Understanding URL's

URL - definition

URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator. It is the Web Address of a web page, or some other kind of document, that is available on the Internet. It is the instruction to your browser regarding the exact location on the Internet of the page you want to visit.

- Some are very short.
    - For example; http://www.cnn.com
- Some are long and somewhat complicated.
    - For example;
      http://www.mcsk12.net/admin/tlapages/entry_level_pc_index.htm
- Some are generated by search requests, and can get quite long and complicated.
    - For example; http://www.alltheweb.com/cgi-bin/search?type=phrase&query=what+is+a+url&exec=FAST+Search
- Some, however, are absolutely ridiculous
    - For example;
      http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/Department_Files/Communications_Department/News_Releases/01_NR/030101%20Alaska's%20Annual%20Low-Income%20Housing%20Tax%20Credit%20Allocation%20Increases%20to%20$2%20Million.htm

This tutorial will use the middle URL to explain the basic structure of a Uniform Resource Locator.

URL - dissection

The address of an index that contained a link to the page like the one you are reading now is:
http://www.mcsk12.net/admin/tlapages/entry_level_pc_index.htm

- **http://** - The way that information is transferred by way of the browser. That is known as the protocol. In this case the browser is to use Hyper Text Transfer Protocol. The language of web pages is known as HTML, Hypertext Markup Language. Another common protocol is known as File Transfer Protocol, or ftp://
- **www.mcsk12.net/** - The domain name, or location of the computer on the World Wide Web which hosts the page. Once a domain is registered the information provided by that domain must have a host computer where the files are stored. That computer is called a server. Some places are huge collections of servers known as "**server farms**."
- **admin/** - Servers which host huge collections of data must organize that data in directories or file folders. Anything following the domain name which is also followed by a slash is the name of a directory.