

The government is working with Becta and UK online centres to help adults learn the basics about computers and the internet.

This leaflet explains the background for providers of learning and interested agencies.





What is Online basics?

Online basics is a way to give people the skills and confidence to go online. It covers using a mouse and keyboard, emailing, looking at the internet and keeping safe online. **Online basics** is an entry-level course.

Online basics is quick and free. People can do it at their own pace, at home if they have a computer and an internet connection, or at a local centre.

Online basics is a new offer from the **myguide service** (www.myguide.gov.uk), a free, simple introduction to computer and internet skills. There are over 25 more myguide courses about online shopping and jobsearch, digital photography and much more. An 'open use' tool, myguide can be used by individuals, colleges and training and adult learning providers.

Online basics includes resources for tutors or anyone else who is helping someone do the course.

Why Online basics?

We live in a digital age. People use computers and the internet at home and at work. Children use them to study at school and at home. Businesses and others rely on them for everything from stock control to the most advanced design and manufacturing.

But not everyone is comfortable with technology. Seven out of ten adults have used the internet in the past three months, but that means over 11 million have not. People who don't or can't use digital technologies miss out at work, on good online deals from shops and others, the convenience and much else besides.

How does Online basics work?

Online basics is available at all member UK online centres and online at www.onlinebasics.co.uk. To evaluate the course, some of the centres are taking part in a special trial between January and March 2010 through a partnership between the government, Becta and UK online centres. We expect that, after the evaluation, learning providers around England will be able to offer it from September 2010.

The life peer Estelle Morris recommended a basic computer skills course for adults in her independent review of 'digital life skills'. The government welcomed the review in its **Digital Britain Report** and announced the development of **Online basics**. The government's **Skills Investment Strategy** says that, after a pilot, 'wider roll-out of an **Online basics** offer will start from September 2010 with FE colleges and training institutions utilising existing funding routes'. The national digital inclusion champion and the digital participation consortium led by Ofcom will support the promotion of **Online basics**. The government's White Paper, **Putting the Frontline First: Smarter Government**, announced £30 million to be invested with UK online centres to support the development of the national plan for digital participation to get more than one million people online in the next three years.

Do you want to know more?

To find out more, visit www.onlinebasics.co.uk. To learn with **Online basics** or get some help, call 0800 77 1234 to find a UK online centre near you. Or if you have a computer and the internet at home, ask someone to locate www.onlinebasics.co.uk where you'll find help to get started.

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