This document will help you to learn the basics of using a computer. It assumes that you are using a Windows 7 computer, using Word 2007 as your word processor and Google Chrome as your web browser.
Computers (which are also known as ‘PCs’) can seem quite intimidating when you first start to use them. There is a lot to learn but this course will teach you the basics without too much stress!

This tutorial will teach you the first steps – how to turn the computer on and off and how to start and shutdown a program. It will then go on to explain how to type a letter and then finally we will look at the basic skills needed to use the Internet.

What is a PC?
A PC (personal computer) is a machine for storing, manipulating and presenting information. It consists of three essential elements – hardware, software and files.

- Hardware is anything you can touch, the physical elements of the PC. At the very least you will need a system unit, a keyboard, a mouse and a screen. In a laptop, all these parts are miniaturised into one small package that is easily transportable. After you have got all the essential elements you can add ‘peripherals’ or non-essential items such as a router (to connect to the Internet), a printer, scanner, webcam etc.
- Software is the ‘instructions’ that tell the hardware what to do.
- Files are named collections of information. Files are of many different types but examples include pictures, movies and letters.

Turning the computer on
Each computer has a slightly different design. Many different kinds of electronic devices will have a power button marked with a common symbol, seen left. To turn the computer on, press and immediately release the power button.
You will also need to turn the screen on. The power button for the screen is on the bottom edge of the screen in line with its power button symbol.

The computer will now ‘boot up’ or start. After a few moments, you will be presented with the ‘logon screen’, similar to the one on the left.

Click the picture labelled ‘Silver Surfer’. A white box will be displayed underneath the picture. Type ‘leeds’ into this box (without the quotation marks). Press the ‘Enter’ key on the keyboard. After a few moments, the ‘desktop’ screen will be displayed:

The desktop screen is where you start using your computer. In the bottom left hand corner of the screen, you will see the ‘Start button’. To the right of the start button, you will see a grey area known as the ‘taskbar’. The taskbar shows you what tasks or jobs you are doing. In the picture on the left, there aren’t any jobs, so the taskbar is empty, apart from the ‘icons’ at the bottom right hand corner of the screen, which are always there. This is known as the ‘notification area’ and gives quick access to some computer features. We don’t need to worry about this for now.

**Using the PC – The general principles**

There are just a few steps you need to take to begin using the PC:

- Turn it on!
- Launch (start) a program. You can think of programs as being like electronic ‘tools’. You start different programs to do different tasks.
Use the program to carry out a task. For example, you might start a word processing program to write a letter.

‘Save’ your work if necessary. When you save your work, you can use it again at a later time.

Close the program.

Shutdown the computer.

Later, we will work through an example in greater detail, but first, we need to get to grips with the mouse and keyboard as these are the main ways we control the computer.

Using the mouse

The mouse has two or sometimes three buttons. The left button is for choosing things – known in computing as ‘selecting’. The right button is the 'menu' button because when you click it, regardless of the circumstances, a menu will be displayed from which you can make a choice. The middle button isn’t really a button – it’s a wheel known as the ‘scroll wheel’. The scroll wheel is used to scroll (move through) a long document that can’t fit on the screen all at once.

There are only a limited number of things you can do with a mouse! As you move your mouse across the desk or ‘mouse mat’, the cursor (a small arrow on the screen) will move, copying the movements of your mouse.

You can use your mouse to:

- Point. Place the cursor on an item on the screen but don’t click any buttons.
- Click. Place the cursor on an item on the screen then press and immediately release the left mouse button.
- Double click. Place the cursor on an item on the screen then press and immediately release the left mouse button twice in quick succession.
• Drag. Click and hold down the left mouse button on an item and then move the mouse.
• Right click. Place the cursor on an item on the screen then press and immediately release the right mouse button.

**Using the keyboard**
The other main piece of hardware you use to control the PC is the keyboard:

You will need to know how to use some of the most important features of the keyboard in order to control the PC.

The letter keys are easiest to understand. Type the letters you need, using the space bar to make spaces between words. To get capital letters, hold down one of the shift keys whilst typing the letter. To type continuously in block capitals, press the Caps Lock key then press it again to revert to normal typing. When the Caps Lock key is pressed, a light will come on to remind you. The light will go off when you press the Caps Lock key again to de-activate it.

If you are typing a letter or similar document, press the Enter key to begin typing on a new line.
As you type, the ‘insertion point’ moves to the right of the text as you type. The insertion point is a flashing vertical line that marks where your text will be entered on the page; it also marks the place where you can make changes to the text – see the picture on the left.

If you need to change some text (for example, if you have made a mistake) click where you want the insertion point to be placed and it will move there. To remove letters to the left of the insertion point, press the Backspace key. To delete letters to the right of the insertion point, press the Delete key. To ‘fine tune’ the position of the insertion point, use the arrow keys.

The Enter key is not only used to begin typing on a new line. It is also used to tell the PC to do other things. In general terms, it is used to execute commands; you tell the PC what you want to do then press the Enter key to make it do it! This will be explained in greater detail later in this document.

Some keys have more than one character printed on them. For example, the ‘3’ key also has the ‘£’ symbol printed on it too. In general, if a key has two characters on it, you press the key to get the symbol at the bottom of the key, and hold down the shift key as you press the key to get the character printed at the top of the key. So, for example, to type an ‘@’ symbol, hold down the Shift key, then press the key with the ‘@’ symbol on it (‘`).

Some other important keys include:

The arrow keys are used to move the insertion point up, down left and right.
The Tab key is used for typing in columns and also for moving between different areas of an on-screen form.

The Escape key is used in various situations to abort what you are doing. For example, if you are watching a video ‘full screen’, pressing the escape key will place the video in a window so that you can stop it playing or close the window entirely.

The Alt key is used in conjunction with other keys for various purposes, often to modify the way the other keys work. For now, you just need to be aware of its position on the keyboard.

Last but not least, be aware that keyboards can vary slightly – you may find that your keyboard has a slightly different layout to the one in the example above.

Starting a program
We will begin by playing a game of ‘solitaire’ also known as patience. First, move the mouse until the cursor is on the ‘Start’ button. Click the start button. In response, the start menu will be displayed.

Move the mouse until the cursor is over the menu item for Solitaire. It will be ‘highlighted’ (with a blue background) as in the picture on the left. Click the highlighted menu item. The Solitaire game will start and the start menu will disappear.

Controlling windows
Solitaire, like all programs, opens inside a ‘window’:
Behind the window we can still see some of the desktop. Notice that the taskbar has a button labelled ‘Solitaire’ (You can display the label by ‘pointing’ at the solitaire button on the taskbar).

Whenever there is a window open, there will be a corresponding button on the taskbar. The more windows you have open the more buttons you will see on the taskbar.

In the top right hand corner of the Solitaire window, there are three buttons:

- Clicking the button with the minus sign on it will ‘minimise’ the window. When the window is minimised, the only thing you will see is the solitaire button on the taskbar. To display the Solitaire window again, click the solitaire button on the taskbar.

- Clicking the button with the square on it will ‘maximise’ the window. When the window is maximised it takes up the entire screen apart from the taskbar.

When the window is maximised, the middle button looks different – it looks like two squares on top of each other. This button is the ‘restore’ button. Clicking it will take the window back to the state it was in when you first started the program, i.e. taking up part but not all of the screen.
To close the program, click the button with a cross on it.

To summarise, a window can be in one of three different states – minimised, restored (sometimes called optimised) or maximised.

When the window is in the restored state, you can ‘drag’ the window around the screen. Place the cursor in the middle of the blue bar (known as the title bar) at the top of the window. Click and hold down the left mouse button. Move the mouse. The window will move across the screen.

You can also change the size of the restored window. Place the cursor on a corner or edge. The cursor will change from an arrow to a double headed arrow. When it is a double headed arrow, click and hold down the left mouse button and drag the window bigger or smaller.

**Playing solitaire**
To play the game, drag cards to the appropriate places. Click on the ‘stock’ pile to work your way through it. If you are uncertain of the rules, refer to the appendix, ‘Solitaire – The rules’.

**Shutting down the computer**
When you have finished your computing session you will want to turn your computer off. Close any programs you have been using by clicking the cross in the top right hand corner of the program’s window. You can check that all your programs are closed by ensuring that your taskbar is empty.

Click the start button. Click the ‘shut down’ button. The computer will turn itself off. You will need to turn the screen off manually by pressing the power button on the bottom edge of the screen.

**Writing a letter**
‘Word processing’ is the modern equivalent of using a typewriter and the best known word processing program is ‘Microsoft Word’. If you don’t
have Word on your home computer, don’t worry. You can buy and install it or download a free alternative called ‘Open Office’ from the Internet.

To start Word, click the start button then click the menu item for Word. Word will open.

You will see the insertion point flashing on screen. This is where your typing will be entered.

We are writing a formal letter so we want to type our address in the top right hand corner of the page. Click the ‘right align’ button. Now type the first line of your address. Press the ‘Enter’ key. The insertion point will move to the next line. Type the second line of your address. And so on...

When you have finished typing your address, press the enter key one last time. Now we want to start writing our letter on the left hand side of the page. Click the ‘left align’ button – this is the one that looks orange in the illustration above (2 buttons to the left of the ‘right align’ button).

Type your letter. Remember, each time you want to start a new line – for example, when you are starting a new paragraph – press the Enter key. You do not need to press Enter if you are continuing the same paragraph. Word has a feature called ‘word wrap’ which means it will start a new line itself when it is running out of space on the current line. You only need to press Enter to force a new line.
Your letter should now look similar to this.

Notice that the words ‘Brainwood’ and ‘La Taska’ are underlined in red. This is to indicate that these words may be spelled incorrectly.

When you have finished creating a document like this, it is good practice to ‘spell check’ it – i.e. ensure there are no spelling mistakes. To do this, click the ‘review’ tab at the top of the window (click the word ‘review’).

On the review tab, click the ‘Spelling and grammar’ button:

The Spelling and grammar window will be displayed. In the top pane, the word ‘Brainwood’ is shown in red. The window is indicating that this word is not in the program’s dictionary. You can choose to add the word to the dictionary, accept one of the suggestions in the bottom pane of the window or ignore the word. It’s up to you! After you have chosen how to deal with this word, the spellchecker moves to the next underlined word, ‘Taska’. Again, you have to decide what to do from the choices available.

When the program has checked the entire document for errors, a window is displayed to show that the spell checking process is complete.
The next task is to ‘save’ the document. The next section explains the process of saving your work.

**Saving and retrieving your work**

When you create new documents on your computer, such as writing this letter for example, your work is in the computer’s ‘memory’. The memory can be thought of as the computer’s workspace. The word memory is somewhat misleading as everything in the memory is ‘forgotten’ when you turn the computer off! This is why you have to save your work. When you save your work, the document is saved on the computer’s hard disk. The hard disk may be thought of as an electronic filing cabinet holding your electronic files inside electronic folders.

Once you have saved your work, it will be saved permanently on your hard disk. It will only disappear if you ‘delete’ it (throw it away).

When you save a document you need to consider two things: What am I going to call the document and where am I going to keep it? Let’s go through the process of saving our letter.

First click the ‘Office button’ in the top left hand corner of the window: The menu for the Office button will be displayed. Point at ‘Save As’.
The saving options will be displayed as in the picture on the left. Click ‘Word Document’.

The ‘Save As’ window will be displayed. At the top of the window, Word is telling you that it intends to save your document in the ‘Documents’ folder. This is the correct place to save your document so you don’t need to change it!

At the bottom of the window, Word is suggesting that you name this document ‘36 Brainwood Rd’. It gets this information from the text in the first line of the document. However, we want to call this document ‘letter to La Taska’, so we need to change this.

Notice that the text ’36 Brainwood Rd’ is highlighted – i.e. the text is in white on a blue background. When ever you see highlighted text like this, you can always type over the top of it, which is what we are going to do here. Type ‘letter to La Taska’ and it will go into the ‘file name’ box.

Now click the ‘Save’ button. Your document is now permanently saved as ‘Letter to La Taska’ in the ‘Documents’ folder of your hard disk. Notice that at the top of the window, the document has changed its name from
‘Document 1’ (the name ‘Word’ gives to unsaved documents) to ‘Letter to La Taska:

You can now print the document or close it and then re-open it at a later date. To print the document, click the office button, point at ‘Print’ then click the ‘print’ option in the right hand side of the window.

The ‘print dialogue box’ will be displayed. Just click the ‘OK’ button to print the whole document or alternatively, set options in the window first before clicking OK. For example, you might choose ‘current page’ if you only want to print out one page amongst many.

You can now close Word by clicking the cross in the top right hand corner of the window.
Finding, re-opening and re-saving a document

If you want to continue adding more text to your document, you will need to re-open it. It was saved in the ‘Documents’ folder. Click Start then click Documents. The Documents folder will be displayed. Double click the file called ‘Letter to La Taska’. The letter will open in Word. Continue to write more text. To update the saved file to include your new work click the ‘Save’ button which is just to the right of the Office button:

There is no need to do anything else when you save files the second or subsequent times.

Using the Internet

The Internet can be understood as a network of networks. But what is a network?

A network is a collection of computers connected together so that information can be passed from one to another using wires, fibre optic cables, wireless technology, phone lines, satellites etc. The Internet simply goes one stage further and connects all these networks together to form the Internet.

Another way of thinking about the Internet is to imagine it as being one giant, electronic encyclopaedia/magazine that can be searched and browsed.

To use the Internet you will need a ‘web browser’. Internet Explorer is one such browser and will certainly be installed on your computer. However, it is not the best or easiest to use, so this tutorial uses ‘Google Chrome’ instead. To download and install Google Chrome on your computer, read the appendix entitled ‘Downloading and installing Google Chrome’.

To start Google Chrome, click Start then click ‘Google Chrome’. Chrome will start, displaying its ‘Home’ page:
A web browser’s ‘Home’ page is simply the first page that the browser displays when it is opened. We have set ‘Google’ as our Home page and so it is the first page to be displayed.

**Searching for information**

Google is a special type of website called a ‘search engine’. A search engine performs the same task as an index in an encyclopaedia. In this section, we will search the Internet for some information.

Let’s say we want to find a recipe for lemon drizzle cake. We simply click in the search box (to place the insertion point there), and then start typing those words into the search box. As you type, suggestions will appear underneath the search box. In the example on the left, simply typing ‘lemon’ has brought up lots of suggested searches including ‘lemon drizzle cake’. Click ‘lemon drizzle cake’. Google displays the results of your search:

The results show a list of websites which have the desired recipe.

Each result is displayed in blue, black and green text. The blue text is the ‘hyperlink’ which, when clicked, will take you to the webpage featuring the recipe. The black text is a snippet of the actual text on that page. The green text shows the actual web address of the page.
We will look at the recipe on the BBC Good Food website. Place your cursor on the blue words ‘Lemon drizzle cake recipe – BBC Good Food’. You cursor will turn into a hand: 🖱️ Click the words.

The page with the recipe will be displayed.

If you want to return to the Google search page, click ‘Home’ 🏡.
You could also click the back button twice to return to Google: ⏪

One last point that is worth noting is that the address bar is also the search bar in Google Chrome. In other words, you do not need to return to Google to search the Internet. You can simply click in the address bar, type your search terms (lemon drizzle cake etc) and press the Enter key to bring up your list of results.

**Navigating directly to a website**
Sometimes you will not need to search because you know where you are going (hopefully!).

It is now commonplace on radio, TV and in magazines for web addresses to be quoted. How many times have you heard the sentence ‘For more information go to www.bbc.co.uk/radio4’? This would be pronounced ‘double u double u double u dot bbc dot co dot u k slash radio 4’.

It is very easy to navigate to a known web address.
First, click the address (located in the address bar) of the current page to highlight it. It will then look like this:
If you find that the address is not fully selected (i.e. it is not all blue), bring your cursor down to an empty area of the page and click it. Then try to select the address again.

Secondly, type the address you want to go to – remember, web addresses cannot, under any circumstances, have any spaces! Your typing will over-write the text that is currently in the address bar. We are going to look at the page located at www.bbc.co.uk/radio4 so that’s what we type into the box. It will now look like this:

As on the Google search page, as you type, suggested web addresses will appear underneath the address bar; you can ignore these or, if one of them is the correct address, you can click it.

The third step is to press Enter on the keyboard. The browser will display the requested page:

In summary, to navigate to a known web address:
1. Click the address of the page you are currently reading (to highlight it).
2. Type the address you want to go to.
3. Press Enter.

'Surfing' the Internet
This phrase has fallen out of favour in recent years but it still well describes the way you can move around the Internet. As we have seen, you can move around the Internet by:

- Searching for information using a search engine such as Google
- Navigating directly to a website
- Using the 'Home' button
- Using the 'back' and 'forward' buttons on the browser.

You can also click on links within web pages to move around. Virtually every web page you ever look at will have links to other web pages. It is these links that create the ‘web’.

Generally (though not always), links are in blue writing and become underlined when you hover your cursor over them. Whenever your cursor turns into a hand (hand) you are on a link.

Virtually all websites also have something called ‘navigation buttons’. Navigation buttons help you to find your way around websites. A good example of a well designed website is the BBC News website at news.bbc.co.uk. Note there is no ‘www’ in this web address – not all websites begin www, just most of them!

The picture to the left shows the navigation buttons for the BBC News website. This website contains over one and a half million pages so the navigation buttons are essential. The navigation buttons are on every page so you can easily find your way around. Whatever page you are on you can always return to ‘News Front Page’, ‘UK’, ‘Technology’, ‘Health’ etc.

The News website also has a search facility. This is different to searching Google (which searches the entire
Internet). The BBC search only searches the BBC website.

Let’s say we are looking for information within the site on the 2010 election. First we click in the search box to place the insertion point in the box:

Next we type ‘2010 election’ (without the quotes):

Now we click the ‘search’ button to the right of the box. The results of our search will now be displayed:

The blue words are all links to relevant pages on this subject.

**Adding bookmarks (favourites)**

Sometimes, you want to make a note of a website address so that you can easily return there. Such notes are known as bookmarks or favourites.

To add a bookmark:
- Navigate to the page you want to bookmark. In the illustration below, I have gone to the BBC iplayer website:

![BBC iPlayer Website](image)

- Click the star to the left of the address bar. A new, small window will be displayed:

```
Bookmark Added! Remove
Name: BBC iPlayer - Home
Folder: Bookmarks bar
      Edit... Done
```

If you click the 'Done' button, a button linking to the BBC iplayer website will be created on the bookmarks bar. It will look like this:

![BBC iPlayer Button](image)

You can only put a small number of buttons on the bookmarks bar – It is probably best to keep the bookmarks bar for only your most frequently visited websites. If you want to bookmark a website but not have it on the bookmarks bar, follow these steps:

- Click the star to the left of the address bar. A new, small window will be displayed:
Click the arrow next to where it says ‘bookmarks bar’. The menu will be expanded:

- Click ‘Other bookmarks’
- Click ‘Done’

Your bookmark for the iplayer website can now be found by clicking ‘Other bookmarks’ at the right hand end of the bookmarks bar, then clicking the link for the BBC iplayer:

**Setting up and using an email account**

People use the Internet for many different purposes but the three biggest activities are:

1. Searching for information using a search engine
2. Navigating directly to a known website
3. Using email

We have looked at the first two on this list and now, finally, we are going to briefly look at email.

Email is an immensely useful facility. You can send an email to anyone who has an email address. Sending an email is rather like writing a letter; you address it, write it and post it!
You do not even need to own a computer in order to start using email. Once you have set up an account, it is available to you anywhere there is a computer with an Internet connection.

Google offers a free email service. To use this service you will need to read the accompanying document entitled ‘Setting up and using a Gmail account’.

Appendix 1 – Downloading and installing Google Chrome

Google Chrome is a ‘web browser’ which you can use instead of Internet Explorer. In the opinion of this author, it has a number of advantages over Internet Explorer (referred to as ‘IE’ in this document) and is this author’s browser of choice.

This tutorial will show you how to download and install Google Chrome. The ‘screenshots’ (pictures of what you will see on screen as you go through this process) assume that you are using the ‘Windows 7’ operating system. If you are using Windows XP or Windows Vista, your screens will look slightly different to the ones featured in this document.

First, start IE. There are several ways of doing this:

- There may be an icon on the desktop for IE. If so, double click it.
- There may be an item on the Start menu to launch IE. If so, click Start then click the IE menu item.
- The third way to start IE is to click Start, point to ‘All Programs’ then click the item for IE on the menu of programs that appear.

IE will display its ‘home page’. The home page is simply the page that has been set to display each time the browser is launched (started):
It doesn’t matter which page is displayed!

Click within the address bar to highlight the address. It should now look similar to the picture on the left – the text is white on a blue background. If the address is not properly selected, move the cursor onto the page and click a blank area then have another attempt at selecting the address.

Type ‘chrome.google.com’ (without the quotation marks).

Press the Enter key on the keyboard.

IE will display the page where you can download Google Chrome:

Click the big blue button labelled ‘Download Google Chrome’. A new page will be displayed:

Click the button labelled ‘Accept and Install’. A new window will be displayed:
Click the ‘Run’ button. A new small window will be displayed:

![Google Chrome Installer](image)

Wait! When the download is finished, another new window will be displayed:

![Welcome to Google Chrome](image)

Click the button labelled ‘Start Google Chrome’. Google Chrome will start:

![Google Chrome](image)

Click the button labelled ‘Keep Google as the default search engine’.

Click the square in the top right hand corner of the window to maximise the window if necessary.

Google Chrome is now installed and ready to use. You can now close IE by right clicking its button on the taskbar at the bottom of your screen and then clicking ‘Close window’:
Appendix 2 – Rules of Solitaire

Solitaire – The rules

The game is played with a single pack of 52 playing cards. After thoroughly shuffling the deck, 28 cards are dealt face down to form the tableau which consists of 7 columns of 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7 overlapping cards from left to right respectively. The exposed card at the end of each tableau column is turned face up. The remaining cards are placed face down to form the stock. The game then begins.

Objective

The object of the game is to build the four foundations up in ascending suit sequence from Ace to King. e.g. A♠, 2♠, 3♠, 4♠, 5♠, 6♠, 7♠, 8♠, 9♠, 10♠, J♠, Q♠, K♠ with cards of identical suit.

Solitaire Rules

As each Ace becomes available it may be transferred to a row above the tableau to start one of the four foundations. The foundations are built up in ascending suit sequence to the King. The exposed card of a tableau column may be transferred to a foundation of the same suit if it follows the ascending sequence or to the exposed card of another column if it forms a descending sequence of alternating colours, e.g. 6♥ on 7♦ or Q ♦.
A complete packed column of face up cards may also be transferred to the exposed card of another tableau column if the join follows the same descending sequence of alternating colours. If the movement of a tableau card exposes a face down card, then it is turned face up. When a tableau column is completely cleared out, the space may only be filled by a King or a packed column headed by a King. When no more moves are available from the tableau, the top three cards from the stock are dealt face up, without upsetting their order, to a single waste pile. The top exposed card of the waste pile is always available for play to the foundations or tableau. When the stock has been exhausted, the waste pile is picked up and turned over to form a new stock and the game continues. This procedure is continued until the game eventually blocks or is won. A variation of the game allows a single card to be dealt to the waste pile instead of three. There is usually a limit to the number of times the waste pile can be re-used to prevent the game coming out too often.