



Basic English for Computing

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1

Everyday uses of computers

Tuning-in

Task 1

We use computers in many different places.
Which places can you link these computer documents with?



Task 2

In groups, make a list of other places where you can find computer documents. Try to say what the documents are, and what they are used for.

Listening: Computer uses

Task 3

Match these words (1–8) to the correct locations (a–d).

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1 games | 5 flight | a a factory |
| 2 machines | 6 letters | b a supermarket |
| 3 tickets | 7 barcode readers | c a travel agent |
| 4 wages | 8 tills | d a home |



Task 4

Listen to the tape. Identify which place is described in each extract.

Reading: Computers in everyday life

Task 5

Tick (✓) the computer uses mentioned in the following article.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> home | <input type="checkbox"/> art |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hospitals | <input type="checkbox"/> banking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> libraries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> film-making |
| <input type="checkbox"/> television advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> schools |

Computers are part of our everyday lives. They have an effect on almost everything you do. When you buy groceries at a supermarket, a computer is used with laser and barcode technology to scan the price of each item and present a total. Barcoding items (clothes, food, and books) requires a computer to generate the barcode labels and maintain the inventory. Most television advertisements and many films use graphics produced by a computer. In hospitals, bedside terminals connected to the hospital's main computer allow doctors to type in orders for blood tests and to schedule operations. Banks use computers to look after their customers' money. In libraries and bookshops, computers can help you to find the book you want as quickly as possible.

Language work: Articles

Study these nouns.

a supermarket technology a computer money

Supermarket and *computer* are countable nouns.

We say *a supermarket* and *supermarkets*.

Technology and *money* are uncountable nouns.

They have no plural and you cannot use them with *a* or *an*.

Study this paragraph.

Computers have many uses. In shops a computer scans the price of each item. Then the computer calculates the total cost of all the items.

We use a plural noun with no article, or an uncountable noun, when we talk about things in general.

Computers have many uses.

Information technology is popular.

We use *a/an* when we mention a countable noun for the first time.

In shops a computer scans the price of each item.

When we mention the same noun again, we use *the*.

The computer calculates the total cost.

We use *the* with countable and uncountable nouns to refer to specific things.

The price of each item.

The total cost of all the items.

The speed of this computer.

Task 6

Here are some common nouns in computing. With the help of the Glossary on page 120, divide them into countable and uncountable nouns. In the Glossary, and in most dictionaries, nouns are marked *C* for countable and *U* for uncountable.

1 capacity	4 disk	7 monitor	10 speed
2 data	5 drive	8 mouse	
3 device	6 memory	9 software	

Task 7

Fill in the gaps in this paragraph with *a/an* or *the* where necessary.

The Walsh family have ¹_____ computer at home. Their son uses ²_____ computer to help with ³_____ homework and to play ⁴_____ computer games. Their student daughter uses ⁵_____ computer for ⁶_____ projects and for ⁷_____ email. All ⁸_____ family use it to get ⁹_____ information from ¹⁰_____ Internet.

Aids to communication

Here are some phrases to use when you do not understand what someone says to you.

What does X mean?

Could you say that again, please?

I'm sorry, I didn't understand that.

A little more slowly, please.

Here are some phrases to use when you need help from your teacher.

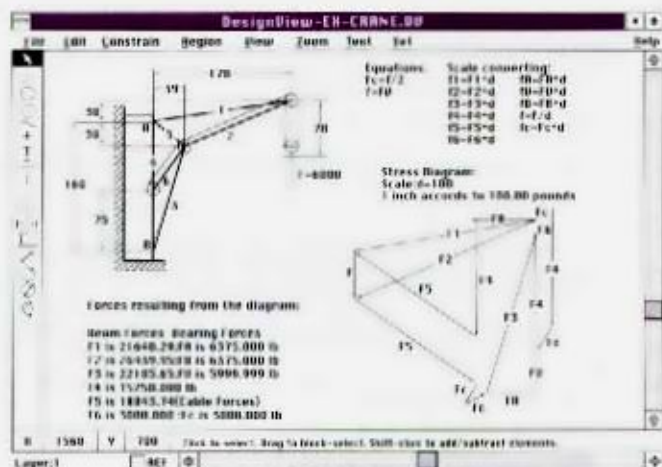
What's the English for ...?

How do you say ...?

Problem-solving**Task 8**

Study these screens. Each shows a program used by a different occupation.

- Who uses each program?
- What do they use it for?
- What did they use before computers?
- How do computers make their work easier?



Database		Record Display from Edinburgh University Library (all sites)	
Keyword		Record 34 of 42 for search:	
Browse		2 12 23 32	
New			
Results			
Hold			
TITLE	Practical English Usage, New Edition / Michael Swan		
AUTHOR	Swan, Michael		
PUBLISHER	Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1995		
ISBN	019431197X (pbk)		
SUBJECTS	Language and languages		
Library Holdings			
	Location	Shelfmark	Status

Writing

Task 9 Match the places in column A with the computer uses in column B.

A

banks
factories
homes
hospitals
shops

B

control machines
calculate the bill
look after patient records and medicines
provide entertainment and information
control our money

Task 10 Now fill in the gaps in this paragraph about computer uses.

Computers are now part of our everyday life. In shops, they ¹_____.
In factories, they ²_____. In ³_____, they look after
patient records and medicines. When we have a bank account, a computer
⁴_____. In our homes, computers ⁵_____.

2 Types of computer

Tuning-in

Task 1 Match these names to the different types of computer.

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|----------------|
| 1 mainframe | 3 notebook | 5 PC |
| 2 laptop | 4 handheld | 6 minicomputer |



Task 2 Who uses these types of computer? Where do they use them? Make a list.

Listening: Buying a computer 1

Task 3 Listen to Part 1 of this conversation between a shop assistant and a customer. Tick (✓) the correct answers to these questions.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 The customer wants a computer for: | 2 A multimedia computer provides: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> writing | <input type="checkbox"/> sound |
| <input type="checkbox"/> graphics | <input type="checkbox"/> telephone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> games | <input type="checkbox"/> video |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> animation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> video | |

Task 4 Listen to Part 2 of the conversation. In column A, tick the hardware items named.

A	B	Device	A	B	Device
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	multimedia computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	handheld
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	multimedia notebook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	printer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	subnotebook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	monitor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	laptop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	modem

Task 5 Listen again to the conversation. In Column B, tick the items the assistant recommends.