

Investigating Browsing Activity

This brief tutorial will demonstrate how to see what web sites have been visited from your computer. This tutorial assumes that you are using the latest versions of the most popular web browsers: Netscape (v4.77) & MS Internet Explorer (v5.5). You can download the latest web browsers at the following locations:

- www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/
- www.netscape.com

The screen shots displayed in this tutorial were taken from a computer running Windows 2000 Professional. Other versions of Windows or Macintosh computers will look different, but the steps outlined are similar.

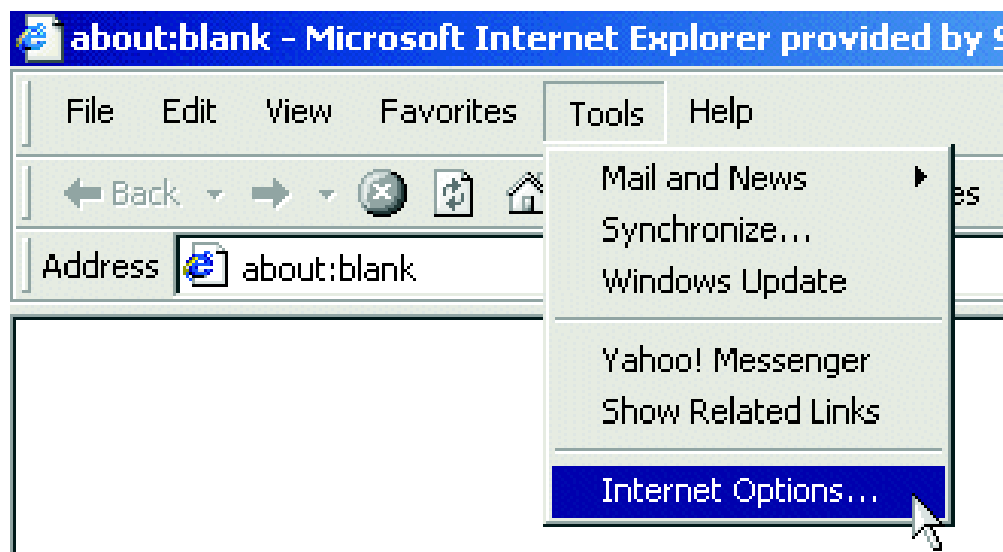
Note: the information contained in this tutorial is not a fool-proof method to determine what has been viewed on your computer. With a little knowledge, anybody can alter or delete the record of visited web sites.

Internet Explorer

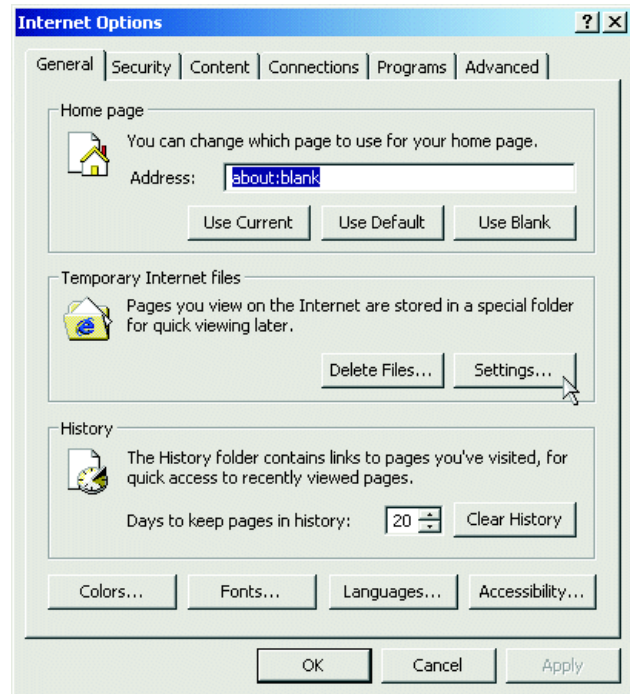
1. Click on the **Tools** menu.



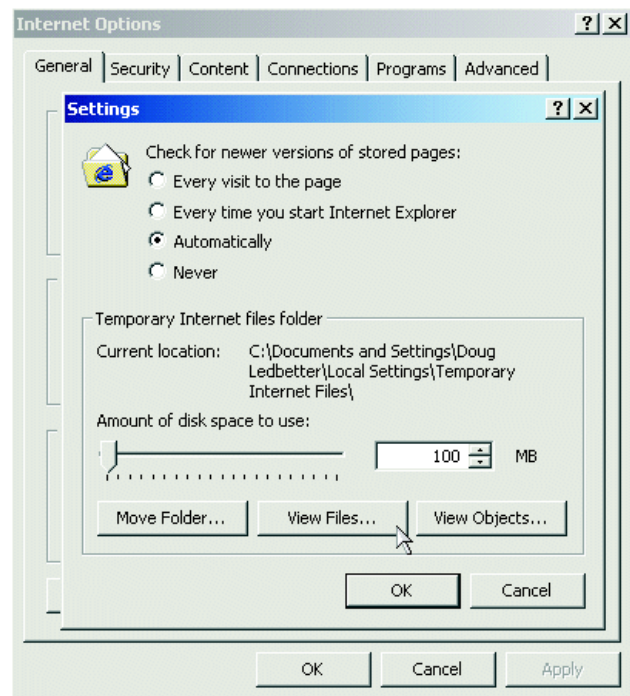
2. Select "Internet Options"



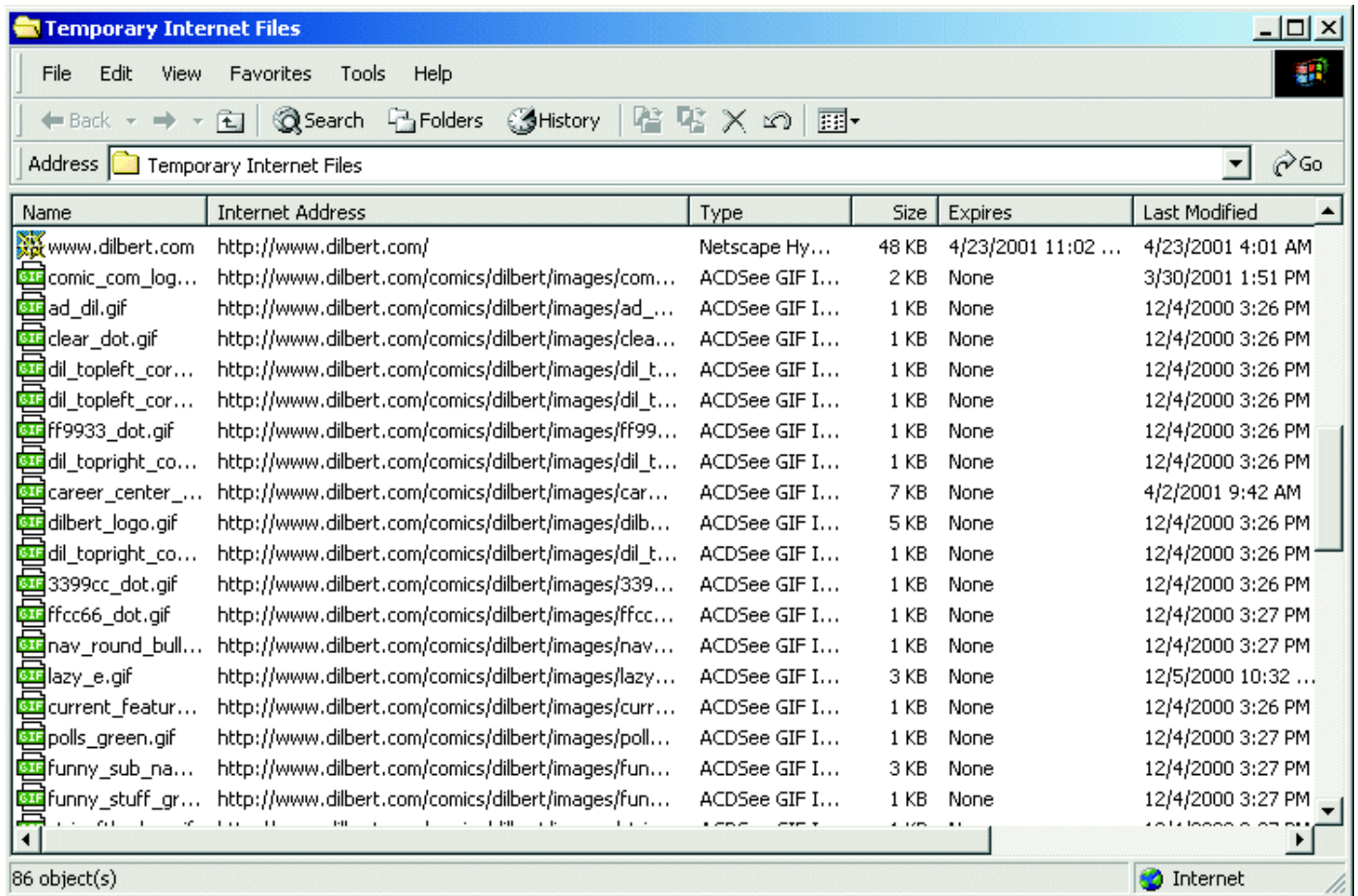
3. Click the button labeled “Settings...” in the “Temporary Internet Files” section of the window.



4. Click the button labeled “View Files...”

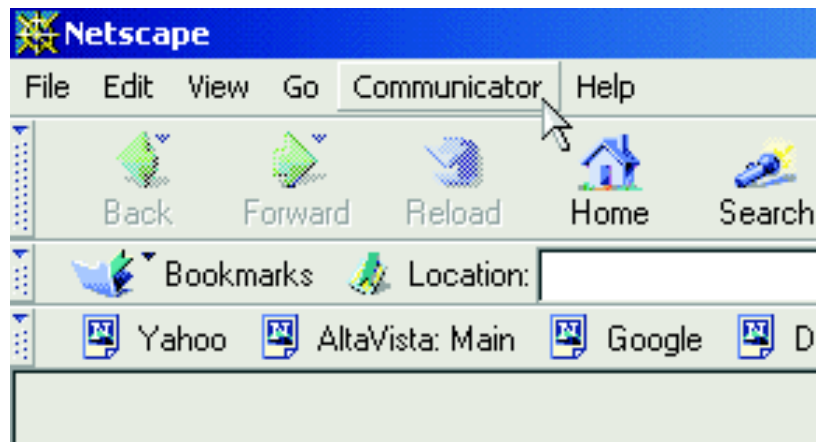


5. A new window will open that shows the recently visited web sites.

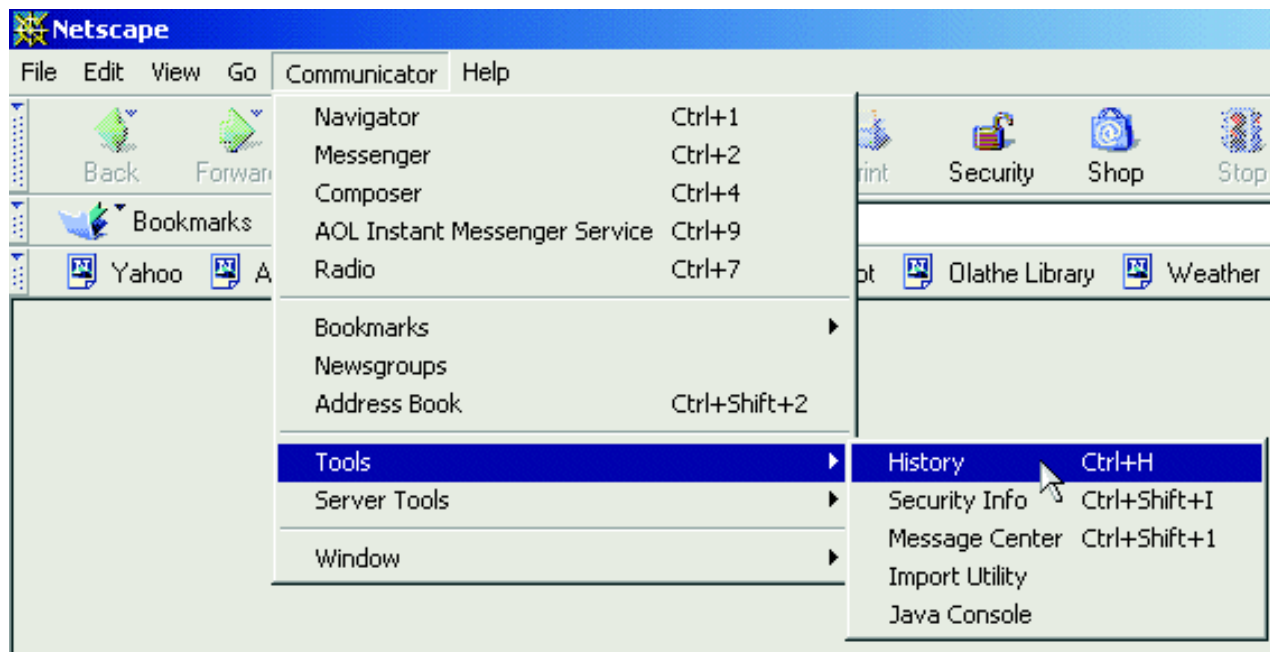


Netscape Navigator/Communicator

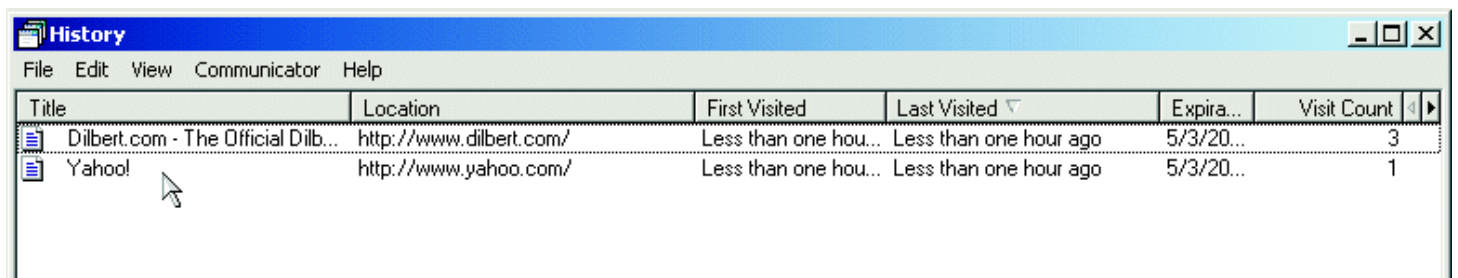
1. Click on the **Communicator** menu.



2. Select “History” from the **Tools** fly-out menu.



3. A new window will open that shows the recently visited web sites.



Cookies

Another way to determine what sites have been visited is to examine the “cookie” files left by many web sites. This method is not a fool-proof test either, as cookies can be deleted, but it is another method that may help you discover what has been viewed by your computer.

What are cookies?

Cookies are just a small piece of data left on your computer by some web sites. Not every web site will store a “cookie” but many do. The cookie is typically used to identify you when you return to a web site.

Finding cookies on your computer

The easiest way to find the “cookies” on your computer is to search for them using the Windows search tool (Start menu -- Search -- Find Files or Folders).

Netscape stores all cookies in one file. You are looking for a file named “cookies.txt”. IE stores each cookie in its own file in a folder called “Cookies”.

