

## GoPher

GoPher was the web before the web. Like the web, GoPher servers could run on any machine, and GoPher pages could link to GoPher pages on their own server or any other server. The difference was that a GoPher page consisted of some plain text, and then a list of other pages. So there were no imbedded links, and I don't recall that GoPher could deal with images at all. But there were GoPher browsers, and they did have the "forward" and "back" concepts for navigating between places you had been.

GoPher was named GoPher as a pun on "go for" information, but also because it was created at the University of Minnesota, where their University Mascot is a gopher, which is a grassland rodent common in central north america. Gophers create large complicated tunnel systems, which resemble the kind of structure that results in linked information systems. More like the web, in fact, than a web.

We did run and use GoPher here at VUW in the early 90s, before we got interested in the Web, and created the first web site and ran the first web server in NZ. These days many web browsers still allow the GoPher protocol, and there are still some gopher servers running.

See: <gopher://gopher.floodgap.com/>

(Hmm, the Wiki doesn't even acknowledge this as a URL.)

Also see: <http://www.scn.org/bkarger/gopher-manifesto>

(This has things to say about the current status of GoPher, including an item that IE doesn't support the GoPher protocol properly.

PS. I mentioned that the gopher is the mascot of the University of Minnesota. I'm not aware that VUW has a mascot. If we wanted one, what would be a good idea for the VuwMasot?

ElvisBrain is accessible via GoPher at <gopher://wakefield:7000/> (or, if you're using Mozilla, which appears to be a bit broken) <gopher://130.195.5.110:7000/>

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Also see [GoPherComments](#).

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