

# Computers for Beginners

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As of 6/7/25

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## What is Windows?

Microsoft Windows is the most popular Operating System used by most businesses and organizations (and individuals). It is also called a *Graphical User Interface* (GUI), which one cannot navigate completely without the use of a pointing device, such as a Mouse or Touchpad. Competitors to Windows are Apple, Linux and Chromebook.

For this handout (in color) and more, visit my teacher's website at:

[www.clearcutcomputing.com/school](http://www.clearcutcomputing.com/school)

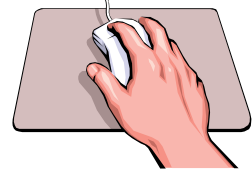


# Computers for Beginners

## Mouse

*You can't communicate with your computer if you can't work the mouse.*

At the right is an illustration showing the proper way to hold the mouse. Think of your grip as a “handshake,” but with your palm facing down. As you glide the mouse around the pad, the pointer (an arrow or other symbol) will mimic your movement on the computer screen.



### “Click” Button

- Tap once & let go (*click*) to:
  - Select an object
  - Position a cursor
- Press & hold to:
  - “Pick up” an object
  - Start selection point (ie: text )
- Tap twice & let go (*double-click*) to:
  - Launch a program
  - Select a “word”
  - Open a menu or dialog window

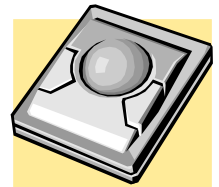
### The MENU button

#### “Right-Click” Button

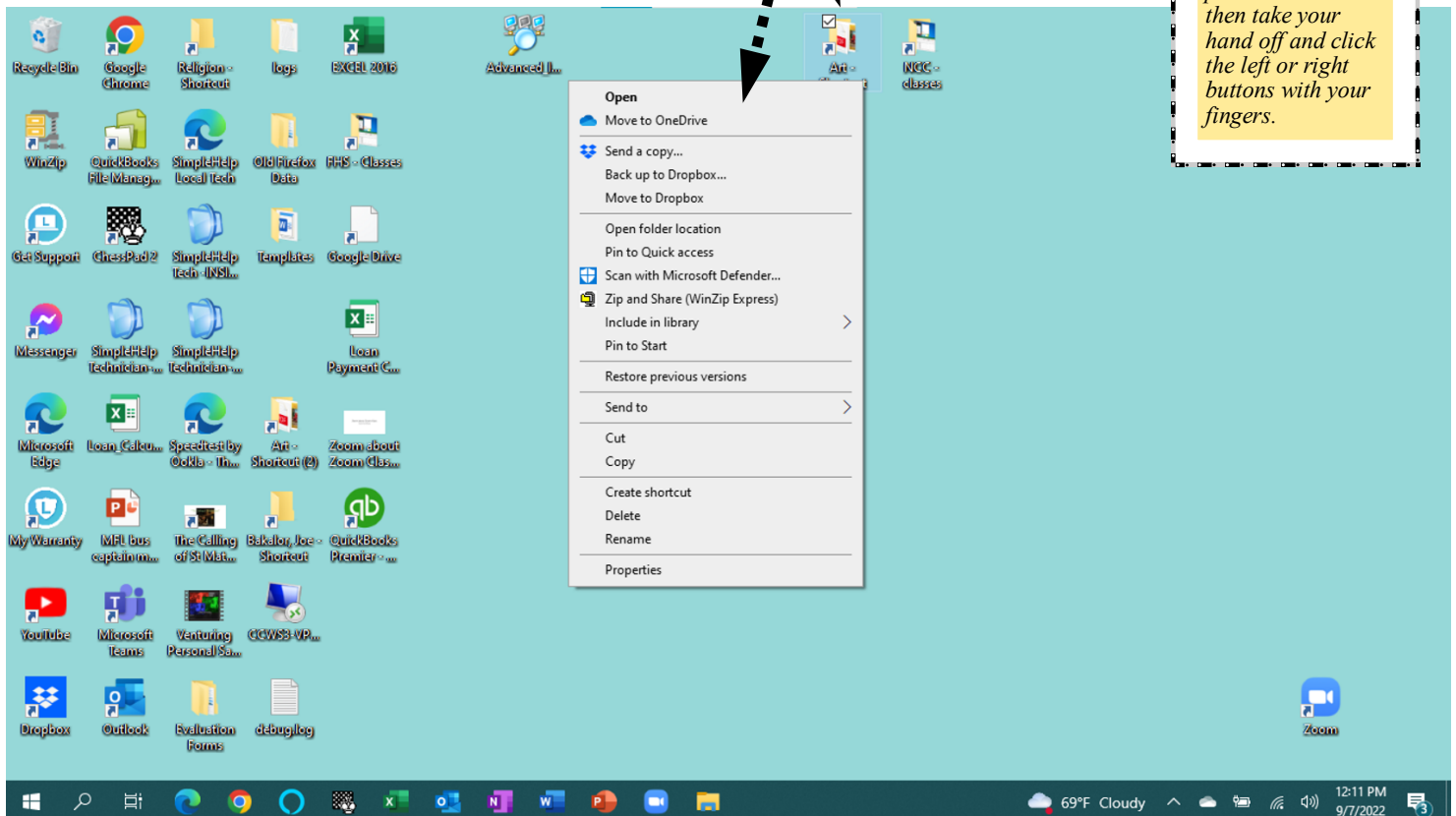
Point to an object and press this button to display a menu of “the most popular things you could do to that item.”

#### Example:

Point to an icon on the desktop and “right click.”



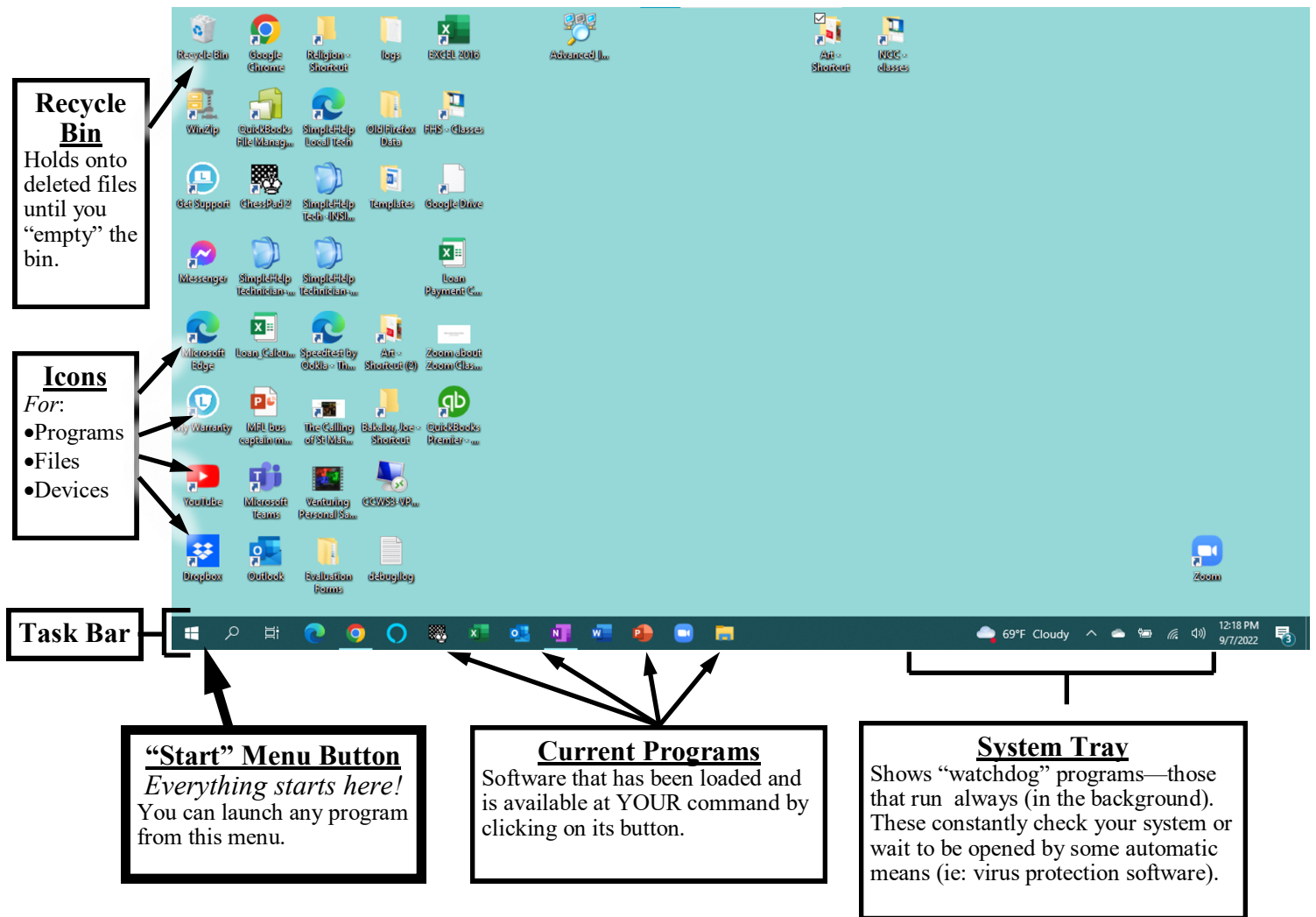
*A Trackball is another pointing device that many people find easier to handle than a traditional mouse. It sits stationary on your desk or table, and you roll the ball with your fingers to move the pointer. You can then take your hand off and click the left or right buttons with your fingers.*



# Computers for Beginners

## Windows Desktop

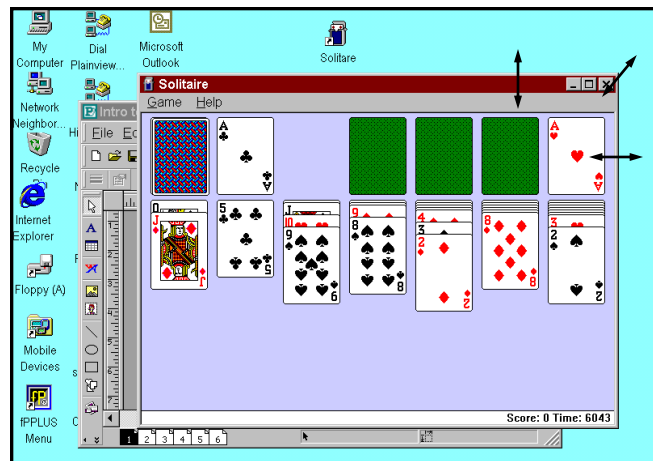
The screen below should be similar to what you may have seen on your computer at work or at home.



The screen on the right shows two program windows opened in the desktop area. Just like looking at your own physical desktop (in your office), there may be times when you pile one piece of paper on top of another. In this computerized version, the *Solitaire* program sits on top of another, *Microsoft Publisher*.

To “bring the *Publisher* program to the top,” you simply need to click on any part of its exposed window. Alternatively, you could click on the *Publisher* button in the **Task bar**.

To Re-Size a window, move the mouse over the window’s border until a two-headed arrow appears (as shown in the upper right corner in the screen at the right). Click-and-hold the left mouse button and drag to change the window’s size.



# Computers for Beginners

## Start Menu (Windows 10)

The **Start** menu gives you access to every program installed on your computer. The **Start button**, located on the **Task bar**, and the **Start Menu** will appear. Let's launch the *Microsoft Word* program as an example of how to use the **Start Menu**.

1. Position the mouse pointer over the **Start** button and click (tap the left mouse button)
2. Scroll the **Programs** (or open the **Apps**) list; they are arranged in alphabetical order.

A **Programs group** may appear on the list as a yellow folder. The group reveals another level in the menu (called a *sub-menu*) of additional choices. You can identify the *groups* from the regular *commands* by the small triangle to its right. Click the triangle pointing downward to reveal its sub-items.

3. Now slide over to the **Word** choice and click. The **Word Collection** program to open the program. Notice that the **Word** choice has no triangle next to it — this is how you know it is a program or a file and not a group.

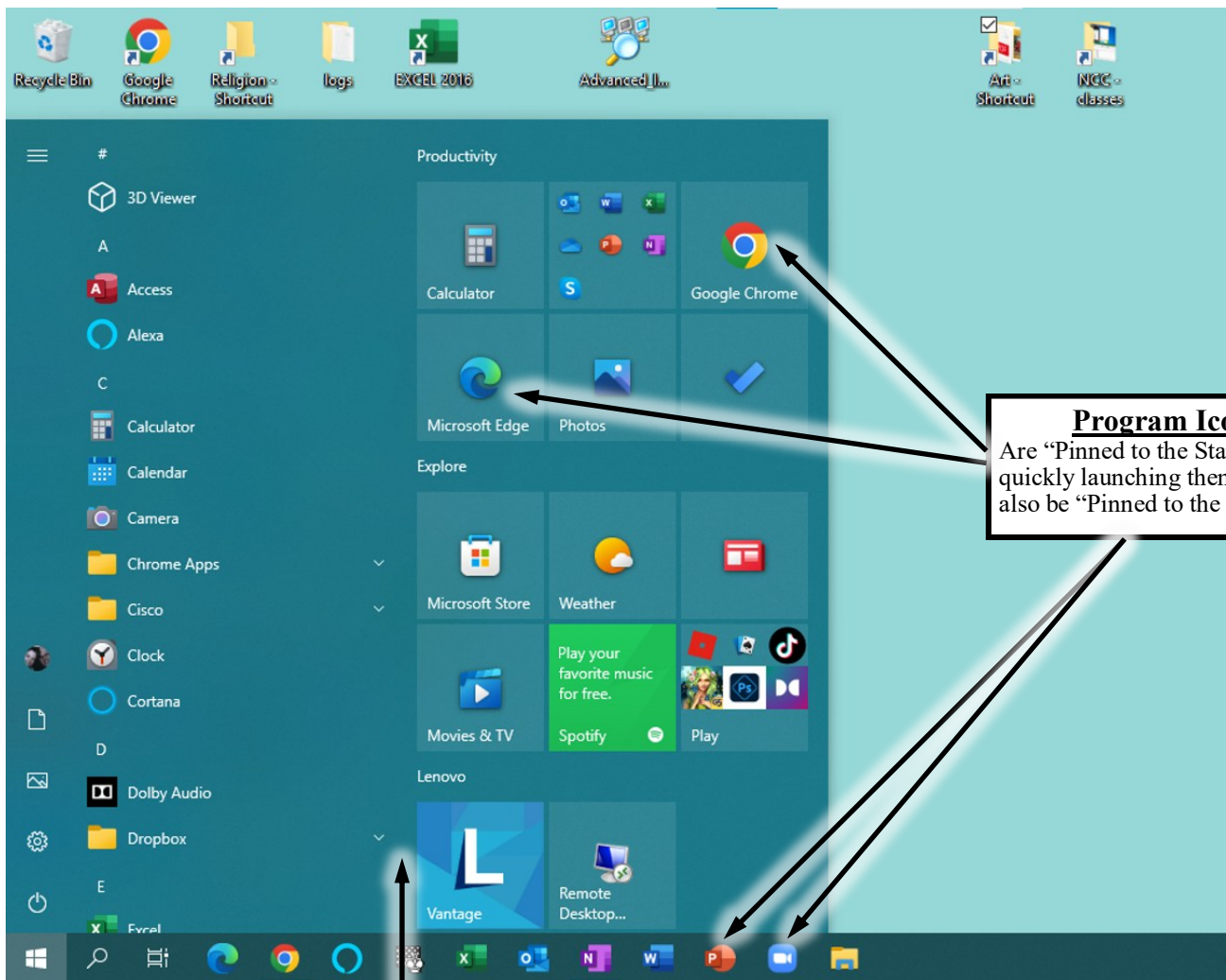
Commonly, you will find the instructions above written in books as: **Start—Microsoft Word**.

Alternatively, you could double-click the **Word** icon on the *Desktop*, or single-click the **Word** icon in the *Task Bar*.

### Tip

An easy way to locate the program (App) in the **Start** menu by typing the first few letters of the name of the App.

Click the Windows flag and begin typing **w-o-r-d**, for example, after only a few letters, the full name will appear on the upper left of the **Start Menu** with the word **App** underneath.



### Program Icons...

Are “Pinned to the Start Menu” for quickly launching them. They can also be “Pinned to the Taskbar.”

### Programs Scroll Bar

Will only appear if you point to “where you would expect it to be.”



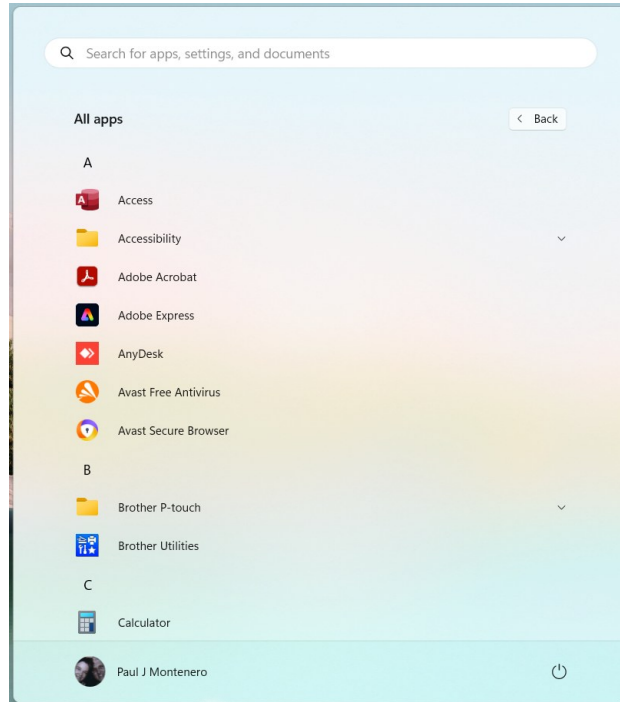
# Computers for Beginners

## Start Menu (Windows 11)

The **Start** menu gives you access to every program installed on your computer. Windows 11 makes a stronger effort to change the term “**Programs**” to “**Apps**.” Click the **Start button**, located on the **Task bar**, and the **Start Menu** will appear. From here, you can either:

- Click the icon of the Program (App) you want to launch (you can use the mouse wheel to “roll” through the list of Programs or Apps).  
—OR—
- Click the “All apps” button to see an alphabetic list of **Programs** (or **Apps**) and scroll through the list as described in the similar section on the Windows 10 instructions on the previous page.

Alternatively, you could double-click the **Word** icon on the **Desktop**, or single-click the **Word** icon in the **Task Bar**.



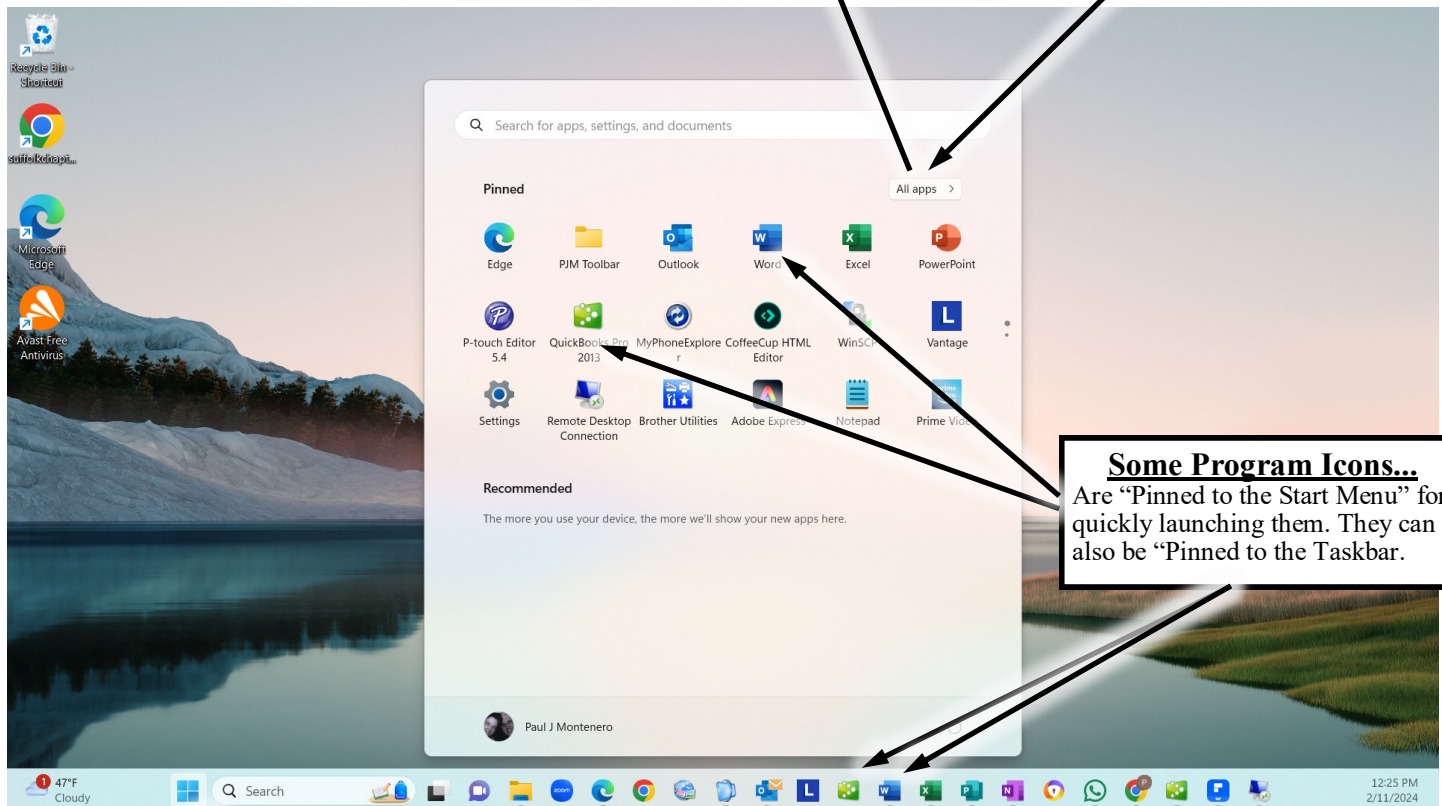
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### Programs (Apps) List

Will only appear if you point to “where you would expect it to be.”



### Some Program Icons...

Are “Pinned to the Start Menu” for quickly launching them. They can also be “Pinned to the Taskbar.”

**START button**

# Computers for Beginners

## Mouse Practice

If you're not comfortable with the mouse, Solitaire is an excellent program to practice your mouse skills on. I happen to think that's the reason Microsoft included it with Windows!

Using an Internet Browser, let's go to the AARP website as they have a version of Solitaire that is closest to the original version that came with Windows. It is called, "Classic Solitaire."



Image 1

1. Use an Internet Browser to go to:  
[games.aarp.org/games/classic-solitaire](http://games.aarp.org/games/classic-solitaire)  
-or-  
[www.klondike-solitaire.online/](http://www.klondike-solitaire.online/)
2. Click on the **Play Now** to launch (start) the program. You may have to endure a commercial first!
3. When the "Title Screen" appears, click the "**1 Draw**" button (if applicable).
4. You are now ready to play.

If you don't know how to play solitaire, it's easy. I'm not going to teach you; Perhaps you already know how to play it with a physical deck of cards, I'll explain the different mouse operations used to play this game. If you're reading this in black & white, you'll have to trust my instructions on the colors.

In the game position shown, there are four plays that we will make. These will be accomplished by the four different mouse operations (all with the normal click button — the left button). Unfortunately, due to the order in which we must play the game, the more difficult tasks are first.

### A) Click, Drag & Drop

Point to the red 3 of diamonds (*Image 1*); then click-and-hold the mouse button down and drag it over until it is on top of the black 4 of spades. Now, let go of the mouse button. The four should be sitting on the five. You alternate the colors as you build your columns

### B) "Small Source Area"

Frequently in windows, you will only have a small area within which to click. In *Image 2* screenshot on the right, the black 4 of spades (in the 3rd column) is only partially visible. Position your mouse pointer over the exposed part of that 4, and apply the *click, drag & drop* method, described above, to move the whole column over the red 5 of hearts.

### C) Double-Click

Next, the ace of hearts needs to be moved to one of the top right empty boxes. While we could use the *click, drag & drop* method described above, I will instantly fail anyone who does! Instead, point to the ace of spades and rapidly tap the mouse button twice (called "double-click"). The ace should "fly" to one of the open slots. You can use this *double-click* method to move a 2 of hearts on top of the ace. Later, as they are revealed, repeat for the rest of the hearts, in ascending order.

### D) Click

To turn a face-down card over (for example, to the left of the Ace of hearts), you simply need to point to it and click (tap the mouse button once).



Image 2

# Computers for Beginners

## Adjusting Your Mouse Settings

So with all this “mousing around,” you may still feel uncomfortable with the way the mouse works. We can adjust a few settings on the mouse to compensate for your own personal “touch.”

Launch the Windows Control Panel through the Start Menu by using your mouse to click on:

 **Start**— (gear icon)

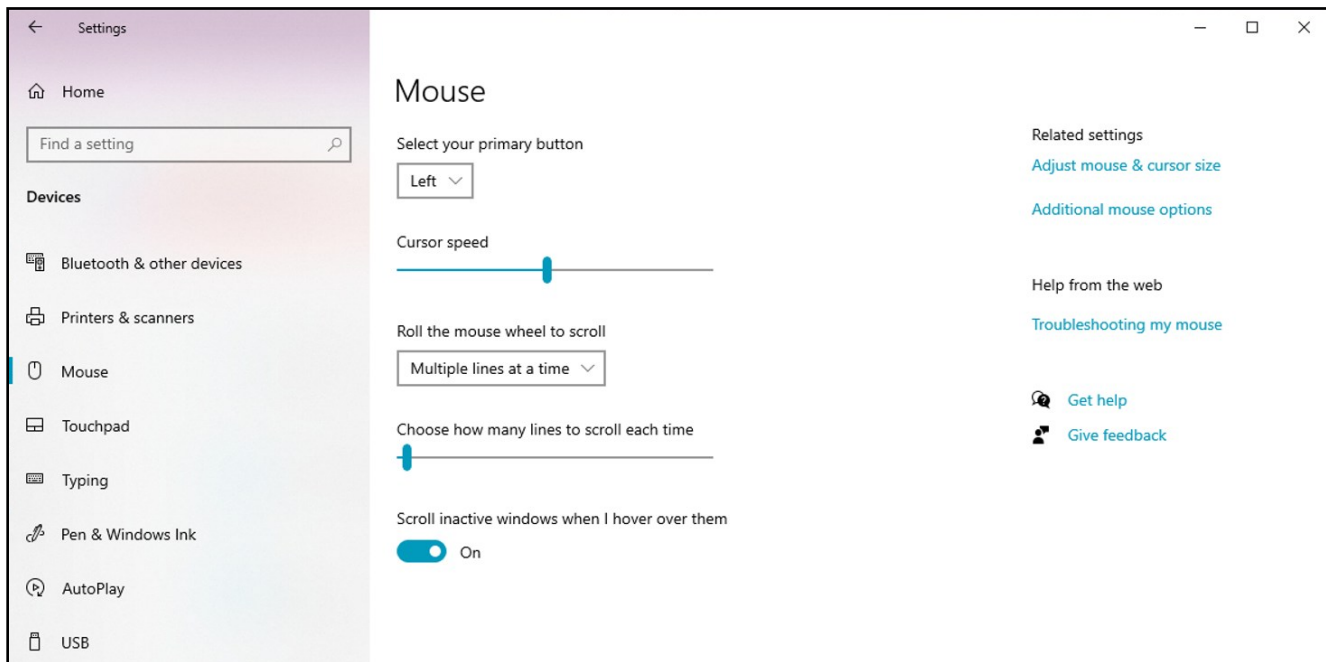
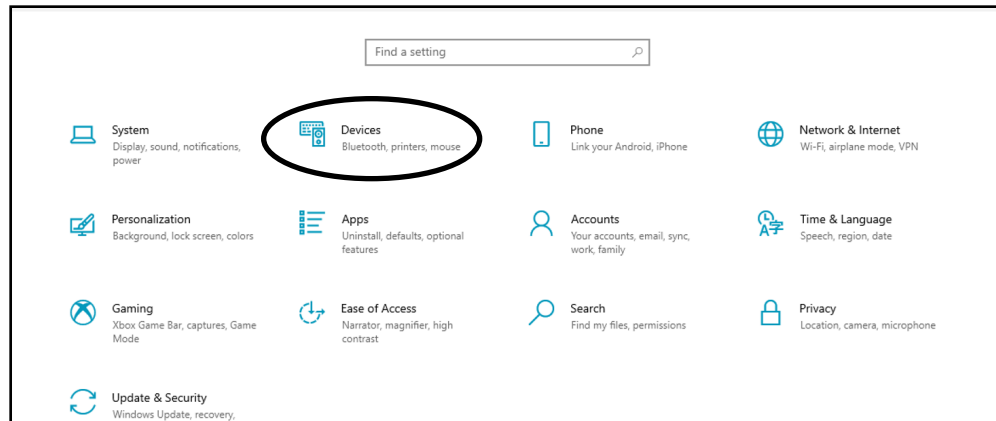
**IMPORTANT:** There are many programs in the Windows Control Panel. Be careful not to “play” with too many of these programs—unless you know what you are doing—as they can cause an unknowledgeable user to damage their system’s configuration. **LAUNCH ONLY THE PROGRAMS MENTIONED HERE.**

Click **Devices** and then click on **Mouse** in the left side of the resulting window. What you should look for are:

**Cursor Speed** — to adjust the speed at which the mouse pointer (arrow) responds to your hand movement.

There are other customization settings that you might want to play with for cosmetic customization of your mouse properties. These include:

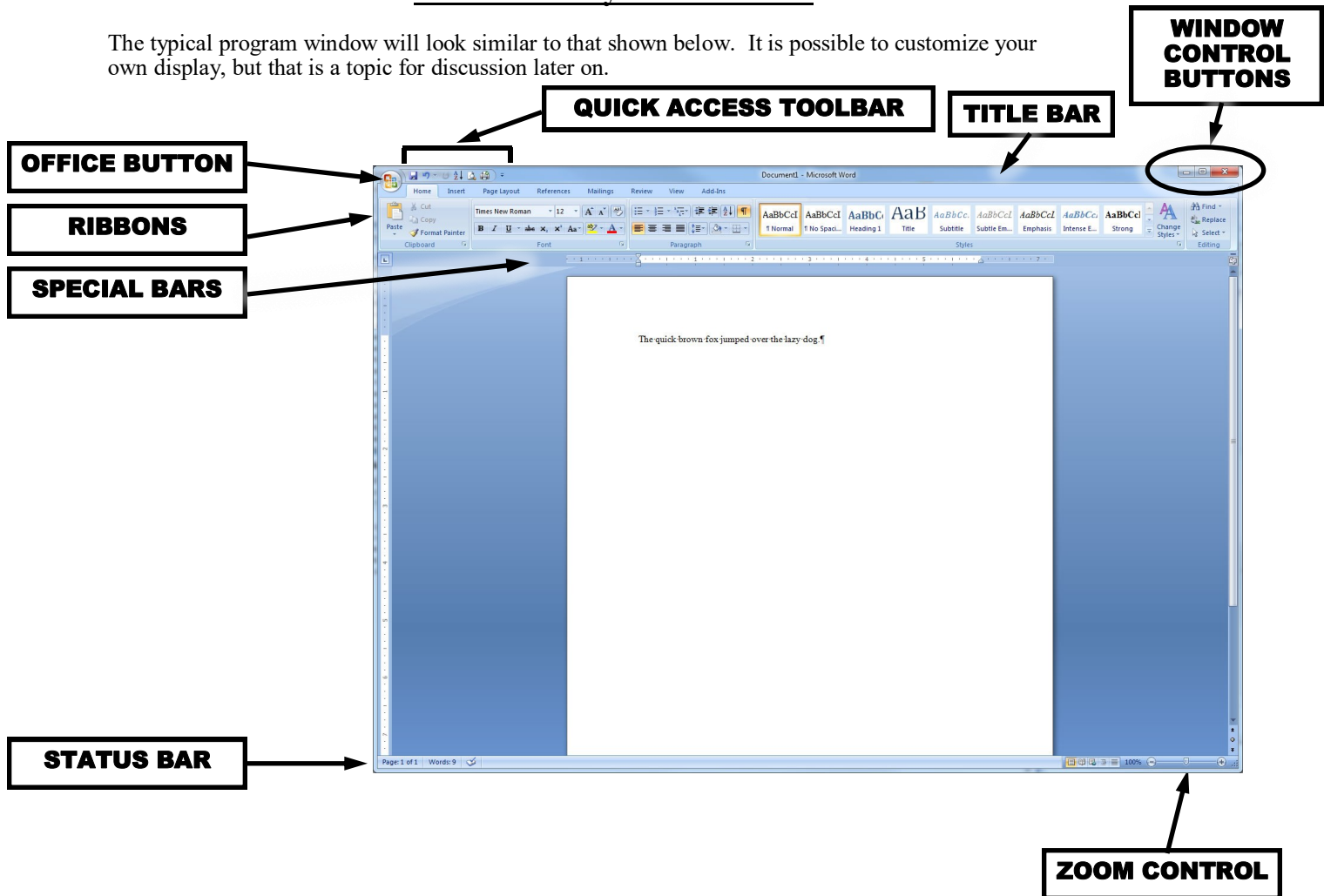
- Left-handed configuration (“Select your primary button” and choose right)
- “Roll the mouse wheel to scroll” (then select how many lines to scroll)



# Computers for Beginners

## The "Anatomy" of a Window

The typical program window will look similar to that shown below. It is possible to customize your own display, but that is a topic for discussion later on.



**Title Bar** – Displays the name of the program (in the screen above: Microsoft Word), and usually, the name of the file that you are currently working on. On the right you have the three buttons that make up the "Window Control Buttons." From left-to-right, these buttons are:

- Minimize** – to shrink the application to the Windows *Task Bar*.
- Windowed/Full Screen mode** — controls the size of the window.
- Close** — to close the document window or shut down the program.

**Ribbons** — Populated with buttons; which are shortcuts to the various features of the program.

**Status Bar** — Shows helpful messages while you use various features of the program.



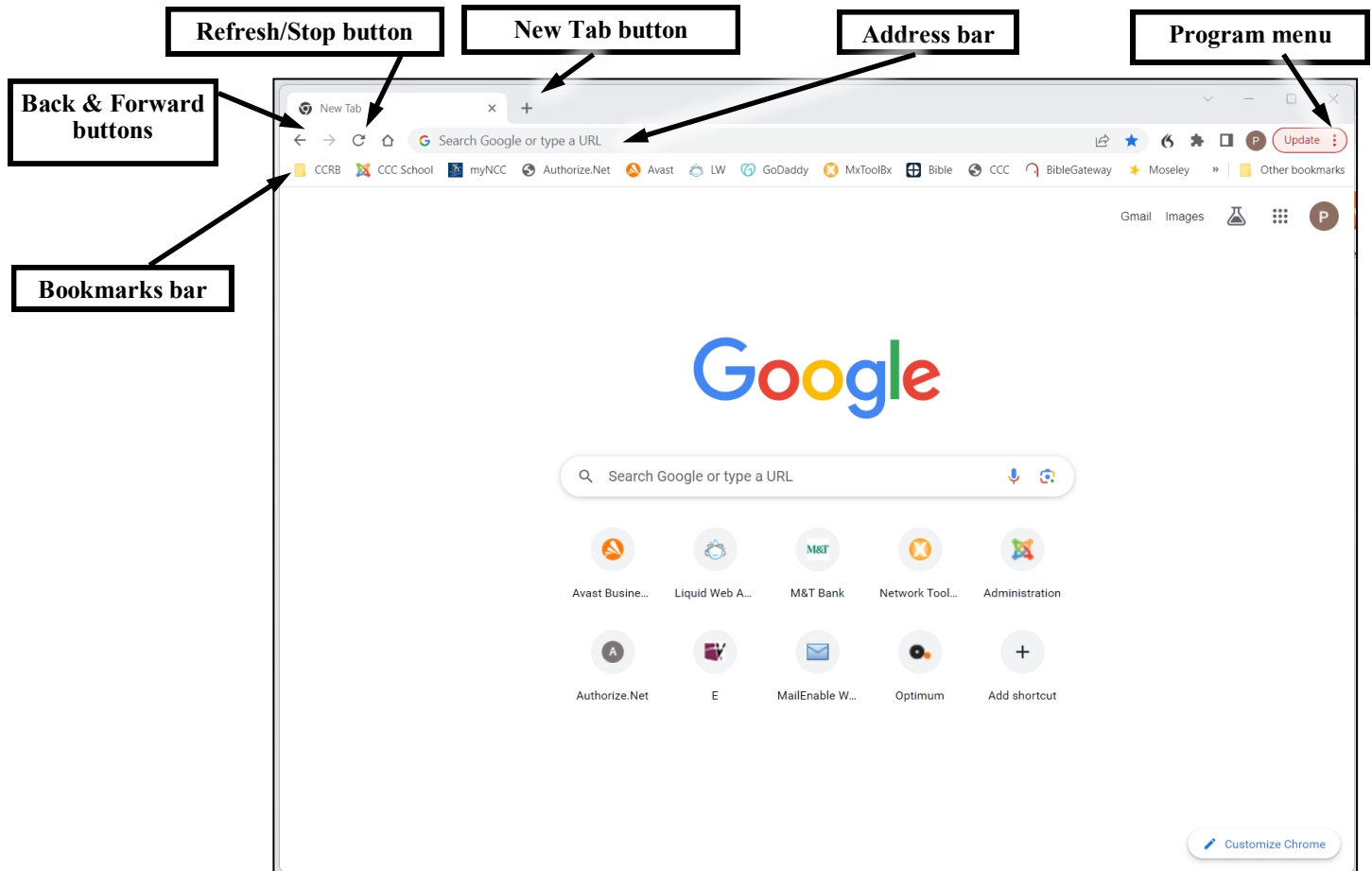
# Computers for Beginners

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## Browser Software

Just as you can have many different brands of TVs in your home and each one can watch the same TV channels, Your computer can have many different programs, called BROWSERS, and each one can view the same websites on the Internet. There are many Browser programs; the most popular are:

Microsoft Edge (comes with Windows), Google Chrome (pictured below), FireFox, AOL, Safari.



### IMPORTANT FEATURES

**Address** — type in a web address (URL) and press the *Enter* key on the keyboard to view that site.

**Back** — allows you to “travel” back to the previous web page that you viewed in the current session.

**Forward** — if you’ve use the **Back** button, this will take you forward to the web page you just came back from.

**Print** — prints the current web page (or frame) to the printer.

**Refresh/Stop** — reloads the web page or (if the icon is an X), terminates the loading of a web page.

**Favorites/Bookmarks** — allows you to keep and use a list of your favorite websites.

**URL** — “Universal Resource Locator” (aka: a website address).

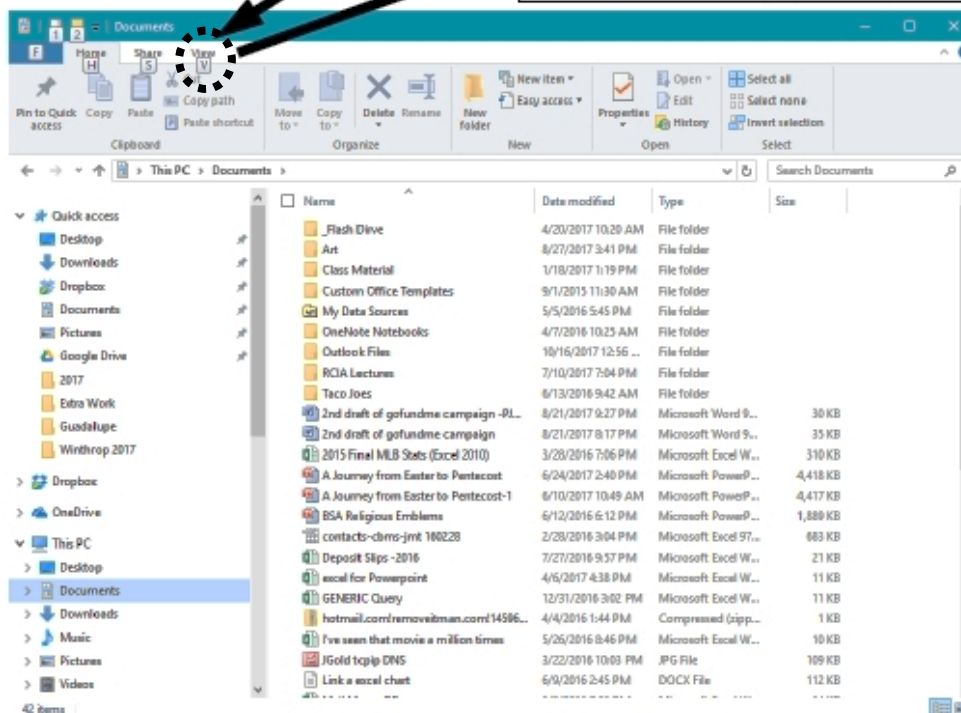
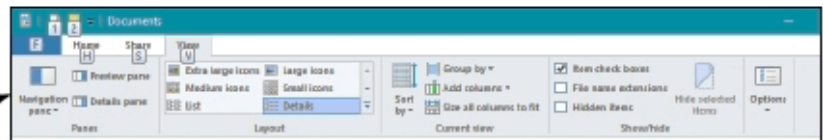
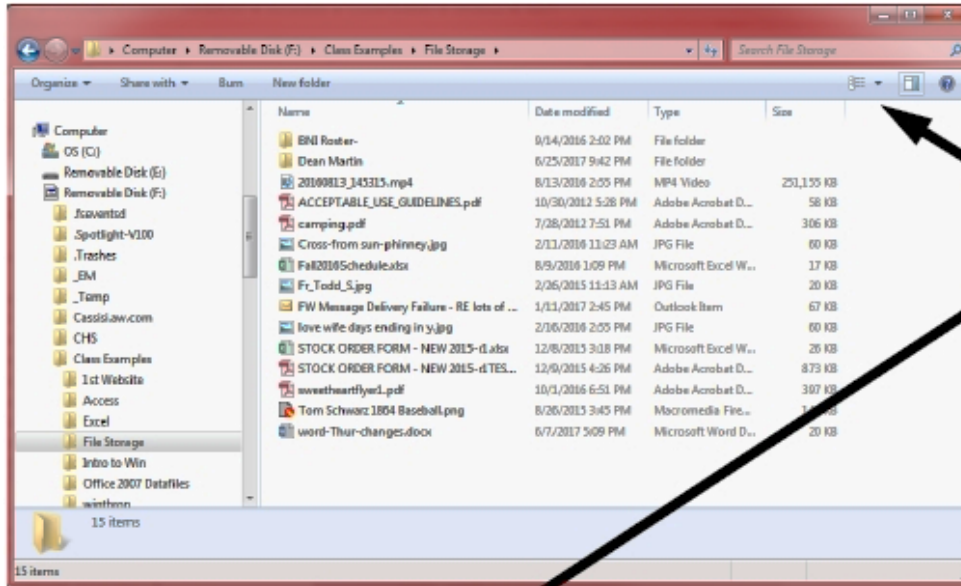
# Computers for Beginners

## Windows Explorer (aka: File Explorer)

Windows Explorer lets you manage your files and folders stored on your computer  
As well as other storage devices.

- ☐ Extra large icons
  - ☐ Large icons
  - ☐ Medium icons
  - ☐ Small icons
  - ☐ List
  - ☐ Details
  - ☐ Tiles
  - ☐ Content
  - ☒ Compact view
- Show >

Switching Views



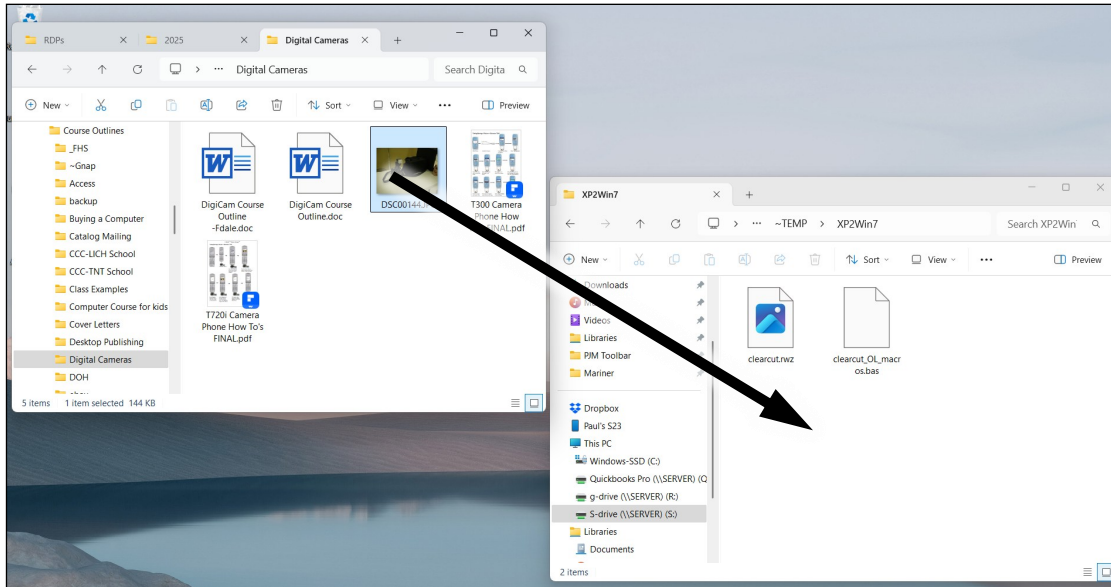
### Typical Drive Letters:

- A: B:** =reserved for floppy drives
- C:** =the computer's Hard Drive
- D:** =CD drive (if present)
- E: F: G:** =Flash drives or external drives
- S: Q: Z:** =Mapped network drives

# Computers for Beginners

## Windows Explorer (Copying Files & Folders)

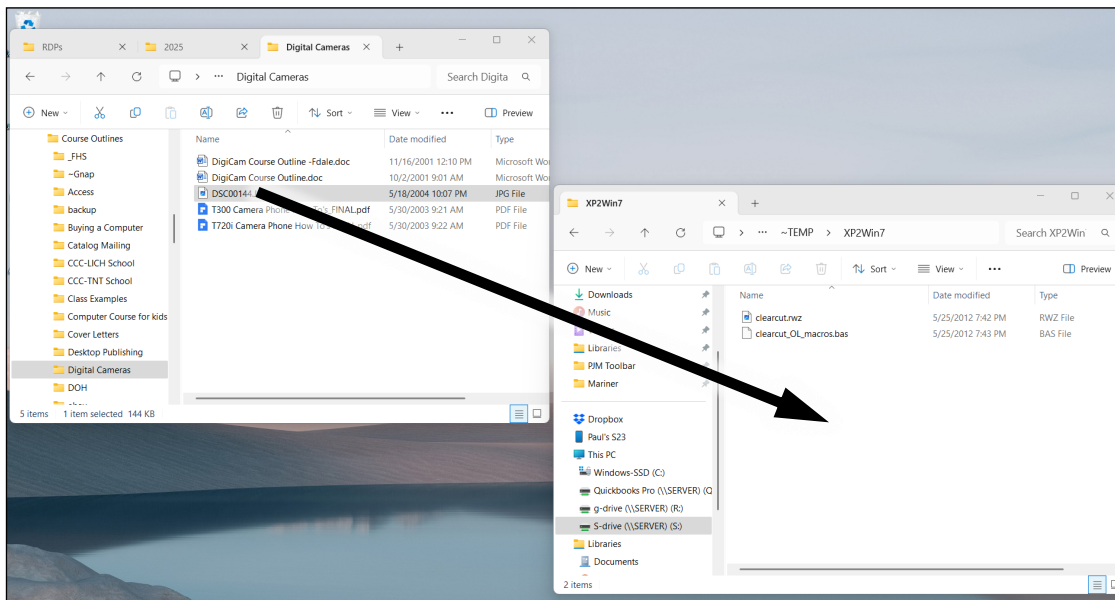
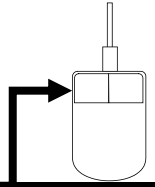
Copying or moving files and folders is as easy as playing solitaire—  
you pick up an item (or items) and move the mouse to the new location and let go..



*Large Icons view*

### **“Click” Button**

- Tap once & let go (*click*) to:
  - Select an object or file
  - Position a cursor
- Press & hold to:
  - “Pick up” an object
- Tap twice & let go (*double-click*) to:
  - Launch a program
  - Open a screen or dialog window



### **Selecting Multiple Items**

#### Contiguous Range:

- Click on one file.
- Then hold the **SHIFT** key and...
- Click on the last file.

#### Staggered Range:

- Click on one file.
- Then hold the **CTRL** key and...
- Click on each additional file, one-by-one, while holding the **CTRL** key.

## **COPYING vs MOVING:**

**COPY** happens when you drag file(s) to a folder on a different drive (*or hold the **Ctrl** key while dragging*)

**MOVE** happens when you drag file(s) to a folder on the same drive (*or hold the **Shift** key while dragging*).

# Computers for Beginners

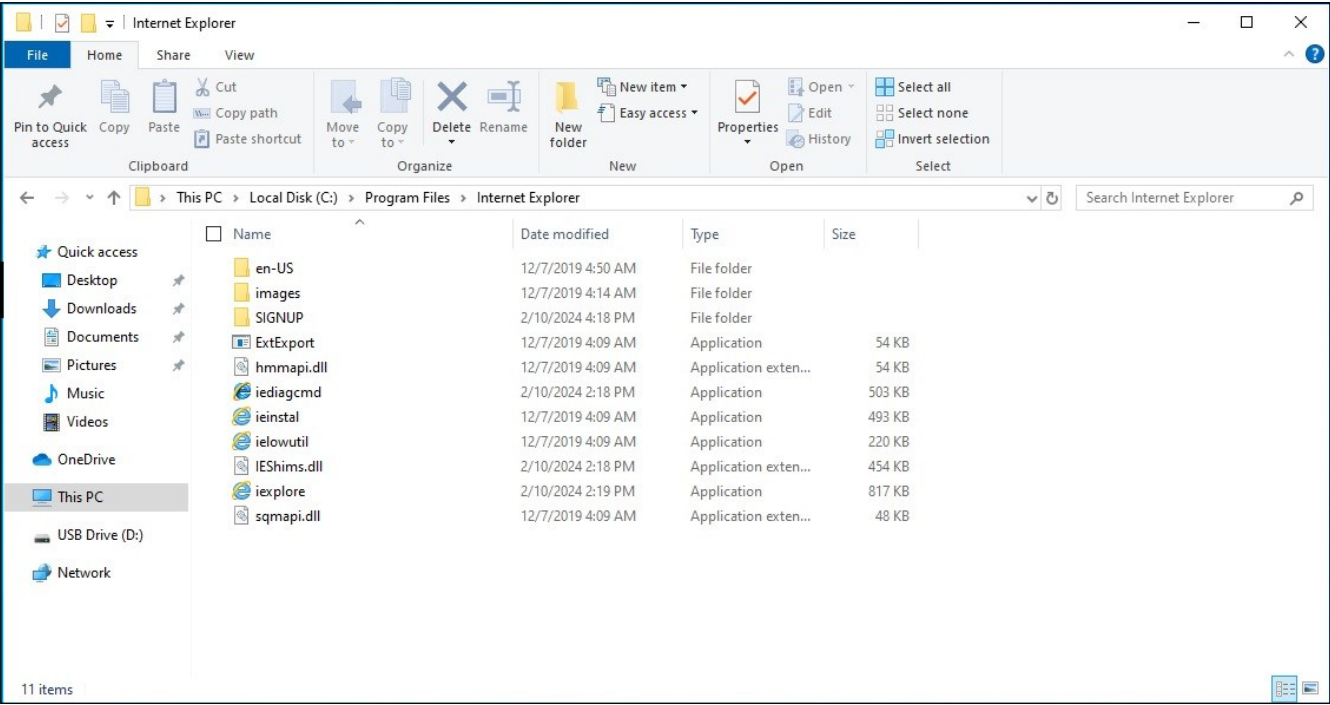
## File Explorer

File Explorer has undergone some changes from Windows 10 to Windows 11.

Command Tabs

Ribbons

Win 10

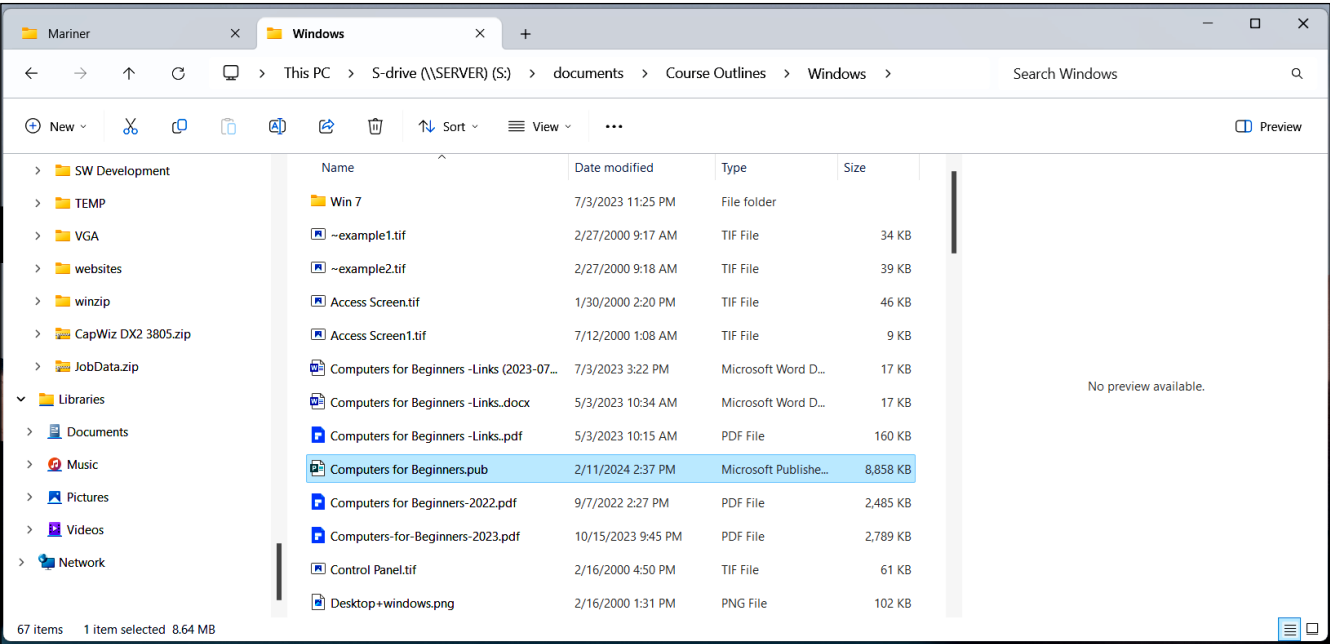


	Windows 10	Windows 11
Overall Controls	Menu Tabs and Ribbons	Single Toolbar
Multiple windows of Explorer	You have to open multiple program session windows.	The + at the top lets you open multiple sessions tabs (like browsers)

Session Tabs

Toolbar

Win 11





# Computers for Beginners

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## File Sizes

1 Byte = 8 bits = “A” (a single letter for example).  
1 Kilobyte = 1KB = 1,000 bytes = actually=1,024 bytes  
1 Megabyte = 1MB = 1,000,000 bytes (million)  
1 Gigabyte = 1GB = 1,000,000,000 bytes (billion)  
1 Terabyte = 1TB = 1,000,000,000,000 bytes (trillion)

## Email attachments

- Emails are **not** limited by the *number* of attachments; they are limited by their total combined file sizes.
- Here are the file size limits of the most popular email service providers: (as of June 2025)
  - Gmail: 25 MB
  - Yahoo: 25 MB
  - AOL: 25 MB
  - Outlook: 25 MB (Outlook.com)
  - Hotmail: 25 MB (now Outlook.com)
  - Apple Mail (iCloud): 20MB (with the option to send up to 5GB using Mail Drop)
  - Optimum: 10MB
- There is also a limit on the number of recipients you can send to in one email. With most, you are safe with up to 50 recipients, but check the website of your email provider.

## Cloud storage services

These are the providers of “cloud storage” - which, loosely put, are computers accessible through the Internet which allow you to save files to. Below are the amounts of space providers give you for free:

- Dropbox = 2GB
- OneDrive (Microsoft) = 5GB
- iCloud (Apple) = 5GB
- Google Drive = 15GB (shared with Gmail)

## RESOURCES

*Here is a collection of links to informative tips about a host of computer topics:*

### **Mouse Tutorial (practice mouse skills) – from GCFGlobal**

<https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/mousetutorial/>

### **Various tutorials from GCFGlobal**

<https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/topics/>

### **Classic Solitaire (at AARP website)**

<https://games.aarp.org/games/classic-solitaire>

<https://www.klondike-solitaire.online/>

# Computers for Beginners

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## A Collection of Useful Keyboard Shortcuts

Improve your speed in using the computer by mastering these keyboard shortcuts:

### Universal Shortcuts for Windows & Mac

	Windows	Mac (⌘ = Command key)
Select All	Ctrl + A	⌘ + A
Cut	Ctrl + X	⌘ + X
Copy	Ctrl + C	⌘ + C
Paste	Ctrl + V	⌘ + V
Undo	Ctrl + Z	⌘ + Z
Redo	Ctrl + Y	⌘ + Shift + Z

### File Explorer

Launch Windows File Explorer	⌂ + E
Open the Preview File Pane	Alt + P
Show the Parent Folder	Alt + Up Arrow
Rotate through the File View Settings	Ctrl + Mouse Scroll Wheel
Change View of the Files	Ctrl + Scroll
Rename the Selected File	F2
Send file to the Recycle Bin (C: drive only)	Del (or Delete)
Delete a file permanently (bypass Recycle Bin)	Shift+Del

### Windows Start Menu

Open the Quick Access menu	⌂ + X
Rearrange the Program Tiles	Click, hold and drag the Tile
Re-Size or Un-Pin a Program Tile	Right-click on the Tile
Close a program	Alt + F4

### Internet Browsers (Microsoft Edge, Chrome, FireFox and others)

Having trouble seeing what's on that Internet screen?	
Zoom In	Ctrl + +
Zoom Out	Ctrl + - (minus or dash)
Zoom to 100%	Ctrl + 0
Open the Find Box to Search the Web	Ctrl + X
Refresh the Web Page	F5
Reload the Web Page	Ctrl + F5
Move Focus to the Address Bar	Ctrl + L
Re-Open All Tabs after Closing Browser	Ctrl + Shift + T

### General Windows

Launch Task Manager	Ctrl + Alt + Delete
Lock the computer	⌂ + L