Deep Web, Dark Web, and Dark Net
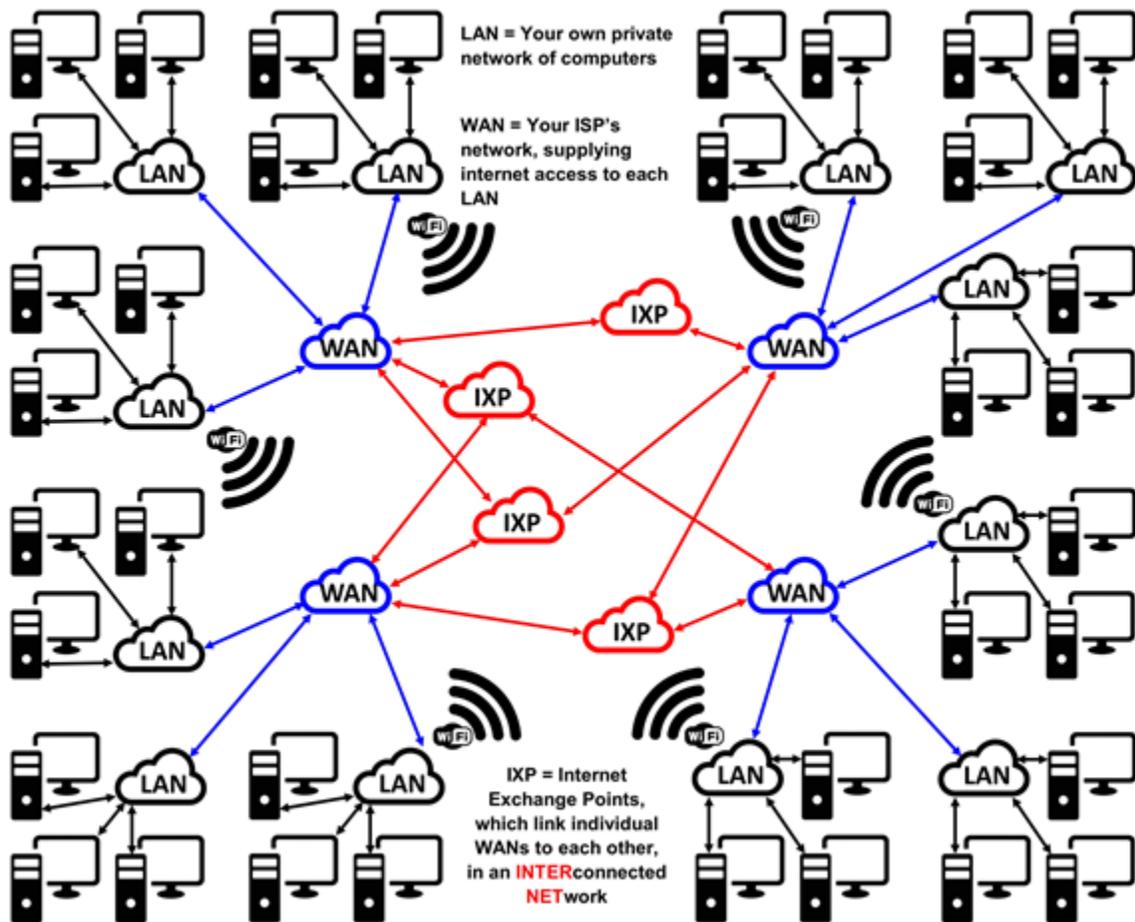## The most dangerous places on the "undernet"...

The **"Internet"** is sort of an abstract concept. It is a **net**work of **inter**connected computers, designed for sharing information, primarily via web pages containing text, pictures, and video. Most of these web pages are indexed by various search engines, such as Google.com, Yahoo.com, and Bing.com. when you search for a topic on one of these search engines, they list the web pages which contain them in search results pages.

LAN = Your own private network of computers

WAN = Your ISP's network, supplying internet access to each LAN

IXP = Internet Exchange Points, which link individual WANs to each other, in an **INTER**connected **NET**work

Above is a rough diagram of the internet, and what it looks like. Starting from the top-left corner, that block of 3 computers is one house, connected to their own router (**LAN** or Local Area Network).

Each household LAN is connected to their Internet Service Provider (**ISP**), such as Comcast or Frontier, who run their own Wide Area Network (**WAN**).

Larger Internet Service Providers connect to each other through Internet Exchange Points (**IXP**). This makes for a faster connection between two points.

ALL Internet Service Providers connect to a major internet line that runs all around the world to every continent. This internet line is EXTREMELY thick, and is called the "**backbone**" of the internet. The red lines in the chart above are part of the backbone.

The larger ISPs sell access to the backbone to smaller ISPs, who then sell subscriptions to individuals and small businesses. Larger businesses will often purchase their own connection directly through the larger ISPs.

So basically, the backbone is an extremely large cable sending internet access around the world, with junctions at multiple points, called IXPs. Large ISPs sell access to smaller ISPs who sell to individuals, who then set up their own home network.

Or, put even more simply, the internet is a series of computers, connected by a bunch of wires.

It is pretty complex, and it takes all parties working together to pull it off.

Internet Backbone Points:

The World Wide Web, which is where we get the "www" that most websites are prefixed with, is a **part of the internet**, and is comprised of websites that anyone can access. Most of these are "indexed" and organized by search engines such as Google and Yahoo, so that they can easily be found.

The **Deep Web, Invisible Web,** or **Hidden Web** are parts of the World Wide Web whose contents are not indexed by standard web search engines. Computer scientist Michael K. Bergman is credited with coining the term deep web in 2001 as a search indexing term.

Most websites Want to be indexed, and will go out of their way to be easily found by all, using tactics called "Search Engine Optimization" (SEO). However, some websites are not meant for the public to freely access, and will add special code to tell Google and other search engines NOT to index them.

The opposite term to the deep web is the "**surface web**", which refers to websites easily accessible and findable by anyone using the Internet.

Dark Net (or **Darknet**) is an umbrella term describing the portions of the Internet purposefully not open to public view or hidden networks whose architecture is superimposed on that of the Internet. "Darknet" is often associated with the encrypted part of the Internet called Tor network where illicit trading takes place such as drug sales and human trafficking. It is also considered **part of the Deep Web**.

With conventional internet, each computer or website server has a distinct IP Address (like a phone number for PCs). However, on the Darknet, this is not so, and computers cannot be traced to their sources. This makes it extremely hard for law enforcement agencies to find those responsible for the illegal activities happening there.

Category	%
Drugs	15.4
Fraud	9
Market	9
Bitcoin	6.2
Mail	5.7
Counterfeit	5.2
Whistleblower	5.2
Wiki	5.2
Forum	4.75
Anonymity	4.5
Hacking	4.25
Search	4.25
Hosting	3.5
Blog	2.75
Porn	2.75
Books	2.5
Directory	2.5
Chat	2.2
New	2.2
Abuse	2.2
Guns	1.4
Gambling	0.4

Dark Web is the World Wide Web content that exists on darknets, which use the Internet but require specific software, configurations, or authorization to access. The dark web forms a small part of the deep web, the part of the Web not indexed by web search engines, although sometimes the term deep web is **mistakenly** used to refer specifically to the dark web. Users of the dark web refer to the regular web as **Clearnet** due to its unencrypted nature.

Traditional websites must be registered, and finding their owners is simple enough. Dark Web sites, however, are encrypted, use extremely long strings for their names (such as **http://7rmath4ro2of2a42.onion**), and require the use of special web browsers to view them, such as the **Tor** web browser. The .onion links are specific to, and can only be opened with a Tor browser. Internet Explorer and other common web browsers will not allow access to Dark Web sites. While most dark web sites are used to buy & sell illegal goods & services, it should be noted that many legal goods & services are also sold, with the advantage being the anonymity offered by the Darknet.

Silk Road was an online black market that was the first modern darknet market, best known as a platform for selling illegal drugs, and legal drugs, illegally. As part of the dark web, it was operated as a Tor hidden service, such that online users were able to browse it anonymously and securely without potential traffic monitoring.

The Silk Road website was launched in February 2011. In October 2013, the FBI shut down the website and arrested Ross Ulbricht, the site's founder. On November 6th 2013, Silk Road 2.0 came online, run by former administrators of Silk Road. It too was shut down, and the operator was arrested on November 6th 2014 as part of the so-called "Operation Onymous".

Legality
    It is of interest to note that the Dark Web, Silk Road, and Darknets in general are not illegal. They are just generally used for illegal activities. But you can buy LEGAL things on them as well.
    As long as you aren't trying to view content that is illegal, such as child porn or human trafficking on the Dark Web, looking at sites that are not hosting illegal content is totally legal, just the same as for regular sites. Just looking at websites that sell drugs, guns, and stolen goods is not illegal. Buying something from it, on the other hand, is illegal, because you are either intentionally receiving stolen property, or purposely purchasing illegal goods.
    Again, the only real difference between the Dark Web and regular web sites is that they require special setup to access them.

    Also, not everything on the Deep Web is illegal either. Some of them just prefer to remain anonymous, and don't want to be listed on Google or other search engines, for various reasons. It may just be that what is discussed and talked about on the Deep Web site is private, illegal, or borderline legal, or possibly questionable in nature.

Accessing Dark Web
    You can always look for Hidden Wikis, which archive and update hidden pages. They are almost like search engines for darknets, except it is just one big list.

    Also, keep in mind, the most hidden darknets are NOT listed on the internet. Most of the more notorious sites are only shared between friends, or by word of mouth by those who know the site owner personally. If the info gets leaked to the internet, the Dark Web site changes its address immediately, keeping the location private.
    Some of them are only shared on Deep Web or Dark Web Forum Sites, between people who trust each other, or have proven themselves trustworthy enough to be given the information. In this way, only trusted folks get access, and they can fly below the legal radar.

    At the very least, you will need to install a third-party web browser to access any Dark Web site. .onion links in particular require the Tor browser, but some others require their own custom browser, the information for which will be shared with those who are deemed trustworthy.

    In some cases, it may be required that your network settings are changed, specifically your DNS server, in order to access these hidden web sites.

    Staying Safe Online
    But BEFORE YOU TRY TO ACCESS ANY OF THESE WEB SITES, you will want to use a VPN.

    A VPN is a way to make your connection private, so that no one knows it's YOU browsing the darknet site. This is important, because not all darknet sites are trustworthy either. Some of them are run by hackers who will immediately try to track you down, steal files from YOUR computer, and possibly infect and hold your computer for ransom (RansomWare).

    If any of this SCARES you, and makes you NOT want to go anywhere near the Dark Web…good. You are probably better off, and you are risking nothing by avoiding it. The best way to stay safe online, is to stay offline.

    If you are still here, you probably should get a VPN.

VPNs?

Normally, when you access a web site, that website can see your IP Address (phone # for your PC). A VPN (Virtual Private Network), is a way for your PC to connect to another PC, and then use THAT PC's IP Address as your own when accessing websites. That is not the only use for a VPN, but for the purposes of this article, it is the only one that matters.

But finding a trustworthy VPN is another story altogether. After all, you are connecting your PC to somebody else's, and that's generally only advisable if you trust them. and trusting strangers is ill-advised on the internet these days. Less so on the darknets.

But if you want to keep up on which ones are trustworthy, you can check here: https://torrentfreak.com/vpn-services-keep-anonymous-2018/

This list is updated annually, and gives a comprehensive overview of the services available.

VPNs tend to slow your internet connection down. Especially the FREE VPNs. The best ones cost a monthly fee, but are faster, more reliable, and you can track them down if they try to pull one over on you.

That's it, you are ready to access the Darknet! Now, if you need some sites to access, try some of these:

For more on Deep Web Sites: http://deep-web.org/how-to-research/deep-web-search-engines/

For more on accessing Dark Web Sites: https://darkwebnews.com/dark-web-market-list/

You can also use Duck Duck Go's Darknet version: http://3g2upl4pq6kufc4m.onion

Overview:
So basically…
Deep Web: Can be accessed by any web browser, just not indexed by Google.
Dark Web: Requires a special browser to access. Different browsers for different darknets.
Darknet: The internet that Dark Web sites are on.
Silk Road: An illegal marketplace that was shut down (twice).

And always remember the cardinal rule of the Dark Net: **TRUST NO ONE!**