



# WebSights

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*WebSights* features reviews of select sites presenting physics teaching strategies, as well as shorter announcements of sites of interest to physics teachers. All sites are copyrighted by their authors. This column is available as a web page at <http://PhysicsEd.BuffaloState.Edu/pubs/WebSights>. If you have successfully used a site to teach physics that you feel is outstanding and appropriate for *WebSights*, please email me the URL and describe how you use it to teach. The person submitting the best site monthly will receive a T-shirt.

## **The Internet Physicist at <http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/acl/tutorial?sid=1053487&op=preview&manifestid=207&itemid=>**

A new, streamlined and user-friendly version of the Internet Physicist is ready for use. The Internet Physicist is a free online tutorial (or Intute–internet tutorial, created by a U.K. education and research consortium) and collection to help one learn how to use the Internet for physics. Subject specialists select and evaluate the websites in the database and write high-quality descriptions of the resources. The database contains 117,357 records. This service is akin to the U.S. National Science Digital Library (NSDL) ComPADRE effort at <http://www.compadre.org>.

The Internet Physicist tutorial is divided into four sections: *Tour* the best of the web for physics, *Discover* how to search the Internet effectively, *Judge* which websites are worth using, and *Success* stories to inspire you. There is a brief quiz at the end of each section to reinforce the learning process. You can collect links to sites as you go, but you must either email the list of links to yourself for future action or bookmark to your own computer before logging off. The links basket empties automatically when one logs off the tutorial.

I especially liked the section that compared and contrasted a general search engine (google) with a Specialist search tool (Intute: science, engineering and technology). The section on evaluating a website is very helpful. The tutorial also stresses that not all information is available online, and academic libraries remain an essential resource for physicists. The tutorial includes links to the online catalogs of major libraries. Listservs and blogs for those interested in physics are also shown.

The Internet Physicist is an excellent starting place for anyone interested in finding good sources of information about physics.

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*reviewed by Pat Viele, Cornell University  
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## **Online Distance Education Graduate Courses in Physics Especially for High School Physics Teachers**

I frequently get queries from teachers interested in online physics graduate credit courses for high school physics teachers, usually from teachers enrolled in masters' programs or looking to add physics certification to their licensure, or simply for professional development. To be frank, I am not an optimist regarding teaching significant physics content by online methods as I am a hands-on, discourse-centric instructor, but these courses do impress. The following are suggestions for online credit that a full-time working teacher can take while holding a full-time job:

—Dan MacIsaac

- I strongly recommend the online PY601/2 Matter and Interactions for Secondary Science Teachers sequence taught by Sherwood and Chabay of North Carolina State University, see <http://distance.ncsu.edu/courses/fall07/PY.html>. This introductory calculus-based sequence of two 3-credit courses is taught by well-known and admired PER figures, from their acclaimed books on calculus-based introductory physics. Recently one of my students took one of these courses and prepared a review of that experience at <http://tinyurl.com/249en6>.  
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- Also recommended, particularly for those teaching middle school physics or physical science, are the University of Virginia PHYS605/6: How Things Work I/II courses described at <http://k12.phys.virginia.edu/online-courses.html>. A review of one of these courses was published in the *Journal of Physics Teacher Education Online* 4(1) for Autumn 2006; see <http://www.phy.ilstu.edu/jpteo/>.  
DOI: 0.1119/1.2768710
- The NSTA/National Teacher Enhancement Network (NTEN) at <http://btc.montana.edu/courses/asp/ntenindex.aspx> frequently offers graduate credit for physics teachers, including some online courses. Faculty active in Physics and Astronomy Education Research from Montana State and the University of Arizona frequently instruct these.  
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