

ICT Frequently Asked Questions

1. How does one get connected to the Internet?

To connect to the Internet and the World Wide Web, you need five basic things: A Computer that can run the necessary software. this can be a Personal Computer (PC) or Macintosh. The computer itself doesn't have to be a high powered machine to access most things on the internet but to properly experience some of the newer multimedia dealing with sounds, digital movies and interactive software however, you may require one of the more powerful machines available.

A Modem or other device (cable or telephone calls when you are connected to the internet. People will receive an engaged signal if they are trying to 'phone you.

An Internet Service Provider (ISP). The ISP that you choose will provide you with disks or instructions on how to set up your internet connection. With this type of set up you pay for the time that you use the internet. Either a fixed amount for a fixed amount of time or on a per usage basis.

Web Browser Software and Email Software which you can download, purchase from a software supplier or get from your ISP. Most new computers come with this software preloaded.

2. Is there any difference between Information Communication (ICT) Technology and Information Technology (IT)? If there is what is it?

IT (for the West) and ICT (for the developing world) are not only different acronyms (IT stands for information technology, ICT add communications to the mix) but very different challenges. In the west, communications technology are taken for granted due to their pervasiveness. In the developing world this is not the case. In many places, information technology such as computers and internet are being implemented alongside communications technologies. Thus, they are grouped together into one major concern, ICT development.

3. People talk of browsing and surfing the Internet. What do they mean?

When people talk of browsing the internet, they mean that they are looking at various different pages are connected either by "links" on the pages or by the user's train of thought. So, a user might go to the BBC website homepage, click on a news article of interest, then go to the Google search engine to find out more information on that topic.

4. In ICT people talk of a digital divide. What is it?

Simply but, the "digital divide" is the wide division between

those who have access to ICT and are using it effectively, and those who do not. Since information and communications technologies (ICTs) are increasingly becoming a foundation of our societies and economies, the digital divide means that the information "have-nots" are denied the option to participate in new ICT jobs, in e-government, in ICT-improved healthcare, and in ICT enhanced education. More often than not, the information "have-nots" are in developing countries, and in disadvantaged groups within countries. To bridges.org, the digital divide is thus a lost opportunity -- the opportunity for the information "have-nots" to use ICTs to improve their lives.

5. How has ICT reduced the world into a global village?

With the revolution in communications and technology and the creation of a global economy, the world has become a smaller place--hence, a global village. What was once remote is now familiar. As a result, people's lives everywhere are significantly shaped and impacted by increased diversity and greater interdependence politically, economically, and socially among nations, cultures, and communities.