

The Basics of Using a Mouse Keywords

A: drive: Where you insert the floppy disk. Part of the address of files saved on a floppy disk.

Address: The exact location where a file is stored. Internet addresses are also called URLs (Universal Resource Locator).

arrow keys: Keys on the keyboard that allow you to move the cursor around the monitor screen.

Bit: The smallest measurement of computer hard drive space.

Bookmark: A web site address saved by a user so that it can be easily found (also called **favorites**)

boot up: To start up the computer

browser: Software that allows the computer to communicate with the Internet. Examples are **Internet Explorer**, **Netscape** and the **AOL** browser.

Bug: An error in the computer hardware or software that causes it to malfunction.

Byte: A measurement of computer hard drive space. A byte, or character, equals eight bits.

C: drive: The computer's "hard drive" or permanent memory. Part of the address of files stored on the hard drive.

CD-ROM: A round metallic disk that holds computer software. CD-ROM stands for Compact Disc, Read Only Memory.

Central Processing Unit: Or CPU is the "brain" of the computer.

checkboxes: allow you to select **one or more** options from a list of options

click: Pushing and releasing the mouse button to perform an action.

click and drag: A way to move items on the screen using the mouse. To move an object, place the mouse cursor over it, press and hold down the left mouse button, then move the mouse while still holding down the left mouse button. When you have dragged the object to the location you want, let go of the mouse button

close box: The box or button on your title bar which allows you to quickly close a program. This box usually contains an "X".

computer case: The part of the computer that contains the CPU, hard drive, RAM, and disk drives.

Cursor: The flashing line that appears on a word processing application to indicate where you are in the document.

D: drive: Where you insert the CD-ROM.

Desktop: The main screen display on the computer.

disk drive: A part of the computer that reads information or software from a disk.

double-click: Pressing and releasing the mouse button twice to perform an action, such as opening a program.

Email: Electronic mail, which is sent via the Internet

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Enter key: A key on the keyboard that performs actions. Also used like a return key on a typewriter.

error message: A message sent by the computer program to indicate that an error has occurred. Usually it includes error codes and other information helpful to computer professionals.

Esc (Escape) key: A key on the keyboard that allows the user to quickly abort an action.

Extensions: The last part of a file name that indicates the program that created the file. For example .docx is a Word 2007 document.

FAQ: An acronym that stands for “frequently asked questions” and is often seen on web pages.

Favorite: see bookmark.

File: Information or document stored on a disk.

Flash Drive: (or USB drive) Portable device ranging from 128MB – 4 GB in storage capacity

floppy disk: A disk on which information or software can be stored.

Folder: A collection of related files.

Font: A style of type.

Freezing: When the mouse or keyboard will not move.

function keys: The shortcut keys labeled F1 to F12 on the top of the computer keyboard.

Gigabyte (GB): A measurement of computer hard drive space which is approximately equal to 1,000 megabytes.

hard boot: To shut down the computer when it is frozen by actually turning off or unplugging the computer.

hard drive: see C: drive

hardware: The physical parts of the computer. For example the monitor, mouse, keyboard, computer case, etc.

highlighting: A way of marking a section of text to make a change with the next command.

home page: The first page of any web site.

HTML (Hypertext Markup Language): A computer language used to create web pages.

Icon: The small picture that serves as a shortcut to opening a program.

Installing: The process of reading and storing software onto the computer’s hard drive.

Internet: A huge and ever growing worldwide network of computers linked by data or phone lines. Also called “The Web”.

Internet Service Provider (ISP): A company which provides access to the Internet.

Keyboard: The hardware used to type information into the computer.

Laptop: A small portable computer with all the hardware in one unit.

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Maximize/restore box: The box or button in the upper left hand corner of a program that restores the page to full size. It looks like two overlapping windows.

megabyte (MB): A measurement of computer space equal to approximately one million bytes.

Menu: A list of commands available to you in a program.

menu bar The toolbar that appears below the title that contains menus for different commands.

minimize box: The “dash” on the top-right corner of the title bar that minimizes a window.

Modem: The part of the computer that allows the user to connect to the Internet over a telephone line.

Monitor: The screen where information is viewed.

Mouse: A tool used to move the pointer on the monitor screen.

My Computer icon: An icon that sits on the desktop of a computer. “My Computer” lets you access and manipulate files.

operating system: The software (such as Windows Vista or Mac OS8) that organizes and manages your computer.

PC: The acronym for personal computer.

Pointer: An arrow that appears on the screen and can be moved by the mouse.

Port: Where the cables from the various hardware plug into the computer case.

Printer: Allows the user to print information from the computer.

radio buttons: allow you to select **one** option from a list of options

RAM (random access memory): Memory stored temporarily when the computer is in use.

right clicking: opens up what is called a context menu.

Save: A command that transfers your data into permanent memory (the C: drive) or onto a floppy disk so you can access it later. It is a good idea to save frequently while working to avoid losing information in case of electrical or computer failure.

scroll bar: A feature that allows the user to move a page up and down to view the entire document.

scroll menu: has a scroll bar to enable you to access all the options

search engine: A web site designed for the purpose of locating information on the Internet.

shift key: A key on the keyboard that allows typing in upper case and also performs other special functions.

task bar: The bar that appears at the bottom of the computer screen that contains the Start button and displays active programs.

text box: represents a part of this page where you can type text

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title bar: The bar displayed at the top of window that displays the software program and document name.

USB: (Universal Serial Bus) Universal port to connect devices (mouse, drives, etc) to PC

Virus: A computer problem which can be spread from computer to computer through email attachments or from infected floppy disks.

web page: Any page on the World Wide Web or Internet.

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- <http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/>

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- <http://www.lizardpoint.com/fun/geoquiz/usacapquiz.html>
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