

Netscape (web browser)

The **Netscape** web browser is the general name for a series of web browsers formerly produced by Netscape Communications Corporation, a former subsidiary of AOL. The original browser was once the dominant browser in terms of usage share, but as a result of the first browser war, it lost virtually all of its share to Internet Explorer.^[1]

Netscape was discontinued and support for all Netscape browsers and client products was terminated on March 1, 2008.^[2]

Contents

Timeline and history

- Netscape-based (versions 1.0–4.8) releases
 - Netscape Navigator (versions 1.0–3.0)
 - Netscape Communicator (versions 4.0–4.8)
 - Netscape Communicator 5.0 (cancelled)
- Mozilla Application Suite-based releases
 - Netscape 6 (versions 6.0–6.2.3)
 - Netscape (versions 7.0–7.2)
- Mozilla Firefox-based releases
 - Netscape Browser (version 8.0–8.1.3)
 - Netscape Navigator (version 9.0)

Release compatibility

Release history

See also

References

External links

Timeline and history

Netscape-based (versions 1.0–4.8) releases

Netscape Navigator



Netscape Navigator 9.0

Developer(s)	Netscape Communications AOL
Initial release	December 15, 1994
Stable release	9.0.0.6 (February 20, 2008) [±] (https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Latest_stable_software_release/Netscape_Navigator&action=edit)
Preview release	None (n/a) [±] (https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Latest_preview_software_release/Netscape_Navigator&action=edit)
Type	Web browser
License	Proprietary software



A/UX running Netscape.

Netscape Navigator (versions 1.0–3.0)

Netscape Navigator was the name of Netscape's web browser from versions 1.0 through 4.8. The first version of the browser was released in 1994, known as Mosaic and then Mosaic Netscape until a legal challenge from the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (makers of NCSA Mosaic, which many of Netscape's founders had spent time developing) which led to the name change to Netscape Navigator.^[3] The company's name also changed from Mosaic Communications Corporation to Netscape Communications Corporation.



A screenshot of Netscape 1.2 on Windows 3.1

The browser was the most advanced available and was an instant success, becoming market leader while still in beta. Netscape's feature-count and market share continued to grow rapidly after version 1.0 was released. Version 2.0 added a full mail reader called Netscape Mail, thus transforming Netscape from a mere web browser to an Internet suite. During this period, both the browser and the suite were known as Netscape Navigator. Around the same time, AOL started bundling their software with Microsoft's Internet Explorer.

Version 3.0 of Netscape was the first to face any serious competition in the form of Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0, but Netscape held off Microsoft's challenge and remained the number one browser for the time. Version 3.0 was also available in a "Gold" version which featured a WYSIWYG HTML editor (later added to Netscape Communicator as a standard feature), and was sold as retail software for profit. Netscape 3.0 introduced many new features such as new plug-ins, background colors for tables, the archive attribute, and the applet element. Netscape Navigator 3 was the undisputed web browser giant in its time with over 90% share, but it was later eroded by the free Internet Explorer included with Windows 95.

Netscape Communicator (versions 4.0–4.8)

Netscape 4 addressed the problem of Netscape Navigator being used as both the name of the suite and the browser contained within it by renaming the suite to Netscape Communicator.^[4] After releasing five preview releases from 1996–1997, Netscape Corp. released the final version of Netscape Communicator in June 1997. This new version, more or less based on Netscape Navigator 3 Code, updated and added new features (such as support of certain CSS1 elements, minimal dynamic font support and the proprietary object element). The new suite was successful, despite increasing competition from Internet Explorer 4.0 and problems with the outdated browser core. The Communicator suite was made up of Netscape Navigator, Netscape Mail and Newsgroups, Netscape Address Book and Netscape Composer (an HTML editor, which later became Mozilla Composer and eventually was split off into a completely separate product, Nvu). In October 1998 version 4.5 of Netscape Communicator was released. This new version featured various functionality improvements, especially in the Mail/News component, but did not update the browser core (which, in its functionality, was basically identical with version 4.08). Only one month later, Netscape Communications Corporation was bought by AOL. A standalone version of Netscape Navigator was still available, but this was discontinued after version 4.08 for Windows. Standalone versions for other operating systems such as Unix/Linux were maintained up to version 4.8.

On January 22, 1998, Netscape Communications Corporation announced that all future versions of their software would be free of charge and developed by an Open Source Community (Mozilla).^[5] Netscape Communicator 5.0 was announced (codenamed "Gromit"). But there were significant delays to the

release of Netscape's next major version and Communicator therefore aged badly over the many years it was still used. As a result of this, and a more advanced support of HTML 4, CSS, DOM, and ECMAScript by Internet Explorer starting with version 4, the more up-to-date Internet Explorer 5.0 became the market leader. In November 1998 work on Netscape 5.0 was cancelled in favor of developing a completely new program from scratch.

Netscape Communicator 5.0 (cancelled)

Netscape 5.0 (codenamed "Gromit"^[6]) was a continuation of the 4.x code, but only two pre-alpha versions were written, one based on original Communicator code (with layout engine stability and performance enhancements to the 4.0 codebase, codenamed Mariner) and another using the Gecko layout engine.^[7]

Though Netscape had originally intended to deploy Mariner and later replace it with Gecko (which had been developed from scratch), Netscape 5 and Mariner were scrapped completely. However, the versions continued to be numbered as if it had been released.

Netscape formed the Mozilla Foundation and developed the Mozilla Application Suite using Gecko. The open-source Mozilla browser was in turn used as the basis for Netscape 6.

Mozilla Application Suite-based releases

Netscape 6 (versions 6.0–6.2.3)

In 1998, an informal group called the Mozilla Organization was formed and largely funded by Netscape (the vast majority of programmers working on the code were paid by Netscape) to coordinate the development of Netscape 5 (codenamed "Gromit"), which would be based on the Communicator source code. The aging Communicator code proved difficult to work with and the decision was made in late October to drop the code branch of the Communicator 4.5 core rendering engine and start from scratch using the standards-compliant Gecko rendering engine.^{[8][9]} Gecko featured in the Mozilla web browser, which, with a few additions, Netscape 6 was based on.



Netscape Navigator 6.1

This decision meant that Netscape's next major version was severely delayed. In the meantime, Netscape was taken over by AOL who, acting under pressure from the Web Standards Project, forced its new division to release Netscape 6.0 in 2000. With public beta versions released in April,^[10] August,^[11] and October,^[12] Netscape 6.0 was released in November 2000.^[13]

The suite again consisted of Netscape Navigator and the other Communicator components, with the addition of a built-in AOL Instant Messenger client, branded as Netscape Instant Messenger. However, it was clear that Netscape 6 was not yet ready for release and it flopped badly. It was based on Mozilla 0.6, which was not ready to be used by the general public yet due to many serious bugs that would cause it to crash often or render web pages slowly.

Later versions of Netscape 6 were much improved (6.2.x was regarded as an especially good release), but the browser still struggled to make an impact on a disappointed community.

Netscape (versions 7.0–7.2)

Netscape 7.0 (codenamed "Mach Five" and based on Mozilla 1.0.1) was released in August 2002 as a direct continuation of Netscape 6 with very similar components. It picked up a few users, but was still very much a minority browser, one of the problems being that Mozilla itself was a worthy adversary. In addition, AOL had decided to deactivate Mozilla's popup-blocker functionality in Netscape 7.0, which created an outrage in the community. In response to the complaints, AOL integrated the pop-up blocker into Netscape 7.0.1. In addition, Netscape introduced a new AOL-free-version (without the usual AOL addons) of the browser suite. Netscape 7.1 (codenamed "Buffy" and based on Mozilla 1.4) was released in June 2003.

In 2003, AOL closed down its Netscape division and laid-off or reassigned all of Netscape's employees. Mozilla.org continued as the independent Mozilla Foundation, taking on many of Netscape's ex-employees. AOL continued to develop Netscape in-house, but, due to there being no staff committed to it, improvements were minimal.

One year later, in August 2004, the last version based on Mozilla was released: Netscape 7.2, based on Mozilla 1.7.2.

Mozilla Firefox-based releases

Netscape Browser (version 8.0–8.1.3)

Between 2005 and 2007, Netscape's releases became known as *Netscape Browser*. AOL chose to base Netscape Browser on the relatively successful Mozilla Firefox, a re-written version of Mozilla produced by the Mozilla Foundation. This release is not a full Internet suite as before, but is solely a web browser. Other controversial decisions include these versions being made only for Microsoft Windows and featuring both the Gecko rendering engine of previous releases and the Trident engine used in Internet Explorer.



Netscape Browser 8.1.3

AOL's acquisition of Netscape years earlier made it less of a surprise when the company laid off the Netscape team and outsourced development to Mercurial Communications.

Netscape Browser 8.1.3 was released on April 2, 2007, and included general bug fixes identified in versions 8.0–8.1.2^{[14][15]}

Netscape Navigator (version 9.0)

Netscape confirmed on 23 January 2007 that Netscape Browser versions 8.0-8.1.2 was to be succeeded by a new stand-alone browser release, Netscape Navigator 9. Its features were said to include newsfeed support and become more integrated with the Propeller Internet portal,^[16] alongside more enhanced methods of discussion, submission and voting on web pages.^[17] It also sees the browser return to multi-

platform support across Windows, Linux and Mac OS X.^[18] Like Netscape version 8.x, the new release was based upon the popular Mozilla Firefox (version 2.0), and had full support of all Firefox add-ons and plugins, some of which Netscape provided.^[19] Also for the first time since 2004, the browser was produced in-house with its own programming staff.^[20]

A beta of the program was first released on 5 June 2007.^[21] The final version was released on October 15, 2007.

On December 28, 2007, Netscape developers announced that AOL would discontinue their web browser on February 1, 2008, due to low market share.^[22] On January 28, 2008, Netscape revised this date to March 1, 2008, and offered support for migration to Flock and Mozilla Firefox.^[23]

Release compatibility

Operating system		Latest version
<u>Mac OS</u>	<u>v9.x-10.0</u>	<u>7.0.2</u> (https://ftp.nluug.nl/netscape/netscape7/english/7.02/mac/macos8/sea/Netscape-mac-full.bin) (2003)
	<u>v10.1</u>	<u>7.2</u> (https://ftp.nluug.nl/netscape/netscape7/english/7.2/mac/macosx/sea/Netscape-MachO.dmg.gz) (2004)
	<u>v10.2-10.5</u>	<u>9.0.0.6</u> (https://ftp.nluug.nl/netscape/netscape9/en-US/9.0/mac/macosx/netscape-navigator-9.0.0.6.dmg) (2008)
<u>Microsoft Windows</u>	<u>3.1</u>	<u>4.08</u> (https://ftp.nluug.nl/netscape/communicator/english/4.08/windows/windows3.1/complete_install/cc16d408.exe) (1998)
	<u>95</u>	<u>6.2.3</u> (https://ftp.nluug.nl/netscape/netscape6/english/6.2.3/windows/win32/sea/N6SetupB.exe) (2002)
	<u>98</u>	<u>7.2</u> (https://ftp.nluug.nl/netscape/netscape7/english/7.2/windows/win32/NSSetup.exe) (2004)
	<u>98SE-Vista</u>	<u>9.0.0.6</u> (https://ftp.nluug.nl/netscape/netscape9/en-US/9.0/windows/win32/netscape-navigator-9.0.0.6.exe) (2008)

Release history

Key:			
Internal Build	Old final version	Final version	Pre-release version

Browser Name	Series	Version	Based on	Release date	Notes
<u>Mosaic</u> <u>Netscape</u>	0.x	0.4	Netscape	September 9, 1994	First public beta release
		0.5	Netscape	September 18, 1994	In-dev Release
		0.6	Netscape	September 26, 1994	In-dev Release
		0.7	Netscape	October 1994	In-dev Release
		0.8	Netscape	October 1994	In-dev Release
		0.9	Netscape	October 13, 1994	In-dev Release
		0.91	Netscape	October 1994	In-dev Release
		0.92	Netscape	October 1994	In-dev Release
		0.93	Netscape	November 1994	In-dev Release
		0.94	Netscape	November 21, 1994	In-dev Release
<u>Netscape</u> <u>Navigator</u>	1.x	0.96	Netscape	December 7, 1994	In-dev Release
		1.0	Netscape	December 15, 1994	First non-beta release
		1.1	Netscape	March 1995	
	2.x	1.22	Netscape	August 1995	
		2.0	Netscape	September 18, 1995	Including JavaScript support, <u>Java</u> support, plug-ins, integrated Messenger / Collabra, Auto-dither, Live3D. Support for font color, div, wrap and textarea tags. <u>Superscript</u> / <u>subscript</u> , <u>Animated GIF</u>
		2.01	Netscape	March 18, 1996	
		2.02	Netscape		
	3.x	3.0	Netscape	August 19, 1996	Added support for LiveAudio, LiveVideo, <u>QuickTime</u> , <u>POP3</u> , HTML 3.2 and extra tags.
		3.01	Netscape		
		3.02	Netscape		
		3.03	Netscape	July 31, 1997	
		3.04	Netscape	October 4, 1997	
<u>Netscape</u> <u>Navigator /</u> <u>Communicator</u>	4.x	4.0	Netscape	June 11, 1997	Suite version marketed as Netscape Communicator included <u>Navigator</u> , <u>Messenger</u> , <u>Composer</u> , <u>Collabra</u> , <u>Netcaster</u> , and <u>Conference</u> .
		4.01	Netscape	June 18, 1997	
		4.01a	Netscape	July 19, 1997	
		4.02	Netscape	August 18, 1997	
		4.03	Netscape	September 14, 1997	
		4.04	Netscape	November 14, 1997	
		4.05	Netscape	April 2, 1998	

<u>Netscape Communicator</u>		4.06	Netscape	August 17, 1998	Added Macromedia Flash plug-in, "Smart Browsing" and NetWatch.
		4.07	Netscape	October 5, 1998	
		4.08	Netscape	November 9, 1998	last release for <u>16-bit</u> Windows and 68k Macs
		4.5	Netscape	October 19, 1998	Added integrated / Internet messaging, enhanced SmartBrowsing
		4.51	Netscape	March 8, 1999	
		4.6	Netscape	May 18, 1999	Added <u>AIM</u> , <u>RealPlayer</u> G2, NetHelp
		4.61	Netscape	June 14, 1999	
		4.7	Netscape	September 30, 1999	Added Netscape Radio, Shop@Netscape, <u>AIM</u> 3.0, <u>Winamp</u> and PalmPilot.
		4.72	Netscape	February 22, 2000	Removed Calendar Client feature
		4.73	Netscape	May 5, 2000	
		4.74	Netscape	July 22, 2000	
		4.75	Netscape	September 17, 2000	
		4.76	Netscape	October 25, 2000	
		4.77	Netscape	April 16, 2001	
		4.78	Netscape	July 20, 2001	
		4.79	Netscape	November 10, 2001	
		4.8	Netscape	August 22, 2002	Final Communicator-based release
<u>Netscape 5</u>	5.x	PreAlpha1	Netscape		Never released, didn't reach Alpha or Beta status
		PreAlpha2	NSLayout		
<u>Netscape 6</u>	6.x	6.0	Mozilla 0.6	November 14, 2000	First Netscape release based on pre-release <u>Mozilla Application Suite</u> . Included Sidebar, customisable installer size, integrated search, themes, privacy protection and multiple e-mail accounts.
		6.01	Mozilla 0.7	February 9, 2001	
		6.1	Mozilla 0.9.2.1	August 8, 2001	Added new default interface, searching from location bar, <u>Mac OS X</u> support on preview release.
		6.2	Mozilla 0.9.4.1	October 30, 2001	Improved QuickLaunch, AutoComplete. Full support for <u>Mac OS X</u> and <u>Windows XP</u>
		6.2.1	Mozilla 0.9.4.1		
		6.2.2	Mozilla 0.9.4.1		

		6.2.3	Mozilla 0.9.4.1	May 15, 2002	
<u>Netscape 7</u>	7.x	7.0	Mozilla 1.0.1	August 29, 2002	Based on final Mozilla Suite releases. Added tabbed browsing, pop-up blocker, full-screen mode, download manager, P3P support.
		7.01	Mozilla 1.0.2	December 10, 2002	
		7.02	Mozilla 1.0.2	February 18, 2003	Last release to support <u>Mac OS 9</u> .
		7.1	Mozilla 1.4	June 30, 2003	Support Windows Media Player ActiveX control, web services by JavaScript API's.
		7.2	Mozilla 1.7.2	August 17, 2004	Improved password manager, vCard support, Palm Sync. Added Netscape Toolbar and table editing in <u>Composer</u> .
<u>Netscape Browser</u>	8.x	0.5.6	Firefox 0.9.3	November 30, 2004	Stand-alone <u>Windows-only</u> browser based on Firefox, beta version. Uses both <u>Gecko</u> and <u>Trident</u> layout engines. Added site controls, multibar, password auto-fill, and advanced tabbed browsing controls.
		0.6.4	Firefox 1.0	January 7, 2005	Pre-beta version
		0.9.4	Firefox 1.0	February 17, 2005	Pre-beta version
		0.9.5	Firefox 1.0	February 23, 2005	Pre-beta version
		0.9.6	Firefox 1.0	March 3, 2005	Beta version
		8.0	Firefox 1.0.3	May 19, 2005	Finished Netscape 8 release
		8.0.1	Firefox 1.0.3	May 19, 2005	
		8.0.2	Firefox 1.0.4	June 17, 2005	
		8.0.3			
		8.0.3.1	Firefox 1.0.6	July 25, 2005	
		8.0.3.2			
		8.0.3.3	Firefox 1.0.6	August 8, 2005	
		8.0.3.4	Firefox 1.0.6	August 17, 2005	
		8.0.4	Firefox 1.0.7	October 19, 2005	
		8.1	Firefox 1.0.7	January 25, 2006	Added <u>spyware</u> and <u>adware</u> protection, new Dynamic Security Centre, profile manager, new

					options panel, and enhanced <u>RSS</u> controls.
		8.1.2	Firefox 1.5.0.7	September 27, 2006	
		8.1.3	Firefox 1.5.0.11	April 2, 2007	Final Netscape 8 release
<u>Netscape Navigator</u>	9.x	9.0b1	Firefox 2.0.0.4	June 15, 2007	Stand-alone browser based on Mozilla Firefox 2, total re-write from Netscape 8.x. Gecko-only support. Added Netscape.com integration, enhanced <u>FTP</u> listing interface, customizable link-pad, <u>multi-platform</u> support, greater Firefox add-on compatibility, and new user interface.
		9.0b2	Firefox 2.0.0.4	July 12, 2007	Added greater tabbed browsing options
		9.0b3	Firefox 2.0.0.6	August 15, 2007	Removed <u>Propeller</u> integration.
		9.0rc1	Firefox 2.0.0.6	October 1, 2007	Re-added optional <u>splash screen</u>
		9.0	Firefox 2.0.0.7	October 15, 2007	Finished Navigator 9 release
		9.0.0.1	Firefox 2.0.0.8	October 22, 2007	
		9.0.0.2	Firefox 2.0.0.8	November 1, 2007	
		9.0.0.3	Firefox 2.0.0.9	November 2, 2007	
		9.0.0.4	Firefox 2.0.0.10	November 27, 2007	
		9.0.0.5	Firefox 2.0.0.11	December 11, 2007	
		9.0.0.6	Firefox 2.0.0.12	February 20, 2008	Final version of Navigator 9. Support discontinued March 1, 2008.

See also

- Netscape
- Firefox
- Gecko
- Blink element

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External links

- [Netscape Browser Archive](http://sillydog.org/narchive/) (<http://sillydog.org/narchive/>), SillyDog701
 - [OldVersion.com - Netscape Download Archive](http://www.oldversion.com/Netscape.html) (<http://www.oldversion.com/Netscape.html>)
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