

PC Basics and File and Folder Management



1. The Desktop

The desktop on your computer may not look the same as the picture on the right because the appearance can be changed to suit the user.

On the screen are a number of **icons**. These can be double-clicked on to launch an application, open a file, or show the contents of a drive.

The Taskbar at the bottom shows a Start button and a button for any programs that are running. Here, the Word application is running but has been **minimised**.

To the right of the Taskbar is the 'icon bar tray' containing a clock and other utility programs that are placed here to be readily available.

When the Start button is clicked, a menu of programs appears. These can be clicked once to launch them.

Changes that can be made to the Desktop include:

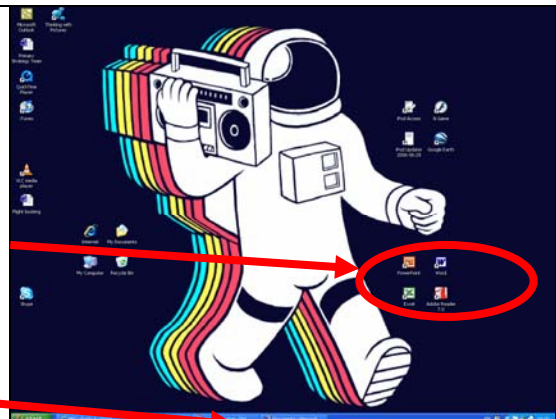
- Icons can be added to the desktop by creating **shortcuts** to programs or files.
- The Taskbar can be moved to any of the edges of the desktop by dragging it, although once placed where you wish it to remain it is sensible to lock it in place.
- The appearance of the screen can be altered using the **Control Panel**.

The most useful **short cuts** to make are of programs you use most regularly.

To do this click on the Start button, move the mouse to the program icon you wish to place on the desktop, click and hold down the mouse button whilst you drag and drop it on the desktop.

An alternative way is to click on the Start button, move the mouse to the program icon you wish to place on the desktop, and this time **right click** with the mouse, click on **Send To** and select the option **Desktop (create shortcut)**.

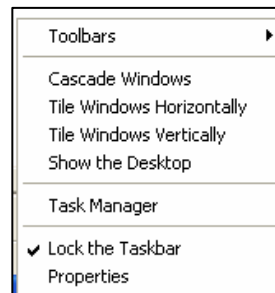
Other than clicking icons on the desktop, most programs can be started by choosing 'Start > Programs..' and selecting from the menu of programs by clicking.



Start Taskbar Utilities

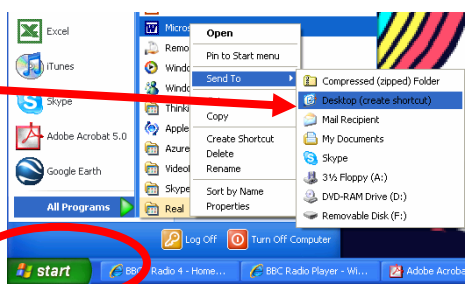
Icons are small picture representations of applications, files and drives.

When a window is **minimised** the program is paused, the window disappears and the icon representing the program on the icon bar changes to a 'blocked icon'. Clicking this icon will open the window and continue the program.



Right click on an empty part of the task bar and place a tick against **Lock the Taskbar**

Shortcuts are an easy way to find and launch programs. The shortcut sits on the desktop and points the PC to where the program is stored. Clicking the shortcut launches the program.



The **Control Panel** can be opened from the start menu : Start > Control Panel. It allows changes to be made to many aspects of the computer.

2. The Mouse

A mouse is a pointing device where the movement of the mouse creates a corresponding movement of the pointer on the screen.

When using a mouse, we use ...

the **left** button to point, click, drag and double click
the **right** button to see a [context menu](#)

With a mouse we can

point things out on the screen
click to select an object
drag to select a line of text, or move an [object](#)
double click to launch an application
right click to select a [context menu](#)

When using the **left button** to select an object...

the **first** click selects the object
the **second** click will open the selected object if it is a file, or run it if it is an application.

3. The Start Menu

The Start button options include :

All Programs	Choose and run a program
My Documents }	See the most recently used
My Pictures }	documents, images and music
My Music }	
Control Panel	
Search	Search for a lost document
Help and support	Get help from the on-line dictionary
Run	Start a program (an old method)
Shutdown	Make the computer safe ready to switch off

Where there is a little arrow to the right of the option, we move the pointer to it to reveal a second menu. In the example given previously the 'All Programs' menu item leads to a list of programs.

We can move onto this menu, and then select and click the application you wish to launch e.g. Word.

We would write this as [Start > All Programs > Word].

4. Shutting down the computer

To shut down the computer we choose [Start > Turn Off Computer] and then confirm the choice in the small window which appears.

Computers should be shutdown rather than just turning them off because they need to 'put away' their files and park the hard disc safely.

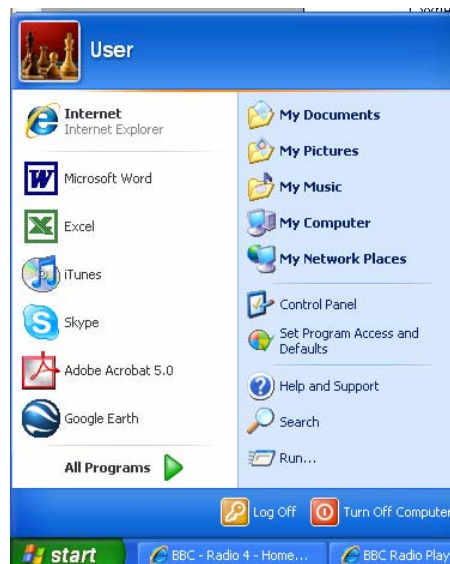
An [object](#) can be an icon, a file, or a button.

A [context menu](#) is a menu with choices relevant to the object which was below the mouse pointer when the mouse button was clicked.

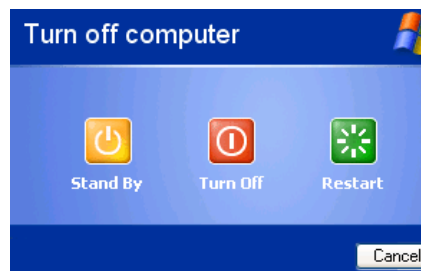
To drag means to move the pointer over an object, click the left mouse button and keep it pressed, then move the mouse. If the pointer is over text the text that is dragged over will become highlighted.

The 'double click to launch application' arises from the convention that the first click selects the program icon and the second click launches it.

With a folder icon the first click selects it and the second click opens it.



A [program](#) like 'Word' is also referred to as an application



5. Window handles

All windows have the same basic features.

Title bar	The Title bar contains the window's name. A click on the title bar selects the window. The window can be moved by dragging the Title bar
Minimise	The minimise button closes the window and puts the window on the icon bar. It can be opened again by clicking its icon on the icon bar.
Maximise	Maximise causes the window open to fill the screen.
Close	The Close icon closes the window or the application.
Menu bar	The Menu bar contains the names of the available menus
Slider	Moving the slider scrolls the window
Scroll bar	Clicking the scroll bar area makes the window jump to the bottom or top of its travel.
Resize handle	The resize handle is dragged to change the size of the window.
Scroll arrow	The scroll arrows allow fine scrolling of the window.

The 'Minimise' option is useful because it 'parks' an active window on the icon bar and makes space to open up another window or file. You retrieve the window by clicking the icon on the icon bar. Note that this doesn't close the application. Windows can be moved to different positions by dragging the window by its title bar - which acts like a handle.

6. Where do files and applications live on a PC?

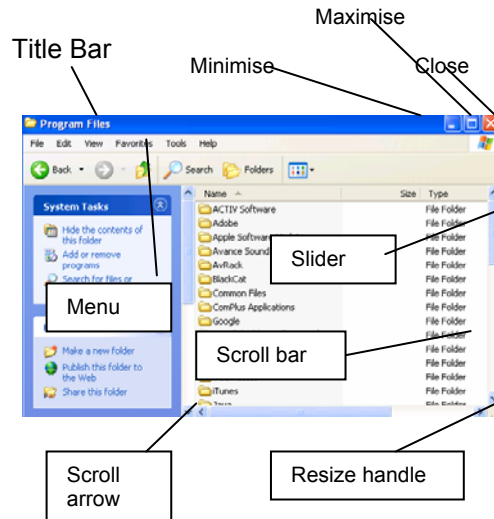
It is important to understand where files are actually located on a PC and the different ways you can get to them.

Handling files, including loading and saving them is one of the more difficult features of a PC. This is partly because it is easy to get confused by files and where they are actually stored.

This is particularly true if they are 'nested', i.e. a file lives inside a folder, which lives inside another folder... and so on.

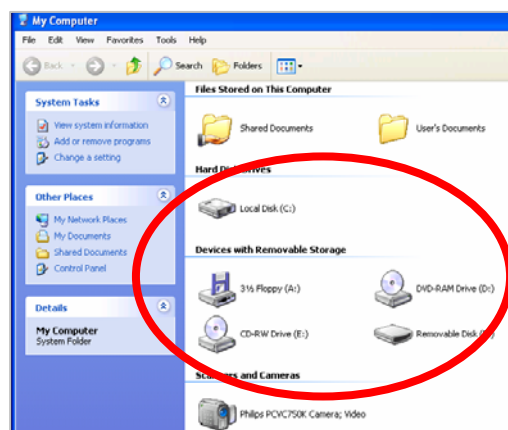
Clicking the 'My Computer' icon will open a small window. This will show the disc drives present, the control panel folder, and network details.

In the window on the right there is a floppy disc drive called 'A', a hard disc called 'C', a DVD/DRAM drive called 'D', a CD-RW drive called 'E' and a removable USB drive called 'F'



*If several windows are open at the same time, the 'active' one will have a coloured title bar. Clicking on another window will select that as the active window and bring it to the front of the screen. We could also 'tile' them on the screen by clicking a blank part of the icon bar with the **right** mouse button and choosing 'Tile Windows Horizontally'..*

*All windows can be minimised at once by clicking a blank part of the icon bar with the **right** mouse button and choosing 'Minimise All Windows'.*



The floppy disc drive is always referred to as the A drive and the hard disc drive as the C drive. Other letters can vary depending on the numbers of other drives installed on the computer.

If we double click on hard disc 'C' a window will open to show the files stored on this drive.

There will probably be many folders, and icons representing applications or application components. The window can be scrolled to show them all.

The icons in this window connect with the parts of the hard disc where these folders, files or applications are saved as magnetic images.

This is where files and applications live on a computer.

The icons that appear on the desktop 'point' to these files and applications. They are called 'short-cuts' because you can get to your file or application without needing to search through drives and folders to find them.

The Start button provides a menu of short cuts to the programs which live on the 'C' drive.

7. Creating a short-cut to folders or applications

It is useful to place frequently-used folders or applications on the desktop for easy access. To do this we can create a shortcut. This is an icon which points to the folder or application. Clicking this shortcut icon will open the folder or application.

To create a short cut, first find the file or application on the hard drive – Use the 'My Documents' icon on the desktop

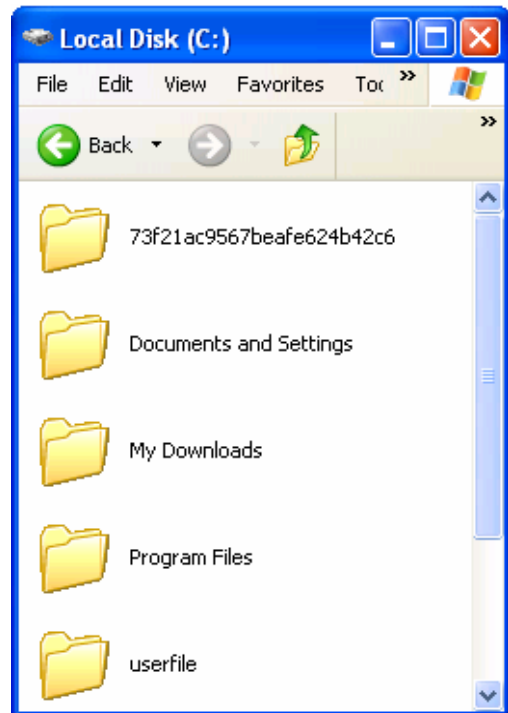
Point to the folder and click the **right** mouse button. This reveals a pop-up **context** menu.

We choose the 'Send To> Desktop (Create Short Cut)' option.

We can recognise short cuts as they have an arrow icon in the bottom left corner.

We can safely delete short cuts as the program or file which they point too is not affected by removing the short cut. However, beware if there is no arrow to indicate a short cut because this will mean that the application or folder is actually saved onto the desktop itself. Deleting this icon will delete the application rather than a shortcut to it!

Note: Creating shortcuts only works for folders or applications that are stored on your PC. It will not work from a USB once it has been taken out of the USB port



Folders can be **temporarily** saved onto the desktop. That way you don't need to go hunting to find them again.

Saving a file onto the desktop means that the file is saved into a folder in Windows which is displayed on the desktop. Its address is : C:\Documents and Settings\User\Desktop.



i.e. to find it we double click C drive, double click the DOCUMENTS AND SETTINGS folder and then double click the folder called USER and then double click the folder called DESKTOP.

8. Finding Files

When we are creating a lot of files, e.g. Word documents, it will be important to file them in folders with names that will allow us to find them again. (Just like any filing system.)
(A good tip is to put the name of the file at the bottom of every document you create.)

Also, the names you give to documents should be logical and 'guessable' when, in the future you wish to search for it and can't quite remember the file name. However, no matter how carefully you do this, files will go missing. The best way to find them is to use the Search facility.

To use this choose [Start > Search > All Files and Folders]
 Enter a likely name for the file into the box labelled 'All or part of the file name'.
 Check that the utility will look in the right place. ('Look in:')
 This will probably be your hard disc drive 'C'.
 Click 'Search'. You can then scroll down the results and click on the document you are looking for to open it.

The Search utility can also be used to find particular types of document. For example, you can look at all the Word documents by searching for [*.doc]. The '*' tells the utility to choose any name file, as long as it ends with .doc.
 'Search' will find all files with a similar name to the one you type in. The 'More advanced options' tab can be used to narrow the search to a particular type of document.

A common PC problem is a lost, or wrongly filed, document which the user thinks has been deleted. One problem is that, when files are saved from applications, the program will offer a folder to save it in - which is not always the folder we would wish to file it in. We must therefore check where a file is going to be saved whenever we choose the 'Save' option.

9. Recognizing different file types

Common file types that you will come across are shown opposite. These can be opened in two ways.

If you are browsing files and folders through My Computer or My Documents then just by double clicking on the icon the right program will automatically open with the contents of the file showing.

The second way is to already have the correct program open eg Excel, go to File, Open on the menu bar and browse you're my Documents(or USB drive) to find the file you wish to work with.

Note: In order to open any of the files you must have the correct program installed on your PC



*In this example *file*. * has been entered in the field 'all or part of the file name'. The * is what is called a wild card. In this example it will look for all files or folders with the letter string 'file' somewhere in them.*



Starters
plenaries

This is a folder, double click to open and view the contents.



260107

A word document. File extension is .doc



AST list JAN
2007

An Excel file. File extension is .xls



BETT Awards
2007 SEC...

A PDF document which can be opened using Acrobat Reader. File extension is .pdf



negative
numbers

A Smart notebook file. File extension is .xbk for versions below 9.5 and .notebook for version 9.5



acid_metal_...

A Promethean flipchart file. File extension is .flp

10. Creating a new folder

In order to create a new folder directly on the Desktop, where we can put our frequently-used files move the pointer to an empty part of the Desktop and click the right mouse button.

The **context** menu which appears will have a menu item called 'New'. When we move the pointer to follow the arrow off the menu, a second menu is revealed where the top item says 'Folder'.

Clicking this will create a new folder on the desktop. Because the text 'New Folder' is already highlighted in blue you can directly type in the name that you wish to call the folder.

11. Re-naming a folder

To rename a folder we move the pointer over it and click the right hand **context** menu. On the menu that appears there is the option to 'Rename'. If this option is clicked the name is highlighted, and a cursor will appear at the end of the existing name. Typing in another name will overwrite the existing name.

12. Moving and copying files

If we open two folders, with one containing a document, we can **move** the document from one folder to another by dragging it from the first folder and dropping it into the second one.

We can also **copy** a file to a folder, leaving a copy of the file in the original folder. To do this we move the pointer over the file and click the right mouse button. On the context menu that appears we select the option to copy the file. We now move the pointer to the new folder and click the right mouse button again. On the context menu which appears we can select the option 'Paste'.

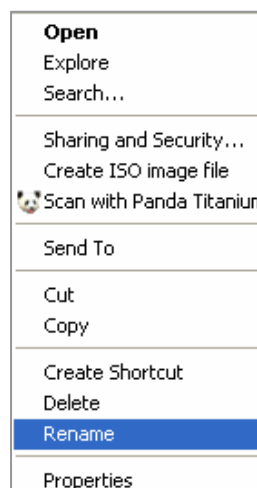
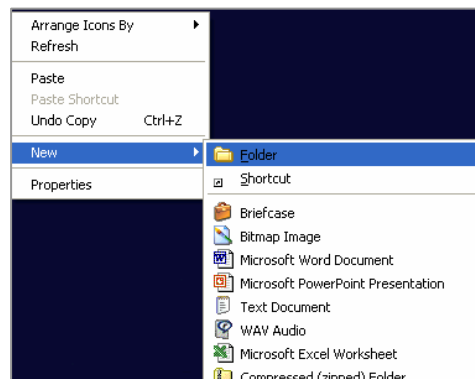
13. Deleting files

We can delete a file by moving the pointer over it and selecting 'Delete' from the context menu that appears when we click the right mouse button.

The file will be moved to the re-cycling bin, which gives you the option of retrieving it if you deleted the file by mistake. To do this click on the file you wish to restore to highlight it and in the right hand menu click on 'Restore this item'.

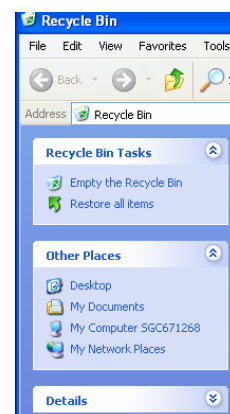
When you wish to make more space on your computer you can 'Empty the Recycle Bin' – an option which is found on a context menu (right click over the recycle bin icon.). But doing this really does remove files permanently.

Understanding where files live on the computer and having a good system for filing, with pre-labelled folders ready to receive documents of a particular type is the key to being organised when using a PC.



When creating an important document over some hours or days it is a good idea to save it regularly as a different name, e.g. mynovel1, mynovel2, mynovel3 etc. This provides you with a history off the document. If you have a disaster with the current version you can step back to the last highest numbered one. You can eventually delete the earlier files.

Many people are happy to leave files in their recycling bin for some time on the basis that if they have a problem, like losing a file, they may find an earlier version in the Bin.



Getting up to speed with PC Basics: self assessment tasks

Action	I can do this	Notes
The Desktop		
Note the main features of the desktop		Identify the Taskbar, the Start button, and the shortcut icons to 'My Computer' , 'My Documents' and to applications.
Create short cuts on the desktop		Double click 'My Computer'. Drag the icons to the desktop.
The Mouse		
Select an object.		Click once on an object with the left mouse button to select it. Click a blank part of the screen to deselect it.
See what is inside 'My Computer'		Click twice on 'My Computer' to see what's inside. One click selects an object. Two clicks opens the file or folder, or launches an application.
Examine the <i>context menu</i> at different places of the screen.		Click the <i>right button</i> over an object to get a context menu with options related to the object. This menu changes depending on the object which the pointer is over.
The Start Menu		
Check the range of applications that are available to you on this PC. What different things could you do on this computer?		Click the 'Start' button in the corner of the screen. Note the choices on the menu which appears. Move to 'All Programs' and then off to the right of the screen. Move up and down this list of programs to see the range of applications you have on your computer.
Launch Microsoft Word, or another application.		When you move along the menu to Word, it becomes selected. You launch it by clicking once.
Shut down the computer		You may decide to do this later – just check where the shut down button is.
Window handles		
Open a folder and move it around		You will find folders in My Computer. Move it by dragging the Title bar.
Resize a window		Find the resize handle at the bottom right of the window. Drag the window to resize it.
Maximise a window. Make it smaller again.		Click the middle of the three icons at the top left of the screen. Notice that the picture in the icon changes. Click it again. Repeat a few times to get the hang of this!
Minimise a window. Bring it back onto the desktop.		The left hand dashed icon at the top left of the window will close the window. To get it back click the icon representing the window on the icon bar.
Make the window small and scroll it coarsely and finely.		Scroll coarsely by dragging the scroll bar, or clicking the space above or below it. Use the arrow icons for fine scrolling.
Folders and files		
Use 'Search' to locate a document		Choose Start > Search > All Files or Folders. Refer to Page 7.
Create a new folder on the desktop		Right click the desktop. 'Choose New > Folder'
Rename this folder		Right click the folder. Choose 'Rename'.
Move a file between two folders.		Open two folders. Drag a file back and forth.
Delete a file		Right click an unimportant file. Choose 'Delete'.

Finish by going to the **Primary Strategy renewed framework website library area**.

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primaryframeworks/>

For either literacy or mathematics select the 'ICT resources' tab relevant to your key stage, how many different file types do you recognize? Have a go at saving some of the resources to your PC and then try opening them using one of the two ways described on page 6.