

Go to a Web site with your browser. Then open a DOS/Command Prompt window as in the Trace Route trick above but enter the command *netstat* with nothing following it. Press Enter. you'll be given a short list of servers you are currently accessing.

The real Ping

You can also “ping” another Web site to find out how fast its server responds. Follow the same procedure as in the Trace Route trick but use the *ping* command, instead of *tracert*, followed by the Web site address. (This also works with an FTP site.)

Three or four signals will be sent to the site, their response times given in milliseconds (thousandths of seconds) and an average round-trip time calculated.

This trick can have a nice side effect. Sometimes if a Web site is not downloading properly to your browser, if it seems to be getting stuck, pinging it like this can nudge the server into continuing the transfer.

You can also choose to send an endless stream of these wake-up calls by throwing in *-t* at the end of the command, as in *ping -t www.EditorEric.com* (there are single spaces before and after *-t*).

To get a fixed number of pings and an average of the response times, specify a larger number of pings by using the command in the form of *ping -n [number] [Web address]*. For instance, to ping our server 30 times, type *ping -n 30 www.EditorEric.com* (there are spaces after *ping*, *-n*, and *30*) and hit Enter. You'll get an average of all the attempts at the end.

The path of Ping

With Windows XP you have an additional tool that combines a couple of the above utilities — the *pathping* command.

In the DOS/Command window, enter *pathping* followed by the Web site address, as in *pathname www.yahoo.com*, and press Enter.

You'll get not only a list of servers that your message passes through on the way to the Web site, but you'll also see how efficient each is at passing along the data.

In the example illustrated on the facing page, *Pathping*