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Getting Started on the Computer - With Mouseaerobics! Windows XP

Introduction to the Computer Hardware A computer is made up of multiple parts that either send or receive information. All computers include the following hardware:

Computer case: The case that holds all the electronic components of the computer, including the hard disk, Random Access Memory chips (often just called memory), central processing unit (CPU), and motherboard.

Disk drives: Devices that read data from and write data to a disk. Computers have disk drives that are inside the machine as well as drives for removable disks. Most home desktop computers have diskette drives, some have ZIP drives, and many have drives that both read and write CDRoms and DVDs. A diskette holds about one chapter of a book; a zip drive holds about one book, and a CDRom can hold the contents of an entire encyclopedia, including pictures.

These laptop computers have an internal disk drive and a drive that reads/writes both CDRoms and DVDs. You can save files, such as letters, pictures, and presentations, on fixed or removable disks

Monitor: Similar to a television, the monitor displays text, pictures, and other items from the computer on a screen.

Keyboard: The set of typewriter-like keys you use to type information into the computer.

The computers in the library's training room are **laptops**, which contain the computer case, monitor, keyboard, and mouse in one compact unit. For ease of use, we have attached full-sized keyboards and mice to the laptop computers, to make the experience more like what you are used to with your home computer.

Computer keyboards have more keys than a typical typewriter keyboard.

Enter Key: When typing text, pressing Enter moves the cursor to the beginning of the next line. If you are running a program that requests information, you must press Enter after typing the information, to send the information to the program.

Backspace Key: This key deletes the character located to the left of the cursor. The cursor is the line or box where your text will appear as you type.

Delete Key: This key deletes the character located to the right of the cursor.

Insert Key: Pressing this key once causes new text that is entered to overwrite the existing text to the right of the cursor. Pressing it again causes text to be inserted at the current cursor position.

Tab Key: As on a typewriter, this key moves to the next tab stop. When you are filling in a form, however, it moves the cursor to the next entry in the form to be filled in.

Arrow keys, Page Up, Page Down, Home, and End: These keys allow you to move the cursor around the screen.

Function Keys: F1 to F12 are located at the top of the keyboard. Pressing F1 displays the Help function for most computer programs. Some computer programs assign special task to other function keys.

Numeric keypad: The keys at the far right of the screen that are positioned like the keys on an adding machine. Press Num Lock to turn these keys “on” and use them to enter numbers and mathematical functions.

Ctrl and Alt keys: Pressing and holding one of these keys make the other keys on the keyboard act differently from the way they normally act. For example, holding down Ctrl while pressing A (CTRL/A) highlights all of the text in a document.

Esc key: This key, which is located in the upper left side of the keyboard, is used in most programs to quit whatever you are currently doing.

Shift key: Holding the Shift down while typing a letter capitalizes the letter; holding shift while typing a number types the special character that appears above the number.

Caps Lock key: Pressing this key causes all letters to be capitalized, but does not cause the special characters above numbers to be used.

In addition to a keyboard, computers use a mouse to control the movement of the pointer displayed on the screen. You use the mouse pointer to select and open items on the computer.

To use a mouse:

1. Rest the heel of your hand on the table in front of the mouse.
2. Hold the mouse between your thumb and ring and little fingers, with the wire facing front.
3. Rest your index finger and middle finger over the two mouse keys at the front of the mouse.
4. Use your thumb and fingers to move the pointer around the screen.

We're going to spend about 15 minutes learning how to use the mouse by doing mouse aerobics! This tutorial will show you valuable skills that you will use in most computer applications. If you want to try mouse aerobics at home, type the following address into the address box of your Internet browser:

<http://www.ckls.org/~crippel/computerlab/tutorials/mouse/page1.html>

Basic Mouse Moves

- **Point** – Slide the mouse until the top of the arrow is over the item you want.
- **Click** – Press and release the left mouse button.
- **Double-click** – Press and release the left mouse button twice very quickly without moving the mouse.
- **Right click** – Press and release the right mouse button. Right clicking displays menus that are specific to the program you are using.
- **Drag** – Point to an object, hold down the left mouse button, and move the object. Release the left mouse button only when the object has been moved to its desired location. Typically, you drag an object while drawing (in a drawing or painting program). You also use the drag mouse move to highlight text in a word processing program.

Using the Windows Operating System

Windows is a family of computer operating systems. The operating system on the computer is the program that starts when you turn on the computer and performs the basic tasks required to use the computer, including interacting with the computer hardware, scheduling tasks, and maintaining files. The operating system also manages the other software programs on the computer. Think of it as the foundation software on which other pieces of software are built.

Computers using a Microsoft Windows operating system have many common features. The computers in this training lab use the Windows XP operating system. If your home computer is more than two years old, it might use a different Windows operating system. Don't worry, however, because the different Windows operating systems behave in very similar ways. Even if your home PC runs an older operating system, everything you will learn in this class will apply to your home computer as well.

The Desktop

When you first log on to the computer, you see the desktop. The following items are the most common items on the desktop:

- **Icons:** Pictures. Each icon represents a program or file. You can start a program or open a file by double-clicking on its icon.
- **Mouse pointer:** The indicator on the screen that you use to select and move objects. It moves as you move the mouse and changes appearance depending on what program you are using and what tool you have selected.
- **Taskbar:** The blue bar at the bottom of the computer screen. It displays a button for each open program, as well as the **Start** button and the clock.
- **Start button:** A button, located in the lower-left corner of the screen, that provides access to all programs loaded on the PC. You also use the start button to shut down the computer.

To Start a Program

The easiest way to start a program is by double-clicking the shortcut icon on the desktop labeled with the program's name.

If there is no icon on the desktop for the program you want to open, you can create one:

- Click on the Start button in the lower left of the screen
- Move the mouse pointer up to the words All Programs (note that on older versions of Windows operating system it's just called Programs)
- Move the mouse pointer to the right to see the list of available programs.
- Right click on the name of the program you want to create a shortcut for, then move the mouse to the words Send to and left click on Desktop (create shortcut). A shortcut icon to your program is now on the Desktop.

Once a program starts, the program is visible as a window on the computer screen; a button representing the program also appears on the taskbar.

Using Windows

Using Microsoft Windows operating system, you can have more than one program or folder open for viewing at the same time. Each program or folder is in its own *window*, a rectangular area on the screen. Having multiple windows open is similar to having multiple books open on the top of a desk.

Each window contains different information. For instance, you can have a window open that displays a letter you are writing and a window that displays a map of the world. When you are using multiple windows, the one you are working in is called the *active window*. The active window is located on top of the other windows, and its title bar is a brighter color than the title bars of the other windows.

Common Window Elements

Most windows have common features, so once you become familiar with one program, you can use that knowledge in another program

1. Double-click the **Microsoft Word** icon on the desktop to start the program.
2. Locate the following items on the computer screen.
 - **Title bar:** The top bar of a window displaying the title of the program and the document.
 - **Menu bar:** The bar containing names of menus, located below the title bar. You can use the menus on the menu bar to access many of the tools available in a program.
 - **Toolbar:** The bar below the menu bar containing buttons that provide access to the most commonly used tools in a program. Each button has a picture on it that represents the button's action. For example, the Save button in Microsoft Office programs looks like a floppy disk, and the Print button looks like a printer.
 - **Minimize button :** The left button in the upper-right corner of a window used to minimize a program window. A minimized program remains open, but is visible only as a button on the taskbar.
 - **Resize button:** The middle button in the upper-right corner of a window used to resize a program window. If a program window is full-screen size, that is, it fills the entire screen, the **Restore Down** button is displayed. You can use the Restore Down button to reduce the size of a program window. If a program window is less than full-screen size, the **Maximize** button is displayed. You can use the Maximize button to enlarge a program window to full-screen size.
 - **Close button :** The right button in the upper-right corner of a window used to quit a program or close a document window.
 - **Scroll bars:** A vertical bar on the side of a window and a horizontal bar at the bottom of the window used to move around in a document. You can use the scroll arrows to view hidden parts of a document. If the entire document is displayed in the window, there will not be a scroll bar.
3. Click the **Restore Down** button. The window is less than full screen size, and you can see part of the desktop.
4. Click the **Maximize** button. The window is full-screen size. 5. Click the **Minimize** button. The Word window is reduced to a button on the taskbar.

Do not click the **Close** button on the Microsoft Word window. If you accidentally close Word, double click the icon on the desktop to start it again.

WINDOWS TIP If you rest the mouse pointer on a button, a short description of the button, called a ScreenTip, appears.

To Switch between Open Programs

It can be helpful to have two or more programs open at the same time.

For instance, you might be researching a topic on the Internet and want to take notes. You can keep Internet Explorer open and take your notes in Word.

1. Double-click the Internet Explorer icon on the desktop. Internet Explorer starts, and a button appears on the taskbar.
2. Click the **Document1 - Microsoft Word** button on the taskbar. The Word window is visible, and the Internet Explorer window is hidden behind it.
3. Click the **Internet Explorer** button on the taskbar. The Internet Explorer window is visible.
4. Click the **Restore Down** button on the Internet Explorer window. You can see both the Word and Internet Explorer windows.
5. Click the **Close** button on both windows. Both windows close, and there are no buttons for them displayed on the taskbar.

Saving Files

One of the great features of a computer is the ability to save what you are working on so you can modify it later without having to re-create it. The steps for saving a document are the same in most programs, so once you learn how to save a document using Microsoft Word, you will be able to save a picture in Paint or a spreadsheet in Excel.

To Create and Save a File _

1. Double-click the **Microsoft Word** icon on the desktop. Microsoft Word starts.
2. Type your name. Your name appears at the top of the document.

3. Press the Enter key. The insertion point, the blinking vertical bar, moves below your name. The insertion point indicates the point at which text will be inserted when you type.
4. Type the city and state you live in. The text appears below your name.
5. Click **Save As** on the toolbar. The **Save As** dialog box appears.
6. Select the text inside the **File name** box, and type me. The text you type replaces the text inside the **File name** box.
7. Click **Save**.
8. Click **Exit** to quit Microsoft Word.

To Open a File

1. Double-click the **Microsoft Word** icon on the desktop.
2. Click **Open** on the toolbar. The **Open** dialog box appears.
3. Double click the file you want to open. It is called me and has an icon with a blue W to the left of it.
4. The file opens in Microsoft Word. You can now make any changes, deletions, or additions that you want to make.
5. Click **Exit** to quit Microsoft Word. Click on Yes as the answer to the question "Do you want to save the changes you made to me.doc?"

Turning the Computer On and Off

Most of the time, turning on the computer is simply a matter of pressing the power switch. If a user account is set up on your computer, you will need to click on your username (in Windows XP) or type your username (in earlier Windows version). You might also be prompted to type a password.

Turning the computer off is a bit more complicated. You don't want to simply press the power switch, because the computer needs to shut down Windows and other software before powering off.

1. Click on the Start button in the bottom left corner. (One of the best computer jokes, is "Can you believe you click Start to Shut down?")
2. Click on the words Shut down.
3. Read the screen, be sure that Shut down is in the box under the question "What do you want the computer to do?" If it is not, click on the downward pointing arrow at the end of that box and click on the words Shut down.
4. Wait until you see a message on the screen that says it is OK to turn off your computer, then turn the power off to your computer by pressing the power switch. (Some computers are set to automatically power themselves off, so you might not receive this message and you might not need to press the power switch. If this is the case, the monitor screen will either go black or give you a message that the cable isn't connected when the computer turns itself off.)
5. Finally, turn off the power to the computer monitor.

Note that occasionally, your computer will freeze, and you won't be able to click on the Start button. If this is the case, you can press the power off button, or if that does not work, turn off the power at the surge protector.

Key Points to Remember

You can't harm a computer by experimenting or trying something new, so if you think you remember how to do something, try it. Also, there is more than one way to accomplish many of the tasks you have learned in this lesson. If you learn another way from a book, or from a friend, use the way that works best for you.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of the bar at the bottom of the screen?
2. Locate the following items on the desktop:
 - Taskbar
 - Microsoft Word icon
 - Mouse pointer
3. How do you start a program?
4. Where is the title bar located on a window?
5. What does the Minimize button do?
6. If you have two programs open, how do you switch between them?
7. Why would you want to save a file?
8. What is the first step in turning off a computer?

Introduction to File Management

You can create folders on your disks to organize your work. To understand how this works, think about the system used for organizing paper files in most offices or at your home. Letters and other correspondence can be stored in folders in a filing cabinet. If there are a lot of items to be filed, the filing cabinet can have multiple drawers to store the files. The structure is similar on the computer, except the files are stored on disks instead of in cabinets.

If you were storing information regarding the year 2001, you could have a folder labeled 2001 and have two subfolders on it, one called *Budget* and the other called *Letters & Contracts*. The *Budget* subfolder would contain information such as budget-planning spreadsheets, budget reports, and sales presentations. Letters and contracts would go in the *Letters & Contracts* folder. You could even have folders inside of subfolders to create further organization for your files.

To Create a Folder

1. Right click on the **Start** button, then left click on the word **Explore**.
2. Double click on the plus sign to the left of the folder icon near the words Documents and Settings.
3. Click on the word Trainee.
4. Click on the word My Documents.
5. On the **File and Folder Tasks** list on the left side of the screen, click **Make a new folder**. A new folder appears on the right side of the screen.
6. Click the new folder to select it.
7. On the **File and Folder Tasks** list on the left side of the screen, click **Rename this folder**.
8. Type a name for your folder, and press the Enter key. The folder has the new name.

To Move a File into a Folder

1. Click the Microsoft Word file you saved earlier to select it.
2. Hold down the left mouse button, and drag the file to the folder. The file is moved into the folder.