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COMPUTER BASICS

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GETTING STARTED

Class Overview

This is a class for very beginning computer users. You are not expected to have ANY experience with computers. If you've never touched a computer before, this is the right place for you.

We will be using personal computers (PC) running the Microsoft Windows operating system. You may have heard these words before, but if not, don't worry. We'll cover their meanings later in the class.

Don't get discouraged! Remember: Practice makes perfect and everyone starts out as a beginner. Using the keyboard and mouse may be challenging at first, but it will become easier the more you use them. **Note:** The mouse is intended for you to use with your right hand, regardless of whether or not you are right-handed. This shouldn't be an issue in class, but if the mouse is uncomfortable for you, let your instructor know.

Please let the instructor know if you have questions or concerns before the class, or as we go along.

What You Will Learn

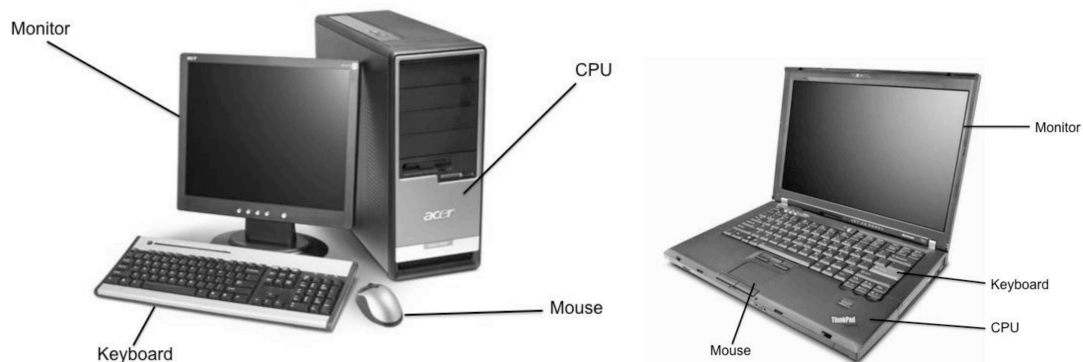
Identify major computer components	Understand the basics of how computers work	Differentiate between software and hardware
Turn a computer on	Log on to a computer	Identify the computer desktop
Change the appearance of the desktop	Use the keyboard	Use and understand the different functions of the mouse
Basics of the Microsoft Windows operating system	Utilize the Start Menu in Microsoft Windows	Utilize the Taskbar in Microsoft Windows
Buy a computer	Buy other software and programs	Differentiate between logging off and shutting down
Shut down the computer	Find more help	

BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS

On any given day, you will encounter computer systems in much of what you do, even if you don't realize it. The television channels you watch, the radio stations that you listen to, the car that you drive in, and even the cash register at the local grocery store are all controlled in some way by computer systems! They help us perform tasks, keep track of information, and even control the airplanes that fly above us. Throughout the course of this class, you will learn about how computers work, how to perform simple tasks, and more.

Anatomy of a Computer

As with most products, computers are designed in a variety of ways. There are, however, major similarities regardless of the brand (e.g., Dell, Apple, Acer, HP, Lenovo) of the computer. There are two main types of computers, desktops and laptops. However, all computers have the following components:



THE MONITOR

The monitor looks like a television screen and is where you see what is happening on your computer. By using shadows and graphics with over a million different colors, much of what you see will appear 3-dimensional. Think of this as the 'face' of the computer.

THE CPU (Central Processing Unit)

The CPU houses the machinery that allows your computer to work. Think of this as the 'brains' of the computer. This component looks very different in desktops and laptops, but it works the same.

THE KEYBOARD

The keyboard is one of two ways to interact with your computer. The keys should mostly mimic a traditional typewriter.

THE MOUSE

This is the other way to interact with your computer. Most mice have two buttons—a right and a left button—and a scrolling wheel.

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