

Getting Started

We are going to say your computer is all set up and ready for your lesson. The purpose of this course is to teach you how to operate your computer, to give it commands to do different functions and to learn what it can do for you. Your computer is no different than an appliance in your home. You give your microwave a command to cook a certain food at a certain temperature and to shut off at a certain time. Your computer is the same. It will do different function only when you command it to do so. Remember you are in command not your computer.

If you have a computer with a floppy drive, before turning anything on check to see that there is no floppy disk in the disk drive. If there is a floppy, eject it by pressing the small button next to the disk slot. A floppy disk left in the slot can sometimes keep the computer from taking commands.

First, turn the monitor on by pressing the power button. Then if your speakers have their own power switch, turn that on. Now turn your computer on. A lot of things are going to happen. Just sit back and watch. First, the screen will be black with some text on it. The computer is running tests. You will hear some beep sounds and see a bunch of numbers. Next a window screen comes on. A moving bar appears across the bottom of the WindowsXP logo. The screen may flash on and off and you may see some words on the screen. This is normal. This means "**Windows**" is loading. You'll know that "Windows" has finished loading when your monitor displays the "**desktop**".

WINDOWS---this is the master program that runs all the other programs you use on your computer. It is also the program you use to give your computer commands. Without this program your computer would not function. There are many Windows programs. Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 2000 and Windows Me, and the last is Windows XP. Each of them have a significant differences, but each of them run all the programs you use on your computer.

DESKTOP--- This is where you will do things with the computer. Just as in an office you do your work at a desk, so on your computer you will work on your desktop. Your desktop is the area that you see on your monitor screen. Windows XP usually starts with a clean desktop. The only objects on the desktop are the Recycle Bin, which is a garbage can, and the Taskbar at the bottom of the screen. After a few programs have been installed, you may see a few 'Shortcut Icons' on the desktop as well. These were added when the programs were installed.

ICONS---these are small pictures on your screen that represents a file, program or command. It is a shortcut to that file or program. It's like a start button. When you click on an icon it will open or start that program. If you delete that icon, you will have only deleted the shortcut not the actual program or that file.

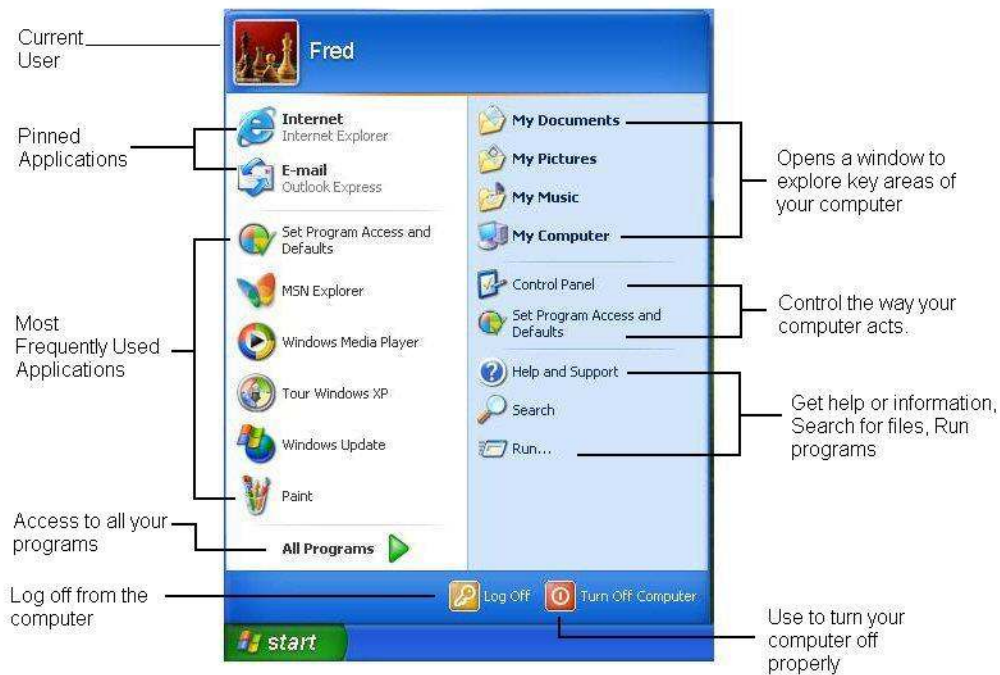


System Tray or **Notification Area**--is used to provide you with information (such as the time) and alerts or warnings. The system tray shown above is telling you that Windows Messenger is running, but not signed in, that Windows Update needs to be set up, and that this copy of Windows has not been activated yet.

Task Bar--shows you what programs are currently running. It is now showing the copy of Microsoft Word I am currently using.

Start Button--is where you can access all of your programs, change you machine's settings, keep your copy of Windows XP up to date, and seek help for windows. Because this is so important, we will send the next section on the start button

Click the start button and the following menu will appear.



First, notice the blue bar across the top. You will see a picture, and a name. The name tells us who is using the computer at this time. With Windows XP you may have more than one user, so this name will change depending on who is using the computer. If the computer is set to have only one user this name will always be the same. We will discuss users in greater detail later.

On the left side of the Windows XP start menu we have shortcut icons to start various programs. The top applications are “pinned” to the start menu. Pinned applications are those programs will always appear here. You can add to or remove programs from this list to meet your own needs. The applications below the grey separating line are those applications that are most frequently used. These icons will change occasionally, as different programs become more used.

On the right side of the start menu at the top, you have some choices to allow you to explore some important areas of your computer. Any documents you create should be stored in the “My Documents” folder. Clicking “My Documents” in the “Start Menu” will allow you to view what you have stored there. The same applies for “My Pictures” and “My Music”.

My Computer is more powerful. It allows you to explore all areas of your computer. Here you can explore all files and folders, not only on the hard drive, but also on any other device attached to your computer. You can see all the files on a floppy disk or a CDROM Disk.

Control Panel allows you to change various settings to make your computer behave differently. We will talk about that later in this course.

The **Help and Support Center** can answer just about any question you may have concerning how to do something with your computer. You can use the search box to ask questions in plain English, and Windows will suggest any relevant articles that it finds. You can open and read the article that seems closest to answering your question.

Search will help you find any file on the machine. If you know you saved a picture of the grandkids and can't find it, search may be able solve your problem.

Run is useful for starting programs. But it is most often used by technicians who may be working on your machine.

At the bottom on the left, we can access any programs on the machine using “**All Programs.**” Simply place your mouse over “**All Programs**” and hover there. Cascading menus will appear allowing access to all programs installed on your machine



To get out of any section of the Start Menu, simply click your mouse on a portion of your desktop outside of the start menu display.

One final important part of the Start Menu is the two buttons along the very bottom. The red “**Turn off my computer**” button is the way you should always shut down your computer after use. If you don't use the red “**Turn off my computer**” button, and just turn off the power to the machine, you can lose information and damage programs that are on your computer. After clicking the red button, a window appears offering you three choices: “**Standby**”, “**Shutdown**”, and “**Restart**”

STAND BY--You can place your computer in Standby mode, which places your computer in a power saving mode that uses less electricity and extends the life of your hard disk. As soon as you move your mouse or press a key your computer will start up exactly as you left it. Users of Laptop computers will use this to extend battery life.

SHUT DOWN--Shutting down this way allows Windows to shut the computer down in an orderly fashion. Windows will close all the windows that are open at the time, and will offer to allow you to save any documents that may need to be saved. Shutting down this way will prevent many glitches from occurring in the future.

RESTART--will allow you to shut down your computer and restart it right away. If your computer starts to act sluggish, becomes very slow, you may want to restart the computer. This often clears the problem.

The orange **“LOG OFF”** button is something you would use if you were going to leave your computer for some time. Also, if more than one user works with this machine, he can log on while you are away. We will discuss multiple users in more detail when looking at the control panel.

Let's Practice using what we have learned by finding the program called “Solitaire” which is a game that comes with all versions of Windows. Click the “Start” button. Bring your arrow up to the “All Programs” option. An option list will pop out. Move your arrow straight across to the new option list and straight up to the option “Games.” You will now see a list of games and “Solitaire” will be one of them. Left click once on “Solitaire” and the game will open. Click your maximize button, upper right hand corner of the window to make the game fill the whole screen.

Lets Review

Click “START BUTTON”...go to
“ALL PROGRAMS”
“GAMES”
Click “SOLITAIRE”

You should play this game, it will help you develop your clicking and **“Dragging and Dropping”** skills.

DRAGGING” and “DROPPING...this is when you move something on your screen from one place to another by left clicking and holding the button down. You now can drag it from one place to another. When it is where you want it, simply release the left button to drop it. Try this now by moving one of the cards in your solitaire game.

To exit from this program, click “Games” upper left corner, go down to exit and left click. Now you should be back to your desktop.

