

TOM ERSIN

professional portfolio: Feature, Business, & Technical Writer / Web Editor / Author

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Computer Baby Steps for Adults

A tech manual with a plot (and a heart)

2008

Computer Baby Steps for Adults

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Computer Baby Steps for Adults

INTRODUCTION

In nearly every business office, government agency, or family home, there are intelligent people who have not yet grasped basic computer skills. It can be some form of mental block for them. Like many adults who can't read, the computer illiterates often develop tricks and excuses to hide their illiteracy: "I don't use email — it's too impersonal"; or "I think better when I write with a pen." The longer they hide their condition, the more their embarrassment stops them from seeking help.

Presidential candidates have been scrutinized for their lack of computer savvy. Attorneys can no longer use the excuse of computer illiteracy to withhold evidence (Losey, 2007). Heads of high-tech government agencies are being pressed to explain their attachment to old, low-tech methods (pen and paper) of administration and communication (Maggs, 2001). If any of this sounds familiar, it's time to get started. Remember how you eventually learned to ride your first two-wheeler bike, as hard as that seemed at the time.

This manual is for the intelligent person who has put off learning basic computer skills. We understand: You may have been keeping this secret. But you're with friends, now. We know you have little prior knowledge of computers, so we've laid out the terms and concepts in plain, everyday language. You won't be judged or belittled here. We specialize in a unique category of student — mature adults who missed the initial computer wave.

We'll spoon-feed the material in small bites so you won't choke on it. And when you graduate, we'll lovingly nudge you out of the nest, brimming with the newfound confidence you'll have in your ability to search for and find almost any information you'll ever need. This program is not a comprehensive user manual. It is a primer for the digitally timid, designed to start you on the road to learning how to learn computers.

We have included a comprehensive glossary. Make this glossary your best friend. Put aside time for it. When it is speaking to you, give it your full attention, as if it were the most important glossary on earth. Compliment it now and then on a new outfit. Surprise your glossary occasionally; send the kids to Grandma's and plan an intimate rendezvous at home, just the two of you. But never, EVER, dispute your glossary's word when the two of you are with friends.

We'll be dealing with the Microsoft (MS) versions of programs (aka "software" or "applications"), including MS Windows XP (their "operating system" program), Internet Explorer (their "browser" program), MS Word (their word processing program), and Outlook Express (their basic email program). If you are using different software than what's featured here, the steps will probably be similar, though the look of the screen might be different. Our diagrams probably won't be exact duplicates of what your screen views look like. Try to find the similarities, rather than focusing on differences.

These instructions assume the following:

- Your computer is already powered-up (turned on).
- Your computer has a “desktop” displayed on your screen that indicates you have MS Windows installed on your computer.
- Your computer is already online (connected to the Internet).
- You are already somewhat familiar with the operation of a mouse.
- Your email program is already set up for you, and you have an email address.

Familiarize yourself with the glossary definitions. The accurate use of terms is important for communication, and a large portion of your computer competence will come from understanding their meanings. All of the relevant glossary terms for each procedure are highlighted in yellow upon their first appearance. Review those terms thoroughly before you start each task. **We suggest printing the glossary as a separate document and keeping it handy.** You will be referring to it frequently.

Remember: This is not rocket science. You will get this stuff and have fun doing it. Together we'll be accomplishing the tasks that follow. And soon you'll be flying solo.

- **Internet**
 - You will launch (open) your website browser.
 - You will access (view) several specific websites.
 - You will create and save bookmarks/favorites so you can easily return to these websites.
 - You will access a search engine and conduct an Internet search on a specific subject.
- **Email**
 - You will launch (open) an email program.
 - You will check for new email messages sent to you.
 - You will create and send an email message.
- **Word Processing**
 - You will launch (open) MS Word.
 - You will create a document.
 - You will name and save that document as a file on your computer.
 - You will retrieve an existing document in MS Word.
- **Learning how to Learn**
 - You will learn some of the basic logic of figuring out unfamiliar tasks on a computer and how many procedures transfer or overlap to other tasks.

GLOSSARY

(Words that are ALL CAPITAL letters refer to other glossary entries.)

account – short for WEBSITE ACCOUNT, this is where you have to sign up to use a WEBSITE. You sign up by entering some personal information and creating a USERNAME and PASSWORD. Upon future visits to the SITE, you enter your USERNAME and PASSWORD to access the site.

address (URL) – the string of letters and symbols that make up the name of a WEB SITE location. Like home addresses, no two WEB ADDRESSES are exactly alike.

address window – [SEE URL / ADDRESS WINDOW] (see Fig. G.13).

application – an item of SOFTWARE, synonymous with PROGRAM. Some examples are MS WORD (WORD PROCESSING PROGRAM), INTERNET EXPLORER (BROWSER SOFTWARE), ITUNES (music player PROGRAM), and MS WINDOWS (OPERATING SYSTEM).

arrow – [SEE MOUSE POINTER] (see Fig. G.8) [SEE BACK or FORWARD ARROW BUTTON] (see Fig. G.1).

back arrow button – the left-ARROW at the top of your BROWSER. When CLICKED,



Fig. G.1 – Back arrow button on Internet Explorer

the BACK ARROW BUTTON will direct your BROWSER to the PAGE(s) that you were previously on, one at a time, in backward, chronological succession (see Fig. G.1).

bookmark – a **LINK** to a **WEBSITE** that you save in your **BROWSER's BOOKMARK** (or **FAVORITES**) **FOLDER**. The term **BOOKMARK** is synonymous with **FAVORITES** (see Fig. 1.6).

browser – the **SOFTWARE** you use to view **WEBSITES** (**INTERNET EXPLORER**, **Firefox**, **Safari**, etc.) (see Fig. G.2).



Fig. G.2 – Internet Explorer screenshot

burn – to **record** to a CD or a DVD.

button – a **LINK** on your **computer screen** that is usually in the image of a literal **BUTTON** (rectangular or circular shaped). An example is the **START BUTTON** at the extreme lower-left corner of your **MS WINDOWS DESKTOP** [**ALSO, SEE MOUSE**].

byte – a **unit of digital (computer) MEMORY** or resources. It takes approximately 1 byte to store 1 letter of the alphabet.

byte (B)	= 1 byte	1 B	= approx. 1 letter of text
kilobyte (KB)	= 1000 bytes	1 KB	= approx. 165 words of text
megabyte (MB)	= 1000 kilobytes	50 MB	= approx. 10 MP3 or 1 CD song
gigabyte (GB)	= 1000 megabytes	1 GB	= approx. ¼ of a DVD movie
terabyte (TB)	= 1000 gigabytes	1 TB	= approx. 250 DVD movies

CD disc drive – the mechanism (**HARDWARE**) in a computer that **plays or reads CDs**.

case sensitive – indicates that a term **must be typed exactly as it is shown** — capital letters typed in uppercase (capitals), and lowercase letters typed in non-capitals.

click – place (HOVER) the MOUSE POINTER over the item (FILE, location, BUTTON, or ICON) that you want to ACTIVATE; then **press-and-release, usually, the LEFT MOUSE BUTTON**. [SEE *LEFT-CLICK* or *RIGHT-CLICK*]. On some computer systems you may have to **DOUBLE-LEFT-CLICK** [SEE *DOUBLE-CLICK*] (see Fig. G.7).

click-and-drag - [SEE *DRAG*] (see Fig. G.7).

click-and-hold - place (HOVER) the MOUSE POINTER over the item (FILE, location, BUTTON, or ICON) that you want to ACTIVATE; then **press-and-hold-down the LEFT MOUSE BUTTON** (see Fig. G.7).

close program button – the **right one of 3 small horizontal gray BUTTONS**, labeled

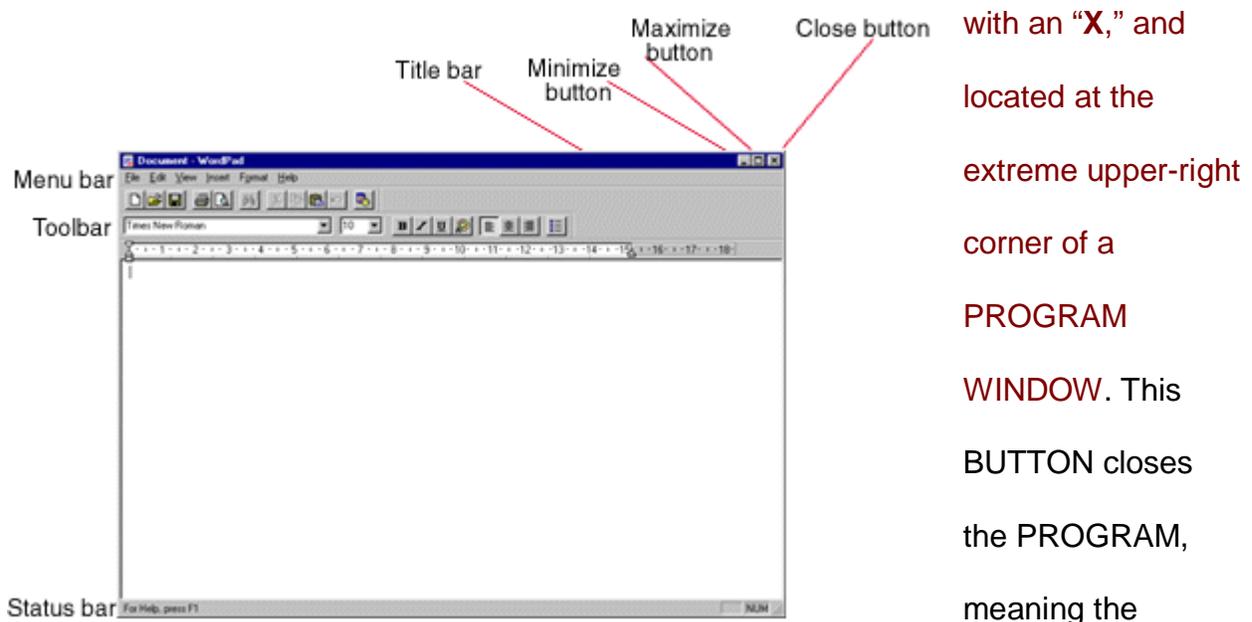


Fig. G.3 – MS Word screenshot

PROGRAM is no longer LOADED and ready to be operated (see Fig. G.2).

cursor – the **small blinking (usually vertical) line** that indicates text is ready to be input at this spot. If you typed something and it did not show up, or it appeared in the “wrong” place, it is probably because your CURSOR was not positioned properly. This is accomplished by moving your MOUSE POINTER to the spot you want to input text, then LEFT-CLICKING your MOUSE.

DVD disk drive – the mechanism (HARDWARE) in a computer that **plays or reads DVD's**. DVD's hold about 6 times more DATA (information) than a CD.

desktop – the **initial view of your computer screen, with ICONs**, after MS WINDOWS has LOADED but before any PROGRAMS (SOFTWARE) are LAUNCHED (started). Yours will look different (see Fig. G.4).



Fig. G.4 – MS Windows desktop

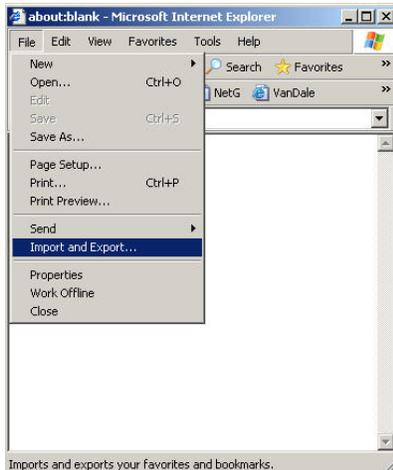
double-click – **two LEFT-CLICKS** performed quickly and close together (like a quick *knock-knock* on a door).

disc – a **CD-like disc** that holds SOFTWARE and other DATA to be accessed by inserting it into the computer's CD (or DVD) DRIVE. DISCS can be factory produced or recorded (BURNED) by an individual. Examples are CD-ROM DISC, DVD-ROM DISC, SOFTWARE DISC, MUSIC CD DISC, and MOVIE DVD DISC.

download – the **act of obtaining an item of SOFTWARE or a digital FILE from a location on the INTERNET** and having it transferred to your computer. **DOWNLOAD** is also a noun that refers to the SOFTWARE or FILE you DOWNLOADED or that is available to be DOWNLOADED.

drag – place (HOVER) MOUSE POINTER over an item that you want to move (DRAG); then **press-and-hold-down** the LEFT MOUSE BUTTON while you move (DRAG) the MOUSE POINTER (and thus the chosen item) to wherever you want the item to go; then release the LEFT MOUSE BUTTON (see Fig. G.7).

drop-down box – a BUTTON that you LEFT-CLICK or HOVER over to display a menu



(in a column / box, just below the BUTTON) of additional choices (see Fig. G.5).

Fig. G.5 – Drop-down box

email – short for ELECTRONIC MAIL, EMAIL is the sending and receiving of electronic messages over the INTERNET. This is performed with an EMAIL PROGRAM, such as MS OUTLOOK EXPRESS or MS OUTLOOK. Many people prefer using a WEB-BASED EMAIL PROGRAM, such as Yahoo Mail, or Hotmail. WEB-BASED PROGRAMS allow the user to access their EMAIL from any computer on the INTERNET, not just from their home (host) computer (see Fig. 2.1).

error message – a message that appears on your screen to indicate that the action you just tried to perform will not work for some reason. This could be a mistake on your part (the usual cause) or a problem with the computer or its connection(s). But don't worry about hurting the computer — they are very difficult to break.

favorites – Microsoft's term for BOOKMARKS [SEE BOOKMARK] (see Fig. 1.6).

file – individual piece of DATA, such as a single MS WORD document (*analogous to a paper document*).

folder – collection of FILES that are usually related (*analogous to a manila file folder in a filing cabinet*).

forward arrow button – the right-pointing ARROW at the top of your BROWSER.

When CLICKED, the FORWARD ARROW BUTTON will direct your BROWSER to the WEB PAGE(s) that you were previously on, one at a time, in forward chronological succession (see Fig. G.1).

gigabyte (GB) – 1000 megabytes (MB) [SEE BYTE].

Google – a SEARCH ENGINE, it is probably the most well-known on the INTERNET.

GOOGLE also has other functions besides operating as a SEARCH ENGINE (see Fig. 1.7). {NOTE: “to Google” is NOT a proper verb form meaning “to (Internet) search.” There many other SEARCH ENGINES that work just as well. You wouldn’t call all facial tissues “Kleenex” would you? ... well, maybe that’s a bad example.}

graphic (noun) – a photo, drawing, logo, graph, etc. Usually refers to any visual item that is not standard TEXT, though TEXT may be incorporated into a GRAPHIC.

hard drive – an area of the computer that holds large amounts of DATA, often including an OPERATING SYSTEM and many FOLDERS, each holding a group of FILES (*analogous to the office filing cabinet*). Your main DRIVE, if not your only DRIVE, will usually be named “C” DRIVE. [SEE MEMORY]. HARD DRIVES can be **internal** (most common - installed inside the computer and is semi-permanent) or **external** (sits outside of the computer in its own case, needing a cable-data connection to the computer and its own power connection to an AC outlet).

hardware – any physical computer component, inside or outside the computer, which you can actually touch.

help file – the information found in the DROP-DOWN MENU under the HELP BUTTON that gives instructions or TUTORIALs on how to use that PROGRAM. Almost all PROGRAMs have a HELP FILE.

highlight (noun) – the setting-off or emphasis of a SELECTION of TEXT. For example, a white background may change to navy blue, or the TEXT color may change for the SELECTED TEXT.

highlight (verb) – place (HOVER) the MOUSE POINTER at the beginning of TEXT you wish to SELECT (HIGHLIGHT); DRAG (press-and-hold-down LEFT MOUSE BUTTON while moving MOUSE POINTER) to the end of the desired TEXT you wish to SELECT; then release LEFT MOUSE BUTTON (see Fig. G.7).

home page – the main PAGE of a WEBSITE. Think of the HOME PAGE usually as a book's cover combined with its table of contents.

hover – placing the MOUSE POINTER over a LINK without CLICKING (without pressing-and-releasing) any MOUSE BUTTON. A LINK usually becomes HIGHLIGHTED while the MOUSE POINTER is HOVERING over it.

hyperlink – [SEE LINK].

hypertext – the specialized TEXT used on the INTERNET and individual computers to form HYPERLINKS. When LEFT-CLICKED, HYPERLINKS automatically bring up the document or WEB PAGE that it refers (points) to [SEE LINK].

icon – a symbol or small picture that opens (LAUNCHES) an item of SOFTWARE or a FILE or FOLDER. This is accomplished by HOVERING your MOUSE POINTER

over the ICON, then LEFT-CLICKING it. ICONS are found on your DESKTOP, in the START MENU, on WEB PAGES, and other places.

Internet – a global digital communications network that connects smaller computer networks and individual computers to each other for accessing information.

INTERNET is often used as a synonym for *WEB* or *WORLDWIDE WEB*, though there is a technical difference: INTERNET = the computers; WORLDWIDE WEB = all of the websites on those computers.

Internet Explorer – Microsoft's **WEB BROWSER** (see Fig. G.2).

iTunes – Apple's music player SOFTWARE.

ITUNES is one of the most common music players, and it can be used for recording (BURNING) CDs containing your choice of songs that reside in your ITUNES FOLDER (see Fig. G.6).



Fig. G.6 – iTunes screenshot

jump drive – a small, portable HARD DRIVE, usually pocket-sized, which can be easily moved between computers. It holds approx. 1 – 10 GB's (GIGABYTES) of DATA and needs no power cable.

kilobyte (KB) – 1000 bytes (B) [SEE BYTE].

launch – to start up an item of SOFTWARE. For instance, we LAUNCH a BROWSER to begin accessing (SURFING) the INTERNET (NET).

left-click – place (HOVER) the MOUSE POINTER over an item that you want to ACTIVATE; then press-and-release the LEFT MOUSE BUTTON (see Fig. G.7). (LEFT-CLICK is often referred to as simply CLICK.)

link – short for HYPERLINK, it's a **section of TEXT, a GRAPHIC, or a photo that you LEFT-CLICK to take you to another WEBSITE or another PAGE on the same SITE.**

A LINK usually becomes HIGHLIGHTED while the MOUSE POINTER is HOVERING over it. A TEXT LINK is usually underlined, though not always.

load – the **act of LAUNCHING an item of SOFTWARE and having it ready to operate.**

This generally takes 10 - 30 seconds or more from the moment of LAUNCHING.

MS – **Microsoft**, the large SOFTWARE company that makes the products outlined in this document, including MS WINDOWS OPERATING SYSTEM (SOFTWARE).

MS Windows – **Microsoft's OPERATING SYSTEM.** Examples of different versions are MS WINDOWS 98, MS WINDOWS 2000, MS WINDOWS XP, and MS WINDOWS Vista.

MS Word – Microsoft's **WORD PROCESSING PROGRAM** (see Fig. G.3).

maximize window button – the **middle one of 3 small horizontal gray BUTTONS labeled with one square and located at the extreme upper-right corner of a PROGRAM WINDOW.** This BUTTON increases the size of the PROGRAM's viewing WINDOW to fill the entire screen (see Fig. G.3).

megabyte (MB) – **1000 kilobytes (KB)** [SEE BYTE].

memory – there are 2 primary types of computer MEMORY: 1) RAM (RANDOM ACCESS MEMORY), which **holds FILE and PROGRAM DATA** that is in use at the moment, and which only lasts while the computer is powered-on; and 2) (semi-) permanent MEMORY, which stores DATA on a HARD DRIVE, CD, DVD, JUMP DRIVE, etc., and which remains in tact even after power is turned off.

menu – a **list of LINKS**, any one of which can be **LEFT-CLICKED** to take you to another **WEB PAGE** or the next in a succession of steps.

minimize window button – the **left one of 3 small horizontal gray BUTTONS** labeled with one short horizontal line at the bottom and located at the **extreme upper-right corner of a PROGRAM WINDOW**. This **BUTTON** takes the **PROGRAM** off your screen without **CLOSING** the **PROGRAM**. You know it is still open by its **BUTTON** remaining visible on the **TASK BAR** at bottom of your **DESKTOP** (see Fig. G.3).

{**NOTE:** To get an **OPEN PROGRAM** back on the **SCREEN**, **LEFT-CLICK** its rectangular **BUTTON** at the very bottom of your screen on the **TASK BAR** (see Fig. G.12).}

mouse – **hand-held controller that you slide around in a small area on your desk**. The movement of the **MOUSE** controls the location of the **MOUSE POINTER** on your computer screen. Whenever your **MOUSE** seems to run out of space on your desk, pick it up and move it back to the center of its area.

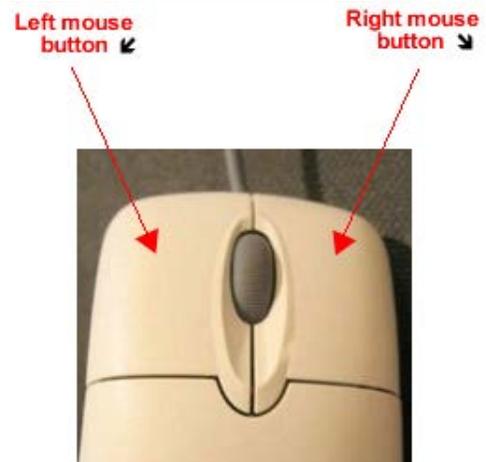
There are 2 **BUTTONS** at the forward or top side of the **MOUSE**: a **LEFT MOUSE BUTTON** and a **RIGHT MOUSE BUTTON** [SEE **LEFT-CLICK** and **RIGHT-CLICK**]. A **MOUSE** may also have a small **SCROLL WHEEL** between the **BUTTONS** for **SCROLLING** [SEE **SCROLL**] (see Fig. G.7).

mouse pointer – the **ARROW** (or other symbol) that indicates where you are on the screen as you move your **MOUSE** (see Fig. G.8).



Fig. G.8 – Mouse pointer

Fig. G.7 – Mouse and its buttons



net – short for **INTERNET**.

ones and zeros – [SEE **ZEROS AND ONES**].

open – a **PROGRAM** is **OPEN** if it has been **LAUNCHED** and is ready to be operated.

operating system (OS) – the **item of SOFTWARE** that allows a computer to operate.

The **OPERATING SYSTEM** forms a digital **PLATFORM** for all other **SOFTWARE** to run on. The most well-known **OPERATING SYSTEM** is **MS WINDOWS**.

Outlook – Microsoft's **advanced EMAIL PROGRAM**.

Outlook Express – Microsoft's **basic EMAIL PROGRAM** (see Fig. 2.1).

page - the **individual parts (or PAGES)** of a **WEBSITE**. Microsoft's **WEBSITE** consists of thousands of **WEB PAGES**, each exhibiting a different screenful of information.

password - a **secret term you create** when you sign up to use a **WEBSITE ACCOUNT**, such as eBay. A **PASSWORD** is usually used in conjunction with a **USERNAME**.

platform – usually refers to the **OPERATING SYSTEM** that is running your computer.

Examples are **MS WINDOWS** (the most common), **Macintosh**, **Linux**, etc.

pointer – [SEE **MOUSE POINTER**] (see Fig. G.8).

program – an **item of SOFTWARE**, synonymous with **APPLICATION**. Some examples are **MS WORD (WORD PROCESSING PROGRAM)**, **INTERNET EXPLORER (BROWSER SOFTWARE)**, **ITUNES (music player PROGRAM)**, and **MS EXCEL (spreadsheet PROGRAM)**.

RAM – **random access memory** [SEE **MEMORY**].

right-click – place (**HOVER**) the **MOUSE POINTER** over an item that you want to activate; then **press-and-release the RIGHT MOUSE BUTTON** (see Fig. G.7).

(This action often presents a MENU of choices, one of which would generally then be LEFT-CLICKED.)

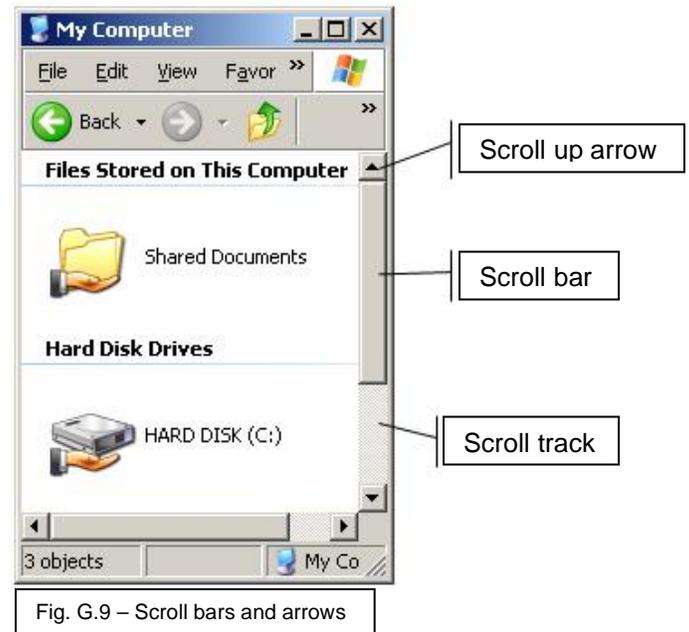
screenshot – a picture of a typical screen view of a given part of a PROGRAM.

scroll – to move UP or DOWN a WEB PAGE,

to bring other parts of the WEB PAGE

into view (see Fig. G.9). **To do this:**

- 1) Place (HOVER) the MOUSE POINTER over the SCROLL BAR (vertical bar at the far right of the SCREEN); press-and-hold-down the LEFT MOUSE BUTTON; then move the MOUSE POINTER (and thus the SCROLL BAR) up or down;
- 2) Place (HOVER) the MOUSE POINTER over the SCROLL UP ARROW (top-right of screen) or the SCROLL DOWN ARROW (bottom-right of screen); press-and-release or press-and-hold-down the SCROLL UP ARROW or the SCROLL DOWN ARROW to move (SCROLL) the WEB PAGE up or down;
- 3) Turn the SCROLL WHEEL on top of your MOUSE (if your MOUSE has a wheel).



scroll bar – [SEE SCROLL] (see Fig. G.9). **{NOTE: length of scroll bar will vary.}**

scroll down arrow – [SEE SCROLL] (see Fig. G.9).

scroll up arrow – [SEE SCROLL] (see Fig. G.9).

search engine – an **item of software that resides on the INTERNET (WEB-BASED)** that **allows you to SEARCH for information on the INTERNET** using key words. Once the key words are entered, the SEARCH ENGINE brings up a list of WEB PAGES related to those words. With practice, you will learn to differentiate between relevant and irrelevant SEARCH RESULTS (see Fig. 1.7).

search results – the **list of WEBSITES** that are produced by inputting key words to a SEARCH ENGINE (see Fig. 1.9).

select – usually means to **SELECT (HIGHLIGHT) TEXT [SEE HIGHLIGHT]**.

shortcut – an **ICON that is placed on your DESKTOP for quicker access to a PROGRAM, FILE, or FOLDER.**

site – **short for WEBSITE or WORLDWIDE WEBSITE.**

small window button – the **middle one of 3 small horizontal gray BUTTONS, labeled with 2 very small squares overlapping each other, and located at the extreme upper-right corner of a PROGRAM.** This BUTTON decreases the size of the PROGRAM'S viewing WINDOW (see Fig. G.3).

software – **PROGRAMS or APPLICATIONS that run on a computer (which is HARDWARE).** SOFTWARE consists only of DATA (ZEROS AND ONES) on a HARD DRIVE or a DISC (or on the INTERNET). These are the different tools that do such a wide variety of tasks using the computer to power them. Some examples are MS WORD (WORD PROCESSING PROGRAM), INTERNET EXPLORER (BROWSER SOFTWARE), ITUNES (music player PROGRAM), and MS Excel (spreadsheet SOFTWARE). Many business analysts praised Microsoft (MS) for

predicting early on that the SOFTWARE industry would be much bigger than the computer (HARDWARE) industry.

Start button – the small rectangular BUTTON at the extreme lower-left corner of your SCREEN that is labeled **Start**. This is where most of your computer activity will begin (see Fig. G.10).

Start menu – a MENU that contains most of the PROGRAMS (and LINKS to specific computer locations) that are available for use on your computer. It is accessed by LEFT-CLICKING the START BUTTON located at the extreme lower-left of your screen. This is where your computer activity usually starts (see Fig. G.10).

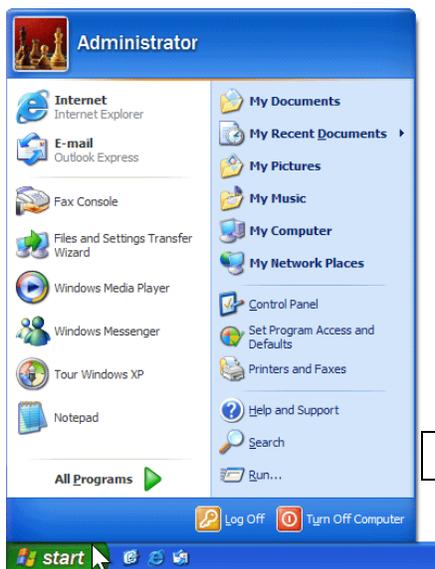


Fig. G.10 – Start button and Start menu

sub-menu – a secondary MENU that opens when a primary MENU item is LEFT-CLICKED or HOVERED over. This is usually in the form of a vertical BOX (see Fig. G.11).

suite – a collection of several PROGRAMS or APPLICATIONS in one package. An example is MS OFFICE SUITE, which contains MS WORD, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, MS Outlook, etc.

surfing – (or SURFING THE NET) – the act of randomly



Fig. G.11 – Sub-menu

accessing different WEBSITES. The concept of LINKS is the key here: one WEB PAGE will have LINKS to another and so on, which supplies a virtually unlimited trail of SITES to visit.

task bar – the vertical bar along the bottom of MS WINDOWS that displays the START



BUTTON, as well as BUTTONS for any other PROGRAMS that are OPEN (see Fig. G.12).

Fig. G.12 – Task bar

Installing the Address Tool Bar

terabyte (TB) – 1000 gigabytes (GB) [SEE BYTE].

text selection – the section of TEXT that you have HIGHLIGHTED.

text window – any (usually small and horizontal) WINDOW, similar to a URL / ADDRESS WINDOW, that accepts TEXT (see Fig. G.13).

tutorial – a step-by-step demonstration or narrative about how to operate a particular PROGRAM. Take advantage of these whenever they present themselves, usually in the HELP section.

URL – (UNIVERSAL RESOURCE LOCATOR) – address of a WEBSITE

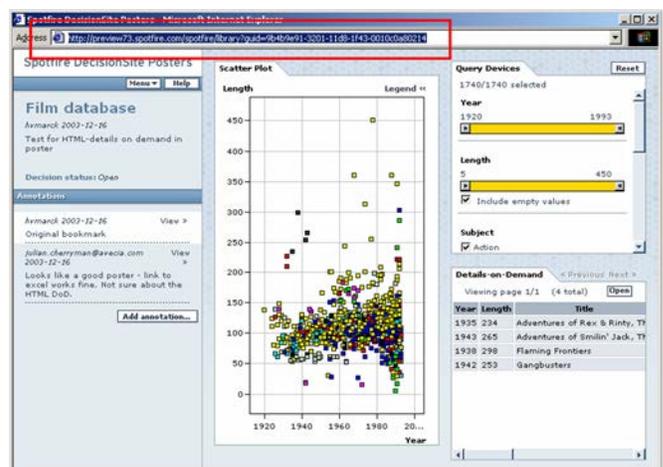


Fig. G.13 – URL / address window

(usually starts with *http:// ...* or *www ...*). No two are identical (see Fig. G.13).

URL / address window - narrow horizontal window located almost at the top of your **BROWSER**. This is where you type in a WEBSITE ADDRESS (e.g., *http://www.ebay.com/*) (see Fig. G.13).

update – similar to an **UPGRADE**, though usually consists of a lesser amount of change or improvement (and thus **DATA**).

upgrade – the adding of new features or improvements (in the form of a digital **FILE**) to an existing item of **SOFTWARE**. These can be either **DOWNLOADED** from the **INTERNET** to your computer or **LOADED** from a **DISC** to your computer.

UPGRADE is also a noun that refers to the **SOFTWARE** improvement, the **FILE** you **DOWNLOADED**, or the **FILE** that is available to be **DOWNLOADED**.

username – a name you create when you sign up to use a **WEBSITE ACCOUNT**, such as eBay. A **USERNAME** is usually used in conjunction with a **PASSWORD**.

Web – short for **WORLDWIDE WEB** [SEE *WORLDWIDE WEB*].

Web-based – refers to **SOFTWARE** that resides on a computer somewhere on the **INTERNET**, rather than on your own computer. Some examples are Yahoo Mail (a **WEB BASED EMAIL PROGRAM**), TurboTax on the Web income tax **SOFTWARE** (as opposed to buying the package with the **DISC**), and all **SEARCH ENGINES**.

Web browser – [SEE *BROWSER*] (see Fig. G.2).

Web page – (short for **WORLDWIDE WEB PAGE**) – a single **PAGE** on the **INTERNET**.

A **PAGE** is one computer screen's worth of information (though you may have to **SCROLL** up, down, or sideways to see it all) (see Fig. G.9).

website – (short for WORLDWIDE WEBSITE) – a **group of related PAGES on the INTERNET**. For instance, GOOGLE is a WEBSITE that consists of many WEB PAGES, such as their *search* SITE, *shopping* SITE, *news* SITE, etc.

window – a **particular screen view of a part of a PROGRAM**. As you perform different tasks, different WINDOWS may open up to show succeeding steps in a process or choices to make. [ALSO, SEE *TEXT WINDOW*] [ALSO, SEE *URL / ADDRESS WINDOW*].

Windows – [SEE *MS WINDOWS*].

Windows Explorer – the **PROGRAM within WINDOWS that allows you to see everything that is on your computer in WINDOWS “outline form.”** WINDOWS EXPLORER is also useful for organizing and moving FOLDERS and FILES.

Word – [SEE *MS WORD*] (see Fig. 3.1).

word processing program – a **program used to create, save, and edit TEXT documents**. The most common of these is MS WORD (see Fig. 3.1).

Worldwide Web (WWW) – the **collection or system of interlinked documents that are accessed on the INTERNET**. These documents (or WEB PAGES) are connected to each other using HYPERLINKS (or LINKS). *WORLDWIDE WEB (WWW)* or *WEB* is often used as a synonym for *INTERNET*, though there is a technical difference. *WORLDWIDE WEB* (or *WEB*) and *INTERNET* are proper names, which explains the capitalization of the first letter(s).

zeros and ones – a **playful synonym for DATA**. This refers to the fact that all computer DATA is constructed of ZEROS AND ONES — billions and trillions of ZEROS AND ONES.

THE INTERNET – INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction to the Internet

Accessing the Internet has become a major activity of the private personal computer user. It's one of those things you never knew you needed for the last ten years. Once you begin to use it and see its benefits, however, it becomes hard to imagine going back to the library or ever handwriting a letter again — kind of like dumping your telephone for a carrier pigeon. In this section, we'll walk you through some of the basic steps for using the Internet, including *launching your browser*, finding a *website*, saving (*bookmarking*) *websites*, *accessing bookmarks / favorites*, and using a *search engine*.

Review the glossary terms highlighted in **yellow**.

Launching Your Browser

1. Move your **mouse pointer** (by moving your **mouse**) to the **Start button** at the extreme lower-left corner of your **desktop** (see Fig. 1.1).

{**NOTE:** When you **hover** your mouse pointer over a **link** or a **graphic**, a descriptive message often appears.}

2. **Left-click** (or **left-double-click**) the **Start button** (see Fig. 1.1).

(This should open up a small rectangular window called the **Start menu**.)

{**NOTE:** You may have to **double-click**. If so, you will probably have to left-double-click most all other **icons** or buttons on your **MS Windows** system.}

3. Move your mouse pointer to hover over the **All Programs >** box (see Fig. 1.2).





Fig. 1.2 – All Programs box and menu

(This should open up another rectangular window with a list of the **programs** installed on your computer.)

4. Move your mouse pointer to hover over the **Internet Explorer** icon / label

(see Fig. 1.2).

(This icon / label should now be highlighted.)

5. Left-click or left-double-click this icon / label.

(It might take 10 – 30 seconds to launch / open, but then you should have a completely new window, which is your **Internet Explorer browser**.)

{**NOTE:** If the Internet Explorer window does not cover most of your computer screen, move your mouse pointer to the extreme upper-right corner



Fig. 1.3 – Internet Explorer screenshot

of Internet Explorer and left-click the **maximize window button**. Your Internet Explorer window should increase in size to cover most or all of your screen (see Fig. G.3).}

6. Internet Explorer should now display a website in its window.

(The site it displays will depend upon which website is set to be your **Home Page**.)

{**NOTE:** If an **error message** appears saying, “*Page cannot be found*” or something similar, this may mean that your computer is not properly connected to the Internet.}

Accessing a website

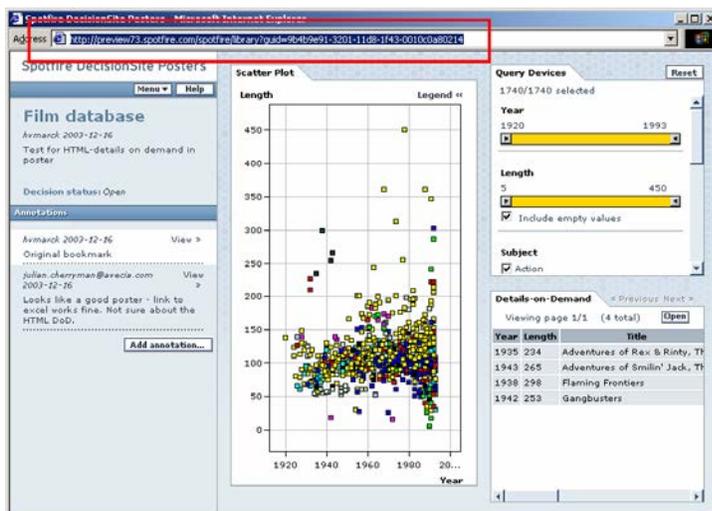


Fig. 1.4 – URL / address window

1. Move your **mouse pointer** to the horizontal **URL / address window** at the extreme top of **Internet Explorer**

(see Fig. 1.4).

2. Highlight whatever text is in the URL / address window by **dragging** your mouse pointer across the text.

(The white background should now be navy blue.)

3. Press the **Delete** key on your keyboard.

(The cursor should now be blinking at the left side of a blank address window, ready to accept text.)

{**NOTE:** An alternate way to erase the existing text is to:

a. Place your mouse pointer at the far right of the text line.

- b. Left-click, which will activate the blinking **cursor**.
- c. Press-and-hold the **Backspace** key on your keyboard until the text has been erased.}

4. Type the following: ***www.weather.com***

5. Press the **Enter** key on your keyboard.

(You should now be viewing the Weather.com website.)

{**NOTE:** An alternate way to activate your entry is to left-click the right-pointing arrow immediately to the right of the URL / address window.}

6. Move your mouse pointer near the top of the Web page viewing window to the text window that says, ***Enter ZIP or US/Intl city.***

7. Left-click in this window.

(The existing text should disappear and the cursor should be blinking, indicating that the window is ready to accept text.)

8. Type in your ZIP code.

9. Press the **Enter** key.

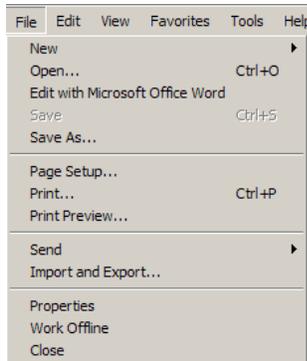
(You should now be viewing the weather page for your ZIP code.)

{**NOTE:** An alternate way to activate your entry is to left-click the **Go** button immediately to the right of the text window.}

10. If you wish to see part of the Web page that seems to cut off at the bottom of your screen, use the **scroll bar** or the **scroll arrows** to move the screen view up or down (and sometimes sideways) (see Fig. G.3).

Saving a Bookmark / Favorite

1. On **Internet Explorer** at the near upper-left corner is a row of terms, which are



drop-down menus. These are labeled **File, Edit, View, Favorites, Tools,** and **Help**. Place your **mouse pointer** over the **Favorites** button and **left-click** (see Fig. G.5).

Fig. 1.5 – File drop-down box

(This should open up a short vertical **menu** of additional choices.)

{**NOTE:** Many of these same drop-down menus will generally be displayed on most other programs that you will use.}

2. Place your mouse pointer over **Add to Favorites...** and left-click (see Fig. 1.5).

(This should open up a new small **Add a Favorite** window with additional buttons (see Fig. 1.6.)

3. Left-click the **Add** button.

(You have now saved a bookmark / favorite for quick access to this website in the future.)



Fig. 1.6 – Add a Favorite screenshot

Accessing a Bookmark / Favorite

1. Place your **mouse pointer** over the **Favorites** button and **left-click**.

(This should open up a short vertical menu of additional choices, including your Weather.com bookmark / favorite (see Fig. 1.5.)

2. Place your mouse pointer anywhere over the Weather.com **icon** or text name, then left-click.

(You should now be viewing the weather page for your ZIP code.)

Accessing a Search Engine

1. Move your **mouse pointer** to the horizontal **URL / address window** at the extreme top-middle of **Internet Explorer** (see Fig. G.13).
2. Highlight whatever text is in the URL / address window by **dragging** your mouse pointer across the text.

(The white background should now be navy blue.)

3. Press the **Delete** button on your keyboard.

(The cursor should now be blinking in a blank address window ready to accept text.)

{**NOTE:** An alternate way to erase the existing text is to:

- a. Place your mouse pointer at the far right of the text line.
- b. Left-click, which will activate the blinking cursor.
- c. Press-and-hold the **Backspace** key on your keyboard until the text has been erased.}

4. Type the following: **www.Google.com**



Fig. 1.7 – Google screenshot

5. Press the **Enter** key on your keyboard.

{**NOTE:** An alternate way to activate your entry is to left-click the right-pointing arrow immediately to the right of the URL / address window.}

(You should now be viewing the Google website (see Fig. 1.7.)

6. Follow the previous instructions for *Saving a Bookmark / Favorite*

(see Fig. 1.5 & 1.6).

7. Move your mouse pointer near the top of the Web page viewing window, to the blank text window.

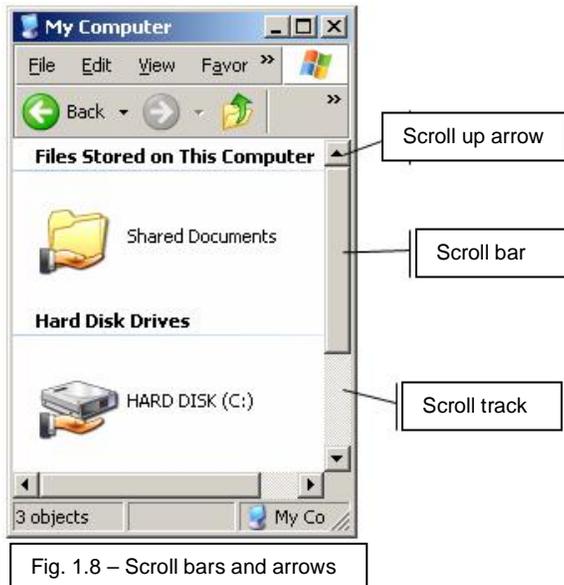
(If the cursor is not there and blinking, left-click in this window.)

8. Type the following: **dictionary**

9. Press the **Enter** key.

(You should now be viewing a list of dictionary hypertext links, which when left-clicked will take you to that website (see Fig. 1.9.)

{**NOTE:** An alternate way to activate your entry is to left-click the **Google Search** button immediately below the text window.}



If you wish to see part of the Web page that seems to cut off at the bottom of your screen, use the **scroll bar** or the **scroll arrow** to move the screen view up or down (and sometimes sideways) (see Fig. 1.8).

Choosing and Evaluating Search Results

1. Move your **mouse pointer** to the first entry in the list of **search result** links, then **left-click** (see Fig. 1.9).

(You should now be viewing that particular dictionary website.)

2. If you like this **website**, follow the previous steps for *Saving a Bookmark / Favorite* (see Fig. 1.5 & 1.6).

3. To return to the Google search results page (see Fig. 1.9), move your mouse pointer to the extreme upper-left corner of **Internet Explorer** and left-click the **back arrow button**, which is the arrow pointing left (see Fig. G.1).

(You should now be viewing your list of dictionary hypertext links.)

4. Move your mouse pointer to the second entry in the list of search result links, then left-click.

(You should now be viewing that particular dictionary website.)

5. If you like this website, follow the previous steps for *Saving a Bookmark / Favorite* (see Fig. 1.5 & 1.6).

6. If you wish to see part of the Web page that seems to cut off at the bottom of your screen, use the **scroll bar** or the **scroll arrows** to move the screen view up or down (and sometimes sideways) (see Fig. 1.8).

7. Rinse and repeat, as desired.

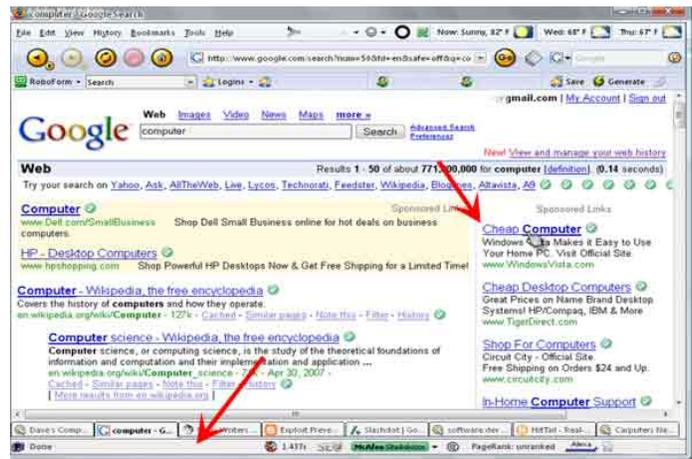
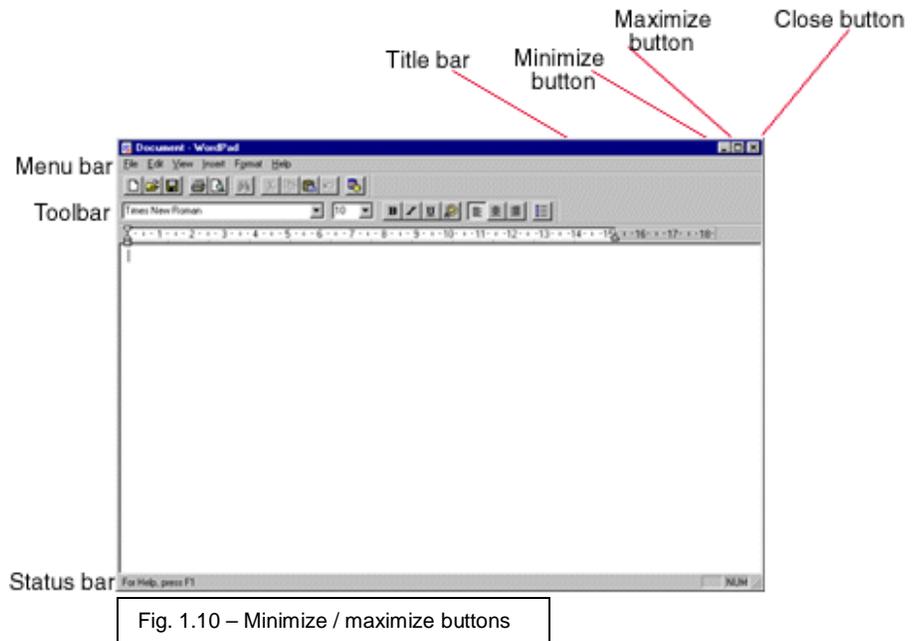


Fig. 1.9 – Google search results screenshot

Closing Internet Explorer

1. Move your **mouse pointer** to the **close program button** (with the **X icon**) at the extreme upper-right corner of **Internet Explorer**, then **left-click** it (see Fig. G.3).



Summary - Tips

Congratulations. We knew you could do it. As you conduct search engine (Google) searches and visit different websites, experiment with clicking different links to see where they take you. Remember: You won't break the computer. (But don't download anything, yet. In rookie hands that COULD gum up the works.) If you get lost, you can always backtrack with the **back arrow button** and the **forward arrow button**, or simply start over by accessing one of your saved bookmarks/favorites. Many of the same steps you used for operating Internet Explorer also apply to most other programs (for example, finding a program with the **Start button**, launching a program, accessing the upper-left drop-down buttons for further options, inputting text to text windows, and closing a program). As you learn how to perform additional computer tasks, you will see how many of the procedures overlap.

From this point, we will shorten a few terms with which you are now familiar:

1. **Left-click** will be simply be referred to as **click** and **left-double-click** will mean **double-click**.

(If you need to right-click, this term will be specified.)

2. **Mouse pointer** will simply be referred to as **pointer**.
3. When we tell you to **move your pointer to a particular spot**, you will assume that we mean to use your mouse to place the pointer at that spot and **hover** until further instructions.
4. When we tell you to **type text into a text box**, you will assume that you need to **left-click inside the box to activate the cursor**, which indicates that the text box is ready to accept text.

EMAIL – INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction to Email

The entire world communicates by email today. It's free, almost instant, and worldwide. More importantly, you can communicate in your underwear without worrying about fixing your hair and makeup. In this section, you will learn how to check for new email messages sent to you, and you will send an email message to someone. **Review the glossary terms highlighted in yellow.** Refer back to the diagrams in the *Internet – Instructions* section for upcoming steps that you have already performed.

Launching your Email Program

1. Move your **pointer** to the **Start button** at the extreme lower-left corner of your **desktop** (see Fig. G.10).

{**NOTE:** When you **hover** your pointer over a **link** or a **graphic**, a descriptive message will often appear.}

2. **Click** (or **double-click**) the **Start button**.

(This should open up a small rectangular window called the **Start menu** (see Fig. G.10.)

{**NOTE:** You may have to **double-click**. If so, you will probably have to double-click all other **icons** or buttons in your **MS Windows** system.}

3. Hover your pointer over the **All Programs >** box (see Fig. G.10).

(This should open up another rectangular window with a list of the **programs** installed on your computer.)

4. Hover your pointer over the **Outlook Express** icon / label (see Fig. G.10).

(This icon / label should now be highlighted.)

5. Click or double-click this icon / label.

(You should now have a completely new window, which is your **Outlook Express** email program (see Fig. 2.1.)

{**NOTE:** If the Outlook Express window does not cover most of your computer screen, move your pointer to the extreme upper-right corner of Outlook Express and click the **maximize window button**. Your Outlook Express window should increase in size to cover most or all of your screen (see Fig. G.3).}

Checking for Received Email Messages

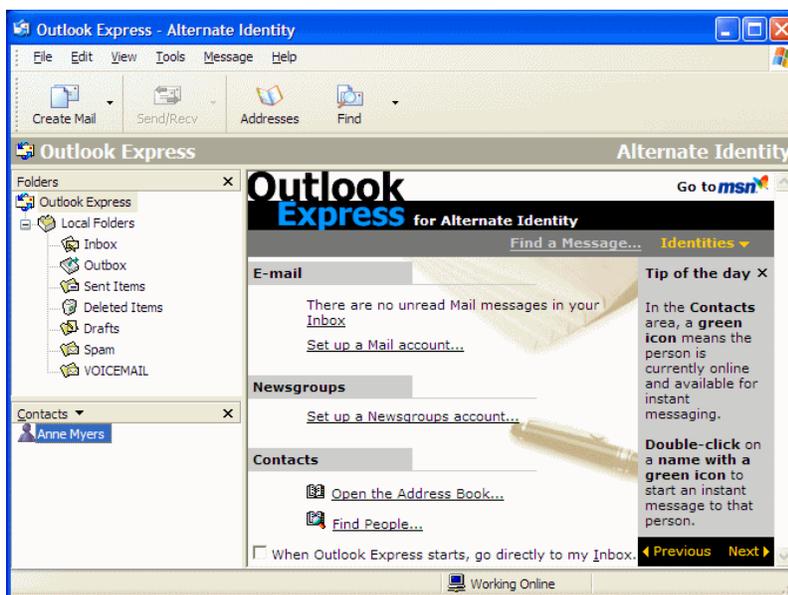


Fig. 2.1 – Outlook Express screenshot

1. You may have one of several different views of Outlook Express depending upon how yours is set up. On the left side of the Outlook Express screen, there should be a vertical

box with the following choices: **Outlook Express** and **Local Folders**. Directly to the left of **Local Folders** will be a tiny box with either a “+” sign or a “-” sign in it. If it is a “+” sign, click it (see Fig. 2.1).

(This will open a sub-menu, which is a vertical list, for Local Folders (see Fig. G.11.)

2. In the sub-menu of **Local Folders**, there will be a vertical list with the following choices: **Inbox**, **Outbox**, **Sent Items**, **Deleted Items**, and **Drafts**.

Click **Inbox**.

(You should now have your *mailbox* or *inbox* showing, along with any incoming email messages if there are any.)

{**NOTE:** Think of menus and sub-menus as being similar to the physical structure of an outline: main categories at the far left, sub-categories indented once underneath, sub-sub-categories indented once more underneath, and so on.}

3. Move your pointer to the top-middle of the Outlook Express window and click the **Send/Rec'v** box (which contains a *letter-with-sideways-arrows* icon).
4. In the larger window on the right of your screen, choose an email message to open by double-clicking on its label. (*If there are no messages, wait until later to proceed with this task.*)

(You should now see a smaller window that has opened to show the contents of this email message.)
5. After reading the email message, move your pointer to the **close program button** (the **X** icon) at the extreme upper-right corner of the smaller message window, then click it (see Fig. G.3).
6. Proceed to open (click on) any other incoming email messages that you choose.

Sending an Email Message

1. Move your pointer to the upper-left corner of the **Outlook Express** window, to the **Create Mail** button (which contains a *piece-of-paper-and-envelope* icon). Click it (see Fig. 2.1).

(This should open up a smaller **New Message** window (see Fig. 2.2).)

2. In the **To** text box, type in your own email address.

(This is how we test to see if our email system is working properly.)

3. In the **Subject** text box, type in “email test.”

4. In the main white box in the lower 2/3 of the **New Message** window, type in any message that you choose, since this is just a test.

5. Move your pointer to the extreme upper-left of the **New**

Message window and click the **Send** button (which has an *envelope-with-an-arrow* icon).

6. This may bring up a **Spelling** window. If so, click the **Ignore All** button until the **Spelling** box disappears.

7. Now follow the steps for *Checking for Received Email Messages*.

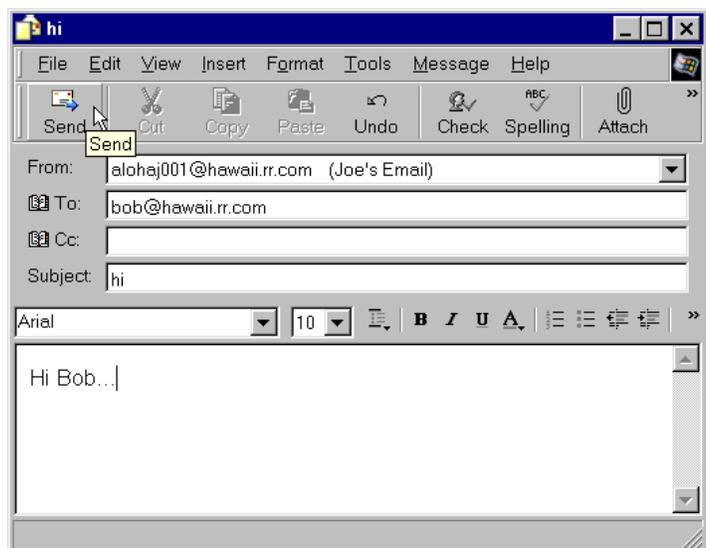


Fig. 2.2 – Outlook Express New Message screenshot

CREATING AND SAVING A DOCUMENT – INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction to MS Word

Microsoft Word is the most common word processing program. Knowing how to use this software is necessary in today's job market and home office. It operates very similar to the old stand-alone word processors and, indeed, much like a typewriter, until the ribbon needs to be changed. In this section, you will learn how to create a document, save a document, and retrieve an existing document. **Review the glossary terms highlighted in yellow.** And refer back to the diagrams in the *Internet – Instructions* section for upcoming steps that you have already performed.

Launching MS Word

1. Move your **pointer** to the **Start button** at the extreme lower-left corner of your **desktop** (see Fig. 1.1).

{**NOTE:** When you **hover** your pointer over a **link** or a **graphic**, a descriptive message often appears.}

2. **Click** (or **double-click**) the **Start** button.

(This should open up a small rectangular window called the **Start menu** (see Fig. 1.1.)

{**NOTE:** You may have to **double-click**. If so, you will probably have to double-click all other **icons** or buttons in your **MS Windows** system.}

3. Hover your pointer over the **All Programs >** box (see Fig. 1.2).

(This should open up another rectangular window with a list of the **programs** installed on your computer (see Fig. 1.2.)

4. Hover your pointer over the **Microsoft Word** icon / label.

(This icon / label should now be highlighted.)

5. Click or double-click this icon / label.

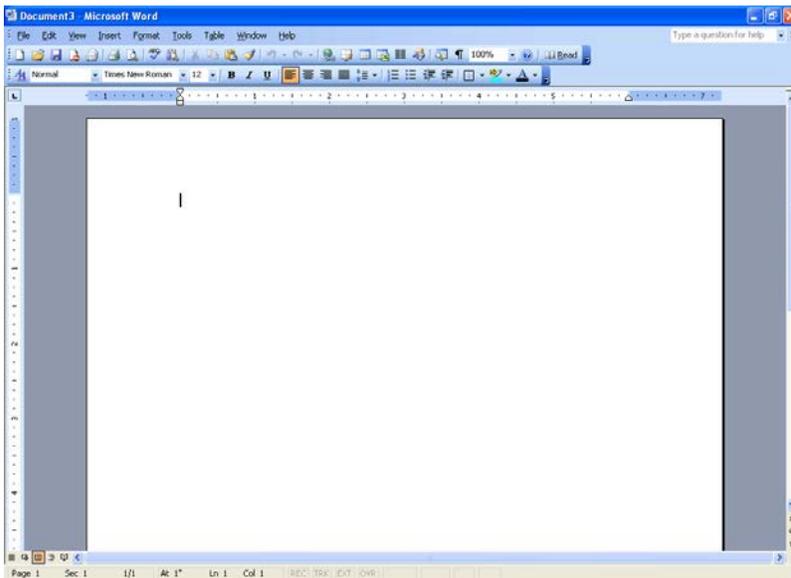


Fig. 3.1 – MS Word screenshot

(You should now have a completely new window, which is your **MS Word** word-processing program. (see Fig. 3.1.)

{NOTE: If the MS Word window does not cover most of your computer screen,

move your pointer to the extreme upper-right corner of MS Word and click the **maximize window button**. Your MS Word window should increase in size to cover most or all of your screen (see Fig. G.3.)

Creating a Document

(You should have a blinking cursor at the top-left corner of the large white box. This is the area where you will begin typing your document.)

1. Begin typing something. Type just as if you were typing on a typewriter (see Fig. 3.1).

{NOTE: As you start to try new things, such as setting tabs, paragraphs, lists, etc., MS Word will probably start acting like it has a mind of its own and will do some things that you don't want it to do. This is MS Word's attempt to predict what it thinks you want to do. The main advice here is to keep trying to

correct it to the way you want things. MS Word will eventually figure out what you want. Each time you use MS Word, try to make a point of learning one new thing about how it works.}

Saving a Word Document

1. On MS Word, at the near upper-left corner, is a row of terms, which are **drop-down buttons**. These are labeled **File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Tools**, etc..

Place your pointer over the **File button** and **click** (see Fig. 1.5).

(This should open up a short vertical **menu** of additional choices see (Fig. 1.5.)

{**NOTE:** Many of these same drop-down buttons will generally be displayed on most other programs that you will use.}

2. Place your **pointer** over **Save As...** and click.

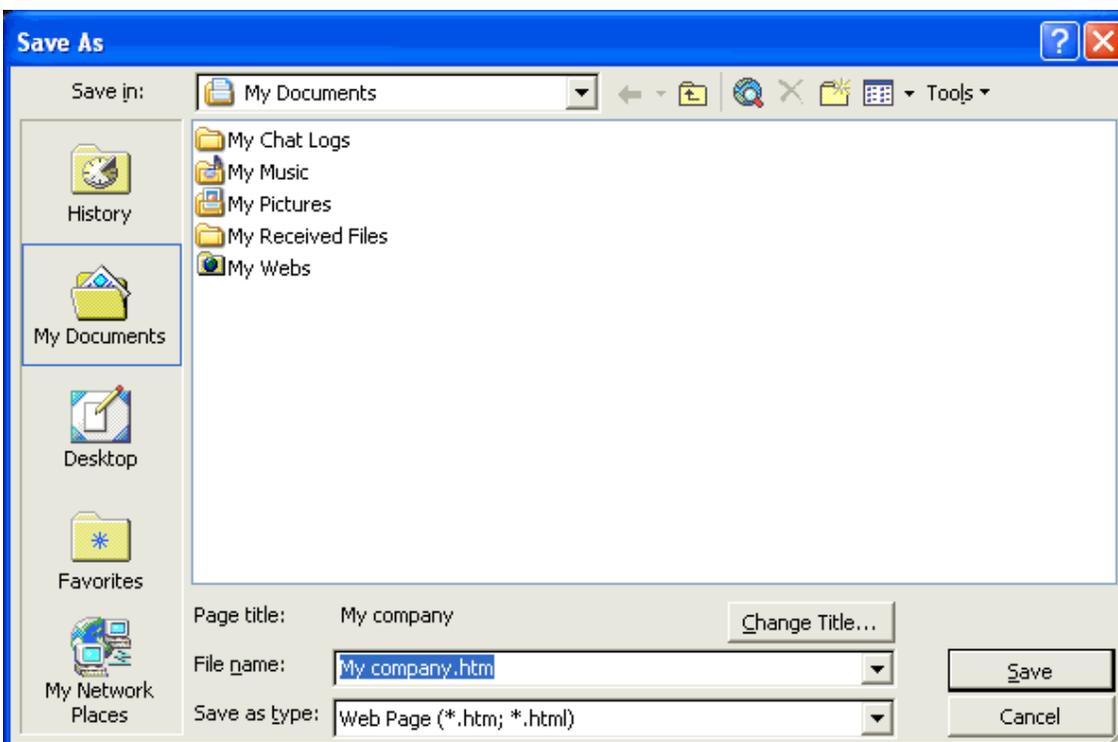


Fig. 3.2 – Save As screenshot

(This should open up a new small **Save As...** window (see Fig. 3.2.)

3. The **Save in:** window should read **“My Documents.”** This is the name of the folder where your documents will be saved. Near the bottom of the **Save As...** window is a text box that is labeled: **File Name:**. There will already be some highlighted text in this box such as, **“Doc1”** or something similar. Push the **Delete** key on your keyboard, and type in whatever name you want for this document (see Fig. 3.2).
4. Move your pointer directly to the right to the **Save** button, and click it.
Your document (file) is now saved in your **My Documents** folder.

Retrieving a Word Document

1. Follow the instructions for **Launching MS WORD.**
2. On **MS Word**, at the near upper-left corner, is a row of terms, which are **drop-down buttons**. These are labeled **File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Tools**, etc. Place your pointer over the **File button** and **click** (see Fig. 1.5).

(This should open up a short vertical **menu** of additional choices (see Fig. 1.5.)

- {**NOTE:** Many of these same drop-down buttons will generally be displayed on most other programs that you will use.}
5. Place your **pointer** over **Open** and click.
(This should open up a new, small **Look in:** window.)
 6. The **Look in:** window should read **“My Documents.”** This is the name of the folder where your documents have been saved. In the white box of the **Open** window, there will be a list of folders and files that have been saved in the **My Documents** folder.

Find the document you are looking for and double-click it (see Fig. 3.2).

(Your document should now be open and ready to be added to, corrected, or printed

(see Fig. 3.1.)

7. To save your changes to this document, follow the instructions for *Saving a Word Document*.

CONCLUSION

See? Now you're wondering why you waited so long. Obviously, there are a lot more functions available on these and other programs installed on your computer. And granted, many of them are complicated. But take your time, have fun, and be patient. Every time you fire up your computer, make a point of learning one or two new things. It's like learning to read and write — the more you do it, the better you get, and the more enjoyable it is.

Print out the following “A Few Things to Remember,” and keep them by your computer.

A Few Things to Remember

1. There are often *several different ways to perform the same task* or function. Gradually you will learn more than the one way you know.
2. Many tasks performed on one program are performed the same or almost the same way on other programs. **Look for these similarities.**
3. When in doubt, always carefully **read the instructions showing on your screen.** Follow them as best you can, and you'll probably be fine. Half of your problems can be overcome just by following this simple rule (Well, it's more of a guideline than a rule — *thanks to Bill Murray*).
4. If you really get **stuck, simply start over by restarting your computer.** This may cause you to lose changes to a document or file that you have been working on.
5. You **can't break the darn thing.**
6. Use your newfound skill (**search engine search**) **for answers to computer questions on the Internet.** You'll be amazed at what you can find simply by typing your entire question into the search window.
7. **Learn to use the Help file** that resides in all of your programs. This has most all of the solutions you'll need when you are stuck. The **Help** drop-down button is usually found at the top middle-left of any given program's main window. Besides being there for **Help**, you can also find tutorials — step-by-step instructions on how to get started using that program.
8. Visit the *University of Minnesota — Duluth Student Handbook* website for further information. You can assess your skill-level and choose what you would like to work on next. <http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/ComputLit.html>

Soon, the label of *computer geek* will be a badge of honor.

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