

A Random Walk on the World Wide Web

Maxwell Memorial Library's Technology Class
Thursday, July 25, 2019

0. Introduction

In the early days of the Web, surfing the Web more-or-less meant spending time going from page to page to find information. It was kind of like paging through an encyclopedia following See Also references or how we have had to navigate our collection during the current hack of the system.

Search engines like Google changed that, but it can still be fruitful to surf the old-fashioned way. The trick is to start with a site with a variety of high-quality links. We'll see how to find such sites. We'll also see some ways to keep your browser lean and fast so that your surfing doesn't make you think you've returned to the days of the World Wide Wait.

1. A Caveat about my totally unhip use of the term *Web surfing*

- [When did we stop 'surfing' the Web?](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2015/01/30/when-did-we-stop-surfing-the-web/)
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2015/01/30/when-did-we-stop-surfing-the-web/>

2. Some sites to check out

2.1. Lists of cool sites

- [22 Cool Websites to Look at When You're Bored](https://www.lifewire.com/cool-websites-to-look-at-when-bored-3486362)
<https://www.lifewire.com/cool-websites-to-look-at-when-bored-3486362>
- [The 27 Best Websites for Wasting Time on the Internet in 2019](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/surf-internet-websites)
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/surf-internet-websites>

2.2. Speed your surfing up

- [9 Tips to Surf the Web Like a Hacker](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/technology/9-tips-surf-the-web-like-hacker.html)
<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/technology/9-tips-surf-the-web-like-hacker.html>
- [Surf The Web Better And Faster With These 6 Pro Tips](https://websitebuilders.com/how-to/learn-to-search/web-surf-better/)
<https://websitebuilders.com/how-to/learn-to-search/web-surf-better/>

2.3. *Is there more like this out there?*

- [AlternativeTo](https://alternativeto.net/)
<https://alternativeto.net/>
- [moreofit](http://www.moreofit.com/)
<http://www.moreofit.com/>
- [SimilarSites](https://www.similarsites.com/)
<https://www.similarsites.com/>
- [Similar Site Search](https://www.similarsitesearch.com/)
<https://www.similarsitesearch.com/>

2.4. *Step into the time machine ...*

- [Wayback Machine](https://archive.org/web/)
<https://archive.org/web/>

2.5. *Dada*

- [The Useless Web](https://theuselessweb.com/)
<https://theuselessweb.com/>

2.6. *Hub? Clickbait? you decide!*

- [Digg](http://digg.com/)
<http://digg.com/>
- [5000 best](http://5000best.com/)
<http://5000best.com/>
- [Mix](https://mix.com/) (Requires signing up)
<https://mix.com/>
- [reddit](https://www.reddit.com/)
<https://www.reddit.com/>
- [Wikipedia](https://www.wikipedia.org/)
<https://www.wikipedia.org/>

2.7. Digital collections (with a bit of a New York slant)

- [Digital Culture of Metropolitan New York](http://dcmny.org/)
<http://dcmny.org/>
- [Exploratorium: Explore, Play, Discover: Websites, Activities, and More](https://www.exploratorium.edu/explore)
<https://www.exploratorium.edu/explore>
- [Hamilton College: Digital Collections](http://elib.hamilton.edu/)
<http://elib.hamilton.edu/>
- [Hudson River Valley Heritage](https://www.hrvh.org/)
<https://www.hrvh.org/>
- [LOC Serendipity: Curated and Randomly Generated Selections from the Library of Congress](https://www.locserendipity.com/)
<https://www.locserendipity.com/>
- [New York Public Library: Digital Projects](https://www.nypl.org/online_projects)
https://www.nypl.org/online_projects
- [New York State Library: New York State Documents](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/statedoc.htm)
<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/statedoc.htm>
- [Smithsonian: Digital Library](https://library.si.edu/digital-library)
<https://library.si.edu/digital-library>
- [United States Military Academy Library Digital Collections](http://digital-library.usma.edu/)
<http://digital-library.usma.edu/>

2.8. Copyright is dead!!! (in the US ... for material published before 1923 ...)

- [Google Books](https://books.google.com/)
<https://books.google.com/>
- [Open Library](https://openlibrary.org/)
<https://openlibrary.org/>
- [Project Gutenberg](https://www.gutenberg.org/)
<https://www.gutenberg.org/>

- [The Universal Digital Library](http://ulib.isri.cmu.edu/)
<http://ulib.isri.cmu.edu/>

2.9. *Walled gardens*

- [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/)
<https://www.pinterest.com/>
- [TED: Ideas worth spreading](https://www.ted.com/)
<https://www.ted.com/>
- [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/)
<https://www.youtube.com/>

2.10. *Memes*

- [Giphy](https://giphy.com/)
<https://giphy.com/>