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I. Introduction

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is committed to offering a comprehensive continuum of service delivery. This means that courses are offered in a number of different formats including face-to-face, part-time, online, and through a combination of blended formats.

Computers are machines that have changed the way we do a lot of different things. In today's world, a desktop computer is sometimes called a "PC." This stands for personal computer and is a term devised by IBM to describe their first desk top computer. In a nutshell, a computer functions like a gigantic calculator not only adding and subtracting numbers but also displaying and manipulating text and graphics.

All members of the NSCC community must abide by the Nova Scotia Community College Computer Resources Usage Policy. Make sure that you take the time to review this policy - it is available online at http://www.nsc.ca/it/policies/computer_usage_policy.asp

This package is intended to provide you with basic information to help you become more familiar with using computers.

II. Parts of a Computer



Every computer system has both hardware and software. Hardware physically does the work: it is the physical components you can see and touch. Software tells the hardware how to do the work it has to do. Software is the brains or set of instructions that tell the hardware what to do and how to do it. By understanding a little bit about the hardware and software of computers, you will have a better appreciation of what is happening when you are using a computer, and how to proceed if things start to go wrong. Listed below are brief explanations concerning the computer hardware components you will most likely encounter.

A. Console

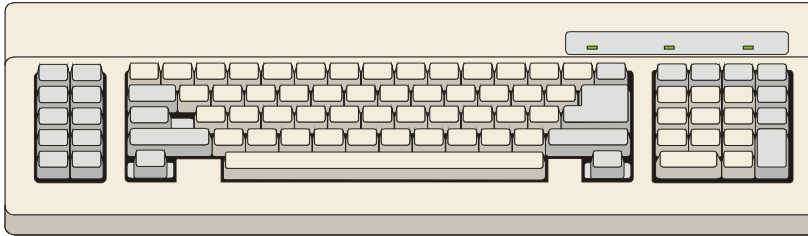


The console is the box or case that holds the main parts of the computer. Some computer consoles are upright towers that stand on the floor or on the desk, others are horizontal and sit in a more flattened position. This part of the computer houses the internal components that make it run. These components function in the processing and storing of information.

Information can be stored in a temporary storage location called memory or "RAM." This type of storage is for information that the computer currently needs or has just processed. Information can also be stored in a more permanent way on disks. There is a hard disk enclosed in the console of the computer. This hard disk can have a wide range of storage capacity depending on the type of the computer.

The back of the computer console has a number of outlets called ports. The cables from various other hardware components connect to the computer through these ports. Some of the ports are reserved for specific components, other ports can be used by different hardware components.

B. Keyboard



The keyboard has keys like a typewriter and a number keypad like an adding machine. The keyboard is used to input data into the computer. You do not need to be a professional typist to be able to use a computer keyboard. Many people use the "hunt and peck" method of using the keyboard to type in information.

At first glance, the typewriter keyboard and the computer keyboard appear to be quite similar. However, there are some basic differences between the two. Essentially, both are used to input letters, numbers and punctuation. Both have a tab key, a caps lock key and a shift key. With the computer, however, some of these similar keys have different functions. For example, besides allowing indenting, the tab key also allows you to move to different parts of the screen. Unlike the typewriter, the caps lock key does not affect the numbers or the punctuation keys, whereas depressing the shift key will reverse the case of the letters but will always display the special characters above the numbers. The "enter" button on the computer keyboard is analogous to the carriage return on the typewriter. The "enter" key is often used to respond to a question the computer gives you and is used to create a new line.

On the computer keyboard there is often a numeric keypad similar to a calculator. This number pad only works when the "num lock" key is pressed and the corresponding green light on the top right side of the computer keyboard is on. When the "num lock" key is on, this pad can be used for numbers. However, when the key is off, the arrow and word functions on each become active.

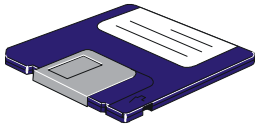
There are other keys on a computer keyboard that you would not find on a typewriter. This includes the insert key, the delete key, the home and end key as well as the page up and page down keys. Along the top of the computer keyboard there are a number of extra keys called function keys. These keys are known as shortcut keys and are used to replace a series of key presses or steps. Function keys vary in what they actually do from application to application. Other keys such as the <ctrl> and <alt> keys were invented to help out with additional computer functions or tasks. They have various uses and applications when used in combination with other key presses at the same time.

C. Mouse



The mouse is the small box with a thin cord (a tail) on the desk beside your console. When you move your mouse it sends a signal through the cord to the computer, telling the computer which direction the mouse is moving. This controls the movement of the small arrow (mouse cursor) on the screen. The mouse and the keyboard are similar in that they both allow you to tell your computer what to do. You can learn more about how to use a mouse in the section of this document entitled "Using The Mouse."

D. Disk Drive



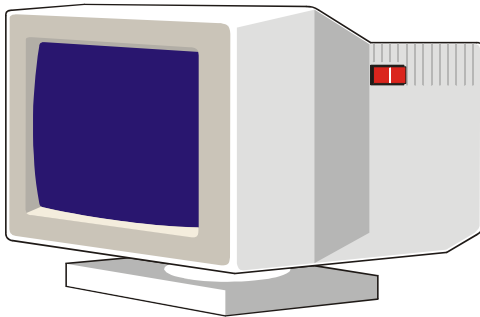
The Disk Drive is an information storage device. The computer stores information on disks like the VCR records onto videotape. The disk is the videotape, and the disk drive is your computer's VCR. Disk drives contain a motor that spins the disk. The "head" hovers over the spinning disk, reading or writing information to or from the disk. The disk drive translates the stuff on the disk into information that the computer can use. The computer hard disk, a CD-ROM disk and a floppy disk are some of the different types of disks.

E. Printer



The printer is a separate device from the computer and it prints information on paper. The printer is capable of taking information stored in the computer and printing it in paper format (also called a hard copy). It is important that you ensure that your printer is turned on before you use it. However, some have no power switch, instead the printer becomes active when a print job is sent through the computer.

F. Monitor



The monitor is the television-like display unit sitting on top of the computer console. Monitors can come in different sizes (some are much bigger than others). As well, some have different quality outputs, some are color whereas others are black and white.

G. Other Components

Computers may have a number of different peripheral pieces of hardware that help to accomplish different tasks. Be aware that the computer you are using may have other parts than what has been listed here.

III. Computer Software

The software is what tells your hardware what to do and how to do it. On the market today, there are many different types of software. Software can be categorized into two types: system software and application software.

System software is the operating system that enables the computer to function. Operating systems perform basic tasks, such as recognizing input from the keyboard, sending output to the display screen, keeping track of files and directories on the disk, and controlling devices such as disk drives and printers.

Application software are programs that do the real work for users. For example, word processors (Microsoft Word), spreadsheets (Microsoft Excel) and database management systems (Microsoft Access) fall under the category of applications software.

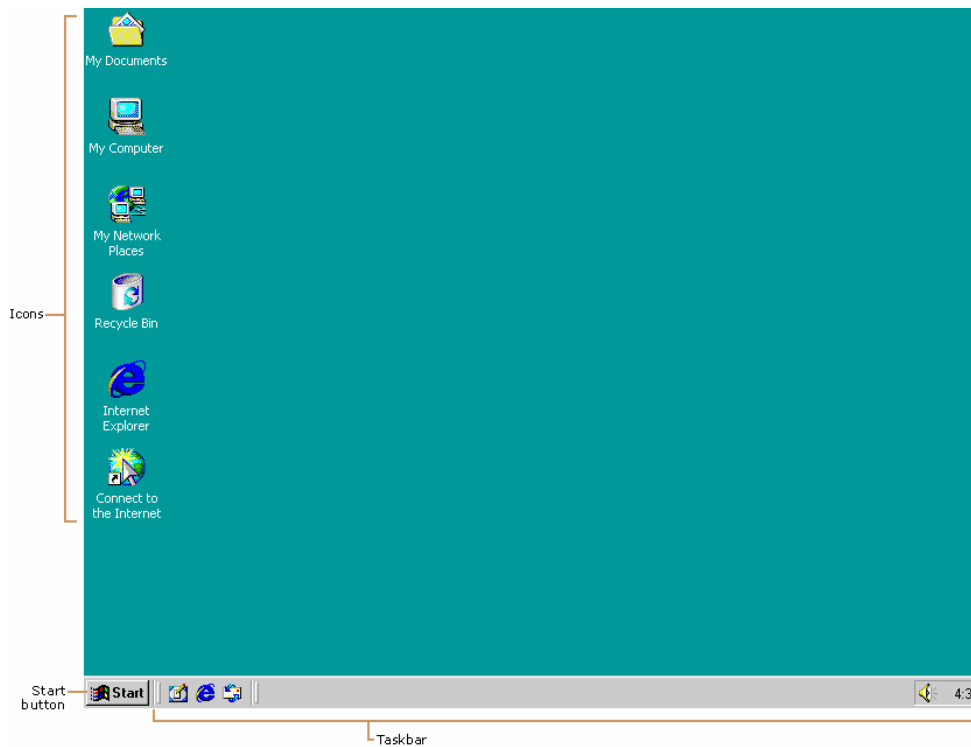
IV. The Windows Environment

NSCC has Microsoft software licensing. This means that Microsoft Windows is used as the system software for most computers on NSCC Campuses. Windows is an operating system that uses icons. It's called Windows because it fills the screen with overlapping windows or boxes. Each window contains its own program. In many ways, Windows makes it easier to use a computer. A lot of things can be accomplished by using a mouse instead of typing at the keyboard.

A. What Is the Desktop?

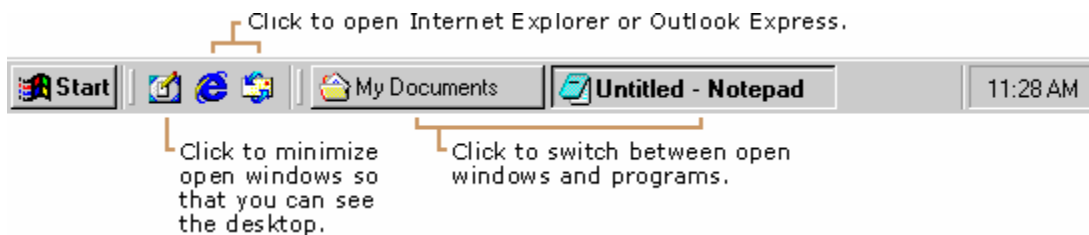
When you start a computer using Windows, the desktop is the area that first appears on the screen after you start. The desktop is your workspace. On your desktop are icons, small pictures that represent files such as documents, folders, or programs. When you want to open a file, double-click its icon.

Note: Depending on how your computer is set up, your icons might be different from those in the illustration.

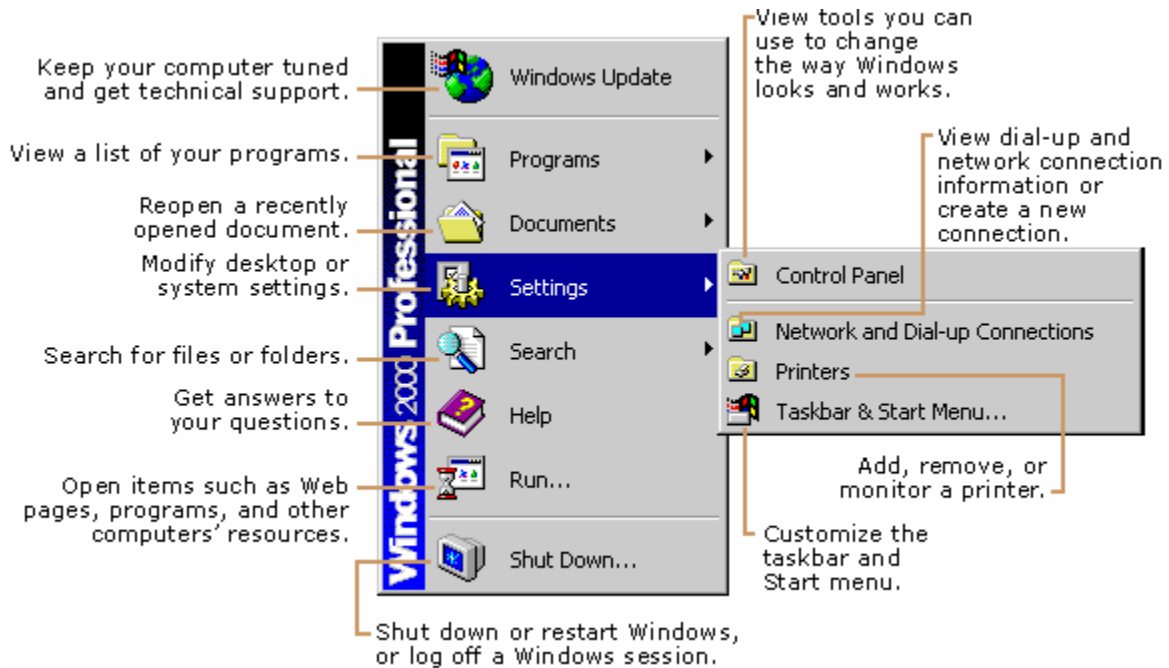


B. The Taskbar and the Start Button

You can use the taskbar and the Start button, which usually appear at the bottom of your screen, to navigate in Windows. Both features are always available on your desktop, regardless of how many windows you have open. Buttons on the taskbar show you which windows and programs are open, even when some are minimized or hidden beneath another window. You can easily switch to a different window or program by clicking its taskbar button.









The Start button displays a list of commands and shortcuts (pointers to files) that you can use to accomplish almost any task. You can start programs, open documents, customize your system, get Help, search for items on your computer, and more. Some items on the Start menu have a right-facing arrow, which means that additional choices are available on a secondary menu, called a submenu. When you place your pointer over an item with an arrow, a submenu appears.



C. My Computer

Use the "My Computer" icon when you want to view the contents of a single folder or disk. A disk is a device, such as a hard drive or floppy disk, on which you can store files. When you double-click My Computer on your desktop, icons representing the available drives appear in a new window. When you double-click a drive icon, a window displays the folders contained on that drive. You can then double-click an icon to open the folder or file.

Some of the following icons may appear in the My Computer window:

Double-Click	In Order To...
	View the contents of the floppy disk, which is usually designated as A drive.
	View the contents of the hard drive, which is usually designated as C drive.
	View the contents of a network drive, if your computer is connected to one.
	View the contents of a compact disc in the CD-ROM drive, if your computer has one.
	View the contents of a removable disc, such as a zip drive, if your computer has one.
	View features in the control panel that you can use to modify your computer settings

You will see when you open "My Computer" that the files on every computer are organized using a number of different folders. This is kind of like the folders in a

filing cabinet. They help to arrange and organize the information. The goal is to make it easier to find information that you want and need.

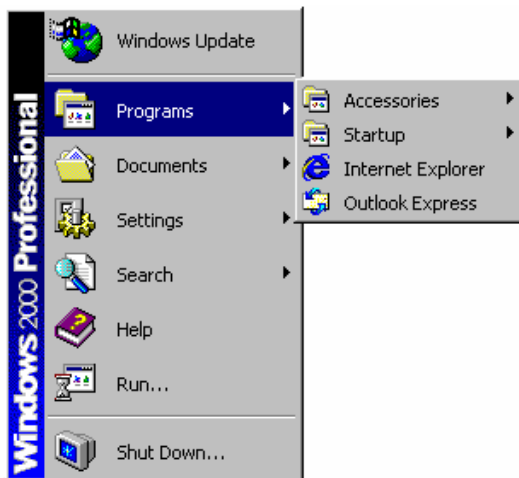
Most computers will have a default "My documents" folder where you can save your personal files. If you are using a public access machine you may need to save your files to a portable floppy disk that you can take with you when you leave.

D. Starting and Quitting Programs

Most of the programs installed on your computer are available from one convenient location - the Programs section of the Start menu. Depending on how your computer is set up, what you see on the Start menu varies.

To start a program

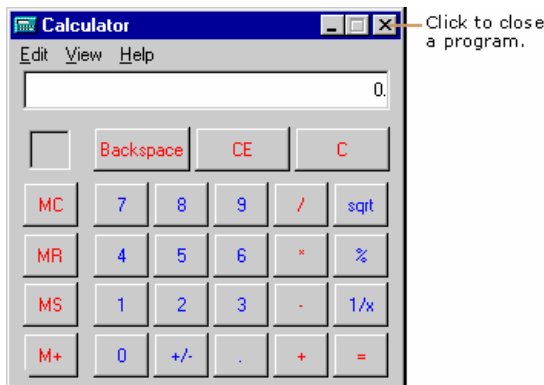
1. Click the Start button, and then point to Programs. The Programs menu appears.



2. Point to the group (such as Accessories) that contains the program you want to start and then click the program name.

To quit a program

Click the Close button in the upper-right corner of the program window.



E. Shutting Down Your Computer

When you finish working in Windows, use the Shut Down command on the Start menu. This command closes windows and programs and prepares your computer for shutting down. If you haven't already saved your work, you're prompted to do so.

Important - Don't turn off your computer until you see a message that the computer has been shut down. If you turn off your computer without shutting it down correctly, you risk losing information.

To shut down your computer

1. Click the Start button, and then click Shut Down.
2. Select Shut down, and then click OK.

If your computer doesn't turn off automatically, a message appears after a few moments telling you when you can safely turn off your computer.

F. Health and Safety

Before starting working at a computer you should:

- Adjust the positions of the screen, the keyboard, the mouse and the documents you're working from, so as to achieve the most comfortable arrangement. Make sure that you have space to use your mouse easily, and rest your wrists in front of the keyboard when not typing.
- Adjust the position of your chair to give you a comfortable viewing distance and posture. The screen should probably be somewhere between eighteen and thirty inches away from you, whatever suits you best.
- Keep your back resting against the back of your chair so that you are not leaning towards your monitor.
- Keep your neck and back in a straight position.
- Good keyboard and mouse techniques are important. Keep your upper body as relaxed as possible and don't over stretch your wrists and fingers. As a general guide, your forearms should be roughly horizontal and your elbows level with the keyboard or the mouse.
- If your feet don't reach the floor when you're sitting in a good position, try a footrest.
- Use a document holder when copying from a manuscript.

Whenever you can, try to arrange your study to consist of a combination of work on and away from the screen, to prevent fatigue and to vary visual and mental demands. Long spells of screen work should be broken up by periods of work of a different kind.

The nature of your study and the combination of media you're using will determine the length of breaks you need to prevent fatigue, but as a general rule:

- You should take breaks before the onset of fatigue, not in order to recuperate. The timing of the break is more important than its length.
- Short, frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional, longer breaks. A break of thirty seconds to two minutes after twenty or thirty minutes of continuous work with the screen and keyboard is likely to be more effective than a fifteen-minute break every two hours.
- If possible, you should take your breaks away from the screen, and avoid activities that require actions similar to your work (writing, crosswords or needlework, for example).

G. Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

Windows includes many accessibility features that can improve display, sound, mouse, and keyboard settings for users with disabilities. These are available through the "Accessibility Options" located in the Windows Control Panel to directly customize keyboard, display, and mouse functions.

Exploration: Go to a computer workstation and identify each of the components reviewed above. How does the computer look different from how you pictured it from the descriptions above? How should the descriptions be changed?

After you complete this exploration you are ready to proceed to the next section of this Orientation.

V. Using a Mouse



A. Introduction

This part of the orientation will introduce some basics about using a mouse for people who are not that familiar with using a computer mouse. The mouse usually sits on the desk beside your computer console. When you move your mouse it sends a signal through the cord to the computer, telling the computer which direction the mouse is moving. This controls the movement of the small arrow (mouse cursor) on the screen.

Depending on the mouse you have, there may be a combination of buttons and knobs on the top of the mouse. Some may have two buttons on the top of the mouse and some may have three buttons. A mouse makes a clicking noise when you push the buttons. A mouse generally sits with the buttons away from you. It is designed to sit underneath your hand with your fingers on the buttons.

The mouse can sit to the left or to the right of the computer console, depending on if you are right handed or left handed (however, some computer system settings changes will have to be made if you are not using the right handed default setting).

B. Mouse Functions

You can manipulate the mouse by holding your hand over the mouse with the palm of your hand on the large base part of the mouse and holding your index finger up and over the inner mouse button. The button under the index finger is always the button you will use the most for your mouse. There are four basic functions you can perform with your mouse: pointing, clicking, double clicking and dragging.

Pointing is when you move the mouse in order to move the arrow/cursor on the screen to a desired location (i.e., to a program icon). Often, when you hold the mouse over an image or icon information will come up on screen about the

object/program. Please note that if you run out of room on your desk and cannot move your mouse any further to the right or left, simply pick up the mouse and physically move it back to a location where you have room to move it and manipulate it. Often, there will be a mouse pad on which to move your mouse. This pad helps to keep the bottom of the mouse clean from dust and dirt. It helps to maintain the life of the mouse, but is not necessary for it to work.

Clicking is accomplished by first pointing to a desired object and then pressing and releasing the mouse button positioned under your index finger. Simply speaking, a click is when you press down on the mouse button and then release the button (usually the left button). Single clicking with the mouse button at the opposite end of the mouse will bring up a pop up menu of options.

Double-clicking is accomplished by first pointing at an object with the mouse and then quickly clicking twice in succession on the desired object. A double-click consists of two quick clicks (on the same spot) of the mouse button. This action takes a little bit more dexterity to be able to complete a double click, and if you don't complete the double clicks fast enough the computer will just sit there, and not complete the action you are asking it to perform.

Dragging happens when you point to an object and then press and hold down the mouse button under your index finger. After you have the desired object (i.e., file, folder, text) selected, you can slide the object to the new desired location by moving the mouse (while still keeping the mouse button clicked) and then releasing the mouse button once the object is in the desired location. This "drag and drop" functionality makes using a mouse extremely convenient.

Please note: If you do “drag and drop” - if the material is not your own, remember that appropriate referencing where the material came from is incredibly important!

Exploration: Become more familiar with using a computer mouse by going to a computer work station and trying each of the actions outlined above.

After you complete this exploration you are ready to proceed to the next section of this Orientation.

VI. The Internet

A. Introduction

This part of the orientation will cover a bit of background about the Internet, Internet connections, web browsers, navigation program, saving a file, retrieving a file and doing basic editing.

The Internet is the world's largest, most powerful computer network connecting personal computers, sophisticated mainframes, and high-speed supercomputers around the globe. The Internet started as a military experiment to ensure that there were communication avenues in the case of nuclear war.

The World Wide Web (WWW) is an aspect of the Internet that organizes information through web pages. The WWW has the ability to integrate graphics, text, and sound into a single tool means so novice users do not have to struggle with a steep learning curve. Web pages have made the Internet into an environment that is extremely user-friendly. The interconnected nature of the web allows users to dynamically link to desired information. The premise of the Internet is that it is uncensored, belonging to everyone, yet belonging to no one single person.

B. Internet Connection

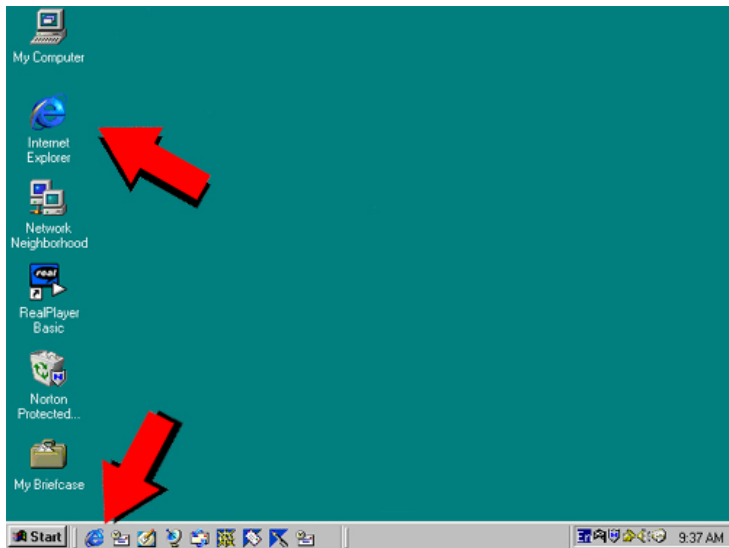
From a NSCC Campus location, you will connect to the Internet using the College Network. From other locations, you may need to use a local Internet Service Provider (ISP) for your connection. Once you have your connection, you can access the Internet by starting your browser program.

C. Browser Programs

Today, many different software programs or "browsers" are utilized to navigate the Internet. This includes programs such as Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer. The Web browser links to the remote computer just long enough so that the information you need can be sent to your computer for you to view. Mosaic was the first of the Internet tools that are now referred to as "web browsers." Web browsers have increased useful access to the information located on the Internet.

NSCC has Microsoft software licensing. This means that Microsoft Explorer is used as the basic web browser program on NSCC Campuses. Usually, you can start the browser by double clicking on the program icon on the Windows desktop or by single clicking on the Windows "Start" button, and then dragging the cursor to "Launch Microsoft Internet Explorer Browser." Internet Explorer usually has a

lower case letter “e” icon. These can be located in a couple of locations, illustrated with red arrows in the diagram below.



Once you initiate the start of the browser program, a splash screen will appear while the program is loading. When the browser has finished loading, it will go to the default home page for your location (depending on if you are connecting from home, from etc.). At the top of the Internet user interface there is a white location bar. At any time, you may use this location bar to manually type in the address or Uniform Resource Locator (also known as U.R.L. or URL) of any web site.

D. Search Engines

Search engines are essentially computer robots that will go out to the Internet and search for things that you tell them to. Figured prominently on most search engine web pages are small text fields for you to type in the term or terms for which you are searching. There are many different search engines that are available today, each of which has their own strengths and weaknesses. You will need to try out some for yourself and decide which ones you like and why.

To start you can try:

Google at <http://www.google.ca/>

Lycos at <http://www.lycos.ca/>

Alta Vista at <http://www.altavista.com/>

Ask Jeeves at <http://www.ask.com/>

E. Navigation Tips

Navigating on the Internet is pretty straight forward. However, here are some basic traffic rules to get you started:

1. On web pages you will likely see a number of blue underlined terms phrases or URL addresses. You may single click with the mouse on these "links" to take you to other pages.
2. On web pages, some icons may be links as well. These icons will change the usual "arrow" cursor of the mouse into a finger pointing. This indicates that the icon is also a link, which leads to something else, somewhere else. If you single click with the mouse on the linked icon, it will take you to the address of that link.
3. You can also navigate the web by using the gray tool bar near the top of the browser page. You can use "BACK" and "FORWARD" to move to previously visited pages. Right clicking with the mouse on the Internet page can accomplish the same navigation functions from the pop-up list that appears.
4. Nova Scotia Community College has its own web site. The address of the NSCC web site is: <http://www.nsc.ca>

Exploration: Use Internet Explorer as your browser to go to the Internet. Visit NSCC's web site and see what information you are able to find out about a program of interest to you.

Try using one of the search engines available to conduct an online search using "online learning" as your key search terms. Explore some of the sites that you find.

After you complete this exploration you are ready to proceed to the next section of this Orientation.

VII. Word Processing

A. Introduction

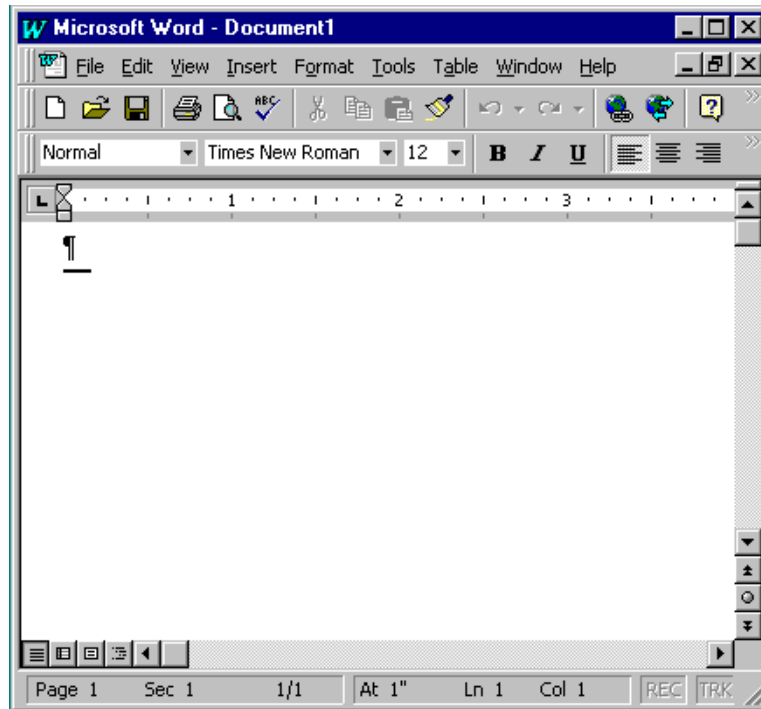
Word processing has changed the way that many documents are produced. In the past, where the typewriter might have been used to generate single typed copies of documents, word processing now allows electronic copies of documents to be created, saved, stored and subsequently updated, edited, changed and used again in other ways. The NSCC has Microsoft software licensing. This means that Microsoft Word is used as the basic Word processing program on NSCC Campuses. This part of the course will cover the basic steps for starting a word processing program, saving a file, retrieving a file and doing basic editing.

B. Starting The Program

To start Microsoft Word, you can double click on the program icon on the Windows desktop. The icon for Word is usually a large letter "W." If there is no program icon, then you will have to single click on the Windows "start" button, drag the mouse up to "Programs" and then select Microsoft Word from the pop-up list of options.

C. The User Interface

The User Interface is a fancy way of saying "what you see on the screen and how you use it." When you start Word, the program will open up a new blank file. Something like "Document 1" will display at the top of the Window. The screen will look something like the one pictured below.

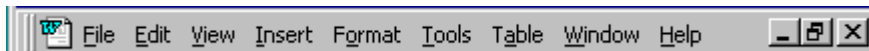


The Title Bar

At the top of the screen is the Title Bar, which tells you the name of the program you are using and the name of the document currently open on the screen. On the right hand side of the Title Bar are three buttons. The left-hand button (the horizontal line) is the minimize button. Clicking on this button will cause Word to be minimized to a button on the taskbar. The button in the middle is the restore/maximize button the change the size of the window. The far right-hand button with the "X" is the close button: clicking this will exit from Word.

The Menubar

Below the Title Bar is the Menu Bar.

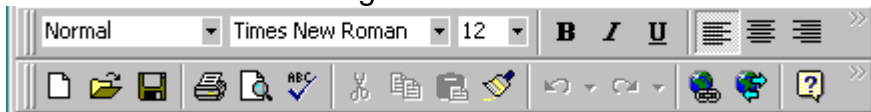


This holds all the pull-down menus for Word. To see the menus, click with the left mouse button on the menu required. When a pull-down menu is displayed it will have several options that can be selected by clicking on them with the left mouse button. To close a menu without choosing a command, click on a blank area of the screen. Any options displayed in light gray are currently unavailable but may become available at a later time. For example, you will not be able to use Copy from the Edit menu unless you have already selected the text you want to copy.


Toolbars

Immediately below the menu bar are one or more rows of tools. The commands you need to perform most of the basic operations in Word can be found in these tool buttons. By single clicking one of the tool buttons you can activate many different commands (i.e., save, print). Some options on the toolbars are in the form of pull-down lists (i.e., font, font size).

The standard & formatting toolbars look like this:

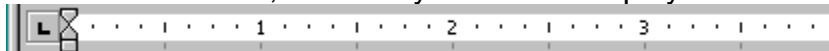


Move the mouse pointer over each of the buttons on the toolbar (but don't click on them). A short description pops up to tell you what each button will do. All the commands found on the toolbars can also be found under each menu.

A toolbar button, which looks "pushed in" means that option, is currently active. Clicking it again will turn it off. If you need any information about what a particular command will do, or want to know more about performing certain tasks, then Word has a good on-line help system. To access this, either select a command from the Help menu, or click on the Office Assistant icon. 

The Ruler

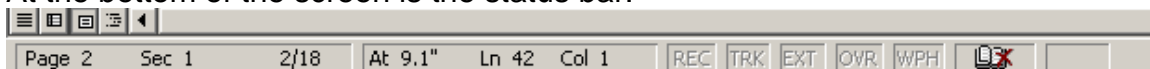
Below the toolbars, there may be a ruler displayed. It looks something like this:



This displays current margins, tabs and indent settings.

The Status Bar

At the bottom of the screen is the status bar.



This displays information about your document, including: Page number, Section number, the total number of pages from the beginning of the document followed by the total number of pages in the whole document, the position of the cursor from the top of the page, the line number and column number.

D. Using the Program

If you start typing something on the blank screen that appears below all the toolbar options, this will be the start of your word processing file. You will see how much better word processing is than typing once you start creating a

document. As you type, you can easily edit what you have typed by moving the mouse around, repositioning in the document and changing how you have worded something. Word automatically wraps the lines of text to fit between the margins of the page as you type, starting a new line when needed. If you add or delete text, change the margins, or change the format of your text, Word automatically adjusts the position of the text for you. Unlike using a typewriter, you only need to press Enter key at the end of each paragraph.

Correcting Mistakes

If you make a mistake when typing you can delete the character to the left of your cursor by pressing the Backspace key. You can delete the character to the right of your cursor by pressing the Delete key.

Capital Letters

For single capital letters hold down Shift key and press the letter. For all capital letters press the Caps Lock key.

Undo

This button on the toolbar allows you to undo a particular command or action. If you don't like the results of a command or accidentally delete some text, choose Undo as your next action. This command is also available in the Edit menu.

Redo

The Redo button works in the same way as the undo except you can redo an undo command. This command is also available in the Edit menu.

Formatting Text

Once your document has been typed, it can be enhanced with effects such as bold, underline, different fonts and centering. For new text, you can switch these options on, type the text, and then switch the option off again. However, if you want to alter text you have already typed, you must select it first.

Selecting Text

To select text, do this:

Move the mouse cursor to the start of the text you want to select; click and hold down your left mouse then drag the cursor across the area to be selected. The text will be highlighted as you drag the cursor across it.

Bold, Underline and Italics

Select the text you want to format then click the **Bold**, *Italic* or Underline button.



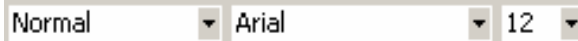
Text Alignment

The same steps are repeated when aligning text on the screen. The two icons displayed shows text being left aligned (Align Left), and text being centered between the margins (Center). To make the text flush to the right margin (Align Right), and aligning to both margins (Justify), use the pull-down menu for more options.



Fonts and Sizes

The different typefaces used in word-processing documents are known as fonts. Fonts are usually measured in points. A point is 1/72 of an inch. Standard text is usually Times New Roman in 10pt size. Font types and sizes can be selected before typing text or can be added retrospectively to specific sections of text (by selecting the text first). To select font types and sizes from the formatting toolbar, click on the arrow next to the current font name and a list of available fonts will be displayed. The pull-down list below lets you choose the font size.



Copy and Paste

You can use some of the fancy mouse skills that you acquired in order to highlight, copy and paste selections you have written from one location to another. Copying and Pasting is a way of moving sections of text or copying things into your document. It is available in all Windows applications, and you can use it to copy things between different applications. There are two commands involved: Copy and Paste. Each can be selected from the EDIT menu or from buttons on the standard toolbar.

When you copy text, it is put into an area known as the clipboard, which is available to all Windows programs. Copy simply puts a copy into the clipboard. The Paste command copies whatever is in the clipboard into the document at the current cursor position. If text is selected when you paste from the clipboard, its contents replace the selected text. Text remains in the clipboard until the next Copy, so you can paste the contents of the clipboard several times. You can paste between Windows applications. For example, you can insert a picture into a document by copying it from Paintbrush and pasting it into Word.

Cut

The Cut command is another way of moving sections of text. Unlike the Copy command, Cut deletes the text from the document and puts the text into the clipboard. You can then use the Paste command to insert the information elsewhere.

Drag and Drop

Select a block of text to be moved and place the mouse pointer over the text. Hold down the left mouse button and DRAG the pointer to the new location for the text.

A gray vertical line will indicate where the text will appear in the document. Release the left mouse button and DROP the text into its new location. Dragging and dropping is a quick alternative to Cut and Paste but can be a little tricky to control if you are new to using a mouse.

Spell Checking

Word has a built-in dictionary, which can be used to check the spelling in your work. Word also checks for repeated words (the the), odd capitalization (tHE), and proper nouns (london).

To spell check a document select the word or section of the document you want to check. If nothing is selected, Word checks the document from where the cursor is, and when it reaches the end will ask if you want to continue from the beginning, until it has checked the whole document.

Select Spelling and Grammar... from the Tools menu. Word looks for words in your document that don't match those in its dictionary. It highlights those words and displays the Spelling dialog box.

To correct the misspelled word, either type it in the text area or select the correct word from the Suggestions list.

Press the Change button to replace the misspelled word with the correct one, or press Change All to change all occurrences of the misspelled word in your document. If the word highlighted is spelt the way you want, choose Ignore to leave the word as it is, or choose Ignore All to ignore all occurrences of this word in your document. If Word highlights a word it does not recognize and you know that it is spelt correctly, you can add the word to the dictionary by selecting Add. The word is added to the dictionary displayed in the Add box. Word continues checking your document. Choose Cancel at any time to stop the spell check.

Thesaurus

When you're not sure of the meaning of a word, or when you think you're using a particular word too often, use the Thesaurus. It defines selected words and offers alternatives (synonyms). To use it:

- Select a word in your document then select Tools, Language, and Thesaurus from the menu bar.
- The Thesaurus dialog box appears, showing the meaning of the word on the left and a list of synonyms on the right.

- To see a list of other related words click on any related words in the meaning box.
- To choose an alternative, highlight it and then click REPLACE.

Word Count

Select Tools/Word Count.

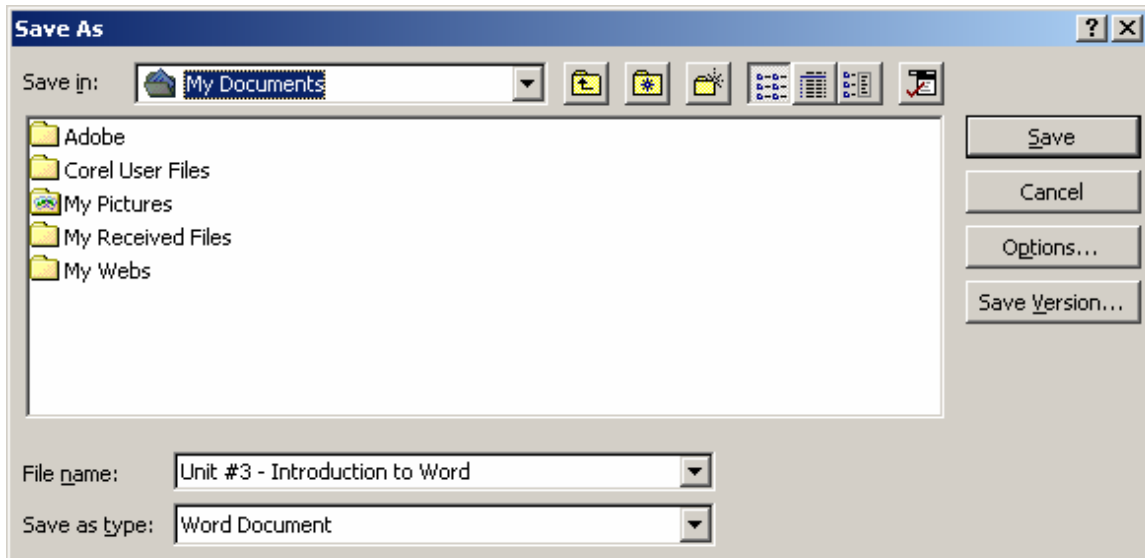
- Check the number of words in the document
- Save the file.

E. Saving Your Work

You should save your document regularly as you are working on it, not just at the end.

To save a new document for the first time.

- Select Save from the File menu, or click on the save icon on the Toolbar. You will see a dialog box similar to the one below:



Check the Save in: box to see where your file is being saved. The default on most PCs is the "My Documents" folder. You can now give your document a file name. Word will suggest a name in the File Name: box. You can accept this, edit it, or replace it with a name of your choice.

- Then click Save.

Filenames

File names can be up to 255 characters long but cannot include special characters such as:

forward slash (/)
backslash (\)
greater than sign (>)
less than sign (<)
asterisk (*)
period (.)
question mark (?)
quotation mark (")
pipe symbol (|)
colon (:)
or semicolon (;)

When saving a file, Word will automatically give each filename the extension .DOC to enable Word to recognize its own files.

Once you have named a file and saved it, you can save other changes you make by simply single clicking the "save" button: your existing document will be updated.

Opening Files

To open an existing document

- Select Open... from the File menu or click on the open icon on the toolbar. Both actions will present you with a dialog box like this:
- Find the file you want to open click on it and then click Open.

As you are discovering, word processing gives you all kinds of options for creating and communicating information.

Exploration: Create a brief biography explaining who you are and a little bit about yourself. Only share what you would be comfortable sharing with a group.

After you complete this exploration you are ready to proceed to the next section of this Orientation.

VIII. General Troubleshooting Strategies

It is important to remember that computers are just machines. They crash, perform illegal operations and can be extremely frustrating at times. This section details some very general strategies for coping with computers and technical problems.

Remember that technical support comes in a number of different shapes and sizes. Look around yourself and utilize the expertise of those people around you. You never know who might be able to lend a hand. As well, there is always access to help and assistance through the various programs and their associated help files. Do not be afraid to utilize this information: it may have just the answer you were looking for. As well, each computer program has its own built-in help function. Do not hesitate to take advantage of the system help available from within the program you are using.

Every now and then your computer will lock and you won't be able to do anything. This can happen even when you've done nothing wrong. To rectify the situation you can hold down the Ctrl, Alt, and Del keys at the same time. The computer will give you the opportunity to end the task you were using before the computer locked up. Once you end this task you can usually resume from where you left off. **NOTE:** Closing the program or restarting the computer will erase all data that hasn't been saved.

Strategy: *If you hold down Ctrl, Alt and Delete three immediately successive times it will restart your computer.*

A good rule of thumb is that if your computer starts doing things that seem strange or somehow out of the ordinary, a restart may be in order. If your computer encounters some sort of an internal error it may keep working for a while, but things may continue to go wrong.

Strategy: *Try restarting the computer by clicking on the Start button, selecting the "shut down" option and then choosing the "restart" radio button option.*

If your computer freezes up, will not restart using Ctrl, Alt and Delete and will not restart using the normal procedure, you may need to take more drastic action. The reset button (or On/Off switch) is a panic button, but only use it when nothing else (even Ctrl, Alt, Delete) works. When you press the button you are destroying all the work you haven't saved during the day. Some computers have a reset button and a main power switch; others just have a single switch. Use the strategy that works with your computer.

Strategy: *Use the reset button when nothing else seems to work for re-starting and resetting your computer.*

It is important that you have somewhere you can call to talk to someone if you are having continuing difficulty. Anywhere in the content modules of the course where you see a "help" button with the image of the question mark, it means that you can use that link to view (and print if you like) the associated help contact information of the module.

Remember: *Your first avenue for assistance if you are experiencing difficulties is course instructor. For additional technical assistance, please contact the NSCC Online Learning Offices. If you are unable to connect with a person right away, always be sure to leave a detailed message.*

IX. Getting Help

As a learner taking an online course, your learning may be challenged in new ways. Please, do not hesitate to initiate contact if you have questions:

Remember that your instructor is your contact for course content questions.

For technical concerns, please do not hesitate to contact NSCC Online Learning:

- ❑ **Phone:** (902) 491-6774
- ❑ **Toll Free:** 1-877-491-6774
- ❑ **Fax:** (902) 491-4835
- ❑ **Email:** online.learning@nsc.ca

All the best with your course!