

Beginning Windows XP

Lesson 1

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Lesson 1 – The Computer and You

*NOTE 1: In these lessons new terminology that you should become familiar with will be shown in **boldfaced italics**.*

The Computer System

Although we speak of them as “computers,” the computer itself is only one component of a complete computer system. As a minimum, today’s **Desktop Personal Computer (PC)** systems consist of the following four major components:

- ✓ The **processor** box, containing the computer itself, its power supply and several different storage devices.
- ✓ A **monitor** (or TV-like screen) for displaying text and images.
- ✓ A **keyboard** for entering text and commands.
- ✓ A pointing device called a **mouse** (or **touchpad** for laptop computers).

NOTE 2: Laptop computers combine all of the above features in one portable package that can run on rechargeable battery power.

Other items often connected to the PC are:

- ✓ A **printer** for producing paper copies.

- ✓ A **scanner** for copying documents, photos or other images.
- ✓ A **digital camera** that can transfer images into the computer.

Your instructor will show you examples of the processor box components including the computer **Motherboard**, **Memory**, **Hard Disk Drive**, **Floppy Disk Drive** (omitted from most new computers), **Compact Disk Drive**, **Flash Memory Device** and perhaps others, and will briefly describe their function — NOT that you need to see or totally understand them to be able to operate the computer, but so you will have a mental picture to connect with when you hear or see these terms used later on.

Windows, the Mouse and the Keyboard

You are in control IF you understand Windows and learn to use the mouse and the keyboard.

- ✓ **Windows** – is the master computer program (software) installed in the computer that lets you take command of the computer and its peripheral devices (hardware). This basic program is termed the **operating system (OS)**.
- ✓ The **mouse** — is a pointing and clicking device that you use to issue commands to the computer.
- ✓ The **keyboard** — Like a typewriter, you use the keyboard to enter text into the computer. It can also be used to issue commands.

Introduction to the Computer

In this first lesson the instructor will start the computer for you and have you “log you in” (more on logging in later) by using the mouse to click on the Student account. The first screen displayed after logging in is the “**Desktop**.” Most desktops have a colorful background just as you will see on your computer.

The Desktop is the starting place for all other computer functions. Located on the Desktop are several “**Icons**” — small images with text underneath that represent places you can go or **applications (programs)** that you may run. Double clicking on an Icon with the mouse instructs the computer to open a “**Window**” and run that application. The application runs inside of its window.

Upon closing an application(s) the window disappears and you return to the Desktop.

Across the bottom of the screen is the “**Taskbar**.” Each application you run shows up as an entry on the Taskbar. At the left end of the Taskbar is the “Start” button, and at the right end are some very small icons and a clock.

First, however, we must learn to use the mouse because it is the most essential tool for controlling the computer. Your instructor will guide you in the use of the mouse.

Exercise 1 — The Mouse

In this exercise you will use the mouse to open some simple applications: a Calculator, the game Solitaire, and optionally the Paint program. Your objective here is to become familiar with mouse operations such as: moving the **mouse pointer** (sometimes referred to as the **cursor**), **clicking** the mouse, and using the mouse to “**drag and drop**.” Your instructor will show you how to hold the mouse and click the mouse buttons. Sometimes you must **double click** the mouse, and other times only a **single click** is required.

*NOTE 3: If you have trouble with rapidly double clicking the mouse. An alternate procedure is to click once on the desired object to “**select**” it (it turns blue), then press the **Enter key** on the keyboard.*

1. Double click on the Calculator icon to open its “window” and experiment with making simple calculations. Notice that the Calculator task appears on the Taskbar at the bottom of the screen whenever you are running the Calculator.
2. Double click on the Solitaire icon to open its “window” and begin the game. Notice that Solitaire appears on the Taskbar along with Calculator. Your instructor will demonstrate how to use the left mouse button to select cards and “drag and drop” cards where you want them.
3. Play Solitaire until you are comfortable with controlling the mouse.
4. Close Solitaire by clicking once on the red X in the upper right corner of the window. Notice that the Solitaire task disappears from the Taskbar.
5. Close Calculator in the same way.

6. Double click on Paint. Use the mouse to draw or write in script with the mouse. (The instructor will provide guidance here.) Close Paint.

Install Lesson Materials from a CD

Your instructor will provide you with a compact disk (CD) containing your lesson materials along with a set of instructions for installing these materials on your home computer. But first, practice an installation on your computer in the computer lab.

Practice With Lesson Materials

After the installation perform the following steps with your instructor's help.

1. At the desktop double click on the BegXP folder to reveal its contents.
2. Double click on the first lesson.
3. Refer to the illustration in the Installation Instructions and if the window does not completely fill the screen click on the "**Maximize**" button.
4. Have the instructor demonstrate using the **wheel** on the mouse to **scroll** the lesson up and down.
5. Close the window.

Creating a Desktop Shortcut

Your home computer probably does not have Solitaire or Paint icons on your desktop. These icons are referred to as "**shortcuts**." Practice this procedure in the class with your instructor's help, then try it out at home.

To create a shortcut to Solitaire on the Desktop:

1. Click on Start, to open the Start Menu.
2. Click on All Programs and it will display a list of the programs installed on your computer.
3. Click on Games, and an expanded menu will appear out to the right.
4. Slide the pointer to the right (staying within the Games area) until the pointer resides in the list of Games.

5. Point to Solitaire then click the RIGHT button on the mouse. Another menu will pop up.
6. Slide the mouse pointer to the “Send To” item, and yet another cascading menu will appear.
7. Slide the mouse pointer into this menu and click on “Desktop (create shortcut).”
8. Now get rid of the cascading menus by clicking somewhere outside the menus on the desktop. Notice that a new “Solitaire” shortcut has appeared on your desktop. You know it’s a shortcut because a small arrow appears in the lower left corner of the icon. You can use the drag and drop technique to move the new icon (or any other for that matter). Try moving the Solitaire icon then double click on it and Solitaire will immediately open.
9. Close Solitaire.

This same procedure will create a shortcut to any of the programs you find in the All Programs menu. (Calculator is located in the Accessories menu.) By the way, to delete a desktop shortcut click once on the icon to “selected,” it, then press the Delete button on the keyboard.

Homework

- ÿ Use the CD and instructions provided by your instructor to install lesson materials on your computer.
- ÿ Open and review Lesson 1.
- ÿ If you can at home — create shortcuts and practice Solitaire and/or Paint.
- ÿ Read through Lesson 2.