

Basic Computer Skills for MU School Library Students

The rubrics below highlight basic, intermediate and advanced skills for various computing tasks: (1) mouse and keyboard skills; (2) basic Windows or Mac operations; (3) file management; (4) Microsoft Word; (5) Windows Live Hotmail (email); and (6) preventive maintenance against viruses, spyware and other “malware” (unwanted programs or code that sneak on to your computer and cause harm, whether intended or not).

Note to Computer Novices

All students need to attain at least a basic level of technical ability to succeed in online courses. If you have time we suggest a computer literacy course or workshop. Otherwise, read a How-To book or try an online tutorial. Search the web or try one of the following:

- [Jan's Illustrated Computer Literacy 101](#)
- [Old Dominion University Tutorials](#) (also see their [pre-enrollment checklist](#))
- [Tutorial Sites](#) (huge list of links from Maureen Greenbaum, Union County College)
- [Malek Tips](#) (collection of helpful tips, forums, guides and [Computer Basics](#))


Mouse and Keyboard Skills	
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate between a single and double click (e.g. select vs. open a file) • Differentiate between left and right click (or Control-Click for Mac users) • Use Alt and Ctrl keys in combination (e.g. Ctrl-Alt-Del, Ctrl-V, etc.) • Move a scroll bar up or down with the mouse
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the right click menu (if available) • Block and copy text with mouse • Copy and paste text using the edit menu (Edit > Copy and Edit > Paste) • Use function keys on a laptop for extra features (usually marked fn in blue type)
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Ctrl-X (cut), Ctrl-C (copy), and Ctrl-V (paste) keyboard shortcuts • Correct mistakes with Ctrl-Z to undo last action (if available) • Experiment with keyboard shortcuts and hotkeys to save time in launching common functions or programs (e.g. Windows + M to minimize all windows). • Use the Windows key plus a number corresponding to the order of icons in the Quick Launch bar (lower left corner of screen) to launch favorite applications. Note that you can drag and drop any shortcut here for quick access.
Resources	<p>For a list of keyboard shortcuts and hotkeys check out some of these sites:</p> <p>http://www.microsoft.com/enable/products/keyboard.aspx (Microsoft)</p> <p>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Table_of_keyboard_shortcuts (Wiki anyone?)</p> <p>http://www.mozilla.org/support/firefox/keyboard (Firefox browsers)</p> <p>http://www.computerhope.com/shortcut.htm (PC, Mac, Linux)</p> <p>http://davespicks.com/writing/programming/mackkeys.html (Mac tips)</p> <p>http://www.sfsu.edu/~teachers/download/mac_pc_basics.pdf (Mac/PC cheat sheet)</p>

Basic Windows/Mac Operations	
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify desktop resources (Start or Dock, quick launch, taskbar, task tray, etc.) • Open programs from Start button (PC) or Finder (Mac) menus • Identify pull-down menu items (e.g. File, Edit, Help, etc.) • Use Help menus for programs and the computer’s own operating system • Minimize, maximize and resize a window (application) • Restore/maximize an active application from taskbar (PC) or Dock (Mac)
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open applications from the Start, Run dialogue (PC) or Finder (Mac) • Open and Close dialog boxes • Create shortcut (alias) on desktop • Search for files or applications on your computer • Change screen (video) resolution, display and other basic settings
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create shortcut in Start menu (PC) • Create shortcut in toolbar (bottom menu, to the right of Start) or Dock • Create custom toolbar (PC) • Edit options (display) in Start Menu (PC) or Dock (Mac)
Resources	<p>For tips and tricks for basic computer operations review some of these sites:</p> <p>http://winbeginners.com/basics.htm (Windows for Beginners)</p> <p>http://www.wikihow.com/Customize-Your-Windows-XP-Desktop (XP Desktop)</p> <p>http://www.techsupportalert.com/best_tips_and_tricks.htm (PC one-stop shop)</p> <p>http://www.howtogeek.com/tag/windows-vista/ (for Vista; see also Windows 7 tips)</p> <p>http://www.mactips.org/archives/category/finder-tips/ (Finder from Mac Tips)</p> <p>http://www.macoptions.com/mactips.html (Mac options)</p> <p>http://www.youthtech.com/techstuff/techtips/mac-tips.htm (Mac Tips ‘n Tricks)</p> <p>http://www.macosxtips.co.uk/ (Mac OS X Tips)</p> <p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iOQd16d2_Q (YouTube video Mac tips)</p> <p>http://www.sad4.com/Technology/OSX/Tips (More OS X tricks and tips)</p>

File Management Skills	
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the components of a file name and path (drive, folder, file) • Open Windows Explorer from My Computer (PC) or Finder’s Go menu (Mac) • Open a file in Windows Explorer or Finder
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create, delete or rename a file or folder • Copy or move a file or folder • Organize commonly used files for specific purpose into folders and sub-folders • Use Windows Search or Mac Finder/Spotlight to locate a specific file or folder

Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View properties of a file in Windows Explorer or the Mac's Finder (Get Info) • Edit file types in Windows Explorer or Finder (Get Info) to change default program to open files of associated format type, as indicated by extension (e.g. Adobe Acrobat opens .pdf files, Microsoft Word opens .doc files, etc.) • Right click a file and select Send To (Windows XP) to save or move files. For help see http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310270 or install Microsoft's free PowerToys for old versions of Windows (for Vista or Win 7 see How-To Geek).
Resources	<p>For tips and tricks for better file management review some of these sites:</p> <p>http://sbinfocanada.about.com/od/datamanagement/a/computerfilemgt.htm http://www.worldstart.com/tips/file-management/index.htm http://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.asp?p=24588&seqNum=9&rl=1 http://winbeginners.com/articles/explorer.htm http://winbeginners.com/articles/file_management.htm http://t4.jordan.k12.ut.us/t4/content/view/232/58/ (Video guide for Macs)</p>

Microsoft Word Skills	
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify basic parts of the Word menu and workspace • Open, close, print and save a file • Change fonts or size for selected text • Use tabs, indents and margins on the ruler to edit document (instead of spaces)
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Save As to save a copy of the same document or save in a different format (e.g. ASCII text, Rich Text format, etc.) • Create bullets and numbered lists • Insert images or other media objects (e.g. audio or video clips) • Use format and paragraph menus to add style and formatting • Insert headings and create a table of contents
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish difference between Edit, Paste and Edit, Paste Special • Use format painter to copy styles and format to another section • Insert page and continuous breaks to create new sections • Format sections and first page differently than the rest of the document (e.g. change one section to landscape mode or change margins)
Resources	<p>There are many online Word tutorials. Besides Atomic Learning and our own video demos (http://libweb.mansfield.edu/media/wordTricks.html), try one of these freebies:</p> <p>http://www.baycongroup.com/wlesson0.htm http://www.internet4classrooms.com/on-line_word.htm http://www.springshosting.com/microsoft_office/ http://www.bettersolutions.com/word.aspx http://www.tutorialized.com/tutorials/MS-Word/1</p>

Windows Live Hotmail (email)	
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate between a web-based and client (installed) e-mail application • Activate MU email account using Windows Live Hotmail (access from either http://www.hotmail.com OR http://mail.live.com/) • Identify Inbox and Junk mail folders • Manage personal information in Options menu (select More options for full menu) • Edit safe senders list in Options, Junk mail menu (especially mansfield.edu) • Open, send and save an attachment • Never open an attachment from an unknown email without first identifying the recipient or what the link is for (it could be a virus or spyware)
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add signature in Options menu (Customize your mail) • Customize reading pane in Options, Customize your mail • Create or delete additional mail folders • Move mail from one folder to another • Create Email contact (address book entry)
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create mail groups within Contacts • Import/export email contacts from other mail programs (e.g. Outlook, Thunderbird, etc.) from Options, Customize your contacts • Retrieve email from other accounts by editing Options, Manage your account
Resources	<p>Note: MU requires all students to use Windows Live Hotmail. For guides see our Help page (http://library.mansfield.edu/help.html#webmail) or click the question mark on the far top right side of Hotmail to access their online Help (see below).</p>  <p>Also review some generic guides to email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.learnthenet.com/english/section/email.html http://www.siteground.com/tutorials/email/index.htm http://www.webfoot.com/advice/email.top.html

Preventive Maintenance	
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and regularly update anti-virus and anti-spyware software to block malware (for commercial software renew subscription annually) • Run anti-virus and anti-spyware software at least weekly (free products are good at cleaning your computer after an attack, but commercial software, usually under \$50, runs full-time in the background to prevent installation of various malware). • Download and install updates at least every 1-2 months for the operating system

	<p>(e.g. Windows Update) and at least every 3-4 months for and critical applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back up critical files and assignments to external media (thumb drive, portable hard drive, CD/DVD, etc.). Floppy disks should now be considered obsolete. • Learn How to Avoid Phishing Scams (cleverly disguised email cons)
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blow out dust from mice, keyboards and from the inside of the computer at least 2-3 times a year (for tips see http://www.computerhope.com/cleaning.htm) • Clean hard drive of unwanted programs, files and folders at least every 1-2 months (especially temporary files). Be sure to also empty deleted files from the Recycle Bin (or Mac Trash Can), as those files aren't physically deleted but merely removed from file management while still taking up space. Windows users can use Disk Cleanup (Start>All Programs>Accessories>System Tools). • Regularly delete temporary Internet files via the web browser's Internet options menu (or manually delete in Windows, from c:\Windows\Temporary Internet files) • Create a Windows restore point prior to installing new hardware or major software packages (PC).
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly defragment hard drive (PC only). Commercial software performs this task as needed, though Windows 7 doesn't require it (for tips on Windows' free Defragmenter see http://www.computerhope.com/software/defrag.htm) • Update computer BIOS once or twice a year (download from computer vendor) • Run Microsoft ScanDisk to check hard drives for various errors (PC) • Back up registry and system
Resources	<p>For helpful advice and tips on preventive maintenance check out some of these sites:</p> <p>http://www.wikihow.com/Category:Hardware-Maintenance-and-Repair (Wiki)</p> <p>http://macs.about.com/od/troubleshooting/Troubleshooting.htm (Mac help)</p> <p>http://tutorials.ausweb.com.au/hosting/Tutorials/Your-PC-Security/ (Security)</p> <p>http://pcworld.about.com/magazine/2208p152id116583.htm (prevention)</p> <p>http://www.pcguide.com/care/pm.htm</p> <p>http://www.computerhope.com/vlist.htm (information on viruses)</p> <p>http://www.nirealtor.com/images/pmchecklist.pdf (checklist)</p> <p>http://www.pcworld.com/tc/spyware/ (Spyware guide)</p> <p>http://guides.radified.com/magoo/guides/spyware/remove_spyware_01.htm</p> <p>http://www.sitepoint.com/article/under-wear-definitive-guide</p> <p>http://www.firewallguide.com/anti-virus.htm</p> <p>http://antivirus.about.com/</p> <p>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malware</p>