Norfolk Factsheet 7

Access to computing

Contents

For details of all Age UK Factsheets, go to
https://www.ageuk.org.uk/norfolk/

If you would like Age UK Norfolk to search any of the websites listed in this factsheet on your behalf, please contact the advice line on 0300 500 1217

Q & A

Do I have to have previous knowledge about computers to go on a course?

No, there is a wide range of very basic beginners' courses available throughout Norfolk. No previous knowledge about computers is required - you don't even need to know how to type.

What kinds of courses are available?

Courses range from 'taster' sessions where complete beginners can try out a range of computing activities and gain a basic understanding of how to operate a computer. More specific beginners' courses that concentrate on one particular area of computing are also available. For example, emailing and the Internet, word-processing, desktop publishing or researching the past - looking at your family tree and tracing your ancestors!

Are there any computer courses available just for older people?

Yes, if you would prefer to learn alongside other older people, there are a number of specialised courses available for older people throughout the County. Large screens are also available at some venues for those with sight problems.

How much will I pay?

Some courses are completely free, others may offer concessionary rates for those in receipt of benefits.

Where can I go to use a computer once I've learnt how to use one - if I don't want to buy a computer of my own?

Many centres are available to give people access to computers, for example:

Norfolk Library and Information Service:

Through the use of computers, software and online sites, libraries in Norfolk can help you to communicate research, learn and have fun. For information, go to www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries-local-history-and-archives/libraries/your-local-library/computers-and-wifi

Every library in Norfolk offers:
- Free internet access (including free web-based e-mail services)
- Free internet and IT taster sessions
- Access to online help and online subscriptions via our information service - our selection of quality information sites
- Computers with Microsoft Office (word processing, spreadsheets and presentations)
- Computers with multi-card reader and USB ports
- Screen magnification and screen reader software
- Photo-editing software
- Colour printing (A4 only in some libraries).
- Printing over Wi-Fi.
- Scanning facilities.

There are 560 computers across our libraries, including 100 at the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library at the Forum, and there are staff on hand to help.

Every library offers the following on at least one computer:
- A4 scanners
- Adobe Photoshop
- Assistive keyboards and mice

Accessibility
We use appropriate technology and equipment to ensure that no customer faces an unnecessary barrier to accessing any of our online services.
All of our public PCs have access to the built in screen magnification and test to speech functionality that comes as standard as part of the Windows 7 operating system.

Free computer help in libraries

We have computers at all of our libraries. To use a computer, you will need to book a session in advance by calling 01603 774777. You can book one 60 minute session per day.

We've introduced new keyboards that are easy to wipe down, and we will clean the keyboard and mouse between sessions.

We're not currently able to offer one-to-one support in person, but you can call 01603 774777 to speak to a member of library staff if you need help. This helpline is available 10am-6pm Monday-Friday and 10am-4pm Saturday.

Wi-Fi

We have free public WiFi access at all of our libraries. The network will show on your list of available networks as NCC_Library_Wifi. When you have connected to the network, you will need to log on using your library membership number and PIN in order to browse the Internet. Logging on implies acceptance of our terms and conditions.

Voluntary Norfolk, Digital inclusion project,

SERVICE UPDATE DURING COVID-19

Our digital inclusion drop-in sessions are unfortunately on hold for the protection of our volunteers and the people they support. However, for those looking to access public computer facilities, a number of Norfolk Libraries have reopened and computer slots are available to book. For further details, including how to book a slot, visit the Norfolk Libraries' Coronavirus updates page.

We are now offering digital support by telephone for any Norwich resident needing assistance to get the most out of technology whilst social distancing. To be eligible for telephone support, learners must have access to the internet at home, a device to connect to the internet and some prior experience of going online.

To request assistance or to make a referral please call the Voluntary Norfolk office on 01603 883838.

Please be aware that during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic the majority of Voluntary Norfolk staff are continuing to work from home.

How can I find out about local computer courses?

The following organisations can provide details of a range of computer courses:

Norfolk County Learning Services (NCLS):

NCLS provides an online catalogue of courses. Their computing courses are a great first step for people who would like to develop their skills and increase their confidence in using a computer or tablet. Learn about email, internet and spreadsheets, along with creating and saving documents in a friendly and relaxed environment with help from experienced and dedicated tutors.

Your local library may also offer basic IT skills through taster sessions and Surf's Up sessions for people over 60 wanting to learn about using the internet. These sessions offer training and support for older people to search the web, use email, shop and stay safe online. They help them to become computer literate and to enjoy the benefits of digital technology. No previous knowledge is needed and there is no upper age limit.

To find current course details at your local libraries including 'Computing for beginners' and 'Get Digital Tablet Course', go to

https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/adult-learning/courses/business-accountancy-and-it-skills/%20computer-courses

or contact your local library.

For information on any of the above Norfolk County Council Services, call the Learners Services team on 0344 8008020 or email information@norfolk.gov.uk

UK Online Centres Network:

Brought together by the Good Things Foundation, this network is made up of 5,000 grassroots organisations to tackle digital and social exclusion by providing people with the skills and confidence they need to access digital technology. These centres are a network of community internet access points which provide people with free or low-cost access to computers and the internet, together with help and advice on how to use them.

Their Specialist Older People Network offers help and support to enable older people to access all the benefits of digital. Older people can face accessibility, motivational and skills barriers – but the benefits of getting online include social inclusion, and better access to health information and services.

The Online Centres Network uses the Learn My Way online courses to support and teach computer beginners. To find out details of your nearest UK online centre and their free and low cost computer courses call 0114 349 1666 or go to https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/ournetwork/find-centre#/map

Learn My Way:

This is the online learning website provided by the Good Things Foundation (a charity that supports digitally and socially excluded people to improve their lives through digital) for Online Centres Network learners and it's designed to make getting online easy. It's perfect for those without basic online skills, or for those looking to improve their existing digital knowledge.

The website comprises a series of free online courses, guides, and activities tailored to the individual user based on their needs and abilities. Learn My Way courses are grouped by subject into a series of packages. Each subject group is also supplemented with a series of additional resources from other websites to help users consolidate their skills and find the information they need to learn more.

For information, go to www.learnmyway.com/about-us

Learn Direct:

Learn Direct is an e-teaching organisation which provides online courses covering a range of subjects and operates a network of learning centres in UK. The Learn Direct Advice Service provides information, advice and guidance to support adults in making appropriate decisions on a full range of learning opportunities. You don't need any previous experience. Their friendly staff is there to help you out and will support you by telephone, email or at one of their local centres.

To find out about their local courses, call on 0800 10190l or go to https://www.learndirect.com/

(online contact form) or contact one of their local training centres at:

GREAT YARMOUTH – 20 Market Place – Tel: 01493 855971

NORWICH – 48 Prince of Wales Road – Tel: 01603 762276

A text relay service is available for learners who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.

Digital Unite Community Training (DUCP):

Digital Unite specialise in supporting older people to use digital technologies, from the internet and email to social networking and blogs. They offer a structured training programme for groups and communities. The DUCP works for all kinds of groups with mixed skills levels. They teach a group of people IT skills and help to set up the equipment to start off with intensive training and thereafter provide regular training sessions, online support and access to learning materials.

A range of 'how-to' technology learning guides are available online including 'Computer Basics' (written by subject matter experts) which are ideal for supporting others with digital skills or improving your own knowledge. For information, go to https://www.digitalunite.com/

(online enquiry form) or call on 0800 2289272, email: du@digitalunite.com

We Are Digital:

This network (formerly Silver Training) provides bespoke courses working with housing associations, companies and charities to deliver basic digital skills group courses, digital champion workshops and one-to-one home training. For information, go to https://www.we-are-digital.co.uk/ or call on 03333 444019. Email: info@we-are-digital.co.uk

Useful Websites:

AbilityNet - https://www.abilitynet.org.uk/about-abilitynet

This is a national charity helping disabled people of all ages to use computers and the Internet by adapting and adjusting their technology. Downloadable factsheets are available which provide advice and information about how computers and other digital technologies can help people with a range of conditions and impairments. Written by their specialist team of assessors and accessibility consultants, they include information on a range of assistive technology, services and related organisations. Many give a step by step guide to help you set up your computer and software (assistive technology) to meet your individual requirements.

Age UK- https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/work-learning/technology-internet/

They help you to get the most out of your computer with their online guides which include ''Staying safe online' and 'Making the most of the internet'.

BBC Webwise - http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/topics/your-computer/

Webwise offers a beginner's guide to using the internet. Find out how to use computers and the web to get the most out of life online.

Get Safe Online - https://www.getsafeonline.org/

This is a public/private sector partnership supported by HM Government and leading organisations in banking, retail, internet security and other sectors. Their website provides practical advice on how to protect yourself, your computers and devices against fraud, identity theft, viruses and other problems encountered online. It also contains guidance on related subjects including how to perform backups, how to avoid theft or loss of your devices, safe online shopping, gaming and dating.

GCF Learn Free - **https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/**

Worldwide online courses covering technology, online literacy and maths skills. Courses are interactive and supported with articles and videos. For those new to computers, their tutorials cover Computer Basics.

Gransnet - https://www.gransnet.com/

Gransnet is a social networking site for the over 50s. Their Gransnet technology page includes 'The Gransnet guide to the Internet', 'How to avoid and deal with scams' and 'Apps for grandparents'. **https://www.gransnet.com/life-and-style/technology/the-gransnet-guide-to-the-internet**

Meganga - http://www.meganga.com/

Offers computer training for older people, beginners and computer novices and free online video lessons for Microsoft Office, Word, Powerpoint and Excel.

Microsoft Accessibility - https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/accessibility

Includes tips for older people on how to change screen settings to make the computer easier to use. .

OpenLearn - https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue

Produced by the Open University, a world-leader in open and distance learning. They offer many free courses which include an intermediate course on 'Computers and computer systems'.

Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)

https://www.rnib.org.uk/?gclid=EAIalQobChMIovKv58GV4AIVRJ3VCh1VWg50E AAYASAAEgKNGPD_BwE

This website includes a page on 'Making computers accessible' with information about keyboard shortcuts and improving the way you use the internet. There is a series of information sheets about technology for blind and partially-sighted people and online 'Beginners Guides' (including to computers, laptops and tablets) For information, or to find out about their free assistive technology support service, call their helpline on 0303 1239999 or email helpline@rnib.org.uk

Silversurfers - https://www.silversurfers.com/

This is an informative lifestyle and social network site for everyone over 50.

Their 'Best of the Web' section includes helpful guides to find websites you can trust when browsing online.

Useful Publications:

Age UK:

Their information guide 'Internet Security – staying safe online' (IL4)

can be downloaded at https://www.ageuk.org.uk/services/information-advice/guides-and-factsheets/ or call for a hard copy on 0800 1696565.

RNIB:

'Confident living – Technology series' (ref PR12368)

This is an introduction for beginners to mobiles, smartphones, computers, tablets, eBooks and getting online with brief explanations about accessibility features for people who are losing or have recently lost their eyesight.

https://shop.rnib.org.uk/reading-and-learning/publications/confident-living-technology-1.html

Available in print, braille or audio CD. To order online go to shop.rnib.org.uk/ or call on 0303 1239999.

Which?:

'Computing' magazine helps you to make the most out of your computer, tablet or phone, plus one-to-one support from their Computing Helpdesk. For information, go to https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/desktop-pcs/article/guides or call on 01992 822800.

Age UK Norfolk has been in existence since 1947

The mission of the charity is

"To support older people in Norfolk to enjoy the opportunities and meet the challenges of later life".

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