

## Erasing Your Tracks

**Concerned about someone finding out where you've been on the net?**

**Here's how to reduce the chances that your net travels will be traced.**

Browsers like **Netscape** and **Internet Explorer** are designed to leave traces behind indicating where you've been and what you've been looking at on the Internet. It's hard to absolutely guarantee that your travels on the Internet can't be traced at all, but here are some simple things you can do to reduce the chances that someone can look through your computer and find out what you've been reading.

In general, you want to erase two different things after you've left ckwc.org any other site that you don't want traced.

One is the "cache" where the computer stores copies of files you've looked at recently with your browser. This will be a directory that will have various files stored in it. You will want to erase all of those files. The second thing you need to erase is your History list. This will be a single file containing the addresses of the places you've recently visited.

### **If you use the Netscape Navigator web browser**

Open the EDIT menu, choose PREFERENCES, choose ADVANCED, then choose CACHE. A screen will appear where you can click on the buttons, "Clear Memory Cache" and "Clear Disk Cache." Click on each of these and then hit "OK." Your cache will now be cleared.

Click on the EDIT menu, choose PREFERENCES, then choose NAVIGATOR. A "Clear History" button will appear on the screen. Select it, then choose "OK." Your history list will now be erased. If you've got a more recent version of Netscape installed on your computer, you will also want to clear your location bar list. Open the EDIT menu, choose PREFERENCES, then choose NAVIGATOR. Click on the "Clear Location Bar" button at the bottom of the window, then choose "OK".

### **If you use the Internet Explorer web browser**

Open the VIEW menu, choose INTERNET OPTIONS, then choose the GENERAL tab at the top. In the section called "Temporary Internet Files," click on "Delete Files" to clear your cache. On the same screen, in the section called "History," click on the "Clear History" button to erase your history list.

In Internet Explorer, clearing the cache and history will automatically clear the address bar on your browser.

### **Other browsers**

Other browsers will be slightly different in the detail of what's required to do these two things. But in any case, what you'll need to do is clear your cache (or "temporary files") and erase your history list. Again, this doesn't guarantee that your browsing can't be traced. Someone with greater computer sophistication will still be able to reconstruct your net travels. But it's a good thing to do to make it more difficult for someone to know where you've been.

### **One additional tip**

When you clear the cache and the history list, you erase not only the information on where you've been, but any other information that had been previously stored there. So, if your partner checks and sees that the cache and the history list have been completely emptied, he'll not only know that you know how to do this, but he might guess that you're trying to hide something. One possible way to avoid suspicion is to clear the cache and history once you're done looking at information you don't want your partner to know about. After they're cleared, spend some time visiting sites that you think your partner wouldn't object to. This way, the cache and history list start to get filled up and your partner might be less likely to notice that old information is missing.