Brimbank Libraries

Mouse and Keyboard Skills

Welcome!

Overview

This class is designed to help beginners, develop keyboard and mouse skills. Learning how to use a keyboard and mouse are basic skills needed to operate a laptop or desktop computer. With these skills, you can open applications, type documents and emails, and navigate around the internet and your computer.

By the end of this class you will know how to:

- use the mouse
- use the keyboard

Practice

It is important that you continue to practice after this class, as it will help your learning and will ensure that you get the most out of today.

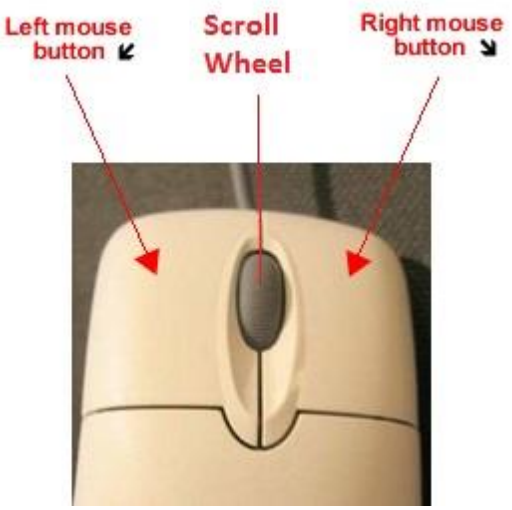
If you do not have a computer or access to the internet at home, please use a public computer at any of our branches, or bring your own laptop and connect to our WiFi network. It's free, and we can help you get started.

Enjoy!

Thank you for joining this class and we look forward to helping you use a keyboard and mouse as the first steps in becoming tech savvy.

The Mouse

The mouse allows you to select and control operations on your computer. It is called a mouse as it has a similar shape and connects either with a cord or wirelessly to your computer. It has two buttons on the top and a scroll wheel between the buttons.



How to place your hand to hold the mouse correctly:

1. Put the palm of your hand on the top curved area of the mouse. Your thumb and small pinkie finger should rest on either side of the mouse.

2. Rest your extended fingers over the buttons. Your index /pointing finger should rest on the left side. Your middle finger should rest on the right side button.

3. Your whole hand should rest comfortably over the mouse.

Tip: you may find it helps to shape your hands in a claw like shape to better fit it around the mouse. (See picture above)

How to move the mouse

You can move the mouse around by sliding it on your desk. Whatever movement you do, the pointer on the screen moves in a similar manner. Roll the mouse left, and the pointer moves left; roll it in circles, and the pointer copies that action.

To achieve the best control of your mouse if it is connected by a cord, it is best to keep the cord of the mouse straight and facing towards the computer. If you move the mouse on an angle, the pointer might not move in the direction you want.

NB: The cursor will only move when the mouse slides around on the table.

This means that if you run out of room to move the mouse, you can pick the mouse up and move it without affecting the position of the pointer. Place it where you DO have room to move, and away you go!

Sometimes it is helpful to use a mouse pad. Mouse pads allow you to use the mouse with more speed and precision, they also make using the mouse more comfortable. They prevent the table/desk surface being scratched and worn by the continuous movement.

Tip: If you suffer from arthritis or just a sore wrist after using a mouse, try the following:

- Use a wrist stabiliser while operating a mouse. This will require slightly longer finger movements to click.
- Purchase a "vertical" mouse, or a mouse with an attached wrist support.
- Purchase a trackball mouse.

Cursors

A cursor is a movable indicator on a computer screen identifying the point that will be affected by input from the user. Once you open a program such as Word or email, you will notice that the pointer will change into different shapes on the screen.

The most common pointers are:

Arrow: You will see an arrow when you move the mouse over the desktop and menu bar this means you can click onto the icon or item to open it

Windows wait cursor: Used to indicate that an application is busy performing an action.

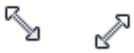
Working in background: Used to point, click, press, or select while a task completes in the background.

Text Cursor: This capital “I” like shape means that you can click in this location to type or edit text. When you move your mouse over normal text, you can also highlight words to edit or delete the contents.

Hand: Used to indicate a link you can follow on the internet.

Move: Used to move a window, pictures or text box in any direction.

Resize: Used to horizontally or vertically resize a window, picture or text box.



Diagonal Resize: Used to resize a window, picture or text box diagonally, which increases the vertical and horizontal dimensions at the same time.

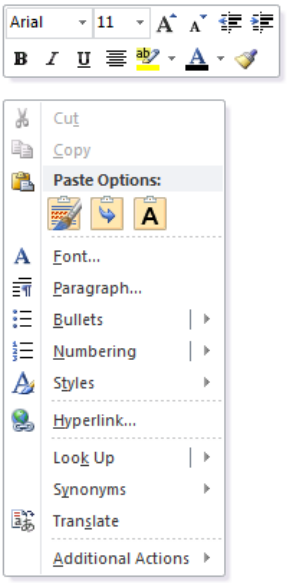
Unavailable: means the function you were hoping to do is not possible.

Mouse Operations

Point: If someone tells you to “point the mouse,” you move the mouse in your hand to select an object on the desktop/screen. You position the pointer to a specific object without clicking any mouse buttons.

Click or Left-click: A click is a press of the mouse button on the left hand side. You give this button one press and release with your index finger. It should be a firm, quick tap, and the mouse should be still when you do it. This action makes a clicking sound, which is why this action is called “click”. Clicking is often done to select something or to identify a specific location on the screen.

Right-click: Same action as a click, using the right mouse button. This may bring up a shortcut menu of options including commonly used items such as saving, printing, copying and pasting.



Double-click: This is most commonly done in Windows to open something such as applications, documents or folders. Both clicks must be on (or near) the same spot for it to open. To double click: you must click the left button twice in rapid succession. If you have physical trouble with the required double click speed, your computer can be adjusted to suit your needs.

Drag: The drag operation is used to pick up something on the screen and move it. To do that, you place the mouse over the thing you want to drag, press and hold the mouse’s button (which “picks up” the object), and then move the mouse to another location. When you move the mouse, keep the button down, the object moves. To release, or drop, the object, release the mouse button. To drag files, press and hold the (left) button, then move the mouse without letting the button go until the file is where you want it to be.

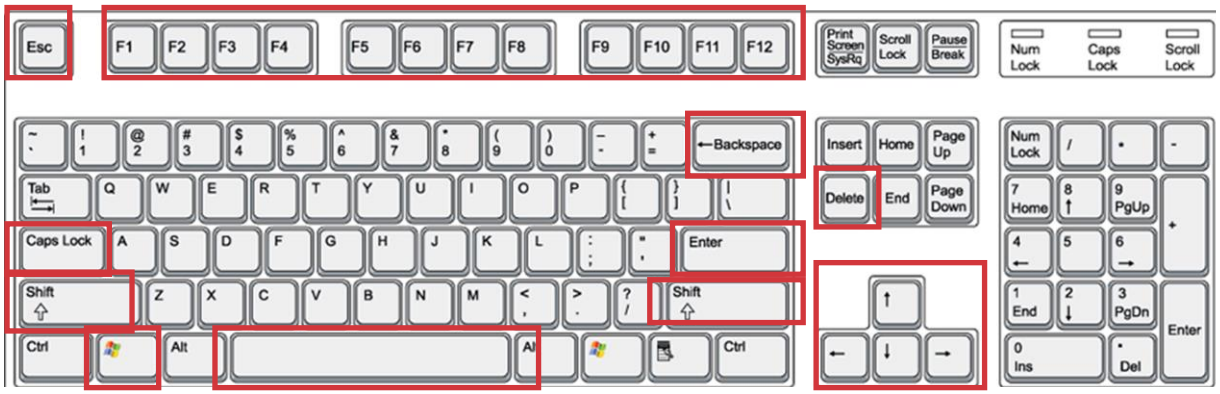
Scrolling: You can move up and down within a document using the scroll wheel on your mouse. Place your index or middle finger over the scroll wheel and slide your finger forward to scroll upwards, or slide your finger downwards to scroll down. When you move the mouse wheel the window scrolls vertically up or down in the direction of the mouse wheel.

To practice these functions, go to the following website:
http://www.mouseprogram.com/practice.html

https://www.seniornet.org/howto/mouseexercises/placemouse1.html

The Keyboard

The keyboard is like the traditional typewriter with a few extra buttons.



Key Functions:

Space Bar

The Space Bar is used to insert a blank space (i.e. between words).

Arrow Keys

Move your cursor around when in a document.

Enter

The Enter (sometimes known as Return) key tells your computer to start a new paragraph, go to a web address or activate a search on the internet.

Erasing:

Backspace

Backspace will remove what is typed one space to the left of the flashing cursor.

Delete

Delete will remove what is typed one space to the right of the flashing cursor. It can also be used to bulk delete highlighted text.

The Windows Key

By pressing the Windows key, you can open the Start menu at the bottom of your screen.

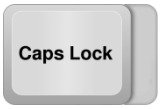
Escape (Esc)

The Escape key can be used to close a pop-up window or prompt that may be open.

Function Keys

Along the top of the keyboard are the function keys. They are numbered F1 to F12. These do different things in different programs and on your computer. They are most often used as menu shortcuts. The F1 key will usually open up the help files for a program.

Letter keys A-Z: Use the letter keys to type words. Although the tops of the keys show the letters as capitals they will appear as lower case letters unless you use the shift or caps lock.



Caps Lock

After pressing the Caps Lock key, everything you type will be in capital letters until you press it again to turn it off. When you press Caps Lock, you will see a light with an indicator turn on near the top of your keyboard. This means that everything you type will now be in capital letters.

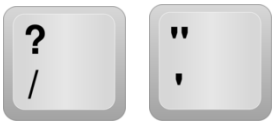
Shift

When you hold down the Shift key and press any letter on your keyboard, the letter will type as a capital letter. Holding down the Shift key and pressing one of the number buttons will type in the symbol you see above the number. For example - if you press Shift and the number 4, the computer will type in $.

Keys with additional Characters:

Many keys on the keyboard have more than one character. These keys will have two symbols on the one key, for instance the numbers row along the top.

Pressing these on their own will type in numbers or the bottom character. Holding down the shift key causes the keyboard to insert either the upper case of an alphabetic character or the top character if two are displayed on the individual key.



← Hold down the shift while pressing the key to type in the top character

← Press the key and it will type the bottom character on the screen.

Numerical key pad
These keys are good to learn if you need to regularly enter numbers in the computer. It's quicker, and easier on your wrists, than using the numbers above the letter keys.

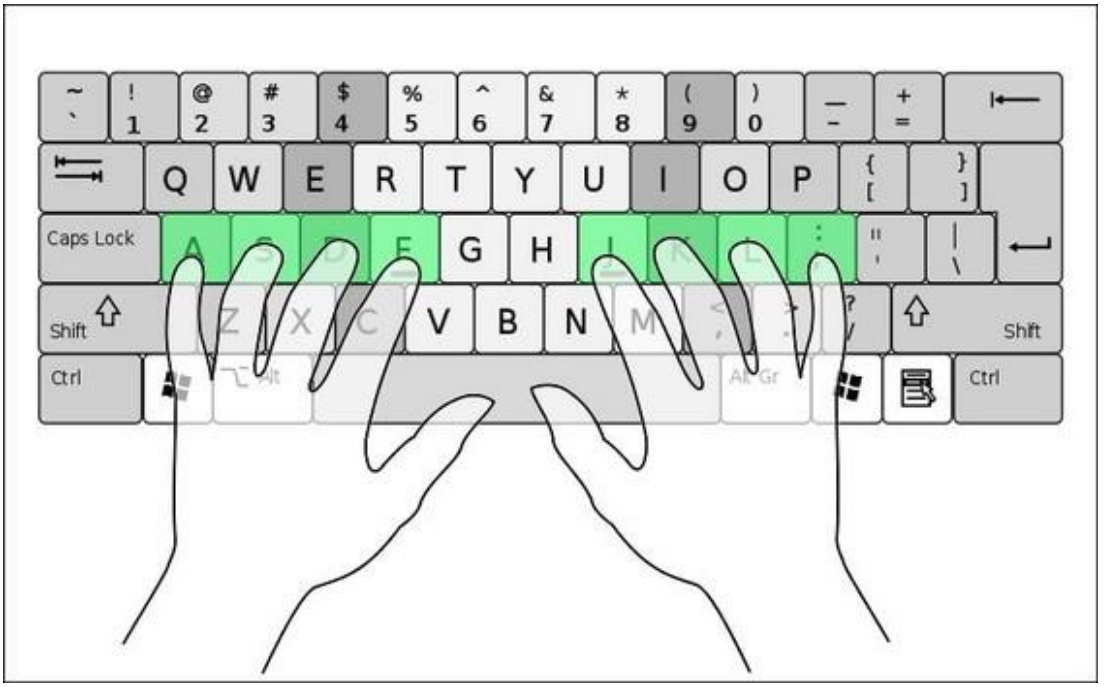
Num Lock key
Tap the Num Lock key (short for 'numbers lock') if you want to use the numerical keypad to enter numbers. That turns off the other options that are shown on the keys. Tap it again to use the other options.

Tab key
In Microsoft Office programs, this works by inserting into the text a number of spaces when it is tapped. The number of spaces is preset but you can change or override the settings. This means you don't have to use the space bar, and the text will line up in the same place.
The tab key is also handy when you are filling 'text boxes' for forms on the internet. Press the tab key and the cursor moves to the next box to be filled.

Hand positioning:
Learning to type correctly is worth the time and effort involved. You will work more quickly and easily and you will be less likely to damage your wrists, hands or neck.

Typing correctly involves having the correct posture, the correct fingering and touch-typing. Touch-typing is typing without looking at the keyboard. You can develop this skill quite quickly with regular practice and a good typing program.

Hold your hand with your thumb on the space bar, first finger on the "F" (left-hand) and "J" (right-hand). Then let your fingers naturally fall so that each rest on top of the next key along the same horizontal row.



To practice typing:

1. Open a blank document in Microsoft Word
2. Type: My name is ------- (practice using letter keys and Shift key for Capital letters)
3. Press Enter to start a new line
4. Type: The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog (practice typing letters a-z)
5. Press Enter to start a new line
6. Type: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Practice typing numbers)
7. Now type: ! @ # $ % ^ & * ( ) _ + (Practice typing symbols using shift key)
8. Type more symbols: < > , . : ; “ ‘ ? / (some symbols don’t require using shift key)

Useful websites for practice and help:

Practice your mouse skills

Teaches about moving the mouse around; left, right and double clicks.
http://www.mouseprogram.com/practice.html

Practice finding and activating links and your precision skills with double clicks.
http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/m1.htm

Practice your typing

A fantastic online typing tutorial site that breaks touch typing into lessons
https://www.typingclub.com/

Designed specifically for seniors it breaks down touch typing into lessons
http://www.skillfulsenior.com/skills/touch_typing.php

Practice typing and check your progress with speed tests:
http://www.typeonline.co.uk/copypractice.php

All about keyboard shortcuts
https://www.godigi.org.au/guides/what-are-keyboard-shortcuts

More information

Helpful guides for getting started using a computer.
https://www.digitallearn.org/

Additional Reading:

Occupational Health and Safety

A safe workstation

The area where you work is called a workstation. It includes your computer, keyboard, desk and chair. You need to know how to set up and maintain a safe workstation.

The screen

The other critical factor is the height and angle of the computer screen. If the screen is in the correct position, there is less strain on your neck muscles.

• The top of the screen should be level with your eyes and approximately an arm's length distance when you are typing. You can use a stand to raise your screen to the correct height.

• You can adjust the angle of most screens. Check with your supervisor if you are not sure how to do this.

• It's also important that there is no light reflecting onto the screen.

Your chair

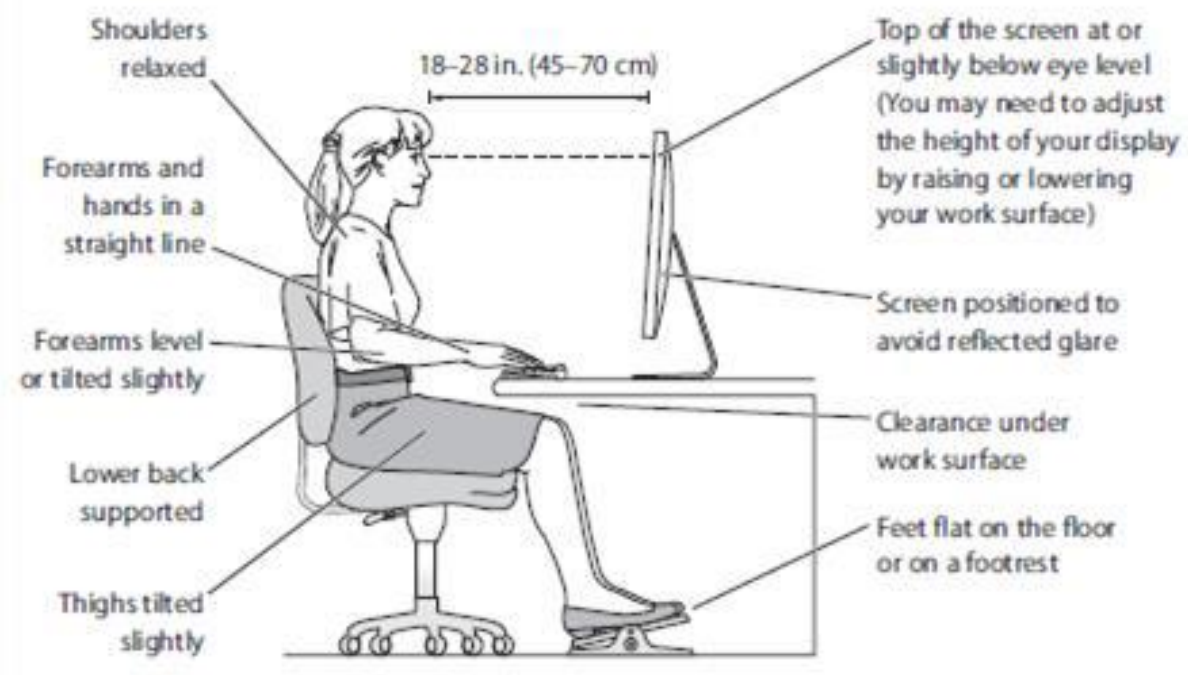
A chair is the workstation item that contributes most to your comfort and health. A well-designed office chair can be adjusted to suit you.

To adjust an office chair:

• Set the chair height so that your thighs are approximately horizontal and your feet rest comfortably on the floor.

• If the chair height is correctly set but the desk is too high, raise the height of the chair and use a footrest to compensate. A phone book can be used as a footrest.

• Adjust the height and the angle of the backrest so that it supports your lower back.



Use Your Smarts on the Internet

Safe
Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your phone number, date of birth, email address and password.

Meeting
Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Try and meet in a public place such as a café or shopping center, and let a friend or family member know where you are going. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time.

Accepting
Be careful opening emails, chat messages, files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust. This can lead to problems as they may contain offensive messages or malicious viruses!

Reliable
Someone online might lie about who they are, and the information about them online may be false. Always cross check information on other websites, in books, or with someone who can help.

Tell
If you feel you have been inappropriately targeted online you can report the person responsible to the website administrator. You can do this through the reporting function or emailing your feedback.

Settings
Social networking sites often change security and privacy settings without you knowing about it. Be aware of your privacy settings on social media and check them regularly. Most social media sites have options for you to do a privacy check-up.

For more ways to stay safe online:

1. Visit the 'Be Cyber Safe' page at brimbanklibraries.vic.gov.au
2. Use the Cybersafety button on the desktop of library computers
3. Talk to a staff member