

Computer Literacy Resources for Adult Literacy Learners

Common Sense Tips for Working with Those New to Computers

1. Begin with working on basic mouse skills such as moving around the screen, pointing, clicking and mastering the dreaded “double-click”. Being proficient at getting the mouse to go where you want is key to minimizing learner frustration. (see the mouse skills section for recommended sites)
2. Find out what the learners most want to learn the most and teach to that. In order to learn to surf the Internet, a learner does not necessarily need to know what the computer drives or what networks are.
3. Break learning how to do a new skill in clear steps. For example, if you want to teach how someone how to use the Internet start with locating the Internet icon, how to double click on the icon, how to locate the address bar and so on.
4. Teach the easiest way to do something. For example, there might be three ways to open a new document, I always tell the students that they should use the way that is the easiest to them.
5. Find everyday analogies for those scary computer terms. The “Enter” key is like the gas pedal on a car. A username for email is like a post office box number and password is like a key.
6. Include lots of repetition and time for practice. This is especially important for working with seniors and those who may have problems with memory and retention. For example, in the seniors computer classes, some students may spend the entire course memorizing the step to open up the Internet home page.
7. If you can, have many extra helpers. In working with seniors and other beginners, I found that ideally it is great to have one tutor per learner.

Learning the Parts of the Computer

The Computer Tutor - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/computertutor/computertutorone/index.shtml>

An online course that shows learners how to use a mouse, keyboard and computer screen. Skills are reinforced through games.

Basic computer skills - <http://aalrc.org/resources/tech/complit/welcome.html>

Parts of a computer quiz - <http://www.quia.com/jg/65620.html> This site allows user to test themselves on how well they know part of the computer through matching, concentration, flashcard and word search activities.

Belanger, Connie. *Introduction to Computers II*. <http://www.nald.ca/connect/v3i4/db/techtips1.pdf>

Rooney, Brian. *Computer Basics 2000*. <http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/basics00/cover.htm>

Perry, Joan. *Basic Computer Literacy* <http://www.nald.ca/litweb/province/nb/nald-nb/english/innosucc/facilit/Computer/contents.htm>

Schwartz, Elyse. *Parts of Computers*. <http://www.nald.ca/connect/v5i1/db/lesson1.pdf>

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Mouse Skills

Many adults, especially seniors, who are new to computers have difficulty with moving the mouse. Below are some great practice sites and suggestions for teaching mouse skills.

Mouse exercises for beginners – This site teaches users how to point, click, double click, drag and drop and select text. <http://www.seniornet.org/howto/mouseexercises/mousepractice.html>

Mousing Around – A tutorial with basics on how to use the mouse is available at <http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/intro.htm> . A series of follow up mouserice exercises are available at <http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/mouserice.htm> . A series of internet games to help with mousing skills <http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/games.htm>

New mouse user tutorial - <http://tech.tln.lib.mi.us/tutor/welcome.htm>

The **Solitaire** game which is found on most computers is another excellent way to encourage beginners to practice their mouse skills.

Learning Word & Excel

Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre has developed a great resource, *The ESL Computer Book – Microsoft Word 2000*. This user friendly book uses lots of visuals and simple language to show readers how to use the Word Program. It is available at <http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/Word2000/word2000.pdf>

Using the Internet

Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre. *The ESL Computer Book – The Internet Using Microsoft Explorer*. Available at <http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/Internet/Internet.pdf>

Step by step guides on computer basics developed by the Revelstoke Adult Literacy Outreach Project.
How to Open a Yahoo Email Account. *How to Surf the Internet.*

How to Reset Your Home Page. *How to Save a Web Page to My Favorites.*

They are available for download at www.okanagan.bc.ca/regions/Shuswap_Revelstoke_Region/Centres/Revelstoke_Centre/Revelstoke_Programs/Volunteer_Adult_Literacy_Tutoring_Program/VALT_Tutor_Learner_Information_Revelstoke.html

Setting Up Computer Programs

McRae, Dee, Jim Dewar and Dave Manahan. *Community Computer Literacy - Lunchroom Learning, the Link at the Library and Computer Camps* (1998) <http://www.nald.ca/library/research/comlit/comclit.pdf> A detailed report on three successful projects developed by Houston Link to Learning (British Columbia) to increase computer literacy in the community.

Haney, Ann. *Computers in the Classroom: A Collaborative Approach*. Winnipeg: DCT Education Services, 2004. This kit is divided into a Handbook and Facilitator's guide. Both the Handbook and the Facilitator's Guide comes with a CD-Rom of handouts. The Handbook explains how to set up a program

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that integrates computers and language learning, and describes a collaborative classroom. The Facilitator's Guide is meant to assist those conducting training workshops for educators..

Useful (Free) Software Programs

Picasa. This is a free photo management software developed by Google. You must download on your computer. To download, go to <http://picasa.google.com/> .

Primo PDF – This free program allows you to convert files into pdfs. (Useful if you want to turn your newsletter or calendar into a file which can't be altered) You must download it to your computer.
<http://www.primopdf.com/>

Puzzlemaker – This site allows users to create a variety of puzzles from word searches, crossword puzzles, mazes, math puzzles, etc. <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/>