

# **ECDL<sup>®</sup>**

## **European Computer Driving Licence<sup>®</sup>**

### **Computer Essentials**

### **BCS ITQ Level 1 (IT User Fundamentals)**

### **Using Microsoft<sup>®</sup> Windows<sup>®</sup> 7**

### **Syllabus Version 1.0**

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# Section 1

# Basics of ICT

**By the end of this section you should be able to:**

**Understand the term ICT**

**Recognise the differences between hardware and software**

**Use different input, output and storage devices**

**Know how to connect peripheral devices**

**Appreciate the factors affecting device performance**

**Spot important health and safety issues when using ICT**

**Select the right software program(s) to complete a task**

**Work accurately, safely and securely**

Work through the **Driving Lessons** in this section to gain an understanding of the above features.

For each **Driving Lesson**, read all of the **Park and Read** instructions and then, if applicable, perform the numbered steps of the **Manoeuvres**. Complete the **Revision** exercise(s) at the end of the section to test your knowledge.

# Driving Lesson 1 - ICT Concepts

## Park and Read

The term **ICT** stands for **Information and Communication Technology**. Pretty much any device or computer program that creates, stores or uses digital information can be considered an ICT system, including:

- Hardware such as desktop computers, laptops, netbooks, tablets and games consoles.
- Software applications such as web browsers, word processors, spreadsheets, databases, e-mail systems, graphics programs and games.
- Internet technologies such as *Google*, *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *Flickr*.
- Mobile devices such as smart phones, GPS systems, media players, digital cameras, iPads and iPods.
- Peripheral items such as printers, scanners, keyboards and mice.



*You will learn more about hardware, software, peripheral devices and Internet technologies later in this guide.*

Computing and mobile technologies have completely transformed how people live their lives – at home, in education and at work. It has changed how people communicate with each other, how they store and access information, how they work, and how they spend their spare time. In fact, ICT systems allow people to better explore ideas, handle lots of information, find answers to questions, solve problems, and become more productive in their personal and professional lives.

If you want to be an active member of your own society and succeed in education and a future career, your ability to fully understand and use ICT technology safely and effectively will be an essential skill.



*ICT systems are used in more places than you may realise: car engines, vending machines, home heating systems. Even some “smart” refrigerators have built-in Internet connections to automatically reorder groceries.*



## Manoeuvres

1. Does the term ICT just refer to computers such as desktop, laptop and tablet PCs?
2. Consider all of the ICT devices that you own or Internet services that you use. You will be surprised how many different types of technology you interact with on a daily basis.

## Driving Lesson 2 - Using ICT Safely

### **P** Park and Read

Before you start working with equipment of any kind, you first need to know how to use it safely and responsibly. ICT devices are no different, and whether you use them at home, in education, or as part of your job, you are required by law to take reasonable care of your own safety and the safety of others.



*In both education and work, the people in charge of you are legally required to make sure you are well-protected and well-trained. For ICT users, this means providing you with equipment that is safe, secure and comfortable to use.*

Modern ICT systems present a number of health and safety hazards that you must be aware of. Whenever you use an electronic device of any sort, no matter where it is, you should always watch out for the following hazards:

- Electrical injuries and fires from damaged wires or incorrect connections
- Electrical injuries and fires from overloaded power sockets (too many plugs connected to one outlet)
- Injuries and fires caused by badly stored materials (paper and other items piled up and around equipment)
- Breakdowns and breathing problems due to poor ventilation (many ICT devices need to be kept cool and some types of printer can produce unhealthy fumes)
- Trips due to trailing cables or problems accessing your work area
- Injuries caused by incorrect equipment handling (heavy or large devices)

When you use ICT on the move you need to be even more alert for dangers. For example, watch out for any hazards that could trip you up or cause a serious fall, and never use a mobile device (such as a telephone or tablet computer) when driving or operating dangerous machinery.



*Never eat or drink when using an ICT device. Food and liquids can easily be dropped or spilled which can damage equipment or cause electrical injuries.*

## Driving Lesson 2 - Continued

Depending on your age, level of ability and where you study or work, there may also be other health and safety hazards to be aware of. For example, you may need to wear protective clothing and keep out of areas where dangerous materials or machinery are stored. Watch for warning signs and follow any health and safety information given to you.



*Always tell someone in charge about any health and safety concerns you have. If you do hurt yourself or damage a piece of equipment, you must report it.*



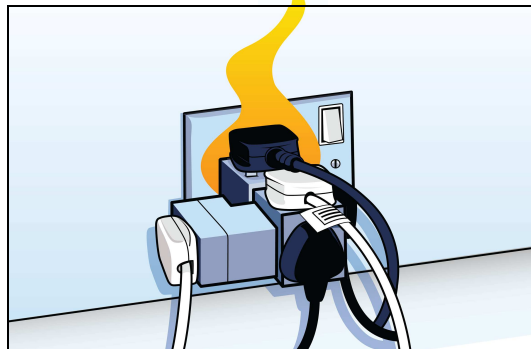
### Manoeuvres

1. Look around you. Check that there are no cables lying across the floor that you or somebody else could trip over.
2. Check that there are no cables hanging down behind your desk that could tangle with your feet as you work. This includes power cables and Internet connection wires.



*Take care when adjusting cables. Always make sure your computer equipment is turned off and unplugged from the wall before you start.*

3. Look out for and immediately replace worn or frayed cables. Never examine a suspect wire or device until it has been turned off and unplugged.
4. Check for sockets or power extensions that have too many plugs in them. Overloaded electrical sockets can easily cause fires or injury.



5. Remove any unnecessary clutter from your work environment and avoid storing items where they could fall and cause injury or damage.
6. Finally, check your surroundings for any other dangers, obstructions, trip hazards (e.g. wires, boxes, bins and bags), fire hazards, and so on.



*In every building in which you study or work, you should always know where the emergency exits and fire extinguishers are located.*



## Driving Lesson 3 - Your Workspace

### **P** Park and Read

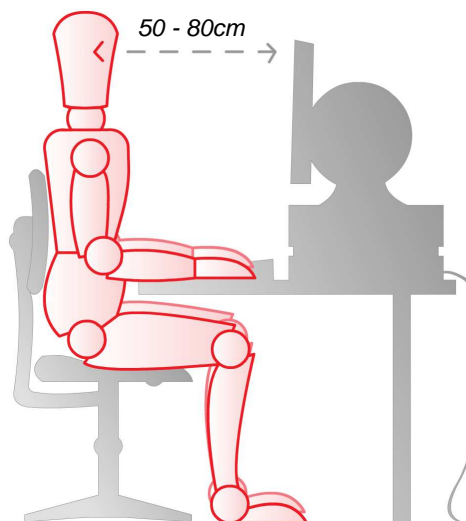
If you sit at a computer or use ICT equipment for long periods of time, it can start to get uncomfortable and – in severe cases – cause injury. To stay safe and well you need to learn how to avoid these problems *before* they start. Remember: prevention is always better than cure!

When using ICT equipment always remember the following simple precautions:

- Take regular breaks away from all of your ICT devices (one or two minutes every hour).
- Look away from screens regularly (and remember to blink often).
- Vary your work activities so that you do not perform the same task for too long.
- Do not sit with a poor posture or hold heavy ICT devices for long periods of time.
- Use simple stretching exercises to relax your muscles and stay active.

If you use a desktop or laptop computer for any length of time, it is also important that you set up your work space correctly. The following advice will help:

- Position your computer monitor directly in front of you with the top of the screen at roughly the same height as your eyes.
- Adjust the position of your chair so that you can sit upright at your desk about one arm's length away from your screen (50 to 80 centimetres is recommended).



- Adjust the screen to reduce glare and reflections from lights or windows.

## Driving Lesson 3 - Continued

- Set up your chair so that it fully supports your back and make sure your feet rest firmly on the floor. Foot and wrist rests can be used to help.
- Place your keyboard and mouse directly in front of you and do not stretch to reach them. Your forearms and hands should always remain parallel with the floor.



### Manoeuvres

1. Adjust your chair so that your back is straight and your hands are placed comfortably over the mouse and keyboard. Your feet should lie flat on the ground
2. Check that the computer screen you are using is positioned at a comfortable height and angle so that you can see it without straining.
3. Make sure there is no glare or reflection from other light sources (i.e. windows or ceiling lights).
4. Adjust the position of the screen, keyboard and mouse so that you are comfortable operating the computer.

## Driving Lesson 4 - Computing Hardware

### **P** Park and Read

ICT devices come in a variety of forms: digital cameras, smart phones, MP3 players, and desktop, laptop and tablet computers. All of these devices are known as **hardware**, which is a term that refers to any piece of physical technology that you can touch.



Two of the most popular types of personal computing (**PC**) device are the **desktop computer** and the **laptop computer**. Smaller, cheaper versions of laptops known as **netbooks** are also quite common, but these simply allow users to connect to the Internet and often suffer from poor performance. Gaining in popularity are **tablet computers** which are smaller again and usually feature a touch screen. Of course, one of the most popular ICT devices in the world today is the **mobile phone**.

| Hardware          | Advantages   | Disadvantages  |
|-------------------|--|--|
| <b>Desktop PC</b> | High performance; easy to upgrade and repair; lots of peripherals to attach; large monitor sizes | Large and can't be moved easily; requires a lot of dedicated desk space  |
| <b>Laptop PC</b>  | High performance; easy to move and use "on the go"; wireless network access                      | Usually more expensive than a desktop; higher chance of being lost, stolen or damaged; harder to upgrade and repair; short battery life; often causes poor posture |
| <b>Netbook</b>    | Cheap, small, light and portable; wireless network access  | Chance of being lost, stolen or damaged; low performance; hard to upgrade and repair; short battery life; causes poor posture                                      |

## Driving Lesson 4 - Continued

|                     |  |   |
|---------------------|--|---|
| <b>Tablet</b>       | Very light and portable; easy to use; wireless network access  | Slower than a laptop; almost impossible to upgrade; small screen and lack of features reduce productivity; short battery life |
| <b>Mobile Phone</b> | Very light and portable; <b>smart phones</b> have lots of communication features; 3G and 4G network access | Easy to lose; small screen size limits usefulness; very short battery life  |

Nearly all ICT computing devices share two important internal hardware components that work closely together: a **processor** and **memory**. The processor is the “brains” of a device and performs all of the basic calculations and functions that make it work. The memory is used to *temporarily* store programs of instructions and “active” data as they are being worked on by the processor.



*A processor is also known as a **CPU (Central Processing Unit)**. It is a small microchip that can get very hot when in use and needs to be cooled (usually by a device’s built-in fan).*

A device’s memory is often referred to as **Random Access Memory (RAM)**. Unlike other ICT storage devices that take a small amount of time to read and write data, RAM memory can be accessed almost immediately. This allows the processor to step through instructions, access data and store the results of calculations very quickly.



*Many ICT devices have built-in “**boot**” instructions stored on special **Read Only Memory (ROM)** chips. These are used to start the device and begin loading its operating system software (which you will learn more about in a later section).*

To be stored long-term, data needs to be recorded on a permanent storage device such as a hard disk drive. You will learn more about storage devices later in this section.



*It is important to realise that memory is not the same as storage. A device’s memory temporarily holds data as the processor works on it; a storage device stores it permanently (or at least until it is manually deleted).*

Finally, most computing devices feature one or more **optical disc drives** for reading from and writing to CD and DVD discs. These drives typically eject a tray into which a disc is placed; when the tray is closed the device will automatically recognise the new media and open it.

# Section 2

# Getting Started

**By the end of this section you should be able to:**

**Start, restart and close down a device**

**Log on and log off Windows**

**Recognise and use the Desktop**

**Open, resize, reposition and close windows**

**Identify parts of a window**

**Understand the Start Menu and Taskbar**

**Start and close programs**

**Find help**

Work through the **Driving Lessons** in this section to gain an understanding of the above features.

For each **Driving Lesson**, read all of the **Park and Read** instructions and then perform the numbered steps of the **Manoeuvres**. Complete the **Revision** exercise(s) at the end of the section to test your knowledge.

# Driving Lesson 12 - Starting a Computer

## **P** Park and Read

Although there are many different types of ICT hardware available, this guide focuses on the use of traditional computing devices such as desktops, laptops and tablet computers. To start such a device, it must be turned on using its main on/off power button.

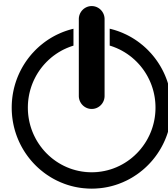


*Before switching a computer on, briefly check for any lights – usually found on the front of the device – that show it is already activated. When left for a period of time, an ICT device may go into a dormant power-saving mode; either move the mouse or press a key on the keyboard to “wake it up”.*



## Manoeuvres

1. Locate your computer's power button. This is usually marked with the following symbol:



2. If your computer is currently switched off (i.e. there are no lights on the front, the screen is blank and interacting with the mouse/keyboard has no effect) press the power button now. The computer starts.
3. If you are using a separate monitor, this also needs to be turned on. If there are no lights on the front of the monitor and the screen is blank, locate and press its power button also.



*Computing devices go through a short start-up (or “**boot**”) routine that detects all connected hardware and then loads the operating system.*



4. After a moment the operating system is loaded. Please continue to the next lesson.

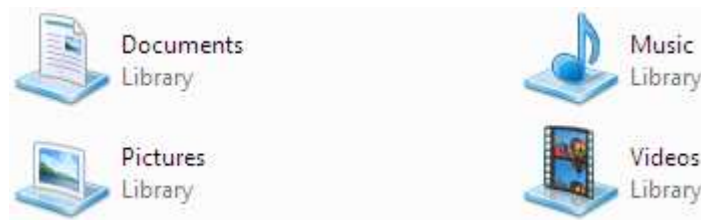


*This guide assumes that you are using Windows 7.*

## Driving Lesson 13 - Logging On

### **P** Park and Read

*Windows* allows more than one person to securely “sign in” and use a computer. Each person has their own settings and private storage spaces in which to keep their files.



To access your own files and start using the computer, you first need to **log on** to *Windows*. This involves entering a **username** and a **password** that is known only by you.



*Together, a username and password prove a person’s identity and right to access files and shared devices. If a device is stolen or left unattended for a time, passwords will act as your own personal entry codes and stop unauthorised use.*

At home you may only need to select a username and, if required, enter a password. If your computer is connected to a network, however, you will first be prompted to log-on by pressing the key combination **<Ctrl Alt Del>**.



*You will need to press and hold the **<Ctrl>**, **<Alt>** and **<Delete>** keys down together.*



### **Manoeuvres**

1. Depending on how your computer is set up, either select your username (if there is more than one user profile set-up) or press **<Ctrl Alt Del>** to begin the login process.
2. If your account is password protected, you will now be prompted to identify yourself. Enter your username (if not already selected) and then type your password. Press **<Enter>** to log on.



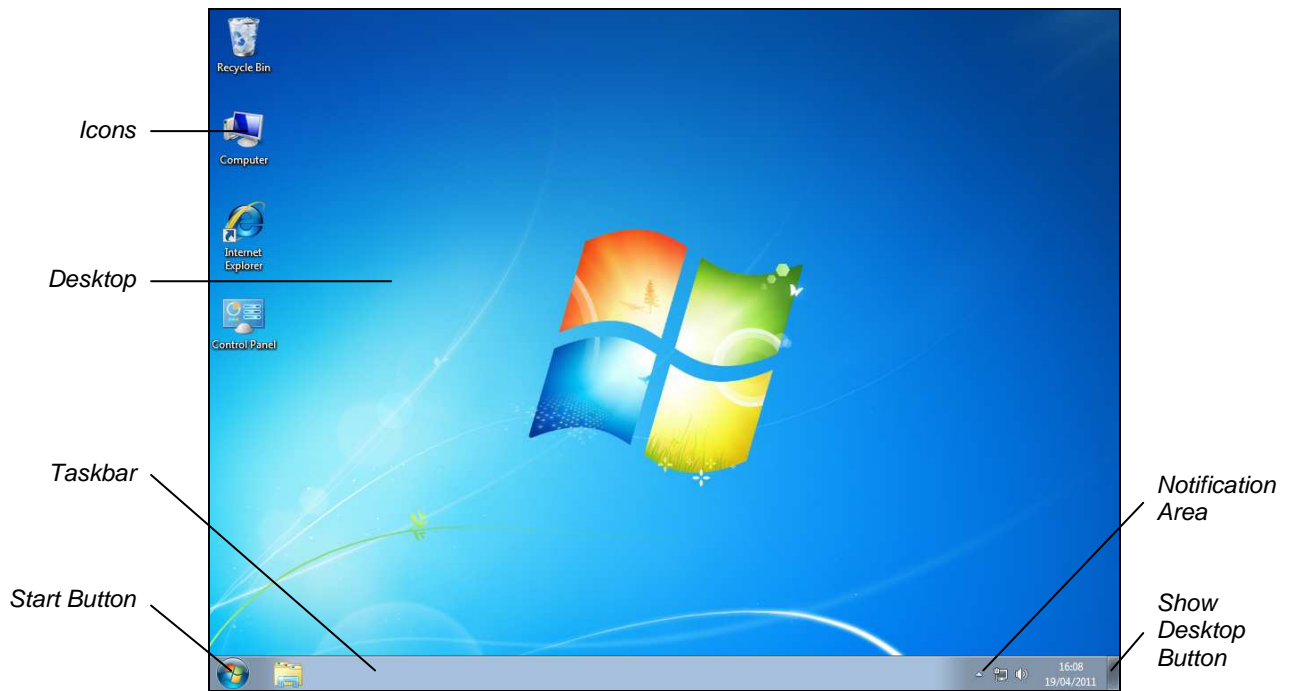
*Be careful not to forget a device’s password. If you do it is very difficult to regain access to your profile and private storage spaces.*

3. After a moment the *Windows Desktop* is displayed. Please continue to the next lesson.

# Driving Lesson 14 - The Windows Desktop

## **P** Park and Read

When you have successfully logged on, the *Windows Desktop* will be displayed. This is the starting point for all tasks performed in *Windows*. From here it is possible to start all the programs installed on the computer and access all of the utilities and features of the operating system.



*Windows can be customised according to your own preferences and that of the organisation which licenses it. Nearly every aspect of its appearance can be changed. For this reason, the screens shown in this guide may not quite match that of your computer. The basic layout and functionality, however, should be exactly the same.*

The **Icons** that appear on the **Desktop** represent a small selection of the programs, folders and files stored on the computer. As you will learn later in this guide, they are small pictures that you usually “double click” to start or open. Most icons are accompanied by a short label to help you identify their use.



Along the bottom of the **Desktop** is an area known as the **Taskbar**. This is used to start, access and manage running programs and usually remains on screen at all times. As you will see later, the **Start** button – on the left of the **Taskbar** – is used to start nearly all programs and *Windows* features.

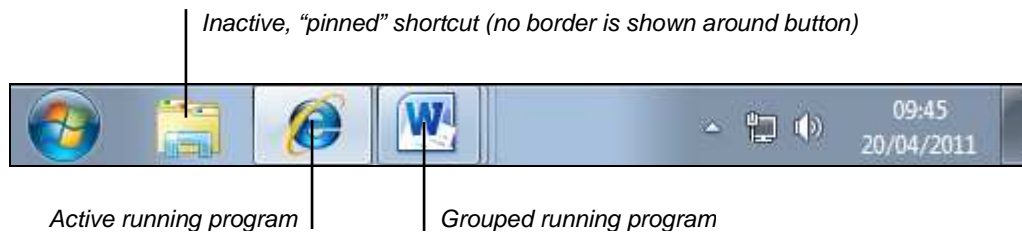


## Driving Lesson 14 - Continued

More than one program can be run at the same time (this is known as **multi-tasking**), and as each program is started, it becomes active and a specific icon for it appears on the **Taskbar**. If the same program is opened many times, *Windows* may group icons together to save space.

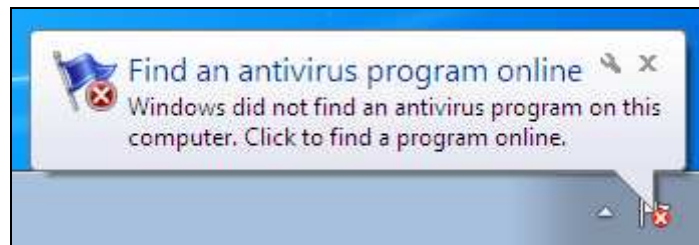


The background of the currently active program icon is lighter than the others and appears with a border around it.



You can **Pin** your favourite programs to the **Taskbar** to make them easier to access. To do this, right click a program's icon and select **Pin to Taskbar**. Pinned items appear on the **Taskbar** but are not active until you click them.

The **Notification Area** on the right of the **Taskbar** displays the date and time. On occasion, short status messages and alerts from *Windows* may also appear here. These are usually important and you should pay attention to them.



Some programs also install small icons in the **Notification Area** to provide status updates and allow you to quickly access settings (which you can do by "double-clicking" them, i.e. quickly clicking the left mouse button twice).



The **Show Desktop** button found to the far right of the **Taskbar** can be used to "minimise" (or hide) all windows and display the **Desktop**.



### Manoeuvres

1. Examine your own **Desktop** and identify all of the features described above. You will learn more about these features in the following lessons.
2. In particular, locate the **Recycle Bin**, the **Taskbar**, the **Start** button, the **Notification Area** and the **Show Desktop** button.

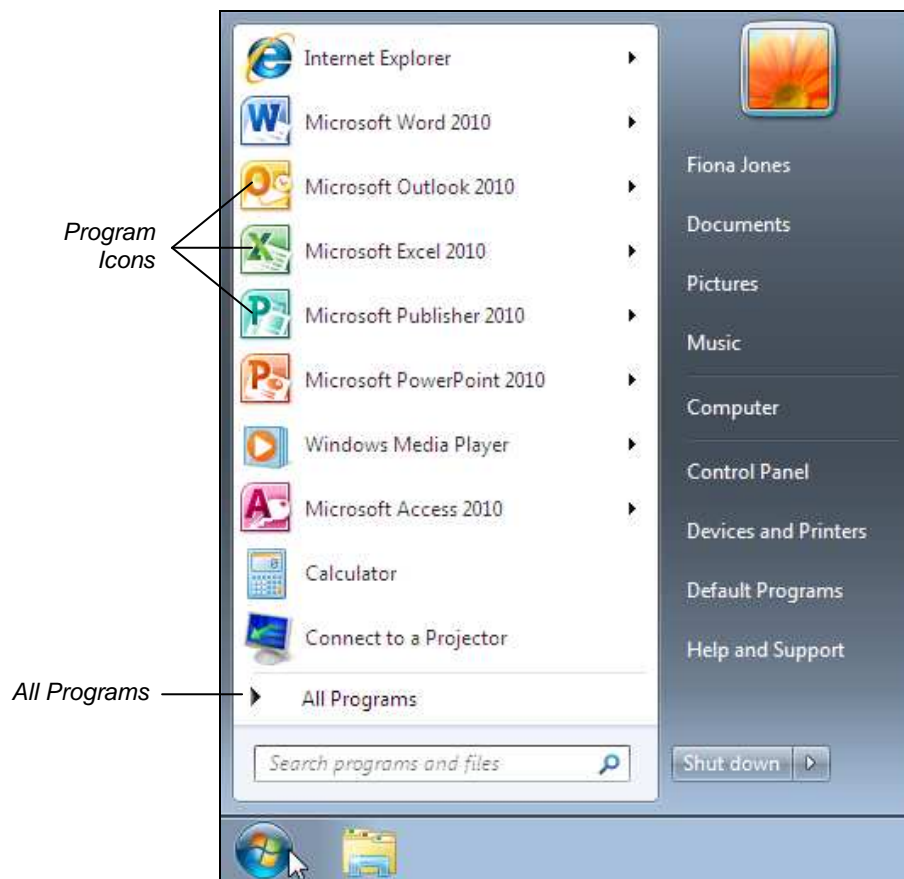
# Driving Lesson 15 - The Start Menu

## **P** Park and Read

At the left of the **Taskbar** is the **Start** button. Clicking the **Start** button opens the **Start Menu** which can be used to “run” any program installed on your computer. The **Start Menu** can also be used to search for information, access private files and folders, find help and support, and control your computer’s settings.

## Manoeuvres

1. From the *Windows Desktop*, click the **Start** button. The **Start Menu** appears.



*A list of commonly used programs appears on the left of the **Start Menu**. These programs can be started by simply clicking them once. All programs (and often the files they create) have distinctive and representative icons to help you identify them at a glance. Observe the various icons that appear as you progress through this guide.*

2. Notice the buttons on the right of the **Start Menu**. These provide fast access to your private files and folders and allow you to access computer settings and find additional help and support.

## Driving Lesson 15 - Continued

3. Without clicking, locate and familiarise yourself with the following buttons. Some of these will be used later in this guide.

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Documents</b>            | a private document storage location  |
| <b>Pictures</b>             | a private picture storage location   |
| <b>Music</b>                | a private music storage location   |
| <b>Computer</b>             | gives access to hardware and peripherals connected to your computer                      |
| <b>Control Panel</b>        | allows control over your computer's settings   |
| <b>Devices and Printers</b> | lets you to view, add, manage or remove peripheral devices and printers                  |
| <b>Default Programs</b>     | allows you to choose the programs that <i>Windows</i> uses by default for specific tasks |
| <b>Help and Support</b>     | gives access to the <i>Windows</i> help system   |



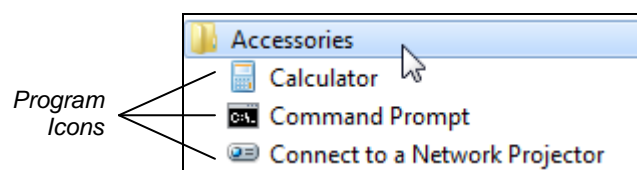
As you will learn later, the **Shut down** button can be used to turn off or restart your computer. If there are any updates for your computer, these can be installed before shutting down.

4. Click **All Programs** towards the bottom of the left area of the **Start Menu**. A list containing all of the programs installed on your computer is shown.



As you will see later, programs can be started by clicking their icon once.

5. Some programs are grouped into folders. Click on the **Accessories** folder once to **expand** it and display the contents.



6. Next, click on the **System Tools** folder to expand it.



7. Click the **Start** button again to close the **Start Menu**. Alternatively, simply click away from the **Start Menu** to close it.

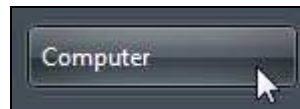
# Driving Lesson 16 - Window Layout

## **P** Park and Read

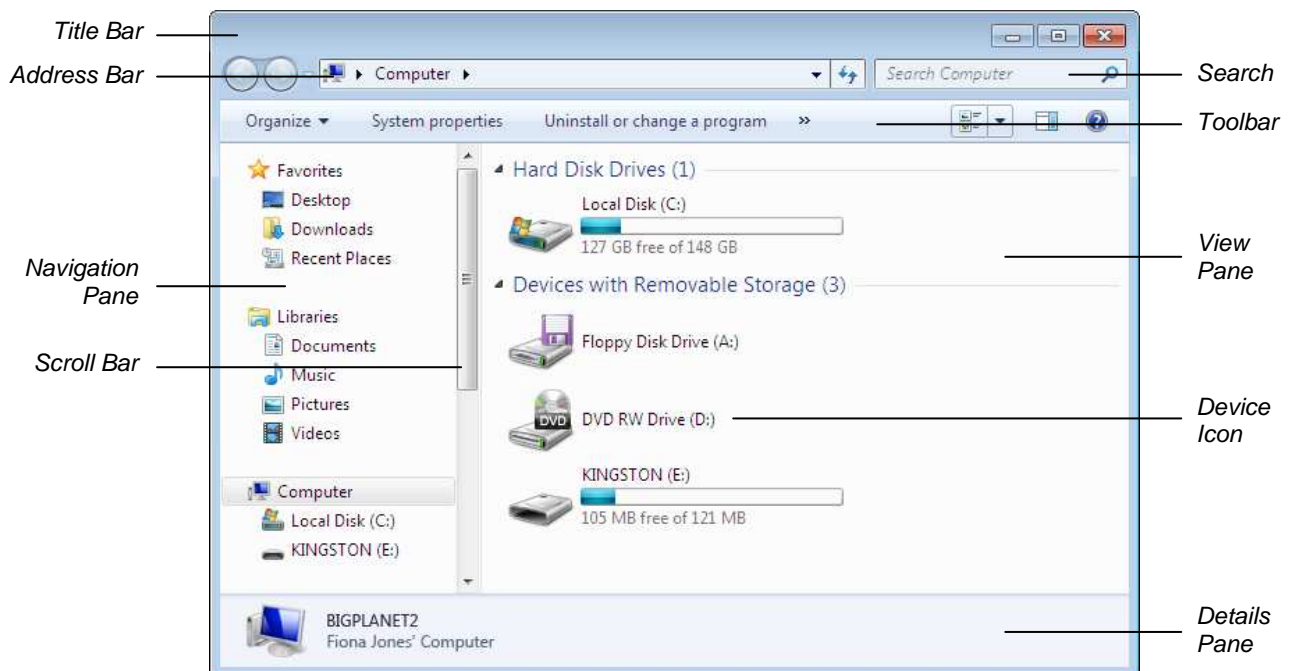
Windows are rectangular boxes that appear on the **Desktop** and can be dragged around to any position and size you like. Inside a window, you can interact with programs, adjust computer settings, and manage files and folders. Many windows can be open at the same time and each can perform a variety of different, simultaneous tasks.


## Manoeuvres


1. Click the **Start** button and then click **Computer** from the right of the **Start Menu**.



2. The **Computer** view is opened in a window. This view shows any and all storage devices that are currently connected to your computer (you may see a different set of icons).



 This type of window is known as a **Windows Explorer** window. It allows you to navigate through the storage devices and folders on your computer. The **Address Bar** shows the current folder name that is on view in the window.

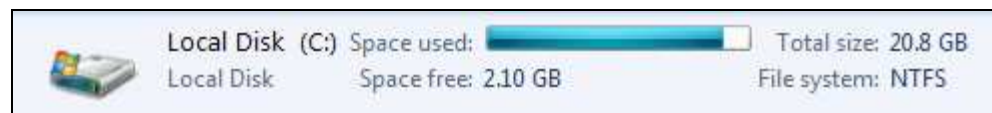
 If your window does not appear with the **Navigation Pane** and **Details Pane** as shown above, click the **Organize** button on the **Toolbar** and select **Layout**. Make sure **Details Pane** and **Navigation Pane** are selected.

## Driving Lesson 16 - Continued

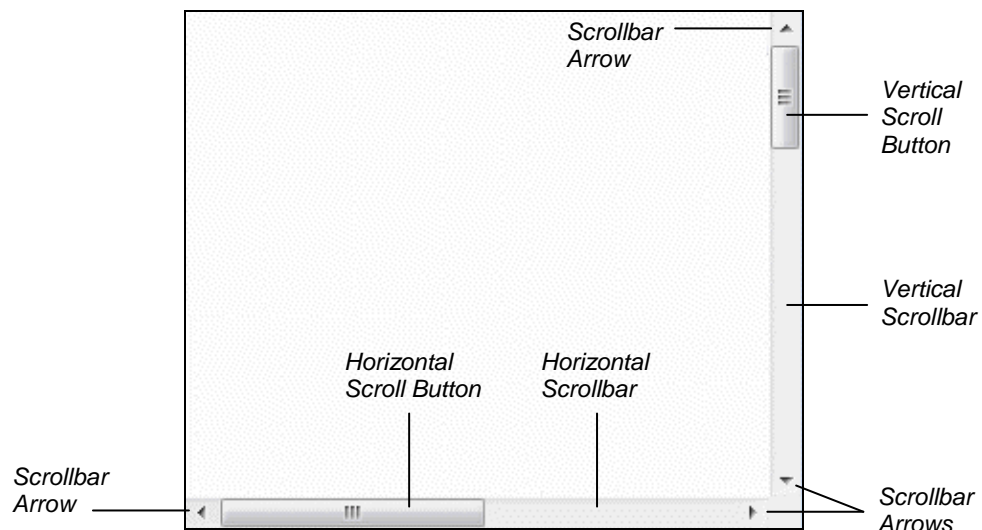


The **Title Bar** can be used to drag a window to another location. For windows containing programs/applications – which you will learn more about in the next section – it is also used to show the name of the program.

3. Locate the **Toolbar**. This is a row of buttons that allow you to perform simple tasks such as creating new folders or changing the current view.
4. Notice the **Navigation Pane** on the left of the window. This can be used to explore the folder structure of your computer. The contents of the selected folder will appear in the **View Pane**.
5. Brief information about any selected files, folders, devices and settings is shown in the **Details Pane**. Select one of the storage device icons shown on the **View Pane** (e.g. **Local Disk (C:)**) to find out more about it.



6. Find the **Search** box to the right of the **Address Bar**. This feature allows you to search for files and folders stored on your device.
7. Finally, whenever a window's contents are too big to view in one go, **scrollbars** are used. A vertical scrollbar allows you to move your view of the window's contents up and down; a horizontal scrollbar allows for side-to-side scrolling.



The position and size of the scroll buttons on a scrollbar indicate the relative view currently displayed in the window. The window's view can be moved by clicking the scrollbar arrows or by dragging the scroll button.



You will learn more about all of the features described above as you progress through this guide.

# Driving Lesson 17 - Working with Windows

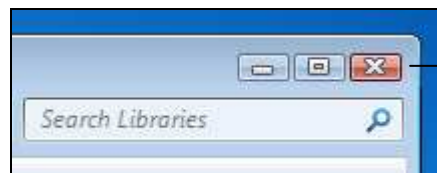
## **P** Park and Read

Once opened, a window can be **maximised** (filling the whole screen), **minimised** (appearing only as an active button on the **Taskbar**), or **restored** (to any size in-between). If a window is *not* maximised, the size and position of it can also be changed.



## Manoeuvres


1. Notice the three **Window Control Buttons** at the top right of the **Computer** window's **Title Bar**: **Minimize**, , **Maximize**, , and **Close**, .





Windows control buttons

2. The **Maximize** button increases the size of the window to the maximum size available. If the **Computer** window is not maximised already, click the **Maximize** button now.



*If the window is maximised, the **Maximize** button is replaced by the **Restore Down** button, . This restores the window to its last (non-maximised) size.*

3. Notice that the window now fills the screen. Click the **Restore Down** button, , to reduce the size of the window.
4. The **Minimize** button hides a window completely, leaving only its active button on the **Taskbar**. Click the **Minimize** button, , on the **Computer** window now.
5. When a window is minimised, the program or task inside the window continues to run. The **Computer** window can be restored by clicking its **Taskbar** button. Do that now.





6. Move the mouse pointer over the **Title Bar** of the **Computer** window. Click and drag the window to a new location anywhere else on the screen.



*You can drag a window to the far left or right side of the **Desktop** to have it automatically resized to fill that half of the screen. Dragging to the top will maximise it.*

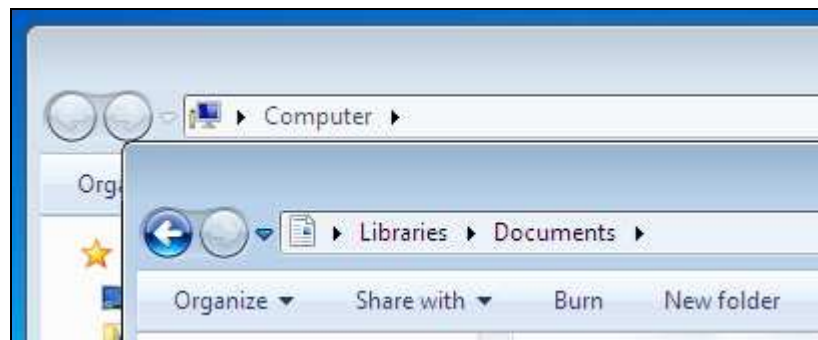
## Driving Lesson 17 - Continued

7. The size of the window can also be changed. Move the mouse pointer over the right edge of the window until the pointer changes to a double headed arrow. 
8. Click and drag to increase or decrease the width of the window. The same technique can be used to increase or decrease the size of the window in all four directions.
9. The size of a window can be changed in two directions at once. Place the mouse pointer over the bottom left or right corner of the window so that it changes to a two headed diagonal arrow. 
10. Click and drag to increase or decrease the size of the window.

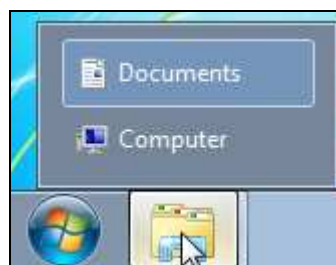


*If more than one window is open at a time, they will overlap. The active window will always appear on top.*

11. Click the **Start** button and then click **Documents** from the right of the **Start Menu**. A second window is opened that shows your private documents. Drag the **Documents** window so that it appears on top of the **Computer** window (if it is not already).



12. Notice that the **Taskbar** has automatically “grouped” the two **Windows Explorer** windows. Click the **Taskbar** button and a pop-up appears above allowing you to select which window you would like to activate.




13. Select **Computer** to activate that window and bring it to the front. Click anywhere on the **Documents** window behind to bring it to the top again.



*You can also move between active windows by holding down <Alt> and pressing <Tab>.*


# Driving Lesson 18 - Closing Windows

## Park and Read

The **Close** button, , found towards the top right of every window, closes that window. Any processes running within it are also stopped. For example, when running a program, closing its window will also end the program.



## Manoeuvres

1. Click the **Close** button, , in the top right of the **Documents** window. The window is closed.



Notice that the **Documents** icon on the **Taskbar** is no longer active.

2. Similarly, close the **Computer** window leaving only your **Desktop** on-screen.



Windows can also be closed by right clicking their buttons on the **Taskbar** and selecting **Close window**.



The keyboard shortcut **<Alt F4>** will also close the currently active window.