Basic Computer Instruction for Library Patrons

Curricula, Instructor's Guides, and Student Resources

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Class Guidelines and Procedures

Rationale

Lane Libraries will provide the community with the latest in technology, including hardware, productivity applications, mobile devices, and Internet access. In order to establish a strong presence in the community and bolster customer use of these new resources, customers should be provided consistent and practical computer instruction at all user comfort levels, beginner to advanced. It does little for the community to merely provide resources without a needed support structure that values scaffolded education. In today's world, computer literacy is no longer optional. It is required to be successful in the workplace, in school, and while engaging in lifelong learning.

Pedagogical Methodology

Computer and technology instruction should eschew traditional lectures and instead favor a hands-on and conceptual approach. Customers should be taught concepts of using technology instead of focusing on specific applications to ensure that they are comfortable in a variety of computing environments. To strengthen this approach, Lane Libraries will provided a variety of computers, operating systems, applications, and devices thus giving customers choice and opportunities to freely experiment in these environments. Each class session should engage students with a practical project that can be used and built upon by the students outside of class.

Class Structure

To ensure customer engagement, classes should last no longer than 1.5 hours (with the exception being specialized workshop sessions that warrant longer times). Each class should be consistently named beginning with the topic followed by the scope. For example "Computers for Beginners" and "Word Processing for Advanced Users." Consistent class structure should be observed. Throughout each class, the facilitator should:

Initial Setup

- Arrive to the training room at least 10 minutes before the event is scheduled to begin.
- Ensure that the training room is clean and presentable.
- Ensure that all handouts are ready, collated, and stapled.

Facilitating the Event

- Begin on time.
- Start the class with "housekeeping" items such as where restrooms are located and how long the class is expected to last.
- Instruct customers to turn off all cell phones.
- Do an amazing job presenting the content.
- Allow ample opportunities for questions.
- Loosely follow the class outline, but modify content on the fly to accommodate student needs (if needed).
- Invite students to attend other classes and labs and pass out the most recent calendar of events (or paper clip the calendar to the class handouts).

Cleanup

- Ensure the training room is still clean and presentable.
- Ensure the training room door is secured and locked.

Train the Trainer

Prior to facilitating a class, each trainer must satisfactorily complete a train the trainer session for each class with the Tech Center Manager or other designated qualified individual. This will ensure that class content is delivered consistently across the board as well as ensure that each trainer is comfortable with the content.

Measuring Facilitator Success

Each trainer will be observed by the Tech Center Manager at least once annually and assessed according to the following observations:

1 to 5 Scale:

5: Excellent 4: Good 3: Satisfactory 2: Some Problems 1: Many Problems NA

Points of Assessment

- Introduction: The introduction captured interest and conveyed clear goals for the class.
- Organization: The class was organized, transitions were effective and appropriate, the conclusion was clear and included a call to action.
- Content: Class content was relevant and delivered appropriately. Adjustments to the content were made on the fly as necessary based on observed student needs.
- Delivery: The facilitator was personable and enthusiastic. They spoke clearly and effectively.
- Discussion. Questions were frequently encouraged and asked for. Questions were answered clearly and succinctly.

In addition, a survey should be distributed to customers after each class session. This anonymous information collected can be used to both improve class content and ensure that each class facilitator is delivering content appropriately.

Class Descriptions

Computers for Beginners 1: Mousing Around, Desktops, and the Internet

Learn the fundamental skills that every computer user needs to know. Topics include recognizing the different parts of the computer, how to use a mouse and keyboard, what the differences between hardware and software are, navigating the desktop, and searching the Internet. *No computer experience required*.

Computers for Beginners 2: What's in the Box?, Internet Searching, and Files

Learn about what goes on inside your computer, how to search the library catalog, find good information on the Internet, and save files. *Basic computer skills (using a mouse and keyboard) are required before taking this class*.

Word Processing for Beginners, Word and More

Learn the basics of the word processing in this introductory class. Topics include typing skills, changing font sizes, working with margins, copying and pasting, and more. Skills learned in

this class can be applied to any word processing program. *Basic knowledge of the mouse and keyboard required before taking this class. Some typing experience helpful, but not required*.

Presentations for Beginners, PowerPoint and More

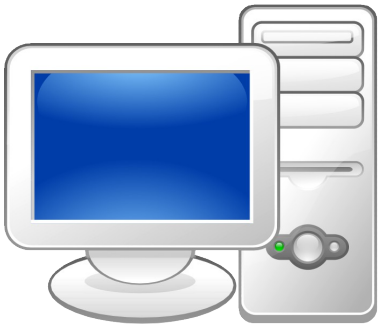
Learn the basics of of building a slideshow to be used to supplement a presentation. Topics covered include the basics of slides, inserting content, animations and transitions, and tips on giving an exciting presentation. *Intermediate computer knowledge (using menus, copying and pasting, finding files saved on the computer, word processing, etc.) is required before taking this class.*

Spreadsheets for Beginners, Excel and More

Learn the basics of spreadsheets in this introductory class. Topics covered include formulas, columns, rows, cells, merging, and more. Intermediate computer knowledge (using menus, coping and pasting, finding files saved on the computer, etc.) is required before taking this class.

Computers for Beginners I: Mousing Around, Desktops, and the Internet

Introduction



This class assumes that you have never touched a computer. That's okay! Don't be afraid to explore, poke around, and play. You won't break anything, but instead will discover some powerful tools that will help you be more productive and more connected with your friends, families, and community.

There are plenty of computers to choose from. Some sit snugly on your desk, some are portable and fit in your backpack, and some are pocket sized. The kind of computer you use makes little difference, so be sure to find one that you are comfortable with that suits your needs. Let's start by looking at what is in front of you.

What's in Front of You? Hardware

Hardware refers to the parts of your computer that can be seen and touched. Poke something on the desk in front of you (not too hard!). If you can touch it, it is hardware.

Computer

The computer is the box that contains all the wires, chips, and circuits that makes a computer do what you instruct it to do. A laptop, tablet, or smart phone has the same parts that a typical computer has—they are just more compact to fit into a smaller space. Don't worry about what's inside the computer just yet. We will get to that in a later class.

The Power Button

The power button is used to turn on a computer. It is usually accented by a green light that remains lit when the computer is on. Avoid turning your computer off using the power button whenever possible to prevent losing any work.

Monitor

Everything that you do with a computer is displayed visually on the monitor, much like a television. Modern monitors are thin, but older monitors are boxy and take up much more space. Both types, however, serve the same purpose. You probably won't have to touch your

monitor other than turning it on and off. If you are using a notebook, tablet, or smart phone, your monitor is attached and is turned on and off using the computer's power button.

Keyboard

The keyboard is one way to provide input, or instructions, to a computer. Except for a few additional keys, the keyboard is laid out just like a typewriter.

Mouse

The mouse is another way to provide input to your computer. Most mice have at least two buttons and a scroll wheel in the middle.

USB Ports

These small rectangular ports are used to connect other hardware to your computer such as flash drives, printers, digital cameras, scanners, and mice.

Headphone and Microphone Jacks

Many computers have circular inputs for headphones (or speakers) and a microphone. If you don't see them on the front of your computer, look at the back or sides. Sometimes the headphone jack will be outlined in green and the microphone jack will be outlined in pink. Color coding the various inputs makes it easier to know what goes where.

Software

Software is the instructions that tell your computer what to do and when to do it. Most software provides visual output through the monitor. Your operating system, word processor, and web browser are all examples of software.

Operating System

The operating system is the most important program that runs on your computer. It performs basic tasks like recognizing keystrokes and other input, sending visual output to the monitor, keeping track of files, and controlling disk drives. Most computers use Microsoft Windows as their operating system, but Mac OSX and Linux are other popular choices. Although each

operating system is different, they all have similarities. If you are comfortable using one, you will probably feel comfortable using another after some practice.

Applications

Applications, or programs, perform everyday tasks. For example, a word processor is used to type and format documents. A web browser is used to view pages on the Internet. A graphic design program is used to edit photographs and create graphics. There are hundreds of different applications that you can use!

Mousing Around

Hold Your Mouse

Are you left-handed or right? Move the mouse to the side that is most comfortable to you. Gently palm the entire mouse. Your pointer and middle fingers should naturally fold over the buttons.

Move Your Mouse

Keep your wrist movement to a minimum and practice moving the mouse around. It's okay to pick up and reposition the mouse if you run out of space.

Click Your Mouse

It's called a "click" when you press a mouse button because the mouse makes a light clicking noise. Keep your hand still when you click and lightly press down once on the button that you need (usually the one on the left). A double click is exactly how it sounds — two clicks in quick succession. Both of these clicks will be very important when you start navigating through programs, menus, and files on your computer.

Practice

Look at your monitor while moving your mouse around. That arrow moving around is your cursor and is what you will use to open programs, select files, and choose where you want

words to appear when you type. Your cursor is pretty smart and will change appearance depending on what it is pointing at.

Default.

Text, like an Internet link, that can be clicked on.

Text can be typed here.

A program is loading or waiting to complete a task.

Keyboarding the Night Away

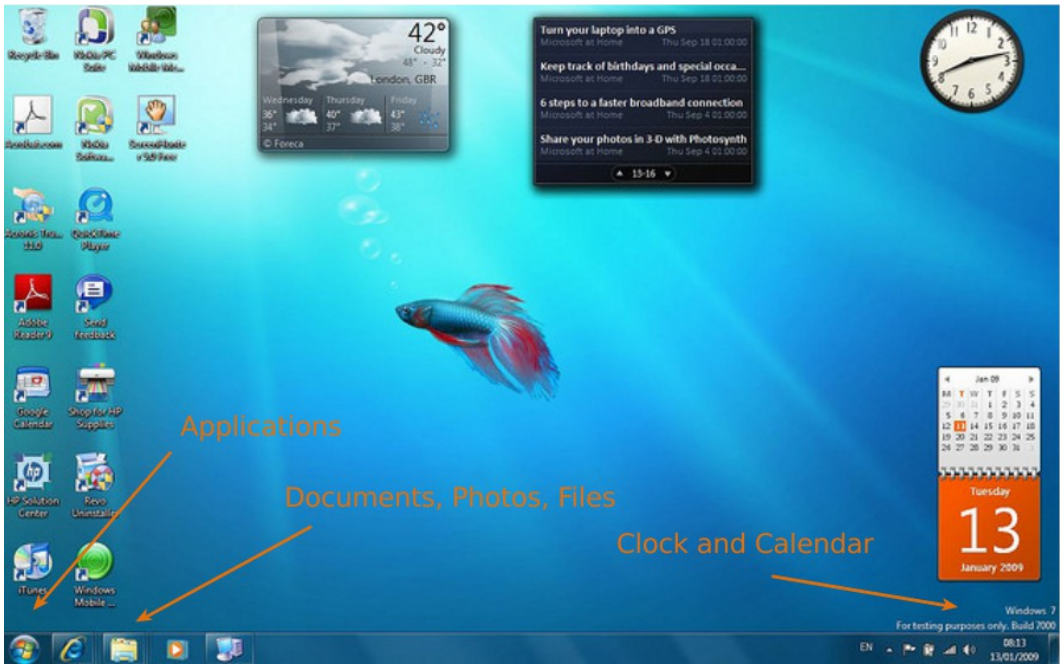
As noted above, a computer keyboard is laid out just like a typewriter. There are, however, a few special keys that typewriters don't have:

- **Page Up** and **Page Down** will allow you to move up and down on the page without using the mouse.

- **Home** will move your cursor to the end of a line of text and **End** will take you to the end. Home and End can also be used to move to the top and bottom of a document or web page.
- At the bottom of your keyboard, on the left and right sides, you'll see a key labeled **Shift** with an arrow pointing upwards. If you hold down the shift key while typing a letter, it will make it capital. When you have a key with two things on it (for example the ! and 1 key), the Shift key tells the computer to type the character on top rather than the one on the bottom.
- The **Caps Lock** key will capitalize each letter you type until it is turned off by hitting the Caps Lock key again.
- If you type something incorrectly, **Backspace** will back up over one letter at a time. Backspace goes back. On the other hand, **Delete** will delete the letter in front of the cursor. If you are using Mac OSX, the Delete key serves as both (delete by itself serves as a backspace, while fn+delete will delete).
- The **Space Bar** puts a space between letters and words.

Exploring Your Desktop

The desktop of a computer serves the same purpose as your office desk at home. The difference, of course, is that it is digital! The desktop is usually the first screen you see when you start your computer (or, if you're using a library computer, after you log on). It contains a clock and calendar to help manage your schedule. It contains a drawer filled with tools, or applications. It has a place to store your files, like a filing cabinet. It also serves as your workspace – a place to put documents, photos, and other items that you need to work on.



The Internet

Your computer can do a lot of things just by itself, but it must be connected to the Internet, whether through a cable or wifi, for you you to send email, download music, or apply for jobs online. The Internet is a massive "network of networks," a networking infrastructure. It connects millions of computers together globally. Each of the connected computes speak the same language, or protocol, which allows them to send information back and forth. The computer you are sitting at (as long as it's connected to the Internet) can communicate with the computer across the street, down the block, or even on the other side of the world as long as the computer on the other end is connected to the Internet as well.

Opening a Browser

You access the Internet using an application called a web browser. Your operating system will always have one pre-installed (Windows comes with Internet Explorer, Mac OSX comes with Safari), but there are other superior browsers, such as Firefox and Chrome, freely available.

- The **address bar** is where the web address of the page you are currently on is displayed. If you want to go to a new website and know the address of the site you'd like to go to, click in the address bar, type the address, and press enter on the keyboard.
- Once you leave the first web page you are on, the **back button** will become active. Clicking on it will take you back – one page at a time.
- To reload the page, click the **refresh button**. This will bring up the most current version of the web page that you are viewing. This is useful if a page fails to load or for sites that are updated frequently.

- **Home** will take you back to your home page – the first page that is displayed when a browser is opened. On library computers, this is the library's website; if you have a home computer, you can set it to any page you want.
- Modern browsers support "tabs" that allow you to open multiple sites at once and navigate among them. Click the **plus sign** to add a new tab.

Maximize! Minimize! Close!

 Every application that you run opens in its own "window" on the desktop. You can have multiple windows open at the same time (e.g. do research online on Wikipedia while you type a paper in a word processor). Every window you have open will be shown in the taskbar at the bottom of the screen (or the dock in OSX). Every window you open will have three buttons at the top right (top left if you are using OSX): minimize, maximize, and close.

The minimize button looks like an underscore or underline. This button will "minimize" your window to the taskbar at the bottom of the screen. This is useful when you need to shuffle some work out of the way to make room for other applications. The second button is a square known as the "maximize" button. Clicking this button will bring the window to full screen size. The last button is the close button (which looks like a giant X). It does exactly what you think it does — it closes the application you have open. If you are in a program where you have made changes to a file, you may be prompted to "save your changes" after clicking the close button. If you choose not to save your changes, anything you are working on will be lost!

Stay comfortable and healthy while computing!

- Sit up straight with the monitor at eye level. Avoid slouching or leaning back too far.
- Take occasional breaks to stretch and walk around.
- Move the mouse with your arm, not your wrist.
- Work in a well-lit area and rest your eyes regularly.
- To reduce neck strain, learn to touch type instead of "hunting and pecking."

Why Computers?

Computers not only provide tools to make your life easier, but they also help you connect with your family, friends, and the world around you. Read local and worldwide news, watch that TV show you missed last week, view photos and videos of your family and comment on what you see. Keep a journal that others can read and comment on. Write that book you always wanted

to. If you are in the job market, almost every employer requires an online application and electronic resume. There is no better time to acquaint yourself with using a computer, and you are not alone on the journey! Like any new skill, learning how to use a computer takes lots of practice (and patience). Here is your homework (don't worry, you won't be graded):

Homework

Practice your mouse skills while playing a game! If you are using a Windows computer, open Solitaire or Hearts from the "Games" menu (remember where applications are kept? They're in the drawer of your desktop).

Practice typing by writing a journal entry for the day using Word (Windows) or Pages (OSX).

Check out www.typingweb.com, a free online typing tutor. No account is required, but you are welcome to create one to keep track of your progress and goals.

The library has an outstanding collection of computer books and tutorials. Speak to library staff for more information.

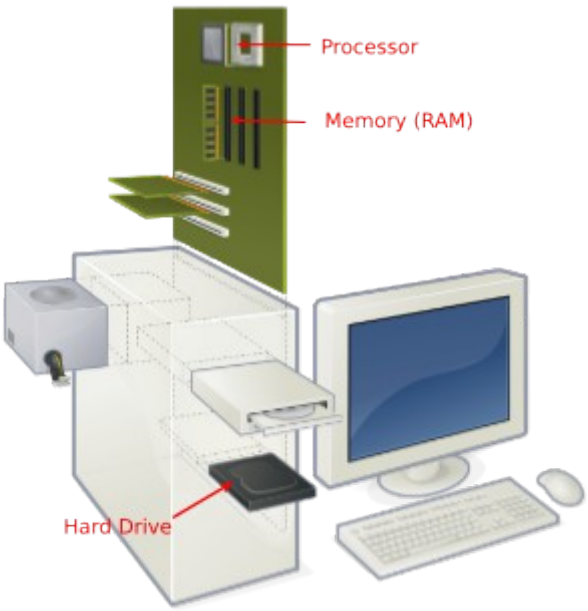
Computers for Beginners 2: What's in the Box?, Internet Searching, and Files

Introduction

This class assumes that you have either taken Computers for Beginners I: Mousing Around, Desktops, and the Internet *or* have used a computer before and are comfortable using the mouse and navigating a desktop.

Every computer, no matter the size, has the same parts in it. If you were to open up the computer in front of you (please don't, by the way... let's use our imagination for now) you would see a processor, memory, and a hard drive. All these parts can interact together because they are connected to the same motherboard. There are other parts in there, too, but we will only focus on these four.

What's in the Box? Hardware



Processor

The processor does exactly what you think it does - it processes instructions that you give to your computer, prioritizes tasks, and gives processed results back to you. A processor can do many things at once, but the speed at which it does them depends on the processor's speed (currently measured in gigahertz).

Memory (RAM - Random Access Memory)

Memory is your temporary workspace. When you have a file or program open, it is stored in memory. Think of memory as your desk at home. You might be working on multiple projects at once – taxes, letters, bills, sorting photos, a jigsaw puzzle. They are on your desk because you need them there to work on them. Just like your desk at home, memory can only hold so many projects at once before it runs out of space (memory is usually measured in gigabytes). If you run out of memory, your computer may run slowly. Just like you file things in a filing

cabinet to free up desk space, moving files and programs on your computer to permanent storage can free up more space for the project you are working on. This permanent storage is called a hard drive.

Hard Drive

A hard drive, like a filing cabinet, stores all the applications that you run and files that you save. When you want to work on your saved resume or listen to your favorite music, your computer pulls the files out of your filing cabinet and places them in memory, your temporary workspace.

The inside of a hard drive.

Don't get the wrong idea of "permanent" storage. Just like anything mechanical, hard drives sometimes fail – taking all your files and programs with them. Be sure to keep at least 2 copies of every file that you have. You can use a flash drive, external hard drive, or online storage solution to do this. That way, if and when your hard drive fails, you still have a copy of all of your work. And your sanity.

Motherboard

The motherboard is the main circuit board in your computer that all the above parts plug into. Without the motherboard, the above parts wouldn't know how to interact with each other.

Not only have you become more comfortable interacting with your computer, you also know what's going on inside of it! It's fun to think about as we progress to something more practical. Since your computer is connected to the Internet, let's open a web browser and search for some information that we need.

Search for Library Books - and Find Them!

Finding a book using the online catalog could not be easier. Simply select the link for the catalog from the Lane Libraries home page. If you are using a library computer, it is the first page you will see after opening a web browser.

Type in the title, author, or subject of the book or movie you are looking for and press “enter” on the keyboard. There is an advanced search available here as well if you would like to perform a more specific search (limit by year published, branch, author, etc.).

You will be presented with a list of results. When you locate the item you want, click on the title for more information or click “Request it” to have it placed on hold at your favorite branch as soon as it is available.

Can't find what you are looking for? Library staff is always happy to help.

Weather, Pizza, and Photos with Google

You will often know the exact address of the web site you want to visit. For example, you may visit cincinnati.com for your local news or facebook.com to interact with your friends. Sometimes, however, you may not know the exact address of the site that has the information you are looking for. A search engine is a site that collects information about web pages and then makes them searchable – it can help find the address of the site you need. Google is by far the most popular search engine. Just like we used the library's catalog to locate a book, we will use Google to locate other information that we need.

Google is a web site that we know the address for already, so type google.com into the address bar of your browser and hit "enter" on your keyboard. Google's home page is deceptively simple – a logo with a search box.

Let's see what the weather is going to be today. Type "weather" into the search box and press "enter" on your keyboard. What happened? Do you think you will need an umbrella today? Simply typing "weather" will provide the local forecast, but you can also enter the name of a different city, for example "weather seattle." This can be useful if you are preparing for a trip or want to brag about how the weather in your hometown is better (for now at least).

Searching may have made you hungry and it's time for a pizza. Enter "pizza" into the search box and press "enter." What happened?

You can search for so much more, too! Google can:

1. Search the content of websites that you might be interested in.
2. Find showtimes for that movie you've been wanting to see.
3. Check sports scores.
4. Be a calculator (no kidding, just type in 4+4 and see what happens).
5. Compare prices of products.
6. Search for an address and provide driving directions.

How do you know when a web site has good information?

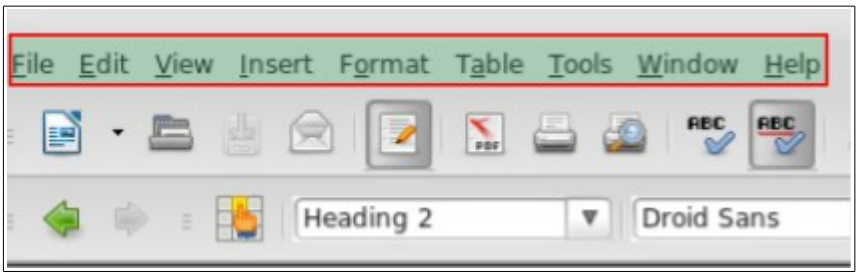
The Internet is unregulated and anyone with an Internet connection can post articles, photos, blog posts, and opinion pieces. Consequently, care must be taken when looking for accurate and authoritative information.

Authoritative sites usually possesses the following qualities:

- The author's name is clearly displayed with any appropriate credentials.
- The date that the site was last updated is displayed. Make sure that you are using current and up to date information.
- Content is well written and free of spelling and grammatical errors.
- If the site contains research, accurate citations to articles consulted are included.
- The site will look clean and professional and contain limited advertisements.

Take a look at http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus. Do you think this site provides accurate and authoritative information? Why or why not?

Menus



Almost every application you run will have a menu at the top of its window. Most menus follow the same conventions as far as the placement of tools, so once you are familiar with the menu, you should be reasonably comfortable in any other program. Let's take a look at the most popular menu items.

- Use the **file** menu whenever you need to interact with the file you are working on. This includes, saving, opening other files, and printing.
- Use the **edit** menu at access editing functionality like cutting, copying, pasting, and undoing (very helpful if you want to undo a mistake!).
- Use the **view** menu to modify the way things in the application are displayed. Some applications can be run full-screen or without menus at all. Sometimes the view menu will let you change the size of the text on the screen.
- Use **help** menu any time you get stuck with something and aren't sure what to do next.

Files

Files and folders on the computer are like files and folders you might have in a desk drawer or filing cabinet. All files store data, whether it's a document, photo, song, or movie. Files are stored in folders (also called directories). When saving a file, it is important to select a folder that makes sense so that you can easily retrieve that file later. For example, you may choose to

put your resume in a folder labeled Documents and a photo of your dog Fluffy in a folder named Photos. You can also store folders inside of other folders. For example, you can have a folder called Fluffy inside of your Photos folder.

Files Types

Most files have a three character extension after the file name. These extensions provide hints about what is contained in the file. Some of the most popular file extensions are:

Documents	**Images**
.doc/x – Microsoft Word Document	.jpg – Image, usually a photo
.txt – Flat Text File	.gif – Image, supports animation
.odt – Open Document Format, Text	.bmp – Bitmap Graphic
.pdf – Portable Document Format	.png – Image optimized for Web
Music	**Movies**
.mp3 – Compressed audio	.avi
.wma – Compressed audio	.mov
.flac – Lossless audio	.wmv

Downloading vs Uploading

When you take a file from a web site or online service (e.g. iTunes, Flickr, etc.) and save it to your computer, you download it. From the Internet to you = downloading.

When you take a file from your computer and put in on a web site (e.g. sharing vacation photos with your Facebook friends), you upload it. From you to the Internet = uploading.

Copyright law also exists online. Just because you are able to save a photo, it does not necessarily mean that you can use it in your own documents or upload it to another web page. The same goes for any other file that you may find online. When in doubt, make sure that you have permission before using a file you find online.

Let's practice downloading a file. Go back to Google and click "images" on the top of the page. Now enter a search term or phrase in the search box that describes a photo that you are interested in.

When you see an image that you want to download, put the mouse cursor over the image and click the right mouse button. This will display a menu. Select “save image as” or similar. You then have to decide where to save the image to (generally the “My Pictures” folder will be the location, although you may want to change it to a flash drive or other directory). You can leave the file name the same or you can change it to something else. Click “save.” That's it!

When you save a file on your computer, that file is only found on the computer in front of you. Another computer will not have a copy of that file even if you signed in with the same user name or library card number. If you are interested in transferring files from one computer to another, you should purchase a flash drive or sign up for an online storage service like Dropbox or Google Drive.

Homework

Continue practicing your Google skills:

- Find directions from your home to your favorite Lane Library branch.
- Find the current weather conditions in Dublin, Ireland.
- Find an authoritative web page about disc golf.

The library has an outstanding collection of computer books and tutorials. Speak to library staff for more information.

Word Processing for Beginners

Introduction

A word processor is an application that provides tools for typing and editing documents, formatting colors and fonts, adding graphics, and printing. Popular word processors include Microsoft Word, Google Docs, Pages, and LibreOffice Writer. Google Docs and LibreOffice are completely free to use. Other commercial word processors can cost between $20 and $200.

Content is King

Although a word processor can help make your documents look visually striking, no one will care to read your document unless the content that you write is engaging, well written, and free of grammatical errors. Type all your your content before you start changing the appearance of your document. Keep going until you are finished, whether you are writing a research paper, letter to your senator, or an updated resume. Thankfully, your word processor makes it easy to create! Your text will automatically flow from line to line (this is called word wrapping), and it is easy to correct any mistakes. You can check for and correct any spelling and grammar mistakes, and many word processors have a built in thesaurus to help you find the perfect synonym to help makes your ideas pop. You can even move entire paragraphs from one location to another without retyping to help the flow of your document.

Purdue University (http://owl.english.purdue.edu) offers a nice online resource for writing which includes formatting tips, grammar guides, and more.

Important Keys

- Tab will indent the line 5 spaces.
- Backspace will remove a character to the left of the cursor with each press.
- Delete will remove a character to the right of the cursor with each press.
- Enter will place an extra line in between paragraphs.

Spelling and Grammar

After you have typed your document, be sure to do a spelling and grammar check to help ensure that your text is accurate. Keep in mind the spellcheck and grammar check are not foolproof. Spell check might flag proper names or acronyms as misspelled. Although grammar check is a good tool, it may not be able to identify the difference among “there,” “their,” or “they’re” for example.

Save Early, Save Often

Laptop batteries run out of juice, the power sometimes unexpectedly goes out, and computers freeze to the point of no return. To prevent losing any work, but sure to periodically save your file using the “File” menu. If you are using an online word processor like Google Docs, your work is saved automatically as it is typed.

My Paragraph is Gone!

Undo! Don’t worry if you accidentally delete a word, paragraph, or page in your document. The undo feature will, well, undo any mistake that you make all the back to when you first started your document. The “undo” function is usually found in the “Edit” menu or looks like a clickable curved arrow that points to the left.

Copying, Cutting, & Pasting

Sometimes you may want to take text from one place and put it somewhere else in your document. By copying and pasting data you save yourself the trouble of having to retype everything. Highlight the text you want to copy by taking your mouse and placing your cursor at the beginning of the text you want to copy. Click and hold the left mouse button while pulling your mouse over the text. You can also do a double-click on the text to highlight a single word, or a triple-click to highlight an entire paragraph. Now release the left mouse button. With the cursor over the highlighted text, right click the mouse for options, and select “copy”. Now move your cursor to the destination of the copied text. Right-click your mouse again, and select “paste.”

Cutting and pasting works roughly the same way except when you cut something it completely removes it from its original location instead of making an exact copy of it.

Formatting a Document

The text that you want to modify must first be selected before you can change its properties. You can tell if text is selected if it is highlighted.

Although it is possible to select text with just the keyboard, many find the mouse to be an easier method. The left mouse button is used most of the time for selecting text.

- A single click moves the cursor to where you click.
- A doubleclick highlights a word.
- A tripleclick highlights a line.
- The scrollwheel scrolls up and down the document.

Now that you have selected the text that you want to format, let's take a look at a few of our choices.

Fonts and Colors

The font refers to the style of the typed characters. Although there are plenty of artistic and flourished fonts to choose from, be sure to select a font that is easy to read for professional documents like resumes and reports. Georgia, Ariel, and Times New Roman are always safe choices. The size of the characters are measured in points (pts). The standard font size is 10-12 pts, although larger sizes may be used for titles and subheadings.

You can also change the color of portions of your text. For example, you might want your subheadings to be green or red.

Sometimes it is appropriate to place emphasis on some areas of your document. Some formatting conventions for research papers, for example, require underlining to be applied under specific circumstances. Highlight the word our word to emphasize and select the right option from the toolbar.

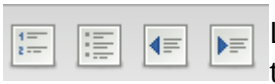
Bold

Italics

Underline

Text alignment allows you to position your text flush with the left margin (default), right margin, center it, or justify it (text touches both the left and right margins equally, like in a newspaper). Remember to never use the spacebar to align text in your document, even if tempted!

Bulleted and Numbered Lists



List are great for breaking down concepts or outlining. Te begin a list, select the appropriate button from the toolbar. When you have completed typing a line, press enter to start a new line item underneath. Using the “tab” key or the arrow buttons (increase and decrease indent buttons) in the toolbar allows you to change the indentation of each line.

- This is a
  - bulleted
    - list.

1. This is
2. a numbered
3. list.

- Keep in mind
  - that you can “nest” lists
    1. inside of other lists
    2. by using the
  - Increase and Decrease
    - indent buttons.

Images

A well placed image can really enhance the appearance of your document when used properly (and sparingly). You can insert a file that you already have on your computer – for example a picture from your vacation to the Tetons, or you can download an image from the Internet. Some word processors also have clip art built in. Clip art is ready-made pieces of computerized art that can be used to decorate a document. Whenever you want to insert a file into your document, use the "Insert" option from the menu at the top of your screen. Then select "Picture" or "Image."

Headers and Footers

Headers and footers allow you to add page numbers, titles, or company names consistently to each page of your document. Use the "Insert" menu and then select "header" or "footer" or double click in the upper (for a header) or lower (for a footer) part of your document. For example, at the bottom of this page "The Lane Libraries" and page number is in the footer area.

Homework

Many word processors have built in templates that can be used to save substantial time. Use care, however, as many templates are difficult to modify. They just provide the structure on which to fit your text. Take a look at some templates that are available and play around with them. Resumes, cover letters, and greeting cards are all good choices. Think about the benefits of using a template as well as some of the downsides as you add your own text.

There is a lot more that your word processor can do. Play around with the software and don't be afraid to try new things. The library has an outstanding collection of computer books and tutorials. Speak to library staff for more information.

Presentations for Beginners: PowerPoint and More

Introduction

Presentation software is used to supplement (not replace!) an oral presentation, class, or speech. Presentations created with presentation software are referred to as slideshows, but unlike the slide projectors and slides of the past, they exist digitally and can be projected on a screen or shown on a computer monitor. Slideshows can also include audio, video clips, and links to Web sites. Try to do that with an old-fashioned slide projector!

There are many different presentation programs that you can use. Microsoft's presentation program is called PowerPoint. Apple's presentation program is called Keynote. LibreOffice's presentation program is called Impress (http://www.libreoffice.org). There are many more to choose from as well! Although each one of these programs is different in certain ways, they all serve the same purpose. They help you make your presentation more engaging for your audience.

What Makes a Good Presentation?

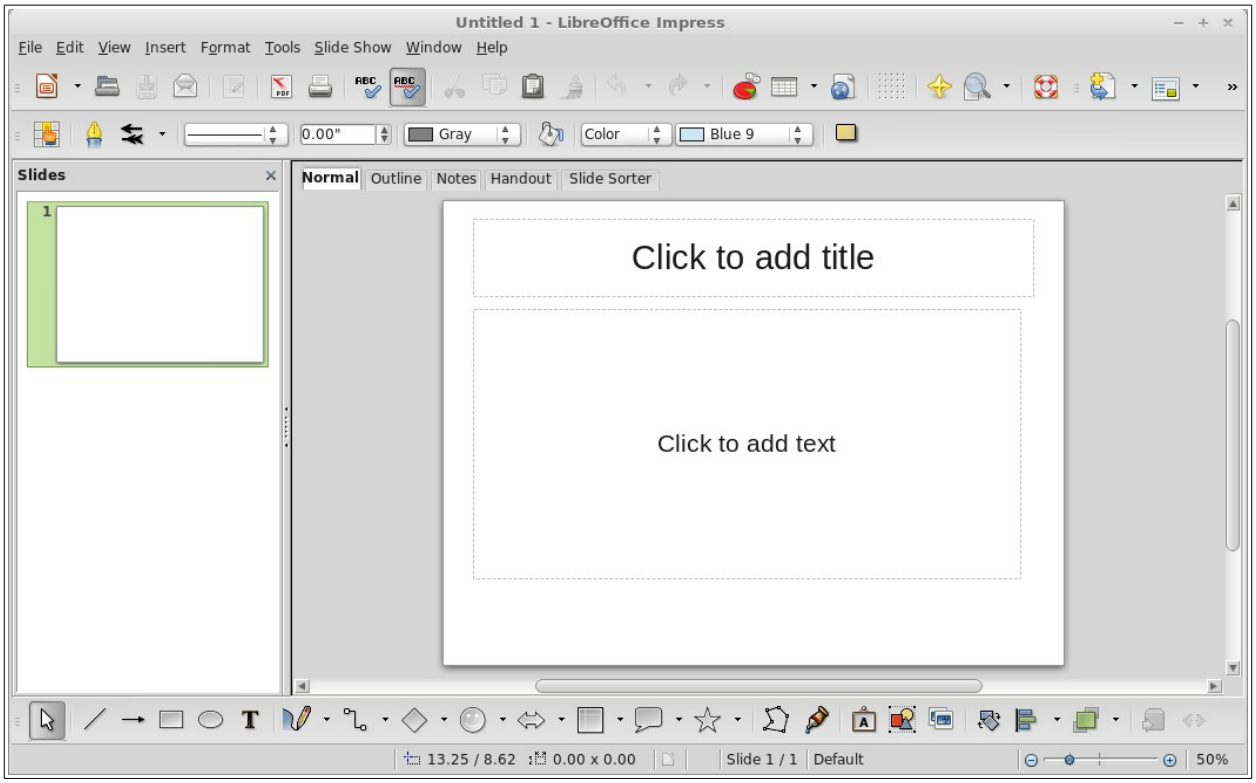
There will come a time when you will have to give a presentation in front of a group of people, whether at school or the workplace. Take a deep breath, rehearse your content, and make your supplemental presentation effective.

- Make sure the title of your presentation is powerful and succinct.
- Ensure that each one of your slides is consistently formatted, including easy to read fonts that are large enough to see from the back of the room.
- Use key phrases about your topic. Choose the top three or four points about your topic and make them consistently throughout your delivery.

- Never read your presentation off of your slides.
- Limit punctuation and avoid all capital letters.
- Use contrasting colors for text and background.
- Limit the number of slides. Keeping the number of slides to a minimum ensures that the presentation will not become too long and drawn out.
- Use photos, charts, and graphs.
- Avoid excessive use of slide transitions and animations.
- Conclude with a call to action. What do you want your audience to do with the information you presented?

Keep this tips in mind as you begin to build your first slideshow. If you are comfortable using a word processor, you will feel right at home creating your first presentation. Many of the formatting items such as fonts, titles, and inserting graphics work exactly the same way. Instead of pages, a presentation uses slides. Instead of containing all of the content that you will present, slides are used to supplement your content by displaying photos, charts, and main points while you are wowing the audience with your presentation prowess.
Since your slides are digital, they can contain not only text, but also images, sounds, videos, and more. Let's first focus on the slide.

Slides



Your presentation is made up of slides. Text, graphics, and/or pictures can be added to each slide to enhance its appeal. When you start a new presentation file, you will initially be presented with a blank title slide. Simply click inside the slide and type your title and any other accompanying text. We will add an image later. To add a new slide to your deck, right click in the panel on the left and select "New Slide." You can select the resulting thumbnails of each slide to easily navigate among your slides.

To change the order of your slides, simply click and drag them to the appropriate place in the left-hand panel. To delete a slide, select one and press the delete key on your keyboard.

Font Formatting

Just like in a word processor, the font refers to the style of the typed characters. Although there are plenty of artistic and flourished fonts to choose from, be sure to select a font that is easy to read. Georgia, Ariel, and Times New Roman are always safe choices. The size of the characters are measured in points (pts). Although the standard font size is 10-12 pts for typed documents, use larger sizes throughout your slideshow to ensure that everyone in the room can read the content.

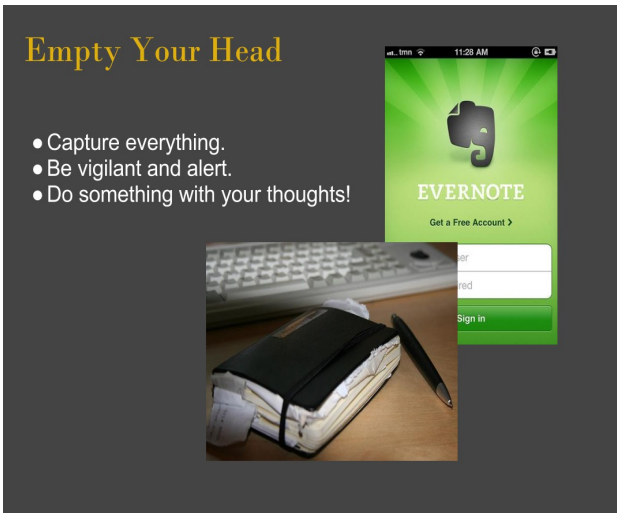
You can also change the color of portions of your text. For example, you might want your subheadings to be green or red.

Sometimes it is appropriate to place emphasis on some areas of your document. You can make certain points stand out by making them **bold** or by underlining them. Highlight the word or words to emphasize and select the right option from the toolbar.

Graphics

A well placed image can really enhance the appearance of your slideshow when used properly. You can insert a file that you already have on your computer – for example a picture from your vacation to the Tetons, or you can download an image from the Internet. Some programs also have clip art built in. Clip art is ready-made pieces of computerized graphic art that can be used to decorate a document. Whenever you want to insert a file into your document, use the "Insert" option from the menus at the top of your screen. Then select "Picture" or "Image."

Some presentation programs also allow you to insert video, audio, and more. Play around with some of the options and see what creative uses you can find. Take your time and have fun with it. Accidentally delete something or insert the wrong picture? Remember the “Undo” option which is located in the “Edit” menu.



Transitions and Animations

Transitions and animations sound similar, but they serve different purposes in a presentation. Transitions are special effects that are displayed as you move from one slide to another. For example, you can make your slides wipe from right to left or spin into place.

Animations are effects given to specific items inside of a slide. For example, you can make numerous images on one slide appear at different times, or make each item in a bulleted list only appear when you need it to.

You are ready to go! To start your slideshow, select “Begin Slideshow” or similar in the program that you are using. Use the arrow keys to move from slide to slide. The space bar will also advance your presentation one slide at a time.

Homework

Create a slideshow that has 3 slides. The first slide should have an effective, eye-catching title. One of the other slides should include clip art or a photo. Practice with transitions and animations, and change the fonts and background colors on each slide.

The library has an outstanding collection of computer books and tutorials. Speak to library staff for more information.

Spreadsheets for Beginners: Excel and More

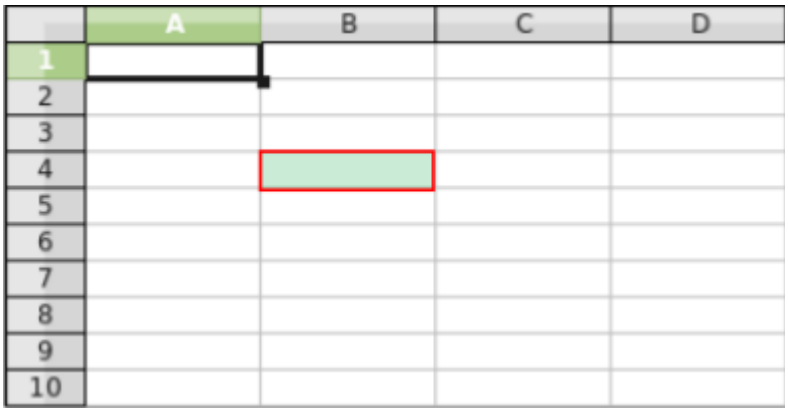
Introduction

Spreadsheet programs are used to sort financial and business data, but they can also help chart your spending, keep your shopping lists in order, or track your CD collection. They have built in functions that can automatically take care of calculations and sorting for you! Spreadsheets are made up of rows, columns, and cells to help you logically store and sort your data.

There are many different spreadsheet programs that you can use. Microsoft's spreadsheet program is called Excel. Apple's spreadsheet program is called Numbers. LibreOffice's spreadsheet program is called Calc (http://www.libreoffice.org). There are many to choose from, but the functionality will be similar from program to program. Most of the items discussed in this class can be applied to any spreadsheet program.

The Anatomy of a Spreadsheet

A spreadsheet is divided into columns (indicated by letters) and rows (indicated by numbers). The intersection of a letter and a number is called a cell. For example, in the image below, B4 is highlighted.



Cell B4 is highlighted.

The way you construct your spreadsheet is completely up to you. Just like when typing a word processing document, don't worry too much about how your spreadsheet looks until you have entered all the data that you need. For our purposes, we will build a working household budget.

There are several ways to move around a spreadsheet. You can use the arrows on your keyboard to select the cell you want, or can can simply click in the cell with your mouse. After you select the cell you need, simply start typing either an item or a dollar amount. Typically, numbers are entered in columns to make it simple to visually absorb the information that has been entered.

Let's set up our budget like the figure below. Our expenses are listed in column A with their cost next to them in column B. Feel free to add as many expenses as you would like – just make additional entries down the spreadsheet.

	A	B
1	Item	Cost
2	Rent	$500.00
3	Car	$100.00
4	Food	$200.00
5	Utilities	$50.00
6		
7		

Just like with a word processor, it is also possible to insert graphics, headers, and footers into your spreadsheet. Use “Insert” from the menu bar whenever you want to insert one of these items.

Formulas

Your spreadsheet will perform a calculation whenever it sees an equals sign (=) in the formula bar. For example, =SUM(A1, A4) will add A1 and A4 together and display the total in the cell where the formula is typed. To add a range of numbers, use the colon (:) in your formula. =SUM(A1:A4) will display the total of every cell from A1 to A4.

The basic mathematical operations are:

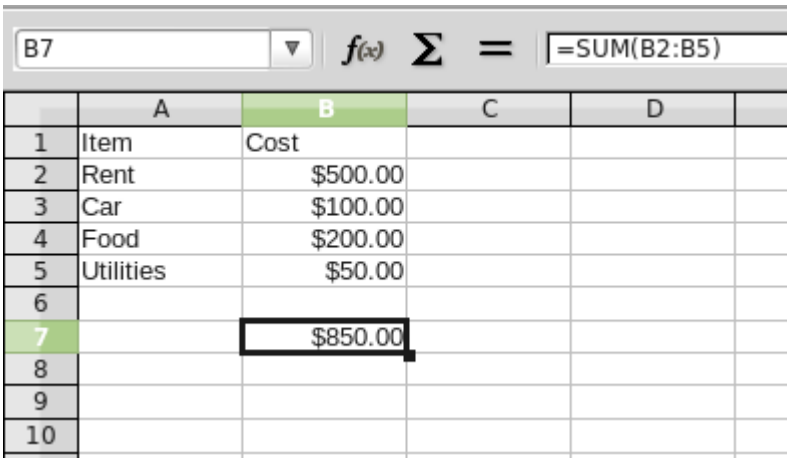
+ Addition	- Subtraction
* Multiplication	/ Division

Look at the formulas below and see if you understand what they do.

=A5-B5 (Subtract B5 from A5)

=A3*B3 (Multiply A3 and B3)

=A4/B4 (Divide A4 by B4)



Let's put our spreadsheet to work by having it calculate our total expenses. Pick a cell where you want your total to be, usually at the bottom of the column with your expenses. Type =SUM(B2:B5) – or whatever range you placed your dollar amounts in. Hit enter on the keyboard to activate the formula. Simple right?

Even if your costs change, the formula will continue to update your total automatically.

Now that you have totaled your expenses for the month, let's subtract them from your total income to see how much is left to save. What would the formula for that look like? Review the formula types above and type the new formula in a cell of your choice.

Formatting

Changing Column Width

Place the mouse cursor between two column lines - say the line between column A and column B. The cursor becomes an arrow – click, hold the click and drag to the right. Your column should change in width. You can do the same thing to change the height of a column – try clicking between the 1 and 2 and following the same steps above. This is useful if you typed something too large to fit into a cell and want to expand the cell to accommodate it.

Copying and Pasting

Sometimes you may want to take text or a formula from one place and put it somewhere else in your spreadsheet. By copying and pasting data you save yourself the trouble of having to retype everything. Highlight the cell you want to copy by clicking in it. You can also click and drag the mouse cursor to select multiple cells at once. With the cursor over the highlighted cells, right click the mouse for options, and select “copy”. Now move your cursor to the destination of the copied text. Right-click your mouse again, and select “paste.”

Cutting and pasting works roughly the same way except when you cut something it completely removes it from its original location instead of making an exact copy of it.

You can format the contents of your cells just like you can in a word processor. Make column headings bold, highlight the total of a column, make the font size bigger, and more. Once you have completed your spreadsheet, make sure that your formulas are correct and that you have all the data needed in the spreadsheet. Format the spreadsheet so that it is easy to read.

Homework

Now that you have created a functional budget, use a new spreadsheet to keep track of your CD or book collection. Consider making separate columns for title, author, and so on. When you have finished, play around and see how you can sort your collection by author then title without having to enter any information over again.

The library has an outstanding collection of computer books and tutorials. Speak to library staff for more information.

Acknowledgements

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