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INTRODUCTION TO **COMPUTERS**

CLASS 1 OF 7 IN THE FUNDAMENTAL DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

Computers have quickly become a mainstay in our daily lives: we bank, watch movies, keep in touch with loved ones, and even go to school and do our work on computers and the internet. However, because technology changes so rapidly, it's easy to get left behind or to feel unable to keep up.

Chinook Arch Regional Library System and the Government of Canada believe that no one should be left behind in learning digital skills, especially as more of our important activities become digitized. These quick guides are designed for you to keep as a reference, and are full of the basic information and helpful hints that you'll need to start exploring computers. We hope that through these classes and accompanying guides we will help you build your confidence in digital literacy, and impart the basic skills you need to go on and explore more of the digital world.



FUNDAMENTAL DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS PROGRAM

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COMPUTER PARTS



Computers can be a desktop with separate pieces of hardware; or a laptop, meaning all of the hardware is built into one machine, making it portable. You can connect separate tools to a laptop, such as a bigger keyboard or a mouse, if you find the laptop touchpad tricky to use.



Many modern desktop computers are made up of three or four parts: the monitor or screen, keyboard, mouse, and sometimes a separate tower. This tower is where the computer's hard drive (its brain) is located. Some computers have the hard drive built into the monitor (like Apple computers), or have a smaller tower that looks more like a small box next to the screen.

To switch your computer on, you need to press the power button.



The power button for a desktop computer is located either on the tower or the back of the screen. On a laptop it's usually on the top right of the keyboard.

DESKTOP

The desktop is what you see when you turn your computer on.

A shortcut is an icon link to a file or program that allows access from a secondary location, rather than searching the start menu or hard drive for the main file. They are usually put on the desktop and/or taskbar to allow for quick and easy access.

Start Menu

Basically the start menu is like the table of contents for your computer. This is where you find all of your files and programs. These files and programs are often duplicated on the screen of your desktop, which some computer users find easier to access.

Folders

You store files (documents, images, etc.) in folders to organize them.

Recycle Bin

This is where deleted files and programs go. Sometimes they are permanently deleted after a certain amount of time; other times you have to empty the bin yourself by right-clicking on it to open a command menu.

Task Bar

More shortcuts can appear along here, including commands (like the volume), internet access, and file access.

Settings

Opens the space where you can adjust the set-up of the computer (screensaver, saved accounts, language, etc.)

Power

Clicking this will begin the shutdown, sleep or restart procedures for the computer.

MOUSE

A mouse is one of the main ways to control your computer.



TO USE THE MOUSE:

Place hand on it, aligning index finger with the left button and the middle finger with the right button.

SINGLE LEFT CLICK TO SELECT

- Start typing on a document or text box.
- Open a webpage, maneuver around a website or webpage.

DOUBLE LEFT CLICK TO OPEN

- Use this to open files, folders, etc.
- Hold the left button down to move files ('click-and-drag').

RIGHT CLICK TO

- Open a command menu.
- Edit text.
- Open a webpage on a new window or tab.

MOUSE

When you move the mouse, it moves a pointer or 'cursor' on the computer screen.

The cursor will change shape depending on what you are doing.

ARROW

Allows you to select and move things.



HAND

Opens a link.



HOURGLASS/ REVOLVING CIRCLE

Means the computer is completing a task.

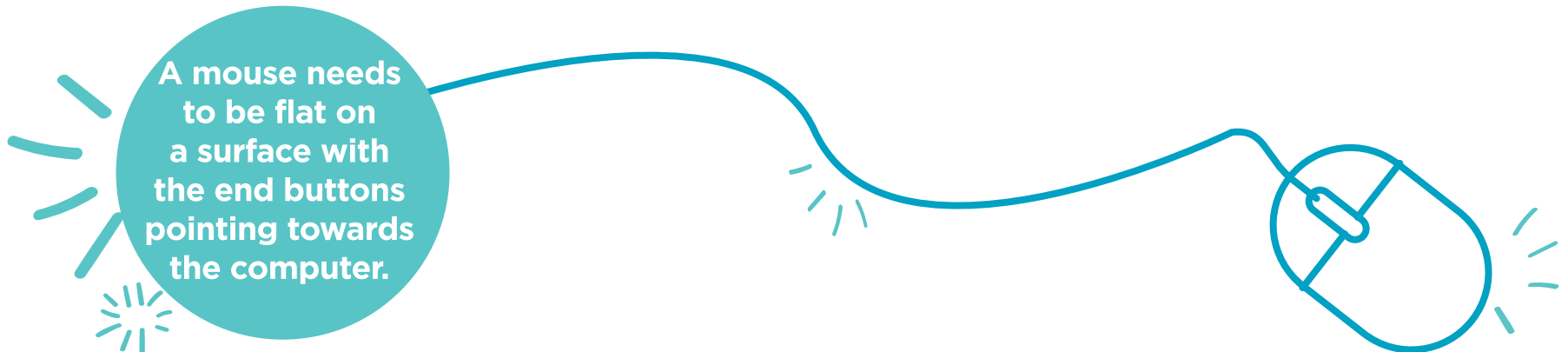


I SHAPE

Indicates you can select an area of the text box to begin typing; will change to a line as you type.



A mouse needs to be flat on a surface with the end buttons pointing towards the computer.



KEYBOARD

The keyboard is how you put information (words and numbers) onto the computer screen. The keys are the individual buttons you press as you type.

Number keys run along the top of the keyboard, and are also on the right.

Symbol keys to the right of the letters include things like question mark and comma.

Command keys surround the letters and symbols.



Letter keys are in the middle.

Other keys include arrows (page directions).

The number and symbol keys are almost always 'doubled up', meaning you can use one key for two functions. Switch between them by holding down the Shift key.

KEYBOARD

IMPORTANT KEYS



Space Bar - Puts spaces between words, etc.

Shift - Hold down to type capital letters or access the symbols on the top of doubled-up keys.

Tab - Puts more space between the margin of the page and the start of the text.

Caps Lock - All letters will be capitalized until the Caps Lock key is released, by pressing it again. A light will go on in the upper right of the keyboard to show that Caps Lock is on.

Control (Ctrl) - Holding the control button acts as a shortcut for different text editing actions.

Ctrl + s - Save.

Ctrl + c - Copy.

Ctrl + v - Pastes copied text in a new area.

Ctrl + x - Cuts the highlighted text out.

Backspace - Deletes the text.

Enter - Moves the cursor to the next line, starting a new paragraph.

When a Word document or text box is open and ready for use, the cursor changes from an arrow or pointing finger to an I to show you can begin typing, and a flashing line to guide you as you type.

MOVING BETWEEN WINDOWS

You can have more than one window open at a time and move between them. You can tell which one is the active window (the one you are able to interact with) because it will have a highlighted frame and be in front of the others. The other windows will have a dull, faded-looking frame.

Another way to tell which is active is to look at the task bar along the bottom of the computer: the active window button will be highlighted or a different colour.

Moving between windows is pretty easy: click on an open window behind the currently active one to bring it to the front, or select a different button on the task bar. You can also arrange the windows by clicking and dragging them to show information on two windows.



Minimize means to hide a window by collapsing it into its button on the task bar. You can reopen it by clicking the button on the task bar.



Maximize is to make the window larger and fill your whole screen.



Closing a window exits out of it entirely – make sure you've finished and saved before doing this!

While Windows computers use the above symbols to represent the minimize, maximize, and exit buttons, Apple computers use colours.



red to exit
yellow to minimize
green to maximize

CREATING DOCUMENTS



Microsoft Word is the most common program for creating documents - it's usually available on public use computers, but you will need to buy the software for your personal computer.

Use Word to create:

- Letters
- Resumes
- Novels

USING MICROSOFT WORD

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word interface with the 'Home' tab selected. The ribbon includes sections for Clipboard, Font, Paragraph, and Styles. The document content is as follows:

To open a document:

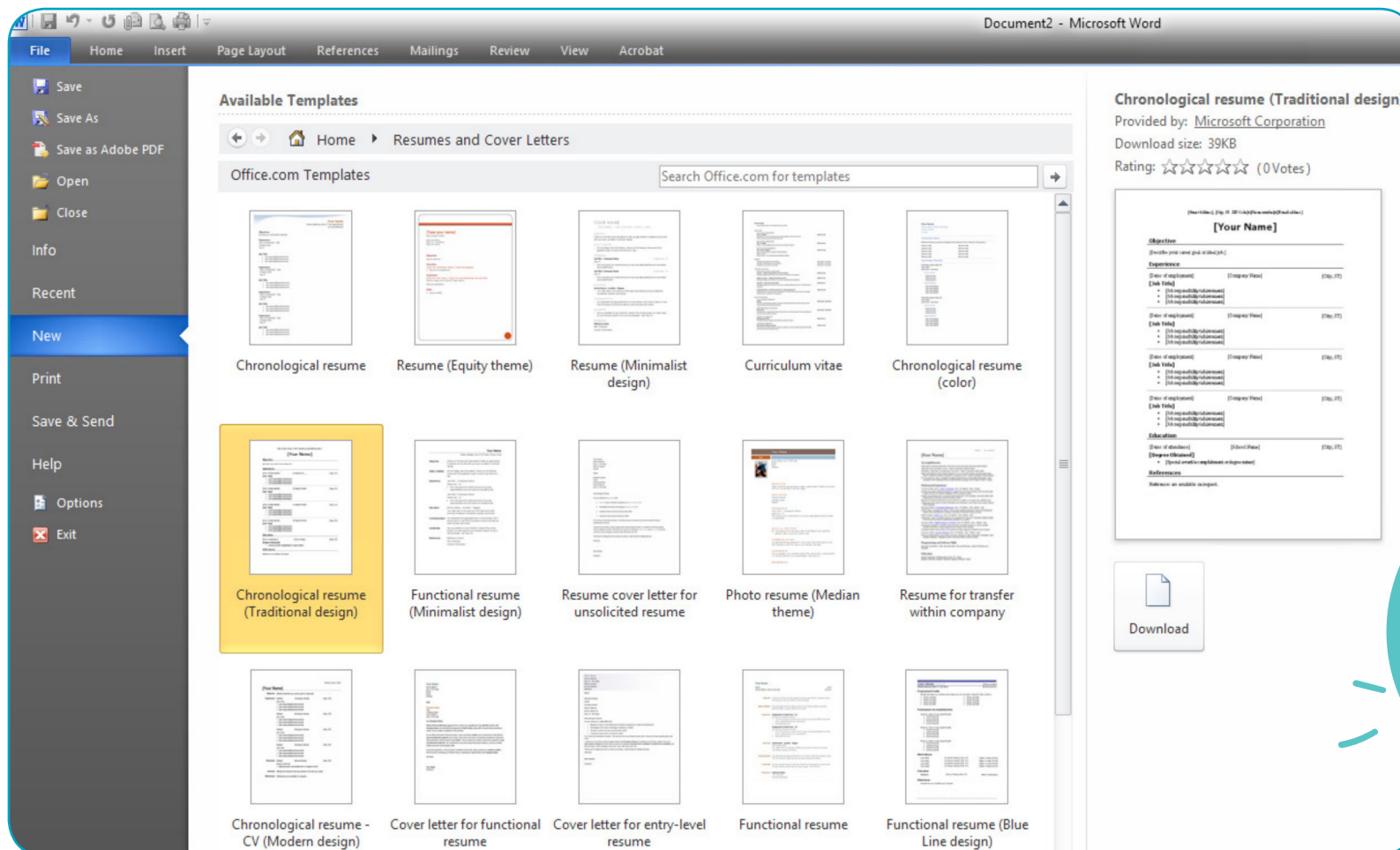
- 1) Locate the MS Word shortcut (desktop, task bar, or Start menu) and double click to open
*If it's your own computer, you might want to move the icon to the desktop or task bar for convenience
- 2) Select New Document to begin a new composition, or open a saved file
- 3) Click the white document box to begin typing
- 4) Save the file before closing (if you hit close without saving, you'll be prompted to do so)
 - a. Save As will let you choose where you save the file
 - b. Save will automatically save it in the default space (usually the general documents folder, but sometimes the hard drive)
- 5) Name the file and select where to save it
 - a. If you're on a public computer, you'll have to save it on a USB or jump drive (see page 12), so you can take it with you. Otherwise it could be deleted or altered by other computer users
 - b. You can also choose the file type – a word document (.doc) can be edited, a PDF (.pdf) cannot

PDF is the preferred file type when sending documents to other people.

CREATING A RESUME

Resume creation is one of the most common uses of Microsoft Word; everyone needs one, and most are expected to be typed.

Microsoft Word does have a selection of resume and cover letter templates to choose from, so you don't need to create it from scratch - unless you want to!



The first line or section of your resume should be your full name and contact information.

RESUME DOS AND DON'TS



DO

Use the job posting as a guide, and tailor what information you include to be as relevant as possible.

Try to keep it on one page, though the more relevant experience you have means the length becomes less important.

Make it professional: be logical, organized, consistent, and have proper grammar and spelling.

Make it visually appealing and easy to read.

Send it as a PDF and label properly (first and last name, what it is, job post number or position).
- ie: John Smith_Resume_Sales Assistant.

Think about what makes you stand out as a candidate, whether it's achievements or who you've worked with.



DON'T

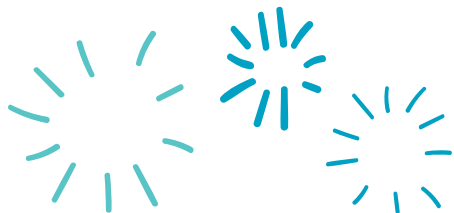
Include your full address or a photo, for privacy reasons.

Include references unless the posting requests it – if you are selected for an interview or meeting, the hiring committee will ask for your references.

List everything you've done; this will just take up space and isn't necessarily important for the specific job you're applying for.

A good rule of thumb is to leave off anything from more than ten years ago, though it is important to note that not every job is the same. Some positions ask for a CV (curriculum vitae) which will list everything you've done professionally. You might want to have one "master" resume from which you take relevant information to create a new resume for each position you apply for.

Many positions ask for both a resume (the list of your professional qualifications) and a cover letter (a one-page document detailing how your skills and experiences make you a good fit for the job specifics). If the posting asks for both, you don't need to include an opening statement on your resume.



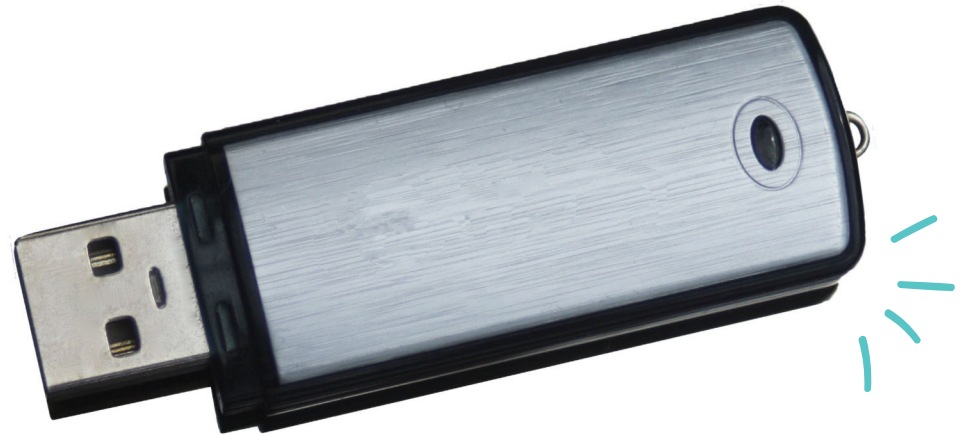
USB DRIVE

If you're using a computer to write something, want to transfer files, or to back up all of your files in case something happens to your computer, you will want a USB drive. This is especially true if you're using a public computer for any of your work.

USB drives are small, portable memory sticks that plug into your computer and allow you to transfer files onto them by clicking and dragging or saving directly (just select the correct file drive on the save location menu).

ALSO KNOWN AS:

JUMP DRIVE
MEMORY STICK
EXTERNAL MEMORY



When properly connected to your computer they will appear as a new icon on your desktop, named after the company that produced it (like Lexar), or as something generic ('external memory'). Double clicking the icon will open the folder, where you can transfer files in and out of as necessary.

INTERNET

The internet is simply a worldwide system of computer networks. When two computers are connected over the internet they can send and receive all kinds of information, such as text, graphics, video, and computer programs.

Some things you can do online:

- Banking
- Apply for jobs
- Watch movies
- Keep in touch with friends and family
- Go to school
- Search for information

A website is where the information you want is located, and a webpage is a specific section. Think of it like this: the website is the book, the webpage is a chapter or individual section.

Online means you're connected to and on the internet.

Offline means you don't have an internet connection or aren't on it.



HOW TO GET ON THE INTERNET

You access the internet through a browser, which can be different depending on preference and what type of computer you're using.



EDGE

The default browser for Windows computers.



SAFARI

The default browser for Mac computers.



GOOGLE CHROME

One of the most popular browsers, usually installed as the default on public use computers.



FIREFOX

Less common than the others, but still used.

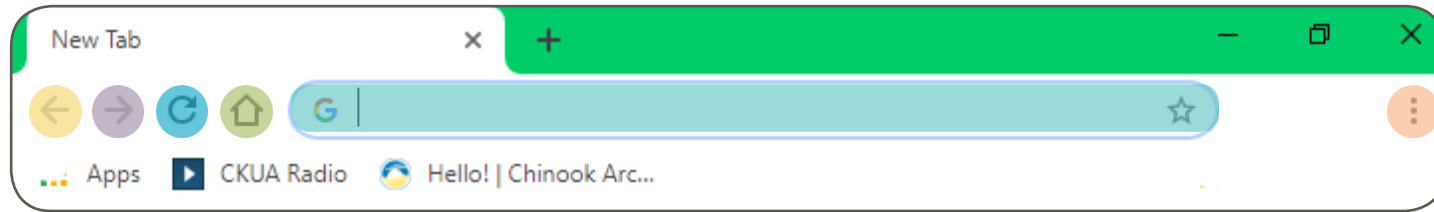
You can use any browser you want, but not all of them are pre-installed: if you want Google Chrome on your personal computer, you will have to download the browser yourself.

Once on the internet, you can explore and download information. Download means you take the information off the internet and save it on your hard drive, so you can access the file or image offline.

Many websites and webpages have links that will take you to new sites or pages, and they appear as highlighted text, buttons or images. If you're not sure, hover your cursor over a link - if the cursor changes to the hand, you can click the link.

BROWSERS AND SEARCH ENGINES






While each browser is slightly different, they all contain the same tools.



An **address bar** along the top, where you type the website address (URL) or search terms.

To change the address, click the bar to highlight the text already in there and start typing.

A toolbar to help you navigate:

-  **Home** takes you to the home page of your internet browser (usually a news page or a search engine).
-  **Back** goes back a page.
-  **Forward** goes forward a page (if you've gone back previously).
-  **Refresh** will update a page.
-  **History** stores the websites and webpages you've recently visited.

SEARCH ENGINES

In order to browse through the millions of websites on the internet, you need a search engine. You can enter key words or entire sentences into a search engine text box to search for related information. The results will be displayed by relevance and popularity, based on your search words.



DID YOU KNOW?
Google is so popular that it has come to mean internet search in general – we say we'll “google something”, meaning to search for it.

EMAIL

Email means to send a letter or message directly to someone - no need to pay for postage or bother with mailboxes!

You sign up for email through an email provider - and there are many to choose from.

INTERNET BROWSERS

- Gmail, @gmail (Google)
- Yahoo! Mail, @yahoo (Yahoo)
- Windows Live/Hotmail, @live/
@hotmail (Internet Explorer/
Edge)

**YOU DON'T NEED TO USE
THE INTERNET BROWSER
TO GET THEIR EMAIL.
FOR EXAMPLE, YOU CAN
SIGN UP FOR A LIVE
ACCOUNT, BUT STILL USE
GOOGLE TO SEARCH.**

**IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO
CHOOSE SOMETHING
PROFESSIONAL AS YOUR
USERNAME, SINCE THIS
IS HOW POTENTIAL
EMPLOYERS WILL LIKELY
CONTACT YOU.**

INTERNET PROVIDERS

- Some popular internet providers will set you up with an email when you sign up for their services.
- Shaw, @shaw
- Telus, @telus
- Bell, @bell

OTHER

- Often your work will provide you with a company email.
- Microsoft Outlook, which is part of the Microsoft Office Suite (also includes Word and Powerpoint).
- Apple computers have their own email, called iMail

An email address follows the same format, no matter who your provider is.

username@provider.com

Personal
identifier

Email
provider

Country the email is
associated with
(.com is US, .ca is Canada)

EMAIL INBOX

When you open your email inbox, you'll see the name of the email sender and the subject line, letting you know who it's from and what it's about. Unread emails will be bolded to let you know they're new and/or unread.

Inbox

All of your emails

Sent

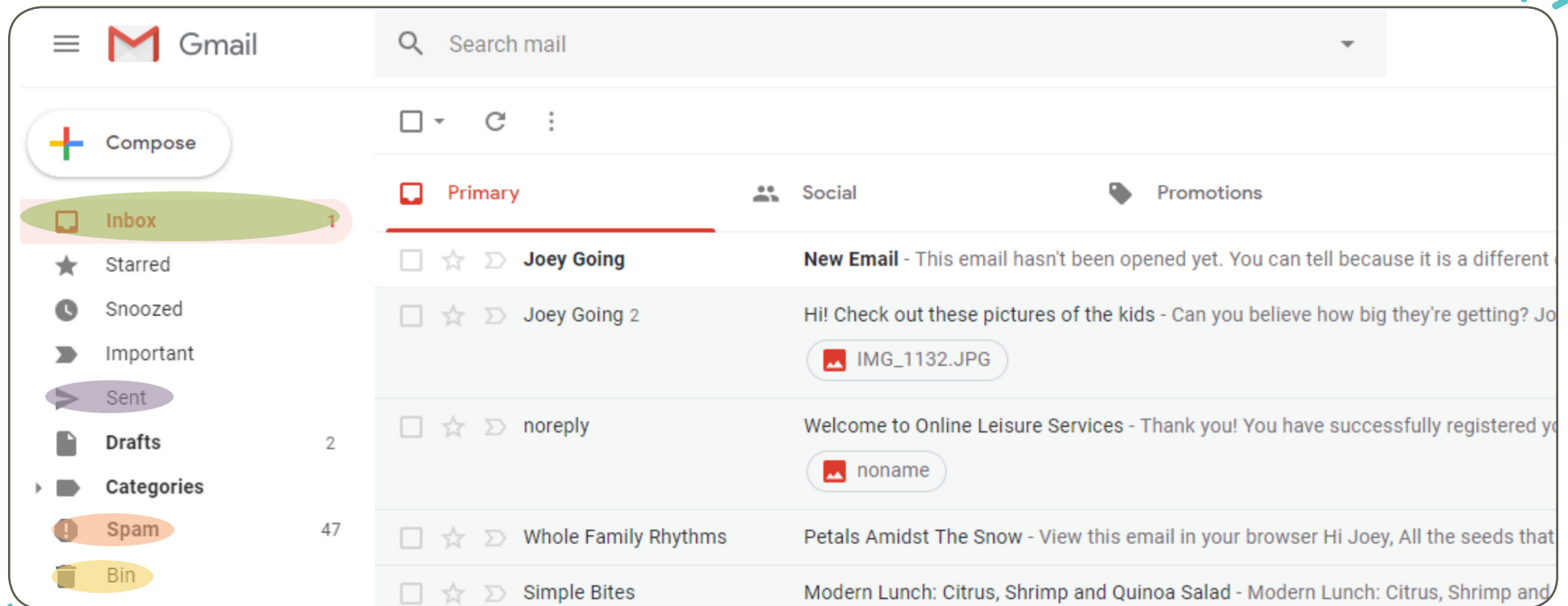
Messages that you've sent

Junk/Spam

Sometimes emails will be automatically sorted here, especially if they seem suspicious

Bin/Trash

Deleted emails



WRITE AN EMAIL

Steps for writing an email:

1) Click the button labeled Compose, New Email, or with the image of a pen.

2) Enter the recipient's email address into the text box labeled To.

3) Add a subject line, so the recipient knows what the email is about.

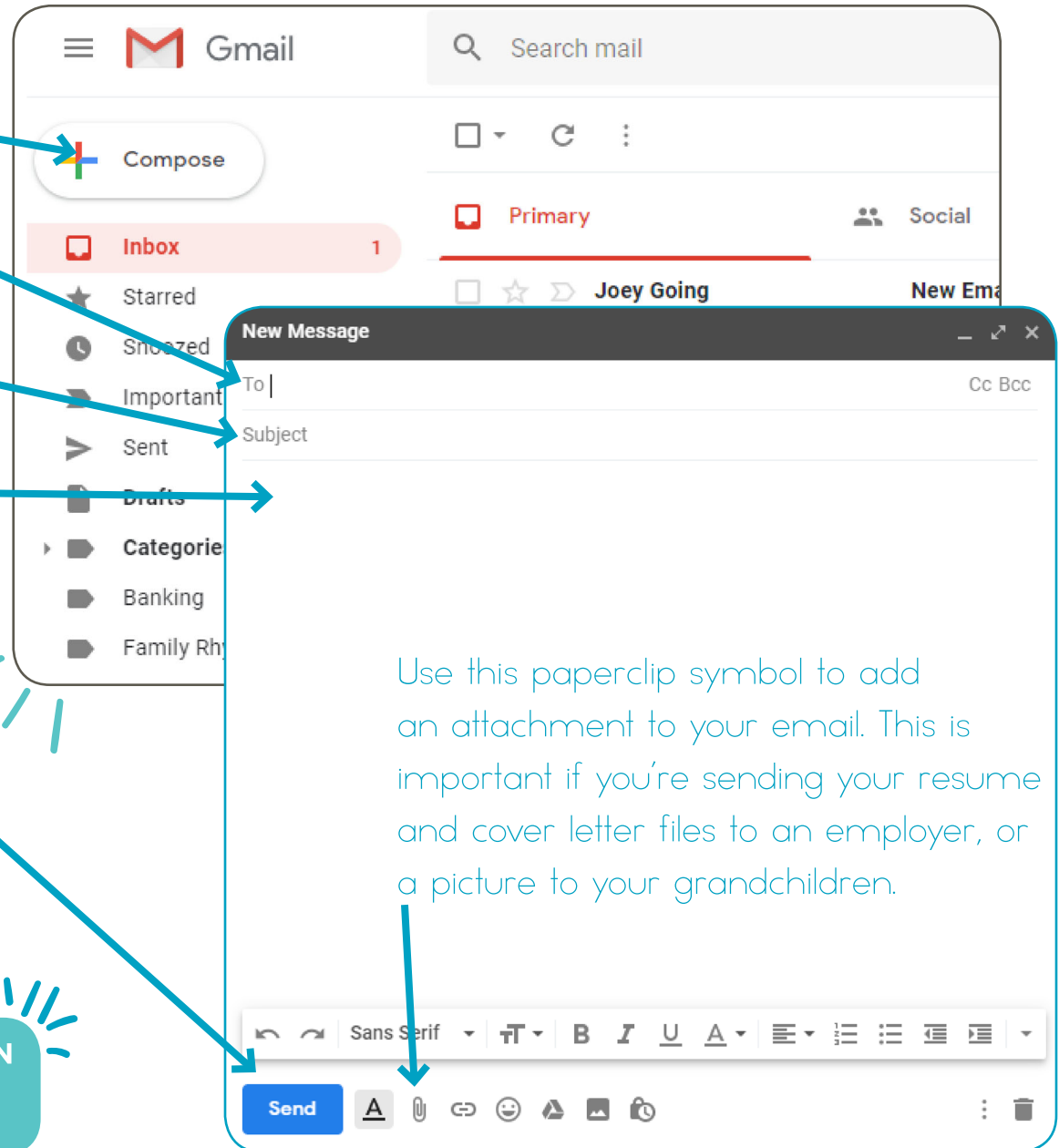
4) Type the message into the large text box.

5) When finished, click Send.

YOU CAN REPLY DIRECTLY TO AN EMAIL BY CLICKING REPLY AT THE TOP OF THE EMAIL MESSAGE.

YOU CAN ALSO SHARE AN EMAIL WITH SOMEONE ELSE BY CLICKING FORWARD AT THE TOP OF THE MESSAGE.

YOU CAN SEND THE SAME EMAIL TO MORE THAN ONE PERSON BY PUTTING MORE THAN ONE EMAIL ADDRESS INTO THE TO LINE.



Use this paperclip symbol to add an attachment to your email. This is important if you're sending your resume and cover letter files to an employer, or a picture to your grandchildren.

QUICK TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE ONLINE

Like any overwhelmingly big thing, there are some dangers with the internet but don't let that stop you from exploring it.

Here are some steps you can take to increase your online safety:

- 1) Make sure your computer has firewall, anti-virus, and anti-spyware software installed that will regularly scan and block attempts to access your information.
- 2) Don't open an email from an unfamiliar sender, unless you are expecting something.
 - a. If you do open one, don't click on any links it contains.
 - b. If one of your contacts sends you an email that seems suspicious, contact them to make sure the message is legitimate before doing anything.
- 3) Never send anyone your banking information or personal information unless you know who they are and trust them. No legitimate business will ever ask you for this information through email.
- 4) Set up a Spam filter on your email to send junk mail and most fraudulent messages to your SPAM or Junk folder.
- 5) Try not to use the same password for every website you register for.
 - a. Try to make our password difficult to guess by adding numbers, symbols, and capital letters.
- 6) It's a good idea to log off a website before you leave it, even on your personal computer.
- 7) Be wary when shopping online - most of the larger retailers are safe. It's a good idea to check out reviews for any you are unsure of. It takes more time, but you might feel more comfortable.
- 8) Make sure the site is secure when you enter your payment information, by checking if there is an s in the <https://> part of the address or the image of a padlock next to it.
- 9) Don't save your card information on a site - type it in every time you buy.
- 10) Never download illegal software, music or videos.

CONCLUSIONS

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

RESOURCES

General Books:

- Bernstein, James. *Computers Made Easy: From Dummy to Geek*. 2018.
- Clapsaddle, Marie. *Become a Tech-Active Senior: Defeat Your Fear, Get Connected, Expand Your World*. 2016.
- Miller, Michael. *Computer Basics: Absolute Beginner's Guide, Windows 10 Edition*. 2015.
- Stokes, Abby. *'Is This Thing On?' A Friendly Guide to Everything Digital for Newbies, Technophobes, and the Kicking and Screaming*. 2015.

General Guides:

- Digital Learn, <https://www.digitallearn.org/>
- Digital Unite, <https://www.digitalunite.com/technology-guides>

Other Websites:

- BBC Webwise, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/0/>

Resume Writing:

- Business 2 Community, <https://www.business2community.com/human-resources/25-fun-facts-resumes-interviews-social-recruitment-0975676>
- Workopolis, <https://careers.workopolis.com/advice/10-things-you-should-know-when-writing-your-first-resume/>



TERM GLOSSARY

ADDRESS BAR

Text box where you see or change the webpage address, found along the top of the website window.

ANTI-SPYWARE

Computer protection software, designed to detect and remove spyware programs that collect personal information about the user.

ANTI-VIRUS

Computer protection software, designed to detect and hopefully remove computer viruses from the computer.

APPLE/MAC

Popular computer manufacturer. Apple refers to the company, Mac (short for Macintosh) is the actual line of computers. However, both terms are used to refer to the computers themselves these days ('My Apple laptop', or 'My Mac desktop').

ATTACHMENT

File (document or image) that is sent along with an email.

BACKSPACE

Key that deletes/erases text in the text box.

CAPSLOCK

Changes the keyboard settings so all letters of the alphabet are capitalized as you type. Press the Caps Lock key to turn it on and off.

COMPUTER/TOWER

The part of the computer that houses the hard drive. Older models look like a large tower (hence the name), while newer ones are either built in to the monitor or look like a small box.

CONTROL (CTRL)

Key that allows you to use the keyboard for commands – like cut, copy, paste, and save – when held at the same time as another key (x to cut, c to copy, v to paste, s to save).

CURSOR

The symbol of the mouse on the monitor, which allows you to maneuver around and do actions. Usually appears as an arrow, though changes to an I when typing, or a hand to select a link.

DESKTOP

1) The type of computer that is stationary on a desk; 2) The home screen of the computer when it is turned on, where you can see your files and shortcuts, etc.

EMAIL

Electronic mail immediately sent and received through an email provider over the internet. Refers to both the individual mail ('an email'), and the action ('I'll email him').

ENTER

Key that starts a new paragraph when typing.

EXIT

Button that exits out of a computer window, represented by an x or the colour red in the upper corners of a window.

FILE

Data that is stored on the computer. Program files are the text based instructions and codes for the programs installed on a computer, and data files (the more commonly used files) are things created by the user, like a document or a photo.

FIREFOX

Internet browser.

FIREWALL

Software program that acts as a first barrier between you and attempts to access your information while you're on the internet.

GOOGLE

Popular internet search engine. Nowadays another way to refer to searching the internet ('I'll google that movie when I get home').

GOOGLE CHROME

Popular internet browser, created and supported by Google.

GMAIL

Popular email provider, created and supported by Google.

TERM GLOSSARY

HARD DRIVE

The brain of the computer, place where data and programs are stored.

HARDWARE

Refers to the physical parts of the computer, like the keyboard and mouse.

HOTMAIL/MICROSOFT OUTLOOK

Email provider created and supported by Microsoft. Originally called Hotmail, now changed to Outlook, though older Hotmail addresses still exist.

ICON

Small picture which you click to access a program or acts as a link on the Internet.

INBOX

Email folder where most emails appear.

INTERNET

The internet is simply a worldwide system of computer networks. When two computers are connected over the internet they can send and receive all kinds of information, such as text, graphics, video, and computer programs.

INTERNET EXPLORER/EDGE

Popular internet browser, designed by Microsoft and the default browser for Windows computers.

IOS

Operating system (OS) for Apple tablet and phones.

JUNK/SPAM FOLDER

Email folder where direct marketing or malicious emails are sent after going through filters.

KEYBOARD

Computer hardware with the alpha-numeric keys used to type information in to the computer.

KEYS

Individual buttons on the keyboard, each one representing a letter, number, symbol or command. Some keys have two symbols, the upper ones accessed by holding the shift key down.

LAPTOP

Small, portable computer that can be run on a battery when not plugged in.

MAXIMIZE

To make a computer window fit the screen. The button is represented by a + or the colour green in the upper corners of a window.

MICROSOFT

Popular software company that created the Windows operating systems and Office suite.

MICROSOFT OFFICE

Software suite containing Word, Powerpoint and Outlook programs. It usually must be bought separately and installed on a computer.

MICROSOFT WORD

Document creation program, part of the Microsoft Office suite.

MINIMIZE

To reduce a computer window to a smaller size, usually by collapsing it into the taskbar along the bottom of the screen. The button is represented by a _ or the colour yellow in the upper corners of a window.

MONITOR/SCREEN

Part of the computer that displays your windows, so you can see what you are doing on the computer. Many current computer monitors will also include the computer hard drive.

MOUSE

Computer hardware that allows you to complete actions on the computer by moving a cursor. In a laptop the mouse is replaced by a trackpad which uses your finger to control the cursor.

OFFLINE

When your computer is not connected to the internet, or you are not currently using the internet.

TERM GLOSSARY

ONLINE

When your computer is connected to the internet and you are using it.

OS

Short for operating system, the program that actually runs the computer. The two most widely used operating systems are Windows (Microsoft) and OSX (Apple).

OSX

Operating system used by Apple for their Mac computers.

RECYCLE/TRASH BIN

Folder where deleted files go. Some computers automatically empty the recycle after a period of time, making the files permanently deleted, but other computers will not.

SAFARI

Internet browser used by Apple computers.

SHIFT

Command key on the keyboard that when held down will capitalize a single letter or allow you to access the upper symbols on doubled-up keys.

SHORTCUT

Icon on the desktop or taskbar of a computer that allows quick access to a program, without having to find the original file in the menu.

SOFTWARE

Installed programs on the computer.

SPACEBAR

Key which adds spaces between text.

START MENU

Main menu of the computer, which lists the programs and applications installed on the computer.

TAB

Key that indents text when typing, useful for indicating a new paragraph.

TASK BAR

Bar that runs along the lower part of the computer screen containing shortcuts for applications, like the internet browser. Also, some computers have computer controls on the task bar, like volume and time and date.

TEXT BOX

Space that allows for text to be entered. A text box can be a bar, such as a search bar, or a page like what you see on a Word document.

TOOLBAR

Bar along the top of the internet window that contains controls, such as those for going backwards and forwards a page.

USB DRIVE

Small, portable memory drive which is plugged in to a computer to transfer files.

Very useful for backing up files, in case of a computer malfunction, or if you use a public computer that does not allow you to save your work on a public account.

WEBPAGE

Individual page on a website, like a chapter in a book. For example, the 'location' section on a restaurant's website.

WEBSITE

Collection of related webpages, like a whole book. For example, all of the information about a restaurant, including location, menu, and history.

WINDOW

Individual screens that appear on the computer, showing different information. For example, a word document is one window while your internet page is a separate one.

WINDOWS

Operating system for Microsoft computers.

WINDOWS LIVE

Email provider by Microsoft.

YAHOO

Popular internet search engine.

YAHOO! MAIL

Email provider supported by Yahoo.