

# Understanding the Difference Between the Internet and the Web

If you find yourself using the terms "Internet" and "World Wide Web" interchangeably, you are in good company. Most people do!

However, while they work together to bring news, crosswords, and video calls into our living rooms, they are actually two very different things.

Think of it like the **railway system**. The tracks, the signals, and the stations are the infrastructure that connects London to Edinburgh. The trains themselves, carrying passengers or mail, are what use that infrastructure to get things done.

Here is a simple guide to help you distinguish between the two.

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## 1. The Internet: The "Invisible Pipes"

The Internet is the **hardware**. It is a vast, global network of physical cables (some running under the Atlantic Ocean!), copper wires, and wireless signals.

Its job is to connect your tablet, computer, or smartphone to every other device in the world. It is the "infrastructure" that allows data to travel from point A to point B.

### The Internet is responsible for:

- **Email:** Sending a digital letter to a friend.
- **WhatsApp & Messaging:** Quick chats with the grandchildren.
- **Streaming:** Watching a programme on BBC iPlayer.
- **Smart Devices:** Such as a Hive thermostat or a Ring doorbell.

## 2. The World Wide Web: The "Library"

The Web (which is why most addresses start with **www**) is just one way of sharing information across the Internet. If the Internet is the tracks, the Web is the **train** carrying the information you want to read.

It is essentially a massive collection of "pages" or documents that are linked together.<sup>4</sup> You "browse" the web using a program like Google Chrome, Safari, or Microsoft Edge.

## A Simple Comparison

Feature	The Internet	The World Wide Web
What is it?	The physical network of wires and signals.	A collection of pages and information.
Analogy	The <b>Telephone Lines</b> in the street.	The <b>Conversations</b> you have on the phone.
When did it start?	Developed in the 1960s/70s.	Invented by Sir Tim Berners-Lee in 1989.
What do you use?	A router, Wi-Fi, or a data cable.	A "Browser" (the icon you click to go online).

### Why does the distinction matter?

Understanding the difference helps when things go wrong. If your "Internet" is down, your BBC iPlayer and your emails won't work either—the "pipes" are blocked.

However, if you can send an email but you can't get onto a specific newspaper's website, your Internet is fine, but that specific part of the "Web" might be having a "wobble."

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This article consists of 2 pages and about 400 words. It was generated in less than 10 seconds by the Artificial Intelligence Bot known as Gemini. It then took me about 5 minutes to edit and tidy it. I needed to edit the original prompt to include *the UK* as the first try had American wording.

The starting script or prompt was :-

Write an article for folk in the UK, over the age of 70 years that explains the difference between the Internet and the Web