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1. The Internet is a worldwide network of computers, linked mostly by telephone lines; the Web is just one of many things (called applications) that can run on the Internet. When you send an email, you're using the Internet: the Net sends the words you write over telephone lines to your friends. When you chat to someone online, you're most likely using the Internet too—because it's the Net that swaps your messages back and forth.
2. The Web is the worldwide collection of text pages, digital photographs, music files, videos, and animations you can access over the Internet. What makes the Web so special (and, indeed, gives it its name) is the way all this information is connected together.
3. The Internet, linking your computer to other computers around the world, is a way of transporting content. The Web is software that lets you use that content…or contribute your own. The Web, running on the mostly invisible Internet, is what you see and click on in your computer’s browser.
4. The machines made by one manufacturer were often totally incompatible with those made by everyone else. In the 1970s, early personal computers (which were called microcomputers) could not even run the same programs. Instead, each type of computer had to have programs written specially for it. Hooking computers up together was possible, but tricky. So most computers were used as standalone machines, like gigantic pocket calculators. Things like email and chat were all but impossible, except for a handful of scientists who knew what they were doing. That is why it was hard to communicate because some manufactures could not run the same programs and they were incompatible.
5. The first thing that happened was that IBM—the world's biggest computer company, famous for its "big blue" mainframes—introduced a personal computer for small businesses. Other people started to "clone" (copy) it and, pretty soon, all personal computers started to look and work the same way. Microsoft came up with a piece of software called Windows that allowed all these "IBM-compatible" computers to run the same programs.
6. ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange), sometimes known as "plain text." In ASCII, the numbers 0–255 are used to represent letters, numbers, and keyboard characters like A, B, C, 1, 2, 3, %, &, and @. Berners-Lee used ASCII to come up with two basic systems of rules (known in computer terminology as protocols).
7. HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol). It is essentially a way for two computers to exchange information through a simple "conversation," whether they're sitting next to one another in the same room or on opposite sides of the world.
8. One computer (which is called a client and runs a program called a web browser) asks the other computer (which is called a server or web server) for the information it needs with a series of simple messages. The web browser and the web server then chat away for a few seconds, with the browser sending requests for the things it wants and the server sending them if it can find them.
9. HTTP and HTML are "how the Web works": HTTP is the simple way in which one computer asks another one for Web pages; HTML is the way those pages are written so any computer can understand them and display them correctly.
10. HTML is the way those pages are written so any computer can understand them and display them correctly. If you find that confusing, try thinking about libraries
11. HTML (HyperText Markup Language). It was based on ASCII, so any computer could understand it. Unlike ASCII, HTML has special codes called tags to structure the text.
12. HTTP and HTML are "how the Web works": HTTP is the simple way in which one computer asks another one for Web pages; HTML is the way those pages are written so any computer can understand them and display them correctly.
13. The http:// bit means your computer can pull this page off my computer using the standard process called HTTP. If the URL begins with https, the page is encrypted as it travels between your browser and the Web server (so things like credit-card numbers, user names, passwords, and so on are kept secure from interference in transit). https pages are inherently more secure than http pages, but https alone does not make a website completely secure: it simply secures the connection between your computer and the server (or servers) you're talking to.
14. www.explainthatstuff.com is the address or domain name of my computer. Some websites use domain names that begin with things other than www (for example maps.google.com and mail.yahoo.com), which are called subdomains. maps.google.com, drive.google.com, and indeed www.google.com are all subdomains of the main google.com domain.
15. howthewebworks.html is the name of the file you're currently reading off my computer.
16. The .html part of the filename tells your computer it's an HTML file. Other filenames you might see include .php and .asp, which mean the pages you're looking at are "dynamic"; unlike "static" HTML pages, dynamic pages are built specifically for you, at the moment you request them, by the web server.