

Common Internet Terms

Below are some common terms you may hear when using HomeSteps Connect. Understanding these basic terms will help you when learning and using the system

Access provider - A company that provides access to the Internet such as MSN® or AT&T®. Also known as an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Address - The identification of a physical or virtual distinct entity in a network. On the Internet, this network address is called a URL (Uniform Resource Locator). For instance: <http://www.homesteps.com>.

Auto responder - An email message that is sent automatically in response to a message to another email address. Confirmation emails are common examples.

Backup - To make a second copy of a file as a safety measure. The copy may be held on a floppy disk, a zip disk, or CD-ROM and is typically not on your hard drive.

Bookmark - A web page 'marked' so that you can jump to it by name from within a list. Also used by browsers to mark frequently visited web sites.

BPO Direct - HomeSteps' web-based valuation system designed to give a timely and efficient price opinion of a property.

Broadband – High speed internet access that uses coaxial cable and is usually provided by cable TV companies. Not available in all areas so call your cable TV company for availability.

Browser - Allows users to access and navigate the World Wide Web. Some examples are Internet Explorer and Netscape.

CD-ROM - Compact Disk - Read Only Memory: A record-like storage medium that uses digital and optical laser technology to store about 600Mb of text, pictures and sound on a single disk.

Checkbox - A small square box which, when clicked on, displays a cross or tick to show that an option has been selected.

Clipboard - A section of a computer's memory where you can temporarily copy chunks of text, data, graphics, or pictures. For example, hitting *control +C* will allow you to copy information and store it temporarily in the clipboard.

Control panel - This is folder where many of Window's settings can be viewed. Here you will find icons for most functions including printers, modems and sound.

Cookies - Small data files created by an Internet web site and stored on the user's computer. A cookie contains information that can help speed access on subsequent visits, such as passwords and details of the user's display facilities.

Dialup Internet connection - Lets a user dial into an Internet Service Provider using a modem and telephone line to access the Internet.

Domain - The part of the Internet address that specifies your computer's location in the world. The most common top level domain is .com for commercial use. Others include .gov, .net and .org.

DSL - Digital Subscriber Line. A high-speed method of connecting to the internet that uses your existing phone line and is always on. It requires special equipment and is usually ordered through your local phone company.

E-commerce - Performing business transactions on the Internet which may include the use of credit cards, shopping carts, forms, and secure servers.

Email address - A code representing a unique email user on the Internet. Examples might include – john.doe@sitename.com.

Emoticons - These things :-) and other character art used to express feelings in email communication. Others include ;-) winks, ☹ frowns, etc.

Encryption - A process that turns files into meaningless text so that they cannot be read, other than by programs containing the appropriate password-protected encryption software. Examples include “secure” connections such as HTTPS.

Extensions Files - Identified by a three or four letters or numbers called an extension. Common types include .doc and .txt for word-processor documents. Files ending in .gif and .jpg generally contain images.

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions. Files on the Internet which store the answers to common questions. If you are stuck, check the FAQs first, before you ask you own question.

Firewall - A security system, usually for networked computers, which controls access in and out of the network.

Gigabyte - A very large measurement of data storage. Equal to a thousand megabyte. (1 GB =1000 MB). Many computers have 5GB to 20GB of storage.

HTML - Hypertext Markup Language. The programming language of the World Wide Web. HTML software turns a document into a hyperlinked World Wide Web page.

HTTP - Hypertext Transfer Protocol. The protocol used to provide hypertext links between pages. It is the standard way of transferring HTML documents between Web servers and browsers.

HTTPS - Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure - is used to secure web sites by using encrypted traffic to and from the user by means of Secure Socket Layer (SSL).

Hypertext/ hyperlink/ link - A highlighted word or graphic in a document that, when clicked upon, takes the user to a related piece of information on the Internet. When the cursor passes over a link, it usually changes from an arrow to a pointing hand. An example is www.homestepsconnect.com.

Icon - A small picture displayed on the screen to identify a command or file.

Intranet - A private internal network based on TCP/IP, usually for the information of staff within a business or an organization.

ISP - Internet Service Provider. Any organization that provides access to the Internet. Most ISPs also offer technical assistance to customers having problems getting online.

IP Address - Every computer on the Internet has a unique numerical IP (Internet Protocol) address assigned to it, such as 123.456.78.9.

JPEG - A widely-used graphic file format. Also known as .jpg. The photos you upload on HomeSteps connect must be either JPEGs or GIFs.

Junk email – Unsolicited email messages which are received. Also known as “spam”.

LAN - Local Area Network. A private transmission that interconnects computers within a building or among buildings for the purpose of sharing voice, data, facsimile, and/or video.

Megabyte - A measure of storage space. 1 Mb roughly translates to a million characters of text, or 180,000 words. Many ISPs will not allow users to send files larger than 1.5MB.

Modem - MOdulate DEModulate. An electronic device that attaches to a computer and links that computer to the online world via a telephone line. Most Internet service providers allow you to dial into their systems at rates up to 56,000 baud and beyond.

MP3 - A popular, highly compressed file format used for music.

MPEG - A family of multimedia standards that refer to audio or visual files saved with MPEG compression extensions. If you view video on your computer it may be called an MPEG.

Network - A group of computers that are connected in some fashion. Most networks are known as LANs, or Local Area Networks, because they are networks linking computers in one small area.

Online/Offline - When you are logged onto a computer through your modem, you are said to be online. When you are using your computer but are not connected to a computer through your modem, you're said to be working offline.

Operating System - The operating system or OS is a program, or a collection of programs, that manages all your computer's resources. Examples include Windows 98, NT, 2000 and Macintosh.

PDF - Portable Document Format - a file format developed by Adobe Systems for capturing formatted page layouts for distribution. Requires the proprietary Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is now given away free of charge.

Plug-in - An extra bit of software which has to be added to a Web browser before a certain type of file can be viewed. Recent browsers come with the most popular plug-ins pre-installed.

RAM - Random Access Memory. A computer's working memory, where programs store information when they are running. The bigger it is, the less time your computer will have to wait to get data from the hard disk drive.

Registry - A large, constantly changing file in Windows which contains details of how your computer is set up, and all the programs stored on the hard disk.

Scanner - A machine that scans a printed image, such as a photograph or a page of text, and turns it into a file that can be displayed and manipulated on a computer.

Search engine - An online service which can crawl through the content of the Internet looking for specific phrases or words. The engine asks you for keywords and then provides a list of web sites that contain your chosen words. Examples include Yahoo and Google.

Zippping - The process of compressing a file so it takes up less space. There are two types of Zip files, normal (which require a program to extract them) and self-executing that open up automatically. PKZip and WinZip are popular zipping and unzipping programs.