ECDL Module 2 – Using the computer and managing files

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Starting the computer

After ensuring that the computer is plugged in an electricity socket, press the button on the system tower.

When you switch on the computer it will perform a POST (Power On System Test) this is performed in the BIOS (Basic input/output system), this generally has the appearance of a black background with white text scrolling on it. This test checks that all the hardware installed in the computer is functioning, it also keeps track of the system time.

The Desktop

[Image of the desktop with icons labeled: ICOns, DESKTOP, START BUTTON, TASKBAR, SYSTEM CLOCK, VOLUME]
Start Button: Lets you quickly go to functions such as programs, settings and documents

Task Bar: Displays open windows, and lets you quickly switch from one window to another by clicking on its icon on the taskbar.

Icons: Click on an icon to easily open the application associated with it.

Volume: move the slider up and down to decrease/increase the system loudspeaker volume.

System Clock: lets you change the time or date settings of your computer, it also lets you change the time zone.

The Mouse

Mouse terms
- Click: Press and release left mouse button
- Right Click: Press and release right mouse button.
- Double Click: Double click left mouse button in quick succession.
- Drag and Drop: Press left mouse button on target and whilst keeping it depressed drag to desired location.
- Hover: Place mouse button on target to activate (e.g. place over Font Color icon and the help tip will appear.

Pointers
Change Mouse Properties

To change the properties of the mouse select Start > Settings > Mouse. The window that appears lets you change the properties of the mouse by clicking on the Tabs at the top of the window you can select various configurations.

Windows

Screenshot of desktop showing two windows open
Parts of a window

Figure 1 shows an example of a drop down window
Start Button

By clicking on the Start button the following shortcuts are shown:

If you right click on the Start button you will get the following menu:

Using the Help Function

To use the Windows help function click Start > Help and a new window will open, either select a help topic or type in keywords in your search and start the search
Shutting down the Computer

The correct procedure to shutdown a computer is Start > Shutdown the following screen will appear. This screen gives you the option to:

- Put Computer in Standby mode
- Shutdown Computer
- Restart Computer

In the event that your computer ‘hangs’ the correct procedure to restart the computer is to press ‘Ctrl+Alt+Del’ twice in rapid succession.
Icons

Commonly used desktop icons are:

- **My Documents**: Default receptacle for all your documents
- **My Computer**: Shows all drives/folders/files in your computer
- **My Network Places**: Shows networked computers (If on a network)
- **Recycle Bin**: Stores deleted folders/files
- **Internet Explorer**: Shortcut button to open your web browser

You can right click on an icon to activate a drop down menu of commands and configurations related to that icon.

Figure 2 shows the drop down menu of commands attached to the My Computer icon.

Icons in windows may be viewed in any one of the following formats, to change these select **View** from the **Menu** bar and select the format you require:
Viewing the Computers drives

Double clicking on the My Computer icon on the desktop opens the view of your computers drives information.
Checking Windows Version Number/RAM/CPU

Right click on the *My Computer* Icon on your desktop and select *Properties* from the drop down window, the following window will appear.

Customizing Computer’s Desktop Settings

All changes to the computers desktop settings may be performed from the *Control Panel*. This may be accessed by clicking *Start > Settings > Control Panel*.

Figure 3 shows some of the icons on the authors computers Control Panel.
Setting the Time/Date

To set the Time/Date of your computer you may either do this by clicking on the Date/Time icon in control panel

Alternatively you can double click on the time located at the bottom right hand corner of your Taskbar, the following window will appear.

Figure 4 shows the Date/Time settings options window
Setting the screen Resolution

To change the screen resolution, right click on any empty space on the Desktop, from the drop down menu that appears select Properties, on the window that appears select Settings.

![Display Properties window]

**Common Screen Resolution sizes are:**
- 640 x 480 (largest icons)
- 800 x 600
- 1024 x 760 (Smallest icons, sharpest images)

**Common Colour Depth settings are:**
- 256 Colours
- 16 Bit (16 million colours)
- 24 Bit (24 million colours)
- 32 Bit (32 million colours)

**Desktop background/Screen Saver**

To change the desktop background or the screen saver, right click on any empty space on the desktop, from the window that appears either select the Desktop tab or the Screensaver tab to make the required changes.
Regional Settings

Start > Settings > Control Panel > Regional and Language Options.

Sound Settings

To edit the sound settings you can either right click on the speaker icon on the right hand side of the Taskbar, and select Adjust Audio Properties.

Alternatively you can select the Sound and Audio Devices icon located in the Control Panel.
Print Screen

You may be required to print screenshots of regions or full screen images from your computer, to do this press the **Prt Scr** (Print Screen Button) located on your keyboard, then go to any application where you can paste images (e.g. Paint or Word) and select **Paste** from the **Edit** menu.

Create a Desktop Shortcut

To create a desktop shortcut right click on the icon that you require the shortcut to, from the dropdown menu select **Send To > Desktop (create shortcut)**.

![Create a Desktop Shortcut](image)

Figure 5 shows the stages to create a shortcut to the program files folder.

Adding Programs to the Start menu

You can add programs to the **Start** menu as long as your computer running Windows XP is not set to Classical mode. To add programs select **Start > All Programs** right click on the program you would like to add to the **Start** menu and select **Pin to Start menu**.

![Adding Programs to the Start menu](image)
Arranging Desktop Icons

To arrange icons automatically on the desktop, right click any clear space and from the menu that appears select *Arrange Icons By > Auto Arrange*.

To position icons in positions that you would like, untag the *Auto Arrange*.

Install/Uninstall Programs

To install a program insert the CD (Compact Disk) that the program came on, the autorun will automatically start the installation, follow program installation instructions.

To uninstall a program select *Start > Settings > Control Panel > Add/Remove Programs* and select the application you would like to uninstall.

Files and Folders

When you save a document or a spreadsheet in your computer you are creating a file with a name that you specify; these will have a file extension; a three character recognition tag that would determine what application that file is associated with e.g.

Module2.xls   > .xls tells us that this file is an Excel spreadsheet file

Multiple files and folders may be stored inside folders; we can imagine that a folder is a sort of envelope that can contain other envelopes (Subfolders) and/or files.
## Common File Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Icon</th>
<th>File Extension</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="doc" /></td>
<td>.doc</td>
<td>Word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="xls" /></td>
<td>.xls</td>
<td>Excel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="mdb" /></td>
<td>.mdb</td>
<td>Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="ppt" /></td>
<td>.ppt</td>
<td>Powerpoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="txt or rtf" /></td>
<td>.txt or rtf</td>
<td>Text or Rich Text Format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="pdf" /></td>
<td>.pdf</td>
<td>Adobe Portable Document Format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="jpg" /></td>
<td>.jpg</td>
<td>Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="gif, .tif or bmp" /></td>
<td>.gif, .tif or bmp</td>
<td>Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="wmv or wma" /></td>
<td>.wmv or .wma</td>
<td>Windows Media Video or Audio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="zip" /></td>
<td>.zip</td>
<td>Compressed File</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="exe" /></td>
<td>.exe</td>
<td>Executable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="wav" /></td>
<td>.wav</td>
<td>Audio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="au" /></td>
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<td>.htm</td>
<td>Web Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="tmp" /></td>
<td>.tmp</td>
<td>Temporary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Windows Explorer

You might want to view the hierarchy of the computer, to do this right click on the Start button and select Explore; this will open the Windows Explorer.

Change File/Folder Status

To change the File or folder status, right click on it and select the Properties from the drop down menu and change the required attributes.
Create a new folder

Open window where the new folder is required:

File > New > Folder

Renaming a Folder/File

Right Click on the Folder/File icon and from the drop down menu select Rename; rename folder/file.

Deleting a Folder/File

Right click on the Folder/File icon, and from the drop down menu select Delete.

Copying a Folder/File

Right click on the Folder/File icon, and from the drop down menu select Copy. Go to the folder where you would like to place your copied folder/files and select Edit > Paste from the Menu bar.

Moving a Folder/File

Right click on the Folder/File icon, and from the drop down menu select Cut. Go to the folder where you would like to place your copied folder/files and select Edit > Paste from the Menu bar.

NOTE: to copy multiple folders files hold down the SHIFT key as you drag a box around the icons. If you want to select Folders/Files at random hold down the CTRL button on your keyboard as you select the icons with your mouse.

Counting Files

To count files of a specified type in any location:

Start > Search > All Files and Folders

Select the area you want to Look In e.g. Drive C:

Type in the name or the file or if you do not know it, then type in the file extension, start the search and the computer will give you a readout of all files of that type and quantities. The window will also show you the file size and date last amended if you set the viewing options to Details

Wildcards

? > Will replace one character

* > Will replace a string
Backing Up

It is imperative that you take regular backups to avoid losing any work in case of damage to your computer/Files.

To backup a floppy disk, right click on drive A: and from the drop down menu select Copy Disk and follow the instructions.

Formatting Disks

To format any disk, right click on the icon referring to that disk and select Format Disk.

Note: you cannot format a disk that contains your system software, formatting a disk wipes that disk clean and information stored on it cannot be recovered once it is formatted.

Compressing/Decompressing Files

To compress or decompress a file (only in Windows XP, you will require an application such as Winzip in previous versions) right click on the file and select Send To > Compressed (zipped) Folder.

To decompress (expand) a compressed folder right click on the icon of the compressed file and select Extract All.
Viruses

There are **FOUR** main categories of viruses:

- **Trojan Horse**: A virus that hides inside a legitimate program, and is designed to look harmless.
- **Worm**: This type of virus replicates itself into the computer system, this will in time use up all the processing power of the computer until it stops.
- **Logic Bomb**: This virus is only activated when a specified condition is satisfied e.g. when the user opens a specified application.
- **Time Bomb**: this virus is activated at a preprogrammed specific time and/or date.

**Prevention**

It is very important that all computers have anti virus software that is continually, preferably daily, updated.

**Text Files**

To create a text file select **Start > All Programs > Accessories > Notepad**.

**Printers**

**Default Printer**

To change the default printer select: **Start > Settings > Printers and Faxes** on the window that opens right click the icon of the printer that you are required to make as your default printer, and from the drop down menu select **Set as Default Printer**.

**Check Print jobs**

To check pending print jobs select the printer icon located at the bottom right hand side of the Taskbar and double click it, a window similar to the one below will open and show you your pending print jobs, these may de deleted if required in this window by right clicking on the print job and deleting it.
**Adding a new Printer**

To add a new printer:

Start > Settings > Printers and Faxes > Add a Printer

Follow instructions on the screen.

**Resources**

Practice paper and notes may be acquired from:

- [http://www.stmichaelfoundation.org/ecdl.htm](http://www.stmichaelfoundation.org/ecdl.htm)
- [http://www.ghalliem.net](http://www.ghalliem.net)
- Using a search engine such as Google and using the keywords given as an example: +ECDL + module 2 + Practice + Papers.