Microsoft Windows

Microsoft makes the Windows operating system used in many computers. The operating system is a set of instructions that tells your computer how to run and how to manage the different programs that you install. There are several versions of Windows currently in use including Windows 98, Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7. The newest version of the Windows operating system is called Windows 8.

When you install a newer version of your operating system, you “upgrade” to the more recent version.

Sometimes Microsoft will discover errors in the operating system and users will need to “download a patch” for the program from the Internet.

Five different versions of windows:
Desktop

The desktop is your work surface representing a physical workspace at home or work. It is the screen you see once your computer has finished booting up and you are ready to get started.

**Icons** - the small pictures are shortcuts to programs called icons. Double-click icons to start a program. Clicking the Start button also shows a list of programs and other options on the computer.

**Taskbar** - the blue bar across the bottom of the screen is called the Task Bar.

**Wallpaper (Desktop Background)** - the image on your desktop is called Wallpaper or Desktop Background.

**System Tray** – the area where you can access programs that are running in the background. The more programs you have in this area, the longer it takes for your computer to boot up.
System Tray

The system tray of your desktop area has icons to indicate which programs are running in the background. Place your mouse cursor over top of the icons to see what they are. (Don’t click. A small explanation box will pop up.)

Antivirus Software - The Norton antivirus program can look like a yellow shield. AVG looks like this: . If you have a different antivirus program you will have to look through the icons to see which one it is. To see options for using this program, either right click on the icon to see a menu or double click on the icon to open the program window. (Remember to keep your antivirus program up-to-date!)

Volume Controls – The speaker icon will open the volume controls.

Single click on the icon to make a quick volume change. Click and drag on the bar to raise or lower the overall volume, or click on the button to mute all sound.

When the small sound option window is open left click on the word Mixer to see all of the sound settings. Click and drag the volume bars up or down to raise or lower the volume in specific categories. Click on the Button(s) at the bottom of the categories to mute the sound.

Hidden Icons – There may be other icons in your system tray that are not being displayed at all times. To see those other icons, click on the Up arrow to the left of the icons. The other icons will appear in a window above the Up arrow.

External Hardware – Another icon you may run across quite often is your external hardware icon. This icon only shown when you have a piece of external hardware plugged in. Examples include things like flash drives, digital cameras, external hard drives, etc. When it’s time to remove the device, it is recommended that you tell the computer to stop the connection with the device. That way your hardware isn’t damaged when you pull the device out.

To stop the device, left click one time on the icon. Choose which device you would like to remove, and left click on it one time. (Flash drives are commonly called USB Mass Storage Devices.) You will be informed when it’s safe to remove the device.
**Windows Updates** – If you see either of these two icons, that means your computer has updates from Microsoft that need to be downloaded. Double click on the icon to see what needs to be done. Your computer will walk you through the steps.

**Power** (Laptop only) – Place your mouse cursor on top of the symbol and it will tell you the battery is charged or if it is currently charging.

**Wireless** (Laptop only) – Laptop computers are capable of connecting to a wireless network to gain access to the Internet. To connect to a network, left click on the wireless icon and choose **Connect to a network**. In the window that appears, choose the network from the list that you desire to connect to and click on the **Connect** button that will appear in the lower right corner.

If the network is Unsecured, anyone can connect to it. If the network is Security-enabled, then you will need a password to connect to it.

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**Add or Remove Desktop Icons**

You can add or delete Icons or Desktop Shortcuts from the Desktop area.

To add an Icon:
- Click on the **Start** button.
- Click on **All Programs**. A menu will appear with all of your programs.
- Go to the program that you want to create a shortcut for and **Right-click** on it. A menu will appear.
- Point to **Send To**
- Left click on **Desktop (create shortcut)**.
- Left click on the desktop area to see your new icon.
To remove an icon:
- Left click on the icon.
- Hit the **Delete** button on your keyboard.
- When your computer asks if you are sure you would like to delete this icon, click on the **Yes** button. The window that popped up is called a *Dialog Box*.

**Dialog Box**

A dialog box is window that appears when your computer has a question for you. In order to continue using the computer, you must first answer its question. (We saw one example of a dialog box when we told the computer to delete an icon from the desktop.)

Sometimes a dialog box appears merely to inform you of something. You must click on the **OK** button to acknowledge that you have read the message before you can continue.

**Create a Folder**

Some people like to keep folders on their desktop to keep important files in. (You could also use the *Documents* folder for this purpose.)

To create a folder:
- Find an empty area on your desktop with no icons or windows in the way.
- Right click on the empty space.
- **Point** to **New**. (You do not need to click.)
- In the menu that pops out, left click on **Folder**.
- Your new folder has been created and is waiting for a name. **Don’t click!** Just start typing to give the folder a name.
- When finished, hit the enter key on the keyboard or click beside the folder. Your new folder is ready to receive files.
Find Images Online

Now that you have a folder to place things in, let’s find something to put in it.

- Double click on the Internet Explorer icon on your desktop.
- Go to www.google.com.
- In the Search box type what type of picture you want to find (like sunsets) and hit the enter key on your keyboard.
- When the Google page loads, click on the word Images in the upper left corner.
- Click on an image that you like.
- The picture will become larger on the screen.
- Right click anywhere on the image and left click on **Save Picture As…**
  - (Note: You can make this image your desktop background immediately if you do not wish to save it on your computer first. Just click on **Set as Background** from the right click menu.)

- In the window that opens, left click on **Desktop** on the left side.
- Find the folder you just created and double click on it.
- Either change the name of the file or keep it as it is.
- Then click on the **Save** button.
- Minimize the Internet Explorer window to see the desktop.
- Double click on your folder to see your saved image.
Wallpaper

The wallpaper, or image, that is on your desktop can be changed. To change your wallpaper:

- Find an empty area on your desktop with no icons or windows in the way.
- Right click on the empty space
- Left click on Personalize

OR

- Click on the Start button.
- Click on Control Panel.
- Click on Personalization.

There are Themes available for you to pick from in the center section. These include multiple desktop backgrounds and a color scheme for your windows.

If you would like to change your wallpaper or background image, only, click on Desktop Background in the lower left area of the window.
Notice the list of images to pick from. You can select more than one, and it will rotate between the images at a specified time interval.
Choose how you would like it positioned from the options at the bottom.

- **Fill** will fit the shortest edge of the image to your screen and the extra will fall off of the sides.
- **Fit** will fit the longest edge of the image to your screen and there will be extra space on two sides.
- **Stretch** will stretch the image to completely fill your screen. (It may become distorted this way.)
- **Tile** is used for small, repeatable images. Your image will repeat over and over until the bottom of the screen is reached.
- **Center** will place your image in the center of the screen in its original size with extra space on all sides.

Notice the drop-down list at the top of the screen. Notice how there is a downward-facing arrow (triangle) on the right side of the box? That indicates that there are more options to see for that category. In order to select a different option, you must first click on the down arrow.

- Click on the down arrow next to **Windows Desktop Backgrounds**.
- These are other areas of your computer that hold images you can use.
- To have the desktop as a solid color choose **Solid Colors**.
- Click on the **Browse** button to the right of the list. (Remember the sunset image you saved?)

- If you do not see the location of your image in this list there is a **Browse** button to the right of the list.

- Click on the **Browse** button.
- The Browse for Folder dialog box will appear. Navigate to the correct folder (left click on Desktop and then on your folder you named Wallpaper).
- Click on the **OK** button. The image will appear in the center area for you to select.

- Once you’ve selected the image(s) to be used as your desktop background click on the **Save Changes** button.
Window Color

To change the colors of your windows:

- Click on the **Start** button
- Click on **Control Panel**
- Click on **Personalization**
- Click on **Window Color** at the bottom of the window.

- Click on the color you would like your windows bordered in, and click on the **Save Changes** button at the bottom of the screen.
Display
You can also change how large items appear on your screen.

- Click on the **Start** button
- Click on **Control Panel**
- Click on **Display**.

- Choose **Smaller**, **Medium**, or **Larger**
- Click on **Apply**

Screen Saver and Power Schemes
Because of new technology and built-in power-saving options, a screen saver is not required. But it is still an option if you would like to use it. To modify your screen saver:

- Click on the **Start** button
- Click on **Control Panel**
- Click on **Personalization**
- Click on **Screen Saver** in the lower right corner.

- Choose a screen saver from the drop-down list and choose a length of time to wait for it to begin.

To change the power settings for your computer, click on the **Change power settings** button.
You can pick either pre-made power option from the middle of the window (just click on the radio button to select one). If you would like to personalize your power settings click on **Change plan settings**.

Once you click on **Change plan settings** you will be able to see or change the settings for when the monitor and computer turns off after inactivity.

Click on **Save changes** to save your changes.

On the previous page, you can change what the power button does when you press it by clicking on **Choose what the power button does** on the left.
Place Your Favorite Webpage as a Desktop Icon

You can create a shortcut of your favorite webpage directly on your Desktop.

- To create the shortcut, you must first open your Internet browser. (Double click on the Internet Explorer icon.)
- Type in the web address of the page you want to view and hit the enter key on your keyboard.
- Once the website is open, restore down the window so that you can view the Desktop space partially behind the opened webpage.
- Point your mouse at the icon to the left of the web address in the address bar as shown below. Hold down your left mouse button and drag the small icon onto empty area of your Desktop. Let go and a shortcut of your webpage will be created on your Desktop.

- You can just double-click that icon to view the webpage directly next time without needing to open an Internet browser.
Managing Multiple Windows

Your taskbar area shows, which windows are open and if you open a lot of windows from the same program, they will start to stack up. Let’s open a lot of windows and see what happens.

- In Internet Explorer, click on the Page menu and then on New Window.
- In the address bar type Yahoo.com and hit the enter key on the keyboard.
- Repeat the first two steps and go to different websites such as Google.com, abc.com, nbc.com, and pbs.org.

Normally, if your items aren’t grouped together, you would be able to select one item from the task bar to navigate to that window. When they are all stacked, you have to click on the group and go from there.

- Left click on the group of stacked Internet Explorer windows in the taskbar to open the list.
- Notice you can see which website each one represents. Click on the one you would like to see.

To close: Instead of opening each window separately and clicking on the “X” in the upper right corner, you can close them all at once. To do so:

- Right click on the group in the taskbar.
- Left click on Close all windows.
The Keyboard

A computer keyboard is very much like a typewriter keyboard, but it has some extra keys.

The ESC key in the upper left corner will close any menus you have opened but do not want to select an item from. (Try opening the Start menu and then click on the Esc key.)

The Function keys along the top of the keyboard each have special uses, often in conjunction with the ALT or CTRL keys, depending on the program you are using. F1 usually open the program’s Help options. It is different for every program.

In the bottom left corner are three keys unique to the keyboard – CTRL, Windows, and ALT.

The CTRL key is used in conjunction with other keys to perform various functions. (CTRL + P will open the print window when in Microsoft Word.)

The Windows key works like pressing the Start button on the screen.

The ALT key is another helper key used in conjunction with other keys.
The **Caps Lock key** is used in typing. Pressing this key once will make all letters you type CAPITALIZED. Press the Caps Lock key again to turn off this feature.

The **Shift key** is used in typing to make one capital letter. To capitalize a letter, press the Shift key and hold it down, then press the letter you want capitalized. Release the Shift key and continue to type.

The **Arrow keys** help you move the cursor around the screen (when using a program like Microsoft Word) or across a line of text when typing in a text box.

The **Insert key** is used when typing to type over words you have already typed.

The **Delete key** is used to remove text you have typed that is to the right of the cursor or to send selected items to the Recycle Bin.

Pressing the **Home key** sends your cursor to the beginning of a line of text. Pressing the **End key** sends the cursor to the end of a line.
Page Up and Page Down move the cursor through a document page by page, either up or down.

To the right of the space bar you see another Alt key, Windows key, and Ctrl key. Notice the new Application key. Pressing this key is the same as pressing the right mouse button (right clicking).

The Backspace key is used to remove text you have typed that is to the left of the cursor.

The Enter key gives a new line (like a carriage return) when you are typing. At other times the Enter key works like a left mouse click.