The Internet Tourbus Guide to the Most Useful Sites in the World
Updated Fall, 2005

TinyURL
http://tinyurl.com/

Cut-and-paste a really long URL into the box on TinyURL's site and the site automatically smushes the URL into a shorter, permanent one that is much easier to share with others. [All of the longer URLs in this handout have been shortened using TinyURL.]

Intel Broadband Download Calculator
http://tinyurl.com/dpq6k

An essential tool for web developers, educators who use BlackBoard or WebCT, or anyone with a dial-up connection. Use your mouse enter a particular file's size and the site automatically shows you how long it will take to download that file over various connection speeds.

Broadband Reports Speed Test
http://tinyurl.com/73862

Want to know how fast your internet connection *really* is? Using a simple JAVA applet, this site both downloads and uploads some simple test files of various sizes to determine your computer's true connection speed.

Mail2Web
https://mail2web.com/

Want to read your email on the road but don't have access to Outlook, Eudora, Netscape, etc? Just go to mail2web.com, key in your email address and password [yes, the site is secure], and up pops your POP3 or IMAP inbox.

Slashdot
http://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.

Gizmodo
http://gizmodo.com/

A constantly-updated collection of stories and reviews about the latest must-have gadgets. Gizmodo is a little like Slashdot with pictures. The site/blog offers one paragraph snippets of gadget information from other sources along with links to where you can find more information about a particular tech product or issue. [*Top 10 blog*]

Engadget
http://engadget.com/

Created by Gizmodo founder Peter Rojas, Engadget also offers one paragraph snippets of gadget news and reviews with links to more in-depth coverage. The site also offers an extremely popular weekly tech news podcast. [*Top 10 blog*]

WOOT
http://woot.com/

Updated daily at Midnight Central Time, Woot sells one name brand electronics item a day at insanely cheap prices [hence the site's "one day, one deal" motto.] The only catch is that Woot has severly limited quantities. You snooze, you lose.

BoingBoing
http://boingboing.net/

Written with a wry sense of humor and created by five contributing writers for Wired magazine, BoingBoing is a frequently updated blog that focuses on technology, futurism, science fiction, Disney, intellectual property, and politics. [*Top 10 blog*]

Digg
http://digg.com/

Don't have time to surf the net? Let other people surf for you. Digg is a social bookmarking site where people submit new stories and websites and then Digg users vote on whether the submissions should be promoted to the front page. Digg is a great way to keep up-to-date with the most popular internet sites and stories of the day.

MERLOT
http://merlot.org/

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 and used by college professors around the world.

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.

US Institutional Accreditation System
http://tinyurl.com/dwf7n

Created by the US Department of Education, this site lets you check to see if a particular higher education institution is accredited.

Standards for Success
http://s4s.org/

Created by the Association of American Universities [with the assistance of the Pew Charitable Trusts], this site offers a free report specifically identifying what students need to know and be able to do in order to succeed in entry-level courses at America's research universities. The report is so significant that The College Board uses it as a foundational element in the development of College Board examinations, including the SAT, PSAT, and Advanced Placement exams.

Lynda.com (**NOT FREE!**)
http://lynda.com/

For $25 a month you can access 10,000 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.

Google Maps
http://maps.google.com/

Google's MapQuest. Key in an address and Google shows you that address on a zoomable, draggable map. You can also view that address from space with or without an overlay showing street names.

Google Sightseeing
http://googlesightseeing.com/

An unofficial companion to Google Maps, you can use Google Sightseeing to view some of the world's best and most unique tourist destinations from space.

Google Blog
http://googleblog.blogspot.com/

Edited by Google managers, engineers, and team members, the Google Blog is a great place to get a sneak peek at some of Google's newest tools and technologies.

KCRW
http://kcrwmusic.com/

Arguably the most influential radio station in America. Located in Santa Monica, CA, KCRW plays a free-form collection of modern, "eclectic" music. Hollywood movie and television studios often raid KCRW's playlists, so if you want a sneak peek of what's next in music, listen to the station's music feeds online.

Metacritic
http://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.

The Internet Tourbus
http://tourbus.com/

A free semi-weekly Internet newsletter read by over 100,000 people in over 130 countries. Tourbus celebrated its tenth anniversary in the Summer of 2005, and PC World recently rated Tourbus as one of the internet's 15 best newsletters. All of the sites in this handout came from the Tourbus archives.

NetSquirrel.com
http://netsquirrel.com/

Created by the co-author of the Internet Tourbus and the author of this handout, NetSquirrel.com is a free collection of how-to articles, movies, and PowerPoint files you are welcome to download and reuse.