Allow for the possibility of a part of the URL being removed

Consider what happens when a user removes part of your URL - Some users might navigate your site in odd ways, and you should anticipate this. For example, **instead of using the breadcrumb links on the page, a user might drop off a part of the URL in the hopes of finding more general content**. He or she might be visiting http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/news/2010/upcoming-baseball-card-shows.htm, but
then enter http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/news/2010/ into the browser's address bar, believing that this will show all news from 2010 (2). Is your site prepared to show content in this situation or will it give the user a 404 ("page not found" error)? What about moving up a directory level to http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/news/?

(2) Users may go to an upper directory by removing the last part of the URL.

Prepare two sitemaps: one for users, one for search engines

A site map (lower-case) is a simple page on your site that displays the structure of your website, and usually consists of a hierarchical listing of the pages on your site. **Visitors may visit this page if they are having problems finding pages on your site**. While search engines will also visit this page, getting good crawl coverage of the pages on your site, it's mainly aimed at human visitors.

An XML Sitemap (upper-case) file, which you can submit through Google's Webmaster Tools, **makes it easier for Google to discover the pages on your site**. Using a Sitemap file is also one way (though not guaranteed) to tell Google which version of a URL you'd prefer as the canonical one (e.g. http://brandonsbaseballcards.com/ or http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/; more on what's a preferred domain). Google helped create the open source Sitemap Generator Script to help you create a Sitemap file for your site. To learn more about Sitemaps, the Webmaster Help Center provides a useful guide to Sitemap files.

Site map

Top:	Card category:	Special features:
News	By team	Card exchange
About this site	By players	Bargain pack
Privacy policy	By year	Holiday gifts
	By price	

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">
  <url>
    <loc>http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/</loc>
    <changefreq>daily</changefreq>
    <priority>0.8</priority>
  </url>
  <url>
    <loc>http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/news/</loc>
  </url>
  <url>
    <loc>http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/news/2008/</loc>
  </url>
  <url>
    <loc>http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/news/2009/</loc>
  </url>
  <url>
    <loc>http://www.brandonsbaseballcards.com/news/2010/</loc>
  </url>
</urlset>
```

Examples of an HTML site map and an XML Sitemap. An HTML site map can help users easily find content that they are looking for, and an XML Sitemap can help search engines find pages on your site.

Links

- **Webmaster Tools**
  https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/
- **What's a preferred domain**
  http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=44231
- **Sitemap Generator Script**
  http://code.google.com/p/googlesitemapgenerator/
- **Guide to Sitemap files**
  http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=156184