



Power Browsing with Internet Explorer 7 and Mozilla Firefox



Toby Greenwalt, Adult Services Librarian
tgreenwalt@skokiellibrary.info

This handout is meant to provide a basic overview of the certain key features of Mozilla Firefox and Internet Explorer 7. While the image below is from Firefox, the features listed (aside from a few graphical tweaks) are the same.



1. **Bookmarks:** Under this tab, you can bookmark your favorite pages, and sort them into relevant groupings. You can also import links that you've compiled and exported from other browsers.
2. **Tools:** Monitors your browser customizations, enables you to clear out private data, and configures other browser settings.
3. **Help:** Use this tab to check the version of your browser. Firefox also has a useful section covering the transition from past versions of Internet Explorer.
4. **Bookmarks Toolbar:** Add your most frequently visited pages to this toolbar for 1-click access at any time.
5. **Search Bar:** Instead of visiting www.google.com, you can now search directly from this window. Use the pull-down menu to change your search options, and click "Manage Search Engines" to add more of your favorites. (See the next page for more info.)
6. **Address Bar/Security Indicator:** When visiting a secure site, be sure to look for the "lock" icon on the right side of the address bar.
7. **Library Toolbar:** Download this extension from tools.skokiellibrary.info, and get 1-click access to the catalog and other features of the Library website.
8. **Tabs:** One of the key features of this new breed of browsers, tabs enable you to have multiple Web pages open in one browser window. You can sort these open pages by dragging the tabs, or close individual tabs by clicking on its corresponding "X."
9. **Right-Click Menu:** Like many other applications, right-clicking on a page activates a context-sensitive menu. In Firefox, this can allow you to cut-and-paste images or text, open new pages, add a page to your bookmarks folder, or activate certain browser extensions.
10. **Status Bar:** Indicates if a page has loaded properly, or if a certain Web feature is not working properly.
11. **Extension Status (Firefox only):** Certain extensions (such as Meebo or IE Tab) can be turned on and off. These icons in the bottom left corner of the browser indicate their status.

Use Extensions to make Firefox even better!

Extensions (also known as Add-ons) enable you to customize Firefox in order to make the browsing experience easier, more efficient, and more fun. Hundreds of extensions are available, but I have found these to be particularly useful.

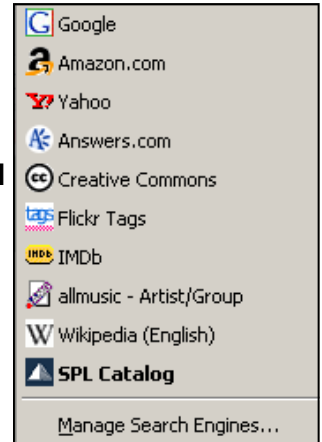


Search Extensions

The search bar is already a standard feature on most modern Internet browsers. Many browsers come with a preset list of search tools. You can switch between them by clicking the down arrow and selecting your preferred search. You can also add other search engines by clicking "Manage Search Engines." You can then search for your favorite website and add it to the list. Firefox takes things a step further by allowing you to create your own search tools. We have created a Skokie Public Library extension, which you can download at www.richardkong.net/tools.

Extensions

You can search for extensions at <http://addons.mozilla.org>. Here are a few favorites:



AdBlock Plus (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/1865>)

Installing AdBlock helps to stop a large percentage of the pop-ups and extra advertising that shows up on too many websites. Blocking them will not only make for a less cluttered browsing experience, but will also make those ad-free pages load more quickly.

Book Burro (<http://www.bookburro.org>)

Do you search for books online? Book Burro can help you save time and money by searching online vendors and local libraries. Once you've installed the extension, visit Tools → Add-ons → Book Burro → Options.

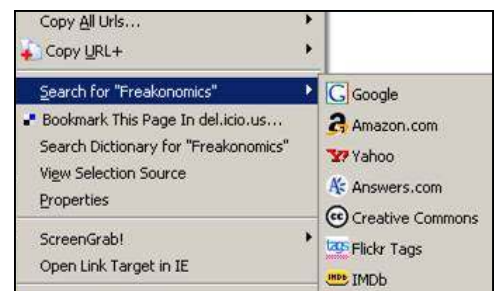
Choose your home library from the list (Skokie Public Library is included), and choose your favorite vendors by clicking on the checkboxes. Any time you visit an online bookstore, Book Burro will tell you how much the book is selling for at other vendors, or if it is available at the Library.

Copy Plain Text (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/134>)

Just like the title says, Copy Plain Text will copy the text from a page without any special formatting, font sizes, hyper-text code, or other modifications. Simply right-click, select Copy as Plain Text, and the text will automatically copy to your Clipboard.

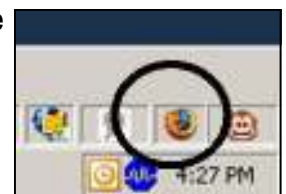
Context Search (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/240>)

One way to make the search bar even more useful is to employ an add-on such as Context Search. Context Search allows you to highlight a piece of text within a webpage and search for that term by right-clicking on it. (See image to the right.) You can choose any of the search engines in your main search bar. This saves you from typing in search terms, making Web searches much faster.



IETab (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/1419>)

While my love for Firefox knows no bounds, the browser does have a few limitations. Every once in a while, you will encounter pages that don't render properly in Firefox, or simply won't open at all. (This is particularly true for sites that employ a lot of ActiveX controls.) Installing IETab allows you to switch to Internet Explorer without exiting Firefox. If you run into a troublesome page, simply click on the Firefox logo in the bottom corner of the browser (pictured at right), and you'll switch rendering engines. (This is also helpful if you're a Web designer.)



(continued)

Firefox Extensions, Continued



Try these add-ons to provide extra functionality to your browser. Add as many or as few as you like to create the browsing experience you want.

Meebo (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/5700>)

Do you Instant Message? Would you like to use multiple IM clients in one place? After downloading the Meebo extension, you can enter your IM usernames and receive notifications of new messages directly in your browser. Learn more about meebo at www.meebo.com.

PDF Download (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/636>)

Files in the Adobe Acrobat (or “PDF”) format have become a necessary evil of the online lifestyle. While they do represent a secure way to send files back and forth, they can be rather unwieldy, and put a lot of strain on your computer. The PDF Download extension takes a lot of the hassle out of downloading PDFs by warning you if a file is a PDF ahead of time. This way, you can view the file, save it to disk, or convert it to HTML for easier viewing.

ScreenGrab (<http://www.screengrab.org>)

Do you ever wish you could capture the image on showing on your Web browser? ScreenGrab makes it quick and easy. After you’ve installed the extension, look for the icon shown at right. It will sit at the bottom of your browser window. If you’d like to capture the screen, click on the icon. ScreenGrab will give you the option to capture the entire window, the full page (including anything you’d have to scroll up or down for), or a selection (which you can choose by drawing a box on your screen). ScreenGrab will copy the image to your clipboard, or allow you to save it to your hard disk.



Snipshot (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/4571>)

Right-click on any image file you find online. Snipshot will take you to its online photo editor, where you can crop, resize, rotate, or recolor the photo. You can then save the file in a variety of different formats, or send it to an online photosharing site like Flickr.

Tab Mix Plus (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/1122>)

If you’ve gotten the hang of tabbed browsing, Tab Mix Plus will add extra features to your tabs. Among these features are the ability to *Protect* a tab (prevent it from closing), *Lock* the tab (prevent it from navigating to another website) or *Freeze* it (both protect and lock the tab). You can activate these options by right-clicking on the tab. You can also use Tab Mix Plus to bring up lists of tabs that you’ve closed, in case you accidentally closed a page in the course of clicking through tabs.

TinyUrl Creator (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/1865>)

Not all website addresses can be as simple as www.skokiellibrary.info. Many URLs can be rather unwieldy, and include what looks like randomly generated letters and numbers. TinyURL takes that address and turns it into something much more manageable. With the TinyURL extension, you can right-click on a site, and it will make the URL tiny, pasting the finished product to your clipboard for good measure.

This is by no means a comprehensive list of extensions. Different extensions work for different people, so don’t be afraid to search for extensions on your own. You can visit the main page by clicking on “Tools” in your Firefox toolbar, selecting “Add-ons,” and clicking the “Get More Extensions” link. If you don’t like a particular extension, you can always uninstall it by visiting that Add-ons menu.



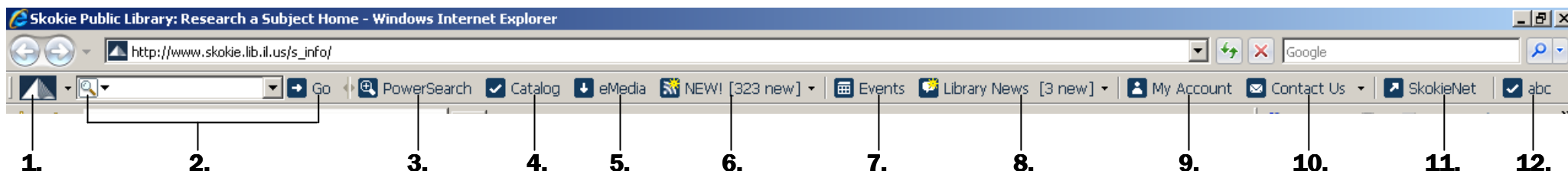
Using the Skokie Public Library Toolbar

1-Click access to your favorite library features!

The Skokie Public Library Toolbar is a free add-on to your web browser that allows quick, easy access to many useful library services. It works with both Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox, is easy to install, and contains no adware or spyware.

Visit <http://tools.skokielibrary.info>, click on “Download the Skokie Public Library Toolbar,” and follow the prompts for easy installation.

Below is a list of the Toolbar’s main features:



1. **Skokie Public Library Homepage**—Click here to be taken directly to www.skokielibrary.info.
2. **Search Bar**—This is similar to the search bar in the top corner of your browser, only this one allows you to search the Skokie Public Library website. Performing a search when the magnifying glass on the left is showing will search Google. By clicking on the arrow next to the magnifying glass, you can also search the Library website or the Library catalog.
3. **PowerSearch**—Takes you to the Library’s PowerSearch engine, which combs through books, articles, and websites, all selected by expert Library staff! Note: You will need to enter a library card number if accessing from outside the Library.
4. **Catalog**—Takes you directly to the Library catalog search page.
5. **eMedia**—Explore the Library’s collection of eBooks, eAudiobooks, and downloadable video.
6. **New Items**—Using RSS (Really Simple Syndication, a Web technology that allows users to receive automatic updates to news and other information), the NEW! tab displays several lists of items recently added to the Library collection. Within each list is a set of links to the library’s catalog. Click on the item to see if it is on the shelf, or to place a hold as it becomes available.
7. **Events**—Takes you to the Library’s calendar of events.
8. **Library News**—Recent announcements from the Library.
9. **My Account**—Log in with your library card to see your account. Place holds, renew items, and check due dates.
10. **Contact Us**—Send the Library an email if you have a question, a comment, or just want to say “Hi!”
11. **SkokieNet**—Skokie’s gateway to community information. Maintained by Skokie librarians.
12. **SpellCheck**—Clicking on this after entering text online (on an email, or in a comment form, or elsewhere) will check your spelling.

Please Note: We are constantly seeking out new ways to improve the Skokie Public Library toolbar. As a result, some of these features may change over time. This handout reflects the current toolbar layout as of November, 2007.

If you have any suggestions for the Toolbar, please click on “Contact Us,” and send us a message.



Skokie Public Library Trustees:

Diana Hunter, President/President Emerita; John Graham, Vice President; Dayle Zelenka, Secretary; Richard Basofin; Susan Greer; Zelda Rich; John M. Wozniak
Director: Carolyn A. Anthony