the Red Sea.

Activity 1
Complete the “Internet Search Tasks” found on the unit web page.

Be sure to use Advanced Searches to narrow down the website hits as much as possible.

Your keywords should be meaningful and taken directly from each question.