

# Making the most of the internet



A practical guide to getting online

Work & learning



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Age Concern and Help the Aged.***

***With almost 120 years of combined  
history to draw on, we are bringing  
together our talents, services  
and solutions to do more to enrich  
the lives of people in later life.***

Age UK is the new force combining

**AGE**  
*Concern*

and

**HELPTHEAGED WE WILL**

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**Age UK has worked with BT since 2005 to ensure that people in later life are able to learn about new technologies and to experience the wide-ranging benefits of digital communication. This guide is one of a number of activities that we are working on together to promote and champion digital inclusion in later life. Visit [www.bt.com/inclusion](http://www.bt.com/inclusion) for more details.**

# Introduction

Every day, more and more of us discover what a wonderful tool the internet can be. You can communicate with people all over the world, find out just about anything and even use it to do your shopping and have it delivered to your door. Going online brings you closer to family and friends, saves money and gets things done faster. You can use the internet to:

- keep in touch
- save time and money managing some of your shopping and bills online
- save time searching for information on absolutely anything – from researching your family tree to catching up on programmes you’ve missed
- have some fun!

This guide will help get you started by taking you through the essential computer kit that you’ll need, and give you lots of practical and simple ways to go online and enjoy using the internet. The internet has its own vocabulary so you will find a glossary of terms on pages 32–34. Words listed in the glossary are in bold when they first appear.

Throughout this guide you will find suggestions for organisations that can give you further information and advice about your options. Their contact details are in the ‘Useful organisations’ section.

## Key



This symbol indicates where information differs for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

what  
next?

This symbol indicates who to contact for the next steps you need to take.

# Getting started

You don't need the latest or most expensive computer to access the **internet**. But nevertheless, it can be a major purchase, so it's worth asking yourself a few questions to help you decide what type of computer you should look for. For example, what will you mainly use a computer for, and what do you hope to be able to do in the future? The types of computer, **software** and accessories you can buy vary widely in technical ability and price.

## A personal computer (PC)

There are two main types of computer:

**A desktop computer.** You have a box, called a base unit, which contains the **hard drive**. This connects to a monitor, like a TV screen, and a keyboard, similar in size to that on a typewriter. This is the type of computer you usually see in libraries and offices. Desktop computers take up quite a lot of space and require several connecting cables that can create a potential hazard.

**A laptop or notebook computer.** This type of computer combines a built-in keyboard, monitor, touchpad and hard drive, each being smaller than you would get in a desktop. This makes a laptop portable so that it can be used in different places, for example, an armchair or at the kitchen table. Laptops are usually more expensive than desktops. Netbooks are cheaper laptops but their screens are usually quite small, which makes viewing more difficult. A laptop with a 15.6" screen offers a good compromise between price and usability.

## Storage, memory and speed

A computer's hard drive may also be referred to as 'storage', memory or 'disk space' and is measured in gigabytes (GB), or terabytes (TB). An older computer, with a relatively small hard disk of 320GB, will be more than adequate for getting on to the internet. But it will hold about a third fewer video and music files than, for example, a newer computer with a 1TB hard disk.

You'll also have a choice about how much short-term memory, commonly known as **RAM** (Random Access Memory), you want to pay for. It is measured in gigabytes. Again, you don't have to choose a computer with the greatest amount of RAM for everyday home use such as **emailing**, displaying pages in a **website**, **downloading** photos and typing letters. Two gigabytes of RAM will be plenty for most people.

The speed of a computer's **processor**, measured in megahertz (MHz), or gigahertz (GHz), determines how 'quickly' it can think and act. Paying extra for the fastest processor is only worth the investment if you intend to carry out complex tasks, such as playing games or video editing. 2.2GHz will be more than adequate.

# Getting online

To go **online** you will need an **internet service provider** to connect your telephone line to the internet. Some of the better-known providers are BT, Virgin Media, TalkTalk, Plusnet and AOL.

The speed at which you access the internet and the amount of information you send and receive is determined by the amount of **bandwidth** you have. Most internet service providers offer different amounts of bandwidth for set monthly prices. As a home user, you probably won't need more than an 8 'megabits per second' (Mbs) connection. And as broadband speeds depend largely on how far your home is from the telephone exchange, your actual speed will probably be around 2Mbs.

There are two ways to connect to the internet – dial-up and broadband.

## Dial-up internet connection

Your computer acts as if it is making a phone call by dialling a telephone number to access the internet. It will keep your telephone line busy and is the slowest way of connecting to the internet. Dial-up is becoming quite rare nowadays and is used mainly in rural areas where exchanges are situated further apart.

## Broadband internet connection

Broadband uses a smarter line than the simple telephone line used in dial-up, so your connection to the internet is faster and you can still use your home phone when your computer is connected to the internet. There are different ways to get a broadband connection:

- ADSL broadband (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line), which is through a telephone line and **modem**.
- Cable and satellite packages which combine television, telephone and internet services from a single provider.
- Wireless broadband (often referred to as **WiFi**) which enables you to access the internet from any room in your home. It is also available in many public places.
- Mobile broadband for internet access on the move with a laptop through a mobile phone using a small device called a **dongle**.

Once you're connected to the internet, you will need a free piece of **software** called a **web browser** to look at websites on your computer. The most common are Internet Explorer, Firefox and Safari.

### what next?

Check (or ask someone else who has internet access to check) what home broadband options are available in your area from a website like [www.top10.com/broadband/postcode\\_checker](http://www.top10.com/broadband/postcode_checker)

Contact Simplifydigital at 0800 090 1302 for a free comparison service for broadband options. They can provide the necessary information and support for the best deals and can walk you through the process of getting connected right up to the point of connection or purchase.

## Equipment for going online

If you decide to use your existing telephone line to connect to the internet, you will need a modem, but most computers have an internal modem already installed. It is a good idea to buy a small accessory called a socket doubler from computer or telephone accessory retailers to allow your computer and telephone to be plugged in at the same time. If your computer will be far away from the telephone socket you may need a telephone extension.

Broadband reception can be severely hampered by the use of extension cables, which can also be a tripping hazard. A better solution would be a wireless access. For this you will need a **router**, which you either buy yourself or get from your internet service provider, and a wireless card or adapter, which is built in to most laptops, or is cheap to buy and slot into a desktop computer.

## Safety and security

A computer connected to the internet can be at risk from rogue computer programs called **viruses**. You should check that your computer has been installed with anti-virus **software** such as Norton Antivirus, McAfee, or even a very effective free program called AVG, which you can download from <http://free.avg.com>

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Once online read the advice about protecting your computer from Get Safe Online at [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org) (see page 28).

## Mouse and keyboard

You might find that either the standard mouse or keyboard you get with a desktop computer doesn't quite give you the control you want, especially if you have limited dexterity. Perhaps you want a different mouse and keyboard to the ones built into a laptop computer. You can choose from a wide range of different shapes and sizes from a provider like AbilityNet (see page 27).

### what next?

Contact AbilityNet's Advice and Information Team on freephone 0800 269 545 to find out more about specialist equipment and adaptations (much of it free or low cost) if you have a disability that makes using a computer difficult.

## Printers

If you want to print out documents such as emails, recipes, web pages or receipts, then you will need a printer. There are some very cost-effective printers available and your printer can be stored in a spare room and only connected when you need to print something.

## After-sales support

If you are going to buy a new computer, then it should come with a warranty lasting at least a year. Warranties for refurbished computers are typically much shorter, often only 30 to 60 days.

Many computer and internet service providers also offer customer support as part of the package or for an additional fee. Ensure that you understand the support service you will be getting and whether there are extras to pay, for example, paying to return your computer if there is a fault, or for home visits from a technician. For a refurbished computer, it is usually only those that have been refurbished by the manufacturer which include support for a period of time.

## Taking your first steps

There are lots of computer courses and taster sessions for older people, providing straightforward training using jargon-free terms that aim to quickly get you enjoying the advantages of the internet. To find a course in your area:

- Contact your local Age UK/Age Concern\* (call Age UK Advice on 0800 169 65 65 for your nearest one) and ask them about training opportunities.
- Ask at your local library about computer training courses.
- Contact UK Online to find out about UK online centres based in community venues (see page 31).
- Access a wide range of free online beginners courses by visiting a website such as [www.myguide.gov.uk](http://www.myguide.gov.uk) or [www.bbc.co.uk/webwise](http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise)

### what next?

For a step-by-step beginner's guide to the internet, order a copy of our priced book *How to Be a Silver Surfer* by calling Age UK Advice on 0800 169 65 65.

\*Many of our local partners will remain Age Concern for a while yet.

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***‘I go to a “silver surfers club” most weeks to practise emailing and searching websites, with help on hand if I get stuck. The more I go, the more confident I feel. In fact, just last week one of the newcomers asked me for my help, I felt proud as punch!’***

Victor, 72

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# Keeping in touch

The internet provides lots of free ways to stay in touch with your friends and family, and even meet people with similar interests. Here are some of the most popular.

## Email

Email, short for electronic mail, is the quickest, easiest and cheapest way to contact people. You can send an email to friends and family, wherever they are, and attach documents and photos.

Setting up an email account to get an email address is straightforward. You can get one from your internet service provider or use a web-based service like Gmail ([www.google.co.uk/mail](http://www.google.co.uk/mail)), Hotmail ([www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)) or myguide ([www.myguide.gov.uk](http://www.myguide.gov.uk)). Email addresses typically look something like this: `yourname@serviceprovider.co.uk`

### what next?

Set up an email account and start emailing. The myguide email service [www.myguide.gov.uk](http://www.myguide.gov.uk) is simple to use and gives step-by-step help.

## Internet telephone calls

Using the internet to make phone calls is becoming very popular, especially for international calls, because it is often cheaper, or even free. You will need a broadband internet connection and a microphone, and so will the person you are speaking to. If you both have a web camera (**webcam**) you can also see each other as you talk, but you will need a fast broadband connection if you want to use video as well as sound.

### what next?

Skype is the most popular provider. Download the free software from [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)

## Social networking

Social networking websites provide a great way to find like-minded people, and keep in touch with family and friends.

Friends Reunited ([www.friendsreunited.co.uk](http://www.friendsreunited.co.uk)) can help reunite you with people you knew at school, clubs or through the armed forces. Other websites like Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) and MySpace ([www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)) enable you to keep in touch with friends and family, and meet new people, registered with the site.

Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)) is a social networking service that enables you to send and receive brief messages to and from registered friends and family members, celebrities, journalists – in fact anyone you choose to follow. Its immediacy makes it ideal for spreading news and sharing quick updates.

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***‘When my washing machine broke down I compared seven different shops by sitting at my computer. In 45 minutes I probably saved myself £55.’***

Joan, 68

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## Protecting your privacy

With any social networking site, it's very important that you guard against people who may want to steal your personal information. Use the privacy features to restrict strangers' access to your profile, and be wary of publishing any information that identifies you, such as your telephone number, address or date of birth. See our guide *Internet security* for more tips on protecting yourself.

Dating sites are also very popular. For example, you could visit [www.uknetguide.co.uk/Lifestyle\\_and\\_Leisure/Dating](http://www.uknetguide.co.uk/Lifestyle_and_Leisure/Dating) for a summary of the main sites for older people. If you arrange to meet someone, meet in a public place where there will be plenty of other people. Tell a friend where you are going and arrange to call them when you are safely back home.

### what next?

A good place to start is the Age UK community area and discussion boards at [www.ageuk.org.uk/chat2](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/chat2) where you can join in discussions, read, respond to and post messages and questions on a range of topics.

# ***Saving time and money***

From shopping to accessing government services, researching family history and even planning a trip – there are many ways to save time and money by using the internet.

## **Shopping online**

Shopping online is convenient, especially if you have trouble getting about, and there are many options and savings to be found. Some people worry about paying with a credit card over the internet, but it has a similar level of risk to buying goods over the phone or through a catalogue. You can also use PayPal ([www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com)) to pay securely using a debit or credit card or bank account without needing to share your financial details with the seller.

All major retailers have shops online and there are many specialist retailers too. Internet auction sites like eBay ([www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk)) are also popular – you type in what you are looking for, view pictures, read descriptions, find out what other customers have said about the seller and bid for items. You can also buy many products from the Age UK Group\* online. See [www.ageuk.org.uk/buy](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/buy) for more details.

It is also possible to get things for free through your local Freecycle group ([www.freecycle.org/group/uk](http://www.freecycle.org/group/uk)). The purpose of Freecycle is to find homes for unwanted items to keep them out of landfills. You can find anything from crockery to garden tools. And if you have things you don't need any more, you can find new homes for them too.

\*Age UK Group comprises the Charity and its trading subsidiaries.

Some sites offer shopping vouchers that will give you money off at online retailers. These include [www.myvouchercode.co.uk](http://www.myvouchercode.co.uk), [www.vouchercode.com](http://www.vouchercode.com), [www.codes.co.uk](http://www.codes.co.uk) and [www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com)

### what next?

Ask for a copy of our free leaflet *Internet security*. Look at the helpful consumer advice guide *Paying Safely Online* available from The UK Cards Association (see page 31).

### Price-comparison and review websites

Shopping around is always advisable when you're making a purchase. The internet makes it very convenient to compare prices and there are websites designed to help you do this, such as [www.kelkoo.co.uk](http://www.kelkoo.co.uk) and [www.pricerunner.co.uk](http://www.pricerunner.co.uk). A good price-comparison website will help ensure that you are comparing like with like, so that, for example, you take account of delivery charges and VAT. It's also worth checking with more than one price-comparison site, to get as much information on the market as possible, as no website covers every single supplier or retailer. Also, not every supplier advertises through price-comparison websites.

Most price-comparison websites also include opinions from ordinary customers to help you make an informed choice. Which? conducts impartial product reviews for everything from dishwashers to mobile phones. You can view the reports on their website [www.which.co.uk](http://www.which.co.uk) although you do need to subscribe in order to access the full content (see page 31).

### what next?

For independent reviews of products aimed at disabled and older people visit the Ricability website (see page 30).

## **Saving on your bills**

It is not just day-to-day items, groceries and household goods that you can save on by shopping online - you can often cut the cost of your utility bills by comparing packages, switching to a new provider, and opting to pay online.

### **what next?**

See if you can save some money on your utility bills or current insurance policies by comparing prices using comparison websites such as [www.uswitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com) and [www.energyhelpline.com](http://www.energyhelpline.com)

## **Government services**

The Government wants us to use the internet as much as possible to cut the costs of delivering public services through its departments and agencies, and through the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and local councils. There is a single website called Directgov (see page 28) that links you to central government and local public services. Here are just some of the things you can do:



- claim your benefits
- renew your TV licence or passport
- apply for a new car-tax disc
- get crime figures for your area.

### **what next?**

Go to [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) and click 'Do it online' for all the government forms and services you can access through the internet.

## Researching family history

The internet can make it much easier to research historical documents to build your family tree. The website [www.freebmd.org.uk](http://www.freebmd.org.uk) provides internet access to millions of UK birth, marriage and death records. You can trace further in time, before civil registration started in 1837, with parish records by searching [www.freereg.org.uk](http://www.freereg.org.uk). The National Archives website at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) provides a set of useful links to help you quickly search these vast archives including census returns, wills and military records.

The internet also provides lots of free resources and advice. To help you organise your research and pick up beginner's tips, take a look at the guide at [www.bbc.co.uk/familyhistory](http://www.bbc.co.uk/familyhistory)

### what next?

Take the first step, as many people have before you, by simply typing your surname into a search engine like Google [www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk) (see page 29).

## Making travel arrangements

Whether you're planning a trip to visit relatives or a world cruise, the internet will save you time making the arrangements, and booking online often saves you money. All the main tour operators, airlines, train and coach companies have websites, so you can browse for holidays or book travel and accommodation separately. Use the internet to:

- plan routes for daytrips in the car –  
e.g. [www.rac.co.uk/route-planner](http://www.rac.co.uk/route-planner)
- search and zoom in on street maps –  
e.g. [www.google.maps.co.uk](http://www.google.maps.co.uk)
- book train and coach tickets –  
e.g. [www.thetrainline.com](http://www.thetrainline.com)
- research and book flight, car and hotel offers –  
e.g. [www.expedia.co.uk](http://www.expedia.co.uk), [www.opodo.co.uk](http://www.opodo.co.uk),  
and [www.travelocity.co.uk](http://www.travelocity.co.uk)
- get unbiased reviews on hotels, B&Bs and holidays  
from paying customers – e.g. [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com)

Remember to check that you will be protected should the company go into liquidation. Consumer protection is provided by organisations such as ABTA, ATOL, ATO, CPT and a number of other trade bodies – check the websites to be certain.

**what  
next?**

Go to Britain's largest travel guide for inspirational ideas for days out or longer breaks in Britain at [www.visitbritain.co.uk](http://www.visitbritain.co.uk)

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***'I was secretly heartbroken when my eldest daughter accepted a job in America. I thought I'd lose all contact. But now I have learned to use email, it has helped us to keep in touch and I also managed to book my flights online to visit her. I couldn't believe how simple it was.'***

Margaret, 58

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# Information and advice

Think of a topic and there's bound to be some information available about it on the internet! However, it pays to be vigilant about where the information comes from, and how up to date it is. Here are some tips on how to search for information and some reputable and trusted online sources of advice.

## How to search

The **world wide web** links billions of websites together. Each website consists of web pages which have a web address (sometimes referred to as 'URLs', short for Uniform Resource Locators).

If you do not have a web address for a specific organisation to hand, or you want to search more broadly using keywords or by asking a question, then you can use a **search engine** which sifts through pages on the internet in seconds. The most popular search engine is Google [www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk). It has become so well used that people often refer to searching for information by saying they'll 'Google it!' The free encyclopaedia at [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org) provides a quick reference tool.

Here are some general tips for searching online:

- Be aware of sponsored links – these are links where a company or organisation is paying to have their information be shown first
- Type in two or more words to make your search more specific - for example, bridge cards instead of just bridge.
- Use inverted commas (“ ”) if you want to search for a phrase to focus the search – for example, “travel insurance”.

## Money matters

Age UK's 'Money Matters' pages at [www.ageuk.org.uk/moneymatters](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/moneymatters) provide information on pensions, tax and benefits, including a factsheet about challenging welfare benefit decisions.

The UK's Consumer Financial Education Body (see page 28) provides a wealth of impartial, free information, tools and guides to help you make informed decisions about financial products and services at [www.moneymadeclear.org.uk](http://www.moneymadeclear.org.uk). There is a section covering retirement and pensions, providing stakeholder and personal pension comparison tables, a financial health check tool and pension calculator.

National Debtline ([www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)) provides information to help you get out of debt and online tools to help you manage debt (see page 29).

You can also monitor your investments on a day-to-day basis using sites such as MoneyExtra at [www.moneyextra.com](http://www.moneyextra.com)

### what next?

Check that you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to by using our online benefits checker [www.ageuk.org.uk/benefitschecker](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/benefitschecker) (available from autumn 2010) and search grant-giving charities for personal financial assistance using the Turn2us Grants Search – [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) (see page 30).

## Health

The best place to start a search for reliable health information is the NHS website – NHS Choices at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

NHS Choices also has information on hundreds of health conditions explaining symptoms, diagnosis and treatment options, often with accompanying video featuring patients and consultants, together with details of specialist support groups. You can try games and quizzes to help work out how healthy you are and how to live a healthier life. You can also watch videos and hear tips from people explaining how small lifestyle changes made a big difference to their health and enjoyment of life.



You can also use it to find and choose NHS services including hospitals and dentists. You can read and post comments about care and treatment received. In Wales, visit [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk) and in Scotland, visit [www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)

Charities' websites are often an excellent place for specialist information and advice. Some that may be of interest for health information include Carers UK [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org), Alzheimer's Society [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk), Macmillan Cancer Support [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk), Diabetes UK [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk) and RNIB [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) (see 'Useful organisations', pages 27–31).

### what next?

Visit the 'Health & wellbeing' section of the Age UK website [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) for guides to keeping fit and healthy eating, NHS services, and your rights and entitlements to health care.

# Staying active

Getting the most out of the internet doesn't just mean using it for practical tasks – there are endless opportunities for fun, interaction and learning.

## Hobbies

From gardening to golf, whatever your interests you'll find the internet a limitless source of information and inspiration. You can use the internet to:

- play sudoku, chess, bridge or backgammon – try [www.sudoku.org.uk](http://www.sudoku.org.uk) or [www.instantchess.com](http://www.instantchess.com)
- chat with other people who share your hobby or interest in discussion forums
- find out about talks, lessons, clubs and outings devoted to your hobby or interest
- there are thousands of video tutorials on YouTube on almost every hobby under the sun
- try out interesting recipes featured on TV cookery shows – try [www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes](http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes)

**what  
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Go to [www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk) and type in one of your hobbies or interests.

## Music, TV and radio

Traditional ways of watching TV and listening to music and radio programmes are changing if you have a broadband connection – now you can watch/listen to what you want, when you want to through your computer. You can:

- Watch TV programmes you've missed or want to watch again (for a limited time) on BBC iPlayer at [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer), from the ITV channels on [www.itv.com/ITVPlayer](http://www.itv.com/ITVPlayer), from Channel 4 on [www.channel4.com/programmes/4oD](http://www.channel4.com/programmes/4oD) and from Five at <http://demand.five.tv>
- Listen live or listen again (for a limited time) to radio shows on stations like BBC's Radio 4 [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4) and Heart at [www.heart.co.uk](http://www.heart.co.uk). Watch video clips of almost anything on YouTube – [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- Buy music online from websites of the major music retailers such as [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) or the iTunes store [www.apple.com/itunes](http://www.apple.com/itunes) to listen to on your computer or transfer across to a mobile phone, MP3 player or iPod.

You will need to have a working soundcard and videocard in your computer, and if you have a desktop computer then the speakers must be switched on, or you could buy headphones. To watch TV programmes and films you'll need special software that you will be able to download and install for free. You may also need Adobe Flash Player, which you can download free from <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer>. It's also worth checking what limit your broadband usage is with your internet service provider, as you may have to pay if you exceed your limit or you may want to consider upgrading to increase your limit.

**what  
next?**

Find out how to get started with using the BBC iPlayer to catch up on BBC radio and TV programmes – [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer)

## Keeping up to date

The internet keeps you up to date with everything that's going on. You don't even need to buy a newspaper with print that comes off on your hands! Most national newspapers are free to read on the internet. You can easily find out:

- news from around the world, nationally and in your local area
- weather forecasts
- what's on in your area – from swimming pool opening times to cinema show times
- the latest currency exchange rates.

### what next?

Find out what the weather is going to be like in your area this weekend using the BBC website – [www.bbc.co.uk/weather](http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather)

## Carry on working

The internet is also a valuable resource for anyone who wants to return to work, switch jobs or find out about volunteering opportunities. You can:

- search for a new job
- sign up to receive alerts when new jobs of interest to you are advertised
- look for training courses
- find tips on writing and improving your CV
- find out about volunteering opportunities matching your interests, skills and availability in the UK using [www.timebank.org.uk](http://www.timebank.org.uk), or abroad, using [www.vso.org.uk](http://www.vso.org.uk)

### what next?

Visit the website [www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk) for help and advice on careers and learning.

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***‘I can’t remember how I ever got by before I learnt to use the internet. I am always picking up the mouse to check a new recipe or follow up something I’ve seen in a TV programme or read in the paper. It has become as second nature as using the telephone.’***

Deidre, 61

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# Useful organisations

## Age UK

Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged. We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

In Wales, contact

**Age Cymru:** 0800 169 65 65

[www.agecymru.org.uk](http://www.agecymru.org.uk)

In Scotland, contact

**Age Scotland:** 0845 125 9732

[www.agescotland.org.uk](http://www.agescotland.org.uk)

In Northern Ireland, contact

**Age NI:** 0808 808 7575

[www.ageni.org.uk](http://www.ageni.org.uk)

## AbilityNet

A national charity which helps people use computers and the internet by adapting and adjusting their technology.

Freephone 0800 269 545

[www.abilitynet.org.uk](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk)

## Alzheimer's Society

Offers advice, information and support to people with dementia, their families and carers through its helpline and local branches.

Helpline: 020 7423 3500

[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

### **Carers UK**

General help and advice for all carers.

Tel: 0808 808 7777

[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

### **Consumer Financial Education Body**

Established by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the UK's financial regulator, it provides information, resources and interactive tools to help people make informed decisions about money.

[www.cfebuk.org.uk](http://www.cfebuk.org.uk)

### **Diabetes UK**

Works for people with diabetes.

Tel: 020 7424 1000

[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

### **Directgov**

The website of the UK government, providing key government information and online services for the public all in one place.

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

### **Get Safe Online**

A joint internet security awareness initiative between the Government, law enforcement, leading businesses and the public sector.

[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

## **Google**

Google is the world's largest search engine, offering an easy-to-use, free search. It aims to organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.

[www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk)

## **Macmillan Cancer Support**

A national cancer care and support charity.

Tel: 0808 808 00 00 (free)

[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

## **National Debtline**

Provides free confidential and independent advice on how to deal with debt problems.

Tel: 0808 808 4000 (free)

[www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)

## **NHS Choices**

NHS Choices, the official site of the National Health Service, offers expert information on conditions, treatments, local services and healthy living.

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

In Wales, visit [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk)  
and in Scotland, visit [www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)

### **Ricability**

A national research charity dedicated to providing independent information to disabled and older consumers.

[www.ricability.org.uk](http://www.ricability.org.uk)

### **RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)**

A national charity supporting blind and partially sighted people.

Helpline: 0303 123 9999

[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

### **Simplifydigital**

An OFCOM-accredited broadband, home phone and digital TV comparison service helping to provide you with the necessary information and support right upto the point of connection or purchase.

Tel: 0800 090 1302 (free)

### **Turn2us**

This service from the charity Elizabeth Finn helps people to access the money available to them in welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help. It brings together an easy to use Benefits Checker and a Grants Search giving access to over 3,500 charitable funds.

[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

### **The UK Cards Association**

A trade body for credit, debit and charge card issuers, which works in partnership with Financial Fraud Action UK to help prevent card fraud.

[www.theukcardsassociation.org.uk](http://www.theukcardsassociation.org.uk)

### **UK Online**

UK online centres help people make the most of computers and the internet.

Tel: 0800 77 1234 (free)

[www.ukonlinecentres.com](http://www.ukonlinecentres.com)

### **Which?**

An independent organisation that campaigns to protect consumer rights, review products and provide unbiased advice.

[www.which.co.uk](http://www.which.co.uk)

# Glossary

## **Bandwidth**

A measure of how much information can be transferred within a given amount of time in megabits per second, or ‘Mbps’.

## **Dongle**

A small device you can plug into your laptop to access broadband internet on the move.

## **Download(ing)**

Transfer files from the internet to your own computer. When used with email, it usually refers to collecting new messages. When used with the web, it usually refers to requesting a web page.

## **Email(ing)**

Short for ‘electronic mail’. Email is the internet version of the postal service: you send a message (also referred to as ‘emailing’) from your computer to another person who also has access to email.

## **Hard drive**

The disk inside your computer where software is stored.

## **Internet/the net**

A worldwide collection of computers joined by networks, which are linked to each other via communication links such as telephone lines. To join the internet all you have to do is connect your computer to one of the networks.

### **Internet service provider (ISP)**

A company that provides you with access to the internet from your computer.

### **Modem**

A device that converts the digital data from your computer into sound signals, which are transmitted over a standard telephone line, and converts sound signals back into digital data that can be understood by your computer.

### **Online**

This means working on a computer that is currently connected to the internet.

### **Processor**

The ‘brains’ of your computer. The faster the processor’s speed, the more calculations and data the computer can process in a given time.

### **RAM**

The memory that your computer uses to store information before writing or reading it from the hard drive, so a computer with a lot of RAM will run quickly and efficiently.

### **Router**

Converts and broadcasts data coming through a telephone wire around a fixed area, which can then be picked up by wireless-enabled devices like laptop computers to give them a wireless broadband connection.

### **Search engine**

A special kind of website that allows you to enter words or select from a list of subjects and categories to search for a topic on the web.

## **Software**

Also called programs, packages or applications. They are installed onto computers. Examples are word-processing, photo editing and desktop publishing software.

## **Virus(es)**

Small programs that can harm the health of your computer, for example by deleting files or causing your computer to malfunction.

## **Web**

(See World wide web)

## **Web browser**

A piece of software that enables your computer to load and display pages in a website.

## **Webcam**

A video camera connected to the internet through your computer.

## **Website**

A collection of related web pages consisting of links, text, photos, graphics, video and sound.

## **World wide web (www or web)**

The web pages stored on computers that are connected to the internet.

# Can you help Age UK?

Please complete the donation form below with a gift of whatever you can afford and return to: Age UK, FREEPOST LON13041, PO Box 203, London N1 9BR. Alternatively, you can phone 0800 169 80 80 or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/donate](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/donate). Thank you.

## Personal details

Title:	Initials:	Surname:
Address:		
Postcode:		
Tel:	Email:	

By providing your email address and/or mobile number you are agreeing to us contacting you in these ways. You may contact us at any time to unsubscribe from our communications.

## Your gift

I would like to make a gift of: £

I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to Age UK

## Card payment

I wish to pay by (please tick)  MasterCard  Visa  CAF CharityCard  
 Maestro  American Express

(Maestro only)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Signature <b>X</b>
Expiry date	<input type="text"/>	/	<input type="text"/>	Issue no. (Maestro only)	<input type="text"/>	

## Gift Aid declaration

(please tick) Yes, I want Age UK and its partner organisations\* to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as gift aid donations. I confirm I pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity will reclaim on my donations in the tax year. Date:   /  /    
(please complete). \*Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI



We will use the information you have supplied to communicate with you in line with Data Protection guidelines. Age UK (registered charity no 1128267) comprises the Charity, its group of companies and national partners (Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI). If you would prefer not to hear from them or carefully selected third parties, let us know by phoning 0800 107 8977.



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*The internet keeps you up to date with everything that's going on. You don't even need to buy a newspaper with print that comes off on your hands!*

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# What should I do now?

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For more information on the issues covered in this guide, or to order any of our publications, please call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65** or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/workandlearning](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/workandlearning)

Our publications are also available in large print and audio formats.

The following Age UK information leaflet may be useful:

- *Internet security*

Age UK offers a wide range of products and services specially designed for people in later life, for more information, please call **0800 169 18 19**.

If contact details for your local Age UK/Age Concern\* are not in the box below, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.



\*Many of our local partners will remain Age Concern for a while yet.

Age UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (registered charity number 1128267 and registered company number 6825798). The registered address is 207–221 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ. Age Concern England (registered charity number 261794) and Help the Aged (registered charity number 272786), and their trading and other associated companies merged on 1 April 2009. Together they have formed the Age UK Group, dedicated to improving the lives of people in later life. The three national Age Concerns in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have also merged with Help the Aged in these nations to form three registered charities: Age Scotland, Age NI and Age Cymru. ID8828 09/10