

THE AMERICAN LEGION

A LEGIONNAIRE'S GUIDE TO THE WEB

ISSUE 1: BASIC COMPUTER USAGE

The difference between your mouse and your RAM



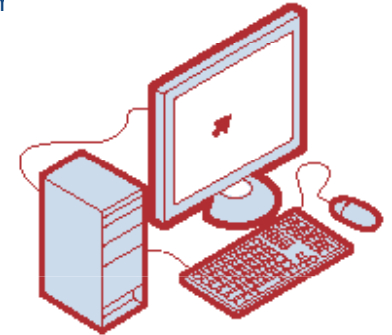
What do you want to do with a computer?

You don't need to be connected to the Internet to get a lot out of your computer. Here are some of the things you can do without an Internet connection:

- Write and print documents
- Keep accounts, do taxes
- Keep track of photos
- Play games, movies, music

If you have an Internet connection, you can:

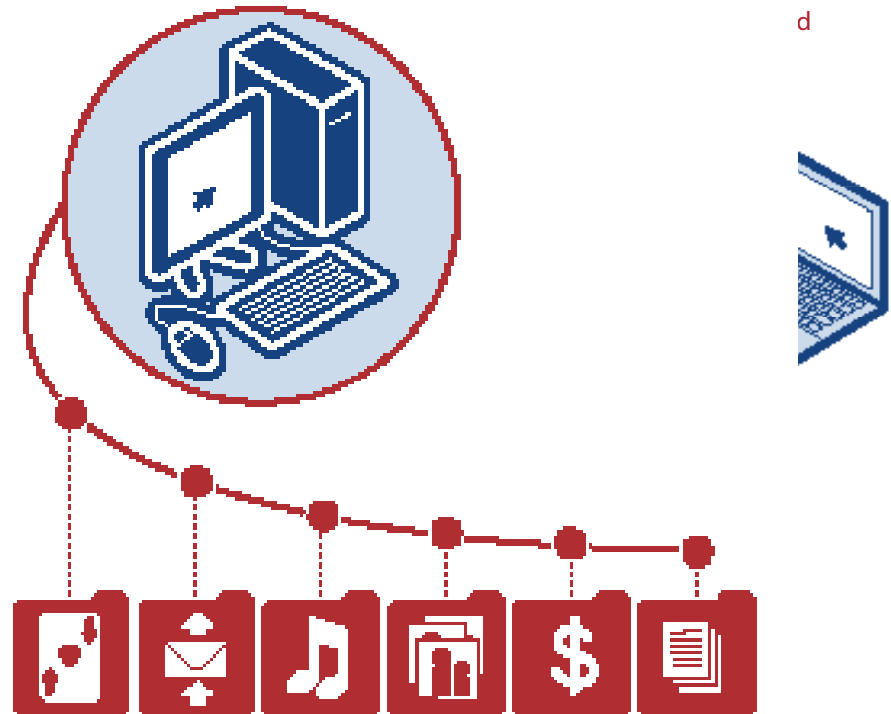
- Send and receive e-mail
- Surf the Web for news and information
- Keep up with friends, organizations and other interests via Web sites and programs like Facebook
- Shop, do banking



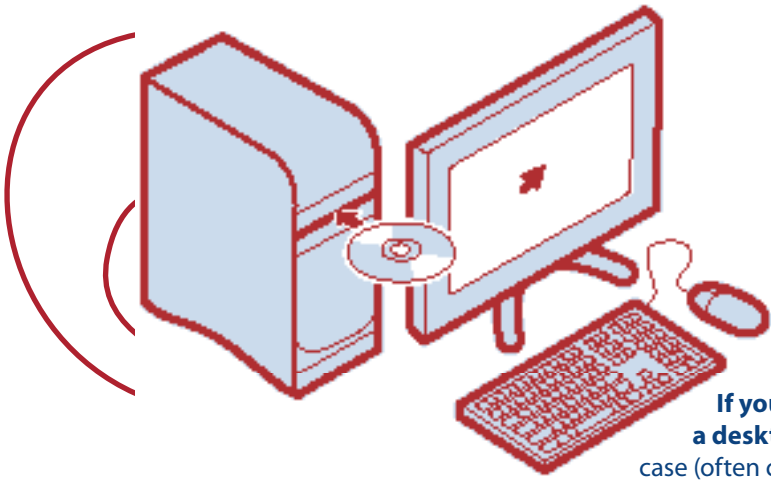
What kind of computer do you have or are you getting?

A **desktop** is tvni-

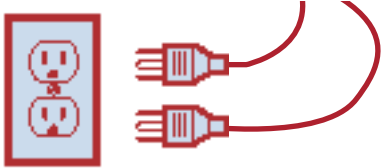
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What's in the box

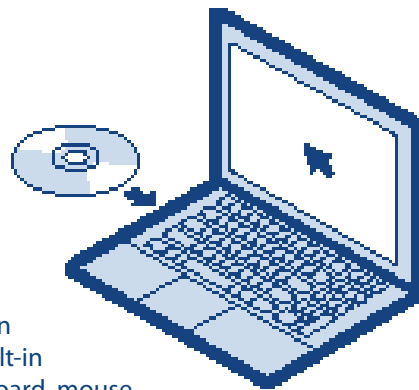


If you have a desktop: The case (often called the tower) contains the computer-processing equipment; the monitor, keyboard and mouse are separate.



Where to set up:

A desktop will need two grounded outlets – one for the computer and one for the monitor. A notebook needs only one grounded outlet.



If you have a notebook:

Everything is in one case – built-in monitor, keyboard, mouse.



Both: AC-power connection cord, quick setup guide and other manuals, CDs/DVDs containing software, and probably a few other cables. You may also have some additional “peripherals” – add-on hardware – such as a printer (recommended) or exterior speakers.

Get set up

Find your quick-start manual and follow the directions. Once you have everything connected, turn on your computer. (If you have a desktop, make sure the monitor is on, too.)

Every time you turn on a computer, it runs through a checklist on itself. This may take a minute or two. The sounds you hear are various drives clicking on and off, plus the ventilation fan.

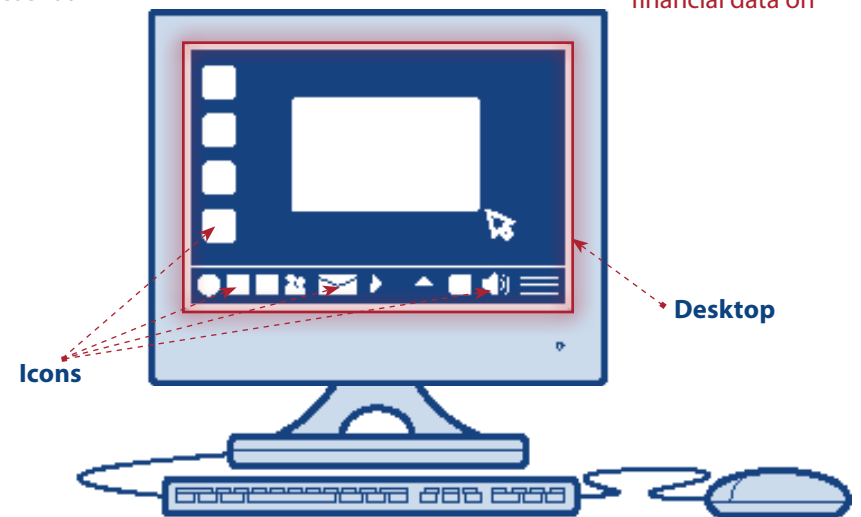
The very first time you turn on your computer, it will ask you if you want to register it (yes) and if you want to set up a password (maybe).

Do you need a password?

You've probably heard a lot about computer security. When you connect to the Internet, you should take advantage of all the ways you can protect your computer from hackers or identity thieves. But putting a password on the computer itself is strictly optional. If you have a password, only you – or someone else who knows your password – will be able to go onto your computer. You may want to set it up this way if the computer is in a public place, or if you keep financial data on

On the screen

When you're finished setting up, take a look at your screen. This is called the **desktop**. (*It's your computer's desktop, as opposed to the top of the desk where you set up your desktop computer. Confusing, huh?*) The desktop on your screen is where you do your business with the computer. Notice there are some little pictures scattered across the screen. The generic name for these is **icons**; they represent a



Now, get your computer to do something



: Using the mouse

Think of the mouse as an extension of your hand. If you had a touch-screen computer, you could just put your finger on the thing you want to choose or move. The mouse enables you to do this by remote control.

On a flat surface, try sliding the mouse around slowly. On the screen, you should see a small arrow tracing a similar path. The arrow is a **cursor**.

If your computer is a laptop, it probably didn't come with a mouse and you're required to use a "scratch" mouse. This is the blank pad directly in front of the keyboard. Drag your finger across the pad. On the

screen, you will see a small arrow tracing a path. There will be one or two buttons in front of the scratch pad. Use these for clicking and double-clicking.

Many people purchase a separate mouse and connect it to their laptop. Recommended!

TASK 2: Creating a file

See the blue bar at the bottom of your screen? This is the task bar. Move the mouse until the cursor arrow rests on the green **Start** button. Click the left mouse button with your index finger.

This opens the **Start** menu. Here you will see names and icons for the programs that are loaded onto your computer, plus lots of other commands.

Click once on the line that says **All Programs**.



Another window opens, with a different list of programs. This is called a **menu**.

Now find the line that says **Accessories**, and click on that. Another window opens with another list of programs. Look for **WordPad**. This is a simple text-editing, or typewriter, program. Click on it. Another window opens, this time a blank one. You've created a new document.

TASK 3: Using the keyboard

Take a look at the file you just created. There should be a blinking vertical line in the top left corner. As you type, text will start filling the document.

Keep typing a full sentence. Now try the **backspace** key (it's at the upper right of the main keyboard). You see it will "rub out" the letter directly in front of the cursor. Hold down the backspace key; it will keep going.

What if you just want to go back to a spot in the sentence without erasing what you wrote? Try the cursor arrow keys (just to the right of the regular keyboard). Watch the cursor move over the letters without deleting them.

Move your cursor to the middle of a sentence with the cursor arrow. Now click the **Delete** key (in the six-key keypad above the cursor arrows). It also deletes letters, but in the opposite direction as the backspace key.

You can also place the cursor where you want it in the text using the mouse. Slide the mouse so the cursor moves around your screen. Notice that it changes shape when it moves over the file, from an arrow to a vertical line. Hover the mouse where you would like the cursor to go in the text. Click once. The blinking cursor is now in that location.



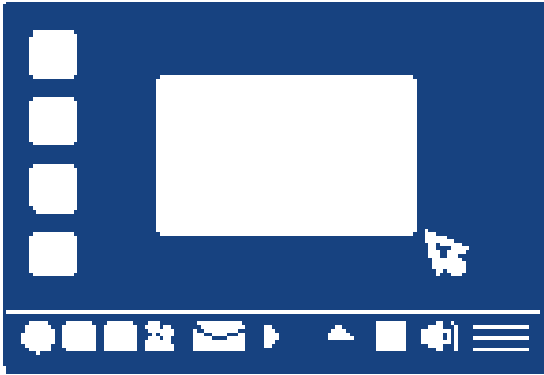
Other strange keyboard keys

■ **ENTER:** This key moves the cursor to the beginning of a new line. It is often used to execute a command by pressing it, instead of clicking the mouse.

■ **CTRL** (short for "Control") and **ALT:** Computer keyboards have these "supershift" keys clustered below the shift key. They are used in combination to perform various functions.

■ **FUNCTION KEYS:** The row of keys at the top of the keyboard (F1, F2, etc.) perform actions according to the program being used.





You can't break it.

Many new users are intimidated by personal computers because they're afraid they'll break them. Never fear. Computers rarely break because of anything a user did. You might "lose" something, but it's probably not gone – just not where you think it is.

Don't be afraid to mouse around in various menus, click on various icons, and see what's there. You just might find what you're looking for.

TASK 4: Saving your file.

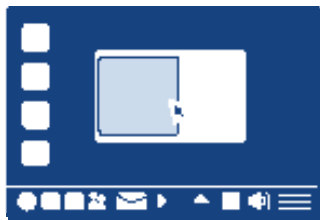
Bet you're wondering what the red X icon at the top right of the window is for. Go ahead. Click it.

As you probably guessed, it's the close-window button. But if there is any text in your file, your computer will ask you if you want to save what you've got before it closes the window.

Click **Save**. Another window opens. This one is asking you where on the computer you'd like to save your file, and what you'd like to name the file.



Change "**Save in**" to **Desktop**. Do this by clicking the triangle next to it to open what is called a "**dropdown**" or "**pulldown**" menu. Once the menu is open, you can mouse your cursor into it and click on **Desktop**. When you choose it in this way, it replaces whatever was in the "**Save in**" field before.



Under **File Name**, fill in something you can remember, like "My File." Make a note of this.

With your mouse, click **OK**. The window vanishes – oh, not really. It's no longer on your screen, but the file is stored in your computer. Think you can find it? There should be an icon of it on your desktop.

Find the icon and get ready to mouse-click it. In this case, you'll have to **DOUBLE-CLICK** the icon to open the file. To double-click, just click twice quickly with your index finger, like rapping on a door. (How do you know when to double-click instead of single-clicking? It's easy – if a single click doesn't work, try a double click.)

Now that you have your file open again, hover your cursor around the icons in the area above the file. Click on the pulldown menus ("File," "Edit," "View" and so on) to see what they do.



If your computer does "crash"

Or, more likely, freezes up – the solution is right at hand: Turn it off and on again. (The recommended way to do this is to hold

down the *ctrl, alt and delete* keys all at one time.) You might lose what you've been working on, but your computer should

clear itself of the problem when you start back up again.



TASK 5: Play Solitaire. You deserve it.

Plus, it's a great way to practice using the mouse.

Just go to **Start**, then to **All Programs**. Click **Games**. Click **Solitaire**. Before you start playing,





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