

The Internet Tourbus Guide to the Most Useful Sites in the World – Part Two (a.k.a. “The Next 21”)

Updated Wednesday, February 5, 2003

1. The Langalist

<http://www.langa.com/>

The best Windows-related Internet newsletter in the world, it offers "tips, tricks, and other information you need to make the most of your hardware, your software, and your time online." There is no cost to subscribe.

2. Slashdot

<http://www.slashdot.org/>

A constantly-updated, online community that offers the latest news, reviews, and commentary about technology in general and information technology in specific. Expect to see a LOT of articles you won't understand ... but Slashdot is still worth the trip, especially if you want to stay up to date with what is REALLY going on in the tech world.

3. Yahoo Whats New

<http://dir.yahoo.com/new/>

Every day, our friends at Yahoo add a couple dozen new sites to their directory. The What's New section shows you which sites have been added, by category, each day.

4. Google Browser Buttons

<http://www.google.com/options/buttons.html>

A special bookmarklet that you drag and drop onto your browser's links bar, enabling you to search Google without actually having to visit Google. Check out the Classroom Resources section of NetSquirrel.com for a PDF handout containing detailed instructions on how to get and use the free Google Browser Buttons.

5. PopCap Games

<http://www.popcap.com/>

A collection of free, online, Java-based games that you can play on any Internet-connected PC or Mac.

6. Coffee Break Arcade

<http://www.coffeebreakarcade.com/>

Gives you links to over 100 free online games grouped into six different categories: classic games, cool games, sports games, shooting games, racing games, and casino games.

7. Internet Movie Database (IMDb)

<http://www.imdb.com/>

A free, searchable database of over 260,000 film and television productions made since 1892. Most everyone knows about IMDb's searchable database, but there are a BUNCH of hidden treasures in this site that few people ever see: the now playing list, movie/TV news, photo galleries, and MUCH more

8. Metacritic

<http://www.metacritic.com/>

A huge, easy-to-read, meta archive of film, video, music, and game reviews. The numbers and the colors next to the title of each movie/CD/game give you that item's average score on a scale from 1 to 100, quickly showing you if that item has received good reviews or poor ones.

9. TechTV

<http://www.techtv.com/techtv/>

The companion site for the TechTV cable television network. TechTV.com is RAPIDLY becoming one of the best places to go if you want to see product reviews and demonstrations or get tech support articles on practically ANYTHING technology-related.

10. MERLOT

<http://www.merlot.org/>

MERLOT -- the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching -- is a free, peer-reviewed collection of over 8,000 different online learning tools and simulations developed (mostly) by college professors around the world.

11. The Schrock Guide

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/>

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators is a free, categorized list of over 2,000 Web sites useful for enhancing curriculum and professional growth. The list is updated daily to include the best sites for teaching and learning.

12. Rubistar

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>

A free, online, rubric-creating tool designed to help educators who want to use rubrics in the classroom but don't have the time to develop them from scratch. The site doesn't look like much, but it is actually quite helpful.

13. AccuWeather

<http://www.accuweather.com/>

One of my favorite Weather sites, mostly for the "RealFeel" forecasts that tell you what the temperature outside feels like. Key in your zip code or city and state into the white search box on the left side of the page to get an in-depth, local forecast. The link for world (non-US) forecasts is right below that white search box.

14. My Yahoo!

<http://my.yahoo.com/>

Sort of like a personal, online newspaper that you can completely customize, My Yahoo! was one of the first free personal portal sites, and is still one of the best. With a free Yahoo account (just click on the "Sign Up Now" button), you can customize your My Yahoo page to display the latest news, stock information, weather reports, and sports scores that interest you.

15. Download.com

<http://download.com/>

The 800 pound gorilla of software download sites, Download.com has an absurdly large collection of freeware and shareware programs, most submitted by the program manufacturers. The site is set up like a directory, so you can either search for a particular program or browse by category. The site offers downloads for Windows, Mac, Linux, and handhelds.

16. Ad-Aware

<http://lavasoft.element5.com/support/download/>

A free Windows 98/Me/NT/2000/XP program that checks your computer for and removes spyware, software used by advertisers and Web sites to track your movement around the Internet.

17. AOL Instant Messenger (AIM)

<http://www.aim.com/>

The most popular instant messaging program out there. Sign up for a free AIM screen name and then download the AIM program which runs on PC, Mac, Linux, and handhelds. If you don't want to download anything, you can launch AIM in a Java window by clicking on the "AIM Express" link.

18. CNET Bandwidth Meter

<http://webservices.cnet.com/bandwidth/>

How fast is your Internet connection right now? Key in your area or country code, click on go, and up pops a chart showing you your bandwidth speed.

19. NetFlix (NOT FREE!**)**

<http://www.netflix.com/>

I have been a NetFlix member since December 2000, and I love it. NetFlix is a \$20 a month DVD rental service that snail mails you 3 DVDs at a time. Ship the DVDs back to NetFlix in the prepaid envelopes and NetFlix ships you the next DVDs on your list. No late fees or time limits!

20. Lynda.com (NOT FREE!**)**

<http://www.lynda.com/>

Another commercial site, but one that I highly recommend. For \$25 a month you can access 2,500 online training movies that show you how to use Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Flash, Photoshop, Quicktime, etc. If you can't afford \$25 a month, check out the free movies that are updated weekly.

21. Zombo.com

<http://www.zombo.com/>

You can do anything at zombocom, anything at all. The only limit is yourself. [By the way, you need a pretty good sense of humor to truly "get" this site.]