Introduction to Computers

Basic Computer Parts

Monitor
- The screen
- Displays information from the tower

Tower
- The "brains" behind the computer
- Sometimes called the CPU – central processing unit
- Can contain a variety of devices (like drives) and ports to which external devices can be connected

Hard Drive
- The computer's **permanent** storage device – not to be removed
- You can save information to it from the Internet or external storage devices

You can delete information from it

Keyboard
- Like a typewriter with a few more keys
- Allows you to input information, like text (words), numbers and commands

Mouse
- The pointing device
- Allows you to interact with the computer

Floppy Drive
- Some older computers have a floppy drive
- Floppy disks are **portable** storage devices, that allow you to carry small amounts of information with you (e.g. some text files or pictures)

Insert them "metal side first, dot side down"

CD-ROM & DVD-ROM Drive

- Some computers have a CD, a DVD, or a combination CD/DVD Drive
- Like floppy disks, these are portable storage devices
- These disks can hold a lot of information. CDs are generally used for software, music and small games, while DVDs store movies and large games.
- They look alike, so pay attention to the packaging
- Both CDs and DVDs come in types R and RW
  - "R" disks are permanent once data is stored to them
  - "RW" disks are re-writable and can be re-used
- To insert them, push the button on your drive to open the door, place the disk on the drive, and use the button to close the door (the door is delicate – so don't force it!!)
- Watch your monitor for prompts to direct your next steps

A CD or DVD Burner is a specific drive used to record data onto blank disks. Burning software exists to direct you through this process.

USB Drive

- An external storage device
- Plugs in, like a mouse or keyboard, to a port in your computer tower
- Small, durable and re-usable
- Holds a lot of information (websites, movies, presentations)

Terminology

Hardware

- Any physical component of a computer, such as the monitor, keyboard, mouse or tower

Software

- Coded instructions that direct the operation of a computer
- A set of such instructions for accomplishing a particular task is referred to as a program or application

Operating System (OS)

- Important piece of software that runs whenever the computer is on
- Main Operating Systems are Windows, or Mac
- Performs basic tasks, such as recognizing input from the keyboard, sending output to the display screen, keeping track of files on the hard drive, and controlling devices like disk drives and printers
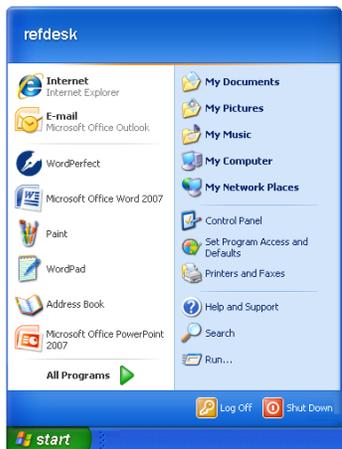
Desktop
- The visual work area that fills the screen on your monitor and allows you to interact with the computer, such as My Computer

Icons
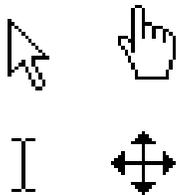- Small pictures that represent programs, folders, documents and disk drives

Start Menu
- The place to look for programs and documents on your computer
- Where to find the Search and Help functions for when you get confused
- Head here to Shut Down the computer when you are done

Task Bar
- The blue bar that runs the length of the bottom of the screen
- Contains the start button (which opens the start menu) and holds icons for programs that are currently in use

Cursor (Mouse Pointer)
- An arrow that indicates the current location of the mouse on the desktop
- Changes shapes depending on the application in use and task being performed

Click

- Single-click. With your cursor on top of an icon or hyperlink, click once with the left mouse button.
- If not specified, and whenever using a menu command, click only once
- Double-click means to click twice in quick succession on the same spot (which can be tricky!)
- Right-click means to click once with the right mouse button (not necessarily over an icon)

Tool Tips

- When you place your cursor over an icon without clicking, you are said to "hover" (like a helicopter). Often, a bubble will appear which gives more information about the item you are hovering over.

My Documents

Contains letters, reports, and other documents and files.

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The Desktop and Folders

My Computer
- The "gateway" to your computer
- A starting point to reach your floppy, hard and disk drives

My Documents
- A convenient place to store your files on the computer
- Create other folders within this one for better organization

Recycle Bin
- The place where deleted files or folders are stored until they are permanently deleted from the computer
- To delete these files entirely, the bin must be "emptied" (**Right-click** -- **Empty Recycle Bin**)

Making a Folder
- Use **My Computer** to find a location
- Choose **Make a new folder** (a new folder will appear with the default name "**New Folder"**). Type a name and press **ENTER**
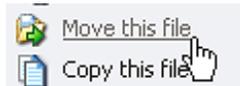
Deleting a File or Folder
- Open or find the document you want to delete and **single-click** to select it
- Hit the **delete** key on your keyboard or use the Windows **Delete this file** command at left
- If a confirmation window comes up, choose 'yes' to confirm your deletion
- It will now be in your recycling bin

Moving Files
- Find the document you want to move and **single click** to select it (you don't want it open)
- You can now **Copy** (keep it where it is and create a copy elsewhere) or **Move** (remove and re-locate) it
- You can use the **Edit -- Cut** or **Copy** commands or the Windows **Move** and **Copy** commands at left
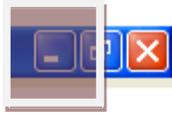
Find the folder into which you want to relocate your document, single-click to select it, and use **Edit – Paste** or the **Copy/Move** button to finish

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Working with Windows

Minimize
Hides a window temporarily so you can work with others. The window will disappear but its icon will still appear on the taskbar.

Restore
When a window is covering the full screen, the middle button (usually the maximize one) will become the restore button. This command reverts the window back to a smaller size so it can be resized or moved around

Maximize
Makes the current window fill the whole screen. If a window is minimized, this command will bring it back to the screen so you can use it again

Close
To close the whole program, click on the top red 'x'.