

Understanding the Parts of an Internet Address

You find information on the Internet through a URL (Uniform Resource Locator). The URL is the “address” to mark the location of a web site or other Internet service.

The address for the Oregon Institute of Technology Library is:

<http://www.oit.edu/lbry>

The **http:** indicates what type of protocol you need to view this item. The protocol is the way in which two systems communicate. Examples of other protocols are ftp or telnet.

The **www** stands for World Wide Web. This is the name of the “host” computer where the web page is stored and is a common name given to computers connected to the web. However, it’s not necessary for web addresses to begin with [www](http://www.oit.edu/lbry). The web page might also be stored on a host computer or server named something else.

The domain name is **oit.edu** and indicates that this page is coming from Oregon Institute of Technology. The **lbry** further directs the address to the OIT Library.

The part of the domain that is considered the top-level domain designator is the **.edu**. The most common types of top-level domains are:

.edu	Educational Institution	Besides the institution’s official web pages, students or faculty members can also publish personal pages on these web sites.
.com	Commercial Entity	Anyone, anywhere in the world can have this type of web site. This is the most common type of site for companies and is often used to advertise and sell products, as well as to post company annual reports and other financial information. Online journals or newspapers also have .com web pages.
.org	Organization	This designation is used for any type of organization, including non-profit organizations.
.net	Network Provider, etc.	Originally designated for organizations directly involved in Internet organizations, .net can now be used by anyone – companies, organizations, and individuals. It is often used by businesses when the desired name under “.com” is already registered by another organization.
.gov	Government	Originally only for the federal government, .gov is now used for any level of government. These sites are used to publish tax forms, census information, legislation, and other government news or information.

Some of the other top-level domain names are .mil, .museum, .info, and .biz. There are also sometimes country codes in the URL, such as **us** for United States, **ca** for Canada, or **jp** for Japan.