

Making the most of the internet



A practical guide to getting online

**Work &
learning**



***Age UK is the new force combining
Age Concern and Help the Aged.***

***With almost 120 years of combined
history to draw on, we are bringing
together our talents, services
and solutions to do more to enrich
the lives of people in later life.***

***The Age UK family includes Age Cymru,
Age NI and Age Scotland. There are
also more than 160 local Age UKs.***

This information guide has been prepared by Age UK and contains general advice only, which we hope will be of use to you. Nothing in this guide should be construed as the giving of specific advice and it should not be relied on as a basis for any decision or action. Neither Age UK nor any of its subsidiary companies or charities accepts any liability arising from its use. We aim to ensure that the information is as up to date and accurate as possible, but please be warned that certain areas are subject to change from time to time. Please note that the inclusion of named agencies, websites, companies, products, services or publications in this information guide does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by Age UK or any of its subsidiary companies or charities.

This guide was first published in September 2010 and updated in July 2011. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this leaflet is correct. However, things do change, so it is always a good idea to seek expert advice on your personal situation.

Date of publication: July 2011 © Age UK 2011

Age UK is the new force combining
AGE and **Concern** and **HELP THE AGED WE WILL**



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Introduction

Every day, more and more of us discover what a wonderful tool the internet can be. You can communicate with people all over the world, find out just about anything and even use it to do your shopping and have it delivered to your door. Going online brings you closer to family and friends, saves money and gets things done faster. You can use the internet to:

- keep in touch
- save time and money managing some of your shopping and bills online
- search for information on absolutely anything, from researching your family tree to catching up on programmes you've missed
- have some fun!

This guide will help get you started by taking you through the essential computer kit that you'll need, and give you lots of practical and simple ways to go online and enjoy using the internet. The internet has its own vocabulary so you will find a glossary of terms on pages 32–34. Words listed in the glossary are in bold when they first appear.

Throughout this guide you will find suggestions for organisations that can offer further information and advice about your options. Their contact details can be found in the ‘Useful organisations’ section (see pages 27–31). Contact details for organisations near you can usually be found in your local phone book. If you have difficulty finding them, your local Age UK should be able to help (see page 27).

As far as possible, the information given in this guide is applicable across the UK.

Key



This symbol indicates where information differs for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



This symbol indicates who to contact for the next steps you need to take.

Getting started

You don't need the latest or most expensive computer to access the **internet**. But nevertheless, it can be a major purchase, so if you are buying a computer it's worth asking yourself a few questions to help you decide what type of computer you should look for. For example, what will you mainly use a computer for, and what do you hope to be able to do in the future? The types of computer, **software** and accessories you can buy vary widely in technical ability and price.

A personal computer (PC)

There are two main types of computer:

A desktop computer. These come in different shapes, sizes and types. In a PC there is a box, called a base unit, which contains the **hard drive**. This connects to a monitor, like a TV screen, and a keyboard, similar in size to that on a typewriter. This is the type of computer you usually see in libraries and offices. Desktop computers take up quite a lot of space and require several connecting cables that can create a potential hazard. However, some computers house all the components of the computer, except the keyboard and mouse, inside the same unit. This saves space and reduces cable clutter.

A laptop or notebook computer. This type of computer combines a built-in keyboard, monitor, touchpad and hard drive, each being smaller than you would get in a desktop. This makes a laptop portable so that it can be used in different places, for example, an armchair or at the kitchen table. A laptop with a 15.6" screen offers a good compromise between price and usability. Netbooks are super small laptops with a screen size of 8–10". They are relatively cheap and very portable but the smaller screen makes viewing more difficult.

Storage, memory and speed

A computer's hard drive may also be referred to as 'storage', 'memory' or 'disk space' and is measured in gigabytes (GB), or terabytes (TB). An older computer, with a relatively small hard disk of 320GB, will be more than adequate for getting on to the internet. But it will hold about a third fewer video and music files than, for example, a newer computer with a 1TB hard disk.

You'll also have a choice about how much short-term memory, commonly known as **RAM** (Random Access Memory), you want to pay for. It is measured in gigabytes. Again, you don't have to choose a computer with the greatest amount of RAM for everyday home use such as **emailing**, displaying pages in a **website**, **downloading** photos and typing letters. Two gigabytes of RAM will be plenty for most people.

The speed of a computer's **processor**, measured in megahertz (MHz), or gigahertz (GHz), determines how quickly it can think and act. Paying extra for the fastest processor is only worth the investment if you intend to carry out complex tasks, such as playing games or video editing – 2.2GHz will generally be more than adequate.

If you are a complete beginner, ask a computer-savvy friend or local computer shop to set up your system.

Getting online

To go **online** you will need an **internet service provider (ISP)** to provide access to the internet through your telephone line, or a mobile broadband device. Some of the better-known providers are BT, Virgin Media, TalkTalk, Plusnet and AOL.

The speed at which you access the internet and the amount of information you send and receive is determined by the amount of **bandwidth** you have. Most internet service providers offer different amounts of bandwidth for set monthly prices. As a home user, you probably won't need more than an eight 'megabits per second' (Mbps) connection. And as broadband speeds depend largely on how far your home is from the telephone exchange, your actual speed will probably be around 2Mbps.

There are two ways to connect to the internet: dial-up and broadband.

Dial-up internet connection

Your computer acts as if it is making a phone call by dialling a telephone number to access the internet. It will keep your telephone line busy and is the slowest way of connecting to the internet. Dial-up is becoming quite rare nowadays and is used mainly in rural areas where exchanges are situated further apart.

Broadband internet connection

Broadband uses a smarter line than the simple telephone line used in dial-up, so your connection to the internet is faster and you can still use your home phone when your computer is connected to the internet. There are different ways to get a broadband connection:

- ADSL broadband (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line), which is through a telephone line and **router**.
- Cable and satellite packages which combine television, telephone and internet services from a single provider.
- Wireless broadband (often referred to as **WiFi**) which enables you to access the internet from any room in your home. It is also available in many public places.
- Mobile broadband for internet access on the move with a laptop or through a mobile phone, using a small device called a **dongle**.

Once you're connected to the internet, you will need a free piece of software called a web browser to look at websites on your computer. The most common are Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari and Chrome.

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Find out what home broadband options are available in your area by checking
www.top10.com/broadband/postcode_checker

Contact Simplifydigital at 0800 090 1302 for a free comparison service for broadband options. It can provide the necessary information and support for the best deals and can talk you through the process of getting connected, right up to the point of connection or purchase.

Equipment for going online

If you decide to use a dial-up connection, you will need a dial-up modem to connect to your telephone line. Most computers have an internal modem already installed. It is a good idea to buy a small accessory called a socket doubler from computer or telephone accessory retailers to allow your computer and telephone to be plugged in at the same time. If your computer will be far away from the telephone socket you may need a telephone extension, although this may slow your connection speed.

If you choose a broadband connection, your internet service provider will usually supply you with a wireless **router**. You can either connect your computer to the router with a cable or, more conveniently, you can connect your computer wirelessly. For this you will need a wireless card or adapter, which is built in to most laptops, or is cheap to buy and slot into a desktop computer. Make sure you password-protect your wireless router so that your neighbours and other people in the area can't connect to your network.

Safety and security

A computer connected to the internet can be at risk from rogue computer programs called **viruses**. You should check that your computer has been installed with anti-virus software such as Norton, McAfee, or even a very effective free program called AVG, which you can download from <http://free.avg.com>. Microsoft also offers free security software which you can download from www.microsoft.com/security_essentials

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Once online, read the advice about protecting your computer from Get Safe Online at www.getsafeonline.org (see page 29).

Mouse and keyboard

You might find that either the standard mouse or keyboard you get with a desktop computer doesn't quite give you the control you want, especially if you have limited dexterity. Arthritic fingers often find a stationary trackball easier to use. Perhaps you want a different mouse and keyboard to the ones built into a laptop computer. You can choose from a wide range of different shapes and sizes from a provider like AbilityNet (see page 27).

Contact AbilityNet's Advice and Information Team on freephone 0800 269 545 to find out more about specialist equipment and adaptations (much of it is free or low cost) if you have a disability that makes using a computer difficult. Microsoft has built various facilities in to Windows to make it easier for people of all abilities to use it. Visit www.microsoft.com/enable to find out more.

Printers

If you want to print out documents, such as emails, recipes, web pages or receipts, then you will need a printer. There are some very cost-effective printers available and your printer can be stored in a spare room and only connected when you need to print something. Wireless printers can connect to your wireless network without the need for cables.

After-sales support

If you are going to buy a new computer, then it should come with a warranty lasting at least a year. Warranties for refurbished computers are typically much shorter, often only 30 to 60 days.

Many computer and internet service providers also offer customer support as part of the package or for an additional fee. Ensure that you understand the support service you will be getting and whether there are extras to pay, for example, paying to return your computer if there is a fault, or for home visits from a technician. For a refurbished computer, it is usually only those that have been refurbished by the manufacturer which include support for a period of time.

Taking your first steps

There are lots of computer courses and taster sessions for older people, providing straightforward training using jargon-free terms that aim to get you quickly enjoying the advantages of the internet. To find a course in your area, do any of the following.

- Contact your local Age UK (call Age UK Advice on 0800 169 65 65 for your nearest one) and ask them about training opportunities.
- Ask at your local library about computer training courses.
- Contact UK Online to find out about UK online centres based in community venues (see page 31).
- Access a wide range of free online beginners' courses by visiting a website such as www.go-on.co.uk or www.bbc.co.uk/webwise

'I go to a “silver surfers club” most weeks to practise emailing and searching websites, with help on hand if I get stuck. The more I go, the more confident I feel. In fact, just last week one of the newcomers asked me for my help. I felt proud as punch!'

Victor, 72



Keeping in touch

The internet provides lots of free ways to stay in touch with your friends and family, and even meet people with similar interests. Here are some of the most popular.

Email

Email, short for electronic mail, is the quickest, easiest and cheapest way to contact people. You can send an email to friends and family, wherever they are, and attach documents and photos.

Setting up an email account to get an email address is straightforward. You can get one from your internet service provider or use a web-based service like Gmail (www.google.co.uk/mail), Hotmail (www.hotmail.com) or Yahoo (www.yahoo.co.uk/mail). Email addresses typically look something like this: `yourname@serviceprovider.co.uk`

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Set up an email account and start emailing. The website www.go-on.co.uk gives step-by-step help for setting up an account.

Internet telephone calls

Using the internet to make phone calls is becoming very popular, especially for international calls, because it is often cheaper, or even free. You will need a broadband internet connection and a microphone, and so will the person you are speaking to. If you both have a web camera (**webcam**) you can also see each other as you talk, but you will need a fast broadband connection if you want to use video as well as sound.

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Skype is the most popular provider. Download the free software from www.skype.com

Social networking

Social networking websites provide a great way to find like-minded people, and keep in touch with family and friends.

Friends Reunited (www.friendsreunited.co.uk) can help reunite you with people you knew at school, clubs or through the armed forces. Other websites like Facebook (www.facebook.com) and MySpace (www.myspace.com) enable you to keep in touch with friends and family, and meet new people registered with the site.

Twitter (www.twitter.com) is a social networking service that enables you to send and receive brief messages to and from registered friends and family members, celebrities, journalists – in fact, anyone you choose to follow. Its immediacy makes it ideal for spreading news and sharing quick updates.

Protecting your privacy

With any social networking site, it's very important that you guard against people who may want to steal your personal information. Use the privacy features to restrict strangers' access to your profile, and be wary of publishing any information that identifies you, such as your telephone number, address or date of birth. See our guide *Internet security* for more tips on protecting yourself.

Dating sites are also very popular. For example, you could visit www.uknetguide.co.uk/Lifestyle_and_Leisure/Dating for a summary of the main sites for older people. If you arrange to meet someone, meet in a public place where there will be plenty of other people. Tell a friend where you are going and arrange to call them when you are safely back home.

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A good place to start is the Age UK community area and discussion boards at www.ageuk.org.uk/chat2 where you can join in discussions, read, respond to and post messages and questions on a range of topics.

Saving time and money

From shopping to accessing government services, researching family history to planning a trip, there are many ways to save time and money by using the internet.

Shopping online

Shopping online is convenient, especially if you have trouble getting about, and there are many options and savings to be found. Some people worry about paying with a credit card over the internet, but it has a similar level of risk to buying goods over the phone or through a catalogue. You can also use PayPal (www.paypal.com) to pay securely using a debit or credit card or bank account without needing to share your financial details with the seller. See our free guide *Your consumer rights* to find out more about shopping safely online.

All major retailers have shops online and there are many specialist retailers too. Internet auction sites like eBay (www.ebay.co.uk) are also popular – you type in what you are looking for, view pictures, read descriptions, find out what other customers have said about the seller and bid for items. You can also buy many products from the Age UK Group* online. See www.ageuk.org.uk/buy for more details.

It is also possible to get things for free through your local Freecycle group (www.freecycle.org/group/uk). The purpose of Freecycle is to find homes for unwanted items to keep them out of landfills. You can find anything from crockery to garden tools. And if you have things you don't need any more, you can find new homes for them too.

*Age UK Group comprises the Charity and its trading subsidiaries.

Some sites offer shopping vouchers that will give you money off at online retailers. These include www.myvouchercodes.co.uk, www.vouchercodes.com, www.codes.co.uk and www.moneysavingexpert.com

Ask for a copy of our free leaflet *Internet security*. Look at the helpful consumer advice guide *Paying Safely Online* available from The UK Cards Association (see page 31).

Price-comparison and review websites

Shopping around is always advisable when you're making a purchase. The internet makes it very convenient to compare prices and there are websites designed to help you do this, such as www.kelkoo.co.uk and www.pricerunner.co.uk.

A good price-comparison website will help ensure that you are comparing like with like, so that, for example, you take account of delivery charges and VAT. It's also worth checking with more than one price-comparison site, to get as much information on the market as possible, as no website covers every single supplier or retailer. Also, not every supplier advertises through price-comparison websites.

Most price-comparison websites also include opinions from ordinary customers to help you make an informed choice. Which? conducts impartial product reviews for everything from dishwashers to mobile phones. You can view the reports on its website www.which.co.uk, although you do need to subscribe in order to access the full content (see page 31).

For independent reviews of products aimed at disabled, and older people visit the Ricability website (see page 30).

Saving on your bills

It is not just day-to-day items, groceries and household goods that you can save on by shopping online. You can often cut the cost of your utility bills by comparing packages, switching to a new provider, and opting to pay online.

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See if you can save some money on your utility bills or current insurance policies by comparing prices using comparison websites such as www.uswitch.com and www.energyhelpline.com

Government services

The Government wants us to use the internet as much as possible to cut the costs of delivering public services through its departments and agencies, and through the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and local councils. There is a single website called Directgov

(NI Direct in Northern Ireland) (see page 29) that links you to central government and local public services. Here are just some of the things you can do there:

- claim your benefits
- renew your TV licence or passport
- apply for a new tax disc for your car
- get crime figures for your area.

what next?

Go to www.direct.gov.uk and click ‘Do it online’ for all the government forms and services you can access through the internet.

(i) In Northern Ireland, go to www.nidirect.gov.uk

Researching family history

The internet can make it much easier to research historical documents to build your family tree. The website www.freebmd.org.uk provides internet access to millions of UK birth, marriage and death records. You can trace back further in time, before civil registration started in 1837, with parish records by searching www.freereg.org.uk. The National Archives website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk provides a set of useful links to help you quickly search these vast archives, including census returns, wills and military records. The websites www.ancestry.co.uk and www.genesreunited.co.uk require an annual subscription but can be useful resources if you are interested in doing detailed research.

The internet also provides lots of free resources and advice. To help you organise your research and pick up beginner's tips, take a look at the guide at www.bbc.co.uk/familyhistory

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Take the first step, as many people have before you, by simply typing your surname into a search engine like Google: www.google.co.uk (see page 29).

'When my washing machine broke down I compared seven different shops by sitting at my computer. In 45 minutes I probably saved myself £55.'

Joan, 68

Making travel arrangements

Whether you're planning a trip to visit relatives or a world cruise, the internet will save you time making the arrangements, and booking online often saves you money. All the main tour operators, airlines, train and coach companies have websites, so you can browse for holidays or book travel and accommodation separately. Use the internet to:

- plan routes for daytrips in the car,
e.g. www.rac.co.uk/route-planner
- search and zoom in on street maps,
e.g. <http://maps.google.co.uk>
- book train and coach tickets,
e.g. www.thetrainline.com
- research and book flight, car and hotel offers,
e.g. www.expedia.co.uk, www.opodo.co.uk, and
www.travelocity.co.uk
- get unbiased reviews on hotels, B&Bs and holidays from paying customers, e.g. www.tripadvisor.com

Remember to check that you will be protected should the company go into liquidation. Consumer protection is provided by organisations such as ABTA, ATOL, ATO, CPT and a number of other trade bodies – check the websites to be certain.

what next?

Go to Britain's largest travel guide for inspirational ideas for days out or longer breaks in Britain at www.visitbritain.co.uk

i In Northern Ireland, go to www.discovernorthernireland.com

'I was secretly heartbroken when my eldest daughter accepted a job in America. I thought I'd lose all contact. But now I have learned to use email, it has helped us to keep in touch and I also managed to book my flights online to visit her. I couldn't believe how simple it was.'

Margaret, 58

Information and advice

Think of a topic and there's bound to be some information available about it on the internet! However, it pays to be vigilant about where the information comes from, and how up to date it is. Here are some tips on how to search for information and some reputable and trusted online sources of advice.

How to search

The **world wide web** links billions of websites together. Each website consists of web pages which have a web address (sometimes referred to as 'URLs', short for Uniform Resource Locators).

If you do not have a web address for a specific organisation, or you want to search more broadly using keywords or by asking a question, then you can use a **search engine** which sifts through pages on the internet in seconds. The most popular search engine is Google at www.google.co.uk. It has become so well used that people often say they'll 'Google it' when searching for information. The free encyclopaedia at www.wikipedia.org provides a quick reference tool but, because it can be edited by anyone, can occasionally contain incorrect information.

Here are some general tips for searching online.

- Be aware of sponsored links: these are links where a company or organisation is paying to have their information shown first.
- Type in two or more words to make your search more specific: for example, bridge cards instead of just bridge.
- Use inverted commas (" ") if you want to search for a phrase: for example, "travel insurance".
- Check several different sources to be certain of important facts, such as medical information.

Money matters

For information on pensions, tax and benefits, including a factsheet about challenging welfare benefit decisions, visit the Age UK ‘Money Matters’ pages at www.ageuk.org.uk/moneymatters

The UK’s Consumer Financial Education Body (see page 28) provides a wealth of impartial, free information, tools and guides to help you make informed decisions about financial products and services at www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk. There is a section covering retirement and pensions, providing stakeholder and personal pension comparison tables, a financial health check tool and a pension calculator.

National Debtline (www.nationaldebtline.co.uk) provides information to help you get out of debt and online tools to help you manage debt (see page 30).

You can also monitor your investments on a day-to-day basis using sites such as MoneyExtra at www.moneyextra.com

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Check that you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to by using our online benefits checker at www.ageuk.org.uk/benefitschecker. In Northern Ireland, go to www.ageni.org for information on benefits checks.

Search grant-giving charities for personal financial assistance using the Turn2us Grants Search: www.turn2us.org.uk (see page 31).

Health

The best place to start a search for reliable health information is NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk.

-  In Wales, visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk and in Scotland, visit www.nhsinform.co.uk

NHS Choices also has information on hundreds of health conditions, explaining symptoms, diagnosis and treatment options, often with accompanying videos featuring patients and consultants, together with details of specialist support groups. You can try games and quizzes to help work out how healthy you are and how to live a healthier life. You can also watch videos and hear tips from people explaining how small lifestyle changes made a big difference to their health and enjoyment of life.

You can also use it to find and choose NHS services including hospitals and dentists. You can read and post comments about care and treatment received.

Charities' websites are often an excellent place for specialist information and advice. Some that may be of interest for health information include Carers UK at www.carersuk.org, Alzheimer's Society at www.alzheimers.org.uk, Macmillan Cancer Support at www.macmillan.org.uk, Diabetes UK at www.diabetes.org.uk, RNIB at www.rnib.org.uk and Action on Hearing Loss at www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk (see 'Useful organisations', pages 27–31).

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Visit the 'Health & wellbeing' section of the Age UK website at www.ageuk.org.uk/health-wellbeing/ for guides to keeping fit and healthy eating, NHS services, and your rights and entitlements to healthcare.

Staying active

Getting the most out of the internet doesn't just mean using it for practical tasks – there are endless opportunities for fun, interaction and learning.

Hobbies

From gardening to golf, whatever your interests you'll find the internet a limitless source of information and inspiration. You can use the internet to:

- play sudoku, chess, bridge or backgammon: try www.sudoku.org.uk or www.instantchess.com
- chat with other people who share your hobby or interest in discussion forums
- find out about talks, lessons, clubs and outings devoted to your hobby or interest
- try out interesting recipes featured on TV cookery shows: see www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes
- find video tutorials on every kind of hobby at www.youtube.com

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Go to www.google.co.uk and type in one of your hobbies or interests.

Music, TV and radio

Traditional ways of watching TV and listening to music and radio programmes are changing if you have a broadband connection. Now you can watch/listen to what you want, when you want to, through your computer. You can do any of the following.

- Watch TV programmes you've missed or want to watch again (for a limited time) on BBC iPlayer at www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer, from the ITV channels on www.itv.com/ITVPlayer, from Channel 4 on www.channel4.com/programmes/4oD and from Channel 5 at www.channel5.com
- Listen live or listen again (for a limited time) to radio shows on stations like BBC's Radio 4 www.bbc.co.uk/radio4 and Heart at www.heart.co.uk. Watch video clips of almost anything on YouTube: www.youtube.com
- Buy music online from websites of the major music retailers such as www.amazon.co.uk or the iTunes store www.apple.com/itunes to listen to on your computer or transfer across to a mobile phone, MP3 player or iPod.

You will need to have a working soundcard and videocard in your computer, and if you have a desktop computer then the speakers must be switched on, or you could buy headphones. To watch TV programmes and films, you'll need special software that you will be able to download and install for free. You may also need Adobe Flash Player, which you can download free from <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer>. It's also worth checking the limit for your broadband usage with your internet service provider, as you may have to pay if you exceed it, or you may want to consider upgrading to increase your limit.

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Find out how to start using the BBC iPlayer to catch up on BBC radio and TV programmes: www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer

Keeping up to date

The internet keeps you up to date with everything that's going on. You don't even need to buy a newspaper with print that comes off on your hands! Most national newspapers are free to read on the internet. You can easily find:

- news from around the world, nationally and in your local area
- weather forecasts
- what's on in your area, from swimming pool opening times to cinema show times
- the latest currency exchange rates.

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Find out what the weather is going to be like in your area this week using the BBC website: www.bbc.co.uk/weather

Carry on working

The internet is also a valuable resource for anyone who wants to return to work, switch jobs or find out about volunteering opportunities. You can:

- search for a new job
- sign up to receive alerts when new jobs of interest to you are advertised
- look for training courses
- find tips on writing and improving your CV
- find out about volunteering opportunities in the UK that match your interests, skills and availability at www.timebank.org.uk, or for volunteering abroad, try www.vso.org.uk

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Visit the website www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk for help and advice on careers and learning.

'I can't remember how I ever got by before I learnt to use the internet. I am always picking up the mouse to check a new recipe or follow up something I've seen in a TV programme or read in the paper. It has become as second nature as using the telephone.'

Deidre, 61



Useful organisations

Age UK

Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged. We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65
www.ageuk.org.uk

Call Age UK Advice to find out whether there is a local Age UK near you, and to order free copies of our information guides and factsheets.

In Wales, contact

Age Cymru: 0800 169 65 65
www.agecymru.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact

Age NI: 0808 808 7575
www.ageni.org

In Scotland, contact

Age Scotland: 0845 125 9732
www.agescotland.org.uk

AbilityNet

A national charity that helps people use computers and the internet by adapting and adjusting their technology.

Tel: 0800 269 545 (freephone)
www.abilitynet.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss (was RNID)

A national charity offering information and support for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

Tel: 0808 808 0123 (freephone)

Textphone: 0808 800 9000

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society

Offers advice, information and support to people with dementia, their families and carers through its helpline and local branches.

Tel: 020 7423 3500

www.alzheimers.org.uk

In Scotland, contact

Alzheimer Scotland

Tel: 0808 808 3000 (freephone)

www.alzscot.org

Carers UK

General help and advice for all carers.

Tel: 0808 808 7777 (freephone)

www.carersuk.org

In Northern Ireland, visit www.carersni.org

In Scotland, visit www.carersscotland.org

In Wales, visit www.carerswales.org

Consumer Financial Education Body

Established by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the UK's financial regulator, it provides information, resources and interactive tools to help people make informed decisions about money.

www.cfebuk.org.uk

Diabetes UK

Works for people with diabetes.

Tel: 020 7424 1000

In Scotland, call 0845 120 2960

www.diabetes.org.uk

Directgov

The website of the UK Government, providing key government information and online services for the public all in one place.

www.direct.gov.uk

In Northern Ireland, visit www.nidirect.gov.uk

Get Safe Online

A joint internet security awareness initiative between the Government, law enforcement, leading businesses and the public sector.

www.getsafeonline.org

Google

Google is the world's largest search engine, offering an easy-to-use, free search. It aims to organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.

www.google.co.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support

A national cancer care and support charity.

Tel: 0808 808 00 00 (freephone)

www.macmillan.org.uk

National Debtline

Provides free confidential and independent advice on how to deal with debt problems.

Tel: 0808 808 4000 (freephone)

www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices, the official site of the National Health Service in England, offers expert information on conditions, treatments, local services and healthy living.

www.nhs.uk

In Wales, visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

In Scotland, visit www.nhsinform.co.uk

Ricability

A national research charity dedicated to providing independent information to disabled and older consumers.

www.ricability.org.uk

RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)

A national charity supporting blind and partially sighted people.

Tel: 0303 123 9999

www.rnib.org.uk

Simplifydigital

An Ofcom-accredited broadband, home phone and digital TV comparison service, helping to provide you with the necessary information and support right up to the point of connection or purchase.

Tel: 0800 090 1302 (freephone)

Turn2us

This service from the charity Elizabeth Finn helps people to access the money available to them in welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help. It brings together an easy-to-use benefits checker and a grants search, giving access to over 3,500 charitable funds.

www.turn2us.org.uk

The UK Cards Association

A trade body for credit, debit and charge card issuers, which works in partnership with Financial Fraud Action UK to help prevent card fraud.

www.theukcardsassociation.org.uk

UK Online

UK Online centres help people make the most of computers and the internet.

Tel: 0800 77 1234 (freephone)
www.ukonlinecentres.com

Which?

An independent organisation that campaigns to protect consumer rights, review products and provide unbiased advice.

www.which.co.uk

Glossary

Bandwidth

A measure of how much information can be transferred within a given amount of time in megabits per second, or ‘Mbps’.

Dongle

A small device you can plug into your laptop to access broadband internet on the move.

Download(ing)

Transfer files from the internet to your own computer. When used with email, it usually refers to collecting new messages. When used with the web, it usually refers to requesting a web page.

Email(ing)

Short for ‘electronic mail’. Email is the internet version of the postal service: you send a message (also referred to as ‘emailing’) from your computer to another person who also has access to email.

Hard drive

The disk inside your computer where your documents, photos and software are stored.

Internet/the net

A worldwide collection of computers joined by networks, which are linked to each other via communication links such as telephone lines. To join the internet all you have to do is connect your computer to one of the networks.

Internet service provider (ISP)

A company that provides you with access to the internet from your computer.

Modem

A device that converts the digital data from your computer into sound signals, which are transmitted over a standard telephone line, and converts sound signals back into digital data that can be understood by your computer.

Online

This means working on a computer that is currently connected to the internet.

Processor

The ‘brains’ of your computer. The faster the processor’s speed, the more calculations and data the computer can process in a given time.

RAM

The temporary memory that your computer uses to store information before writing or reading it from the hard drive, so a computer with a lot of RAM will run quickly and efficiently.

Router

A device used to connect one or more computers, either wired or wirelessly, to a broadband-enabled telephone line.

Search engine

A special kind of website that allows you to enter words or select from a list of subjects and categories to search for a topic on the web.

Software

Also called programs, packages or applications. They are installed on to computers. Examples are word-processing, photo editing and desktop publishing software.

Virus(es)

Small programs that can harm the health of your computer, for example, by deleting files or causing your computer to malfunction.

Web browser

A piece of software that enables your computer to load and display pages in a website.

Webcam

A video camera connected to the internet through your computer.

Website

A collection of related web pages consisting of links, text, photos, graphics, video and sound.

WiFi

Wireless broadband that enables you to access the internet from any room in your home. It is also available in many public places.

World wide web (www or web)

The web pages stored on computers that are connected to the internet.

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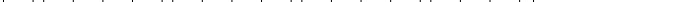
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The following Age UK information leaflet may be useful:

- *Internet security*

The Age UK Group offers a wide range of products and services specially designed for people in later life. For more information, please call **0800 169 18 19**.

If contact details for your local Age UK are not in the box below, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.