

# Helper's guide to Internet basics

Beginner handout

[www.fastershire.com](http://www.fastershire.com)

## About this guide

This document gives helpers practical suggestions and tips on how to hold a session with individuals or groups of beginners. The guide covers the three 'Internet basics' hand-outs:

### 2.1 Getting online

### 2.2 Staying safe online

### 2.3 Protecting your computer

The three hand-outs in the 'Internet basics' topic help a new user gain confidence in using the Internet effectively and safely, from using a web browser to search for and follow links to what they want, to protecting their personal information by using the right software and behaviour when online.

Remember to review each hand-out, **involve beginners** and use the **Introduction for helpers** and the suggestions below to plan and deliver sessions that are appropriate to the needs and abilities of the individual or group.

Please note that all of the web links referred to throughout the Beginner guides can be found in the Useful Links section at the end of the guides. Check that you have access to these links before your session

Remember to use the glossary.

## 2.1 Getting online

**This session may take 45 minutes to complete but everyone learns at a different speed.**

### What do I need to get online?

Show beginners a broadband modem/router and explain how it is connected to the Internet and to a computer, either with a network cable or wirelessly. You may want to extend this part of the session to explore how to connect to a wireless router and follow this up in session 2.3 with an extra activity to look at how to secure a wireless network with a password.

Bring in or show some offers from broadband providers to discuss, looking at up-front and monthly costs, contract length and data caps. You could use the uSwitch website to compare what offers are available locally.

### How do I browse the Internet?

Tailor this activity to the browser that is installed on your computers. You could use a local website as your example when beginners practise how to navigate using the mouse to find web links.

### How can I search for what I want?

Ask beginners to find out something which is of interest to them, for instance a hobby or a place they would like to visit. Many people who are 'offline' do not understand what the internet has to offer so making it personally relevant can provide a big incentive for them to get online.

### Discussion points

- Where can I find out about broadband providers, especially if I'm not already online?
- What other things can I search for as well as web pages?
- How do I remember web pages that I like or need?

### 2.2 Staying safe online

This session may take 30 minutes to complete but everyone learns at a different speed.

What is identity theft?

This activity guides beginners to find out what personal information is and how to be safe, so it's important to review what they learn from each web link. Discuss the different bits of information that are part of someone's 'personal identify', such as their date of birth, postcode, email etc. as well as debit or credit card details. Explain how a determined person can piece these together by finding such information 'scattered' across different sites.

How can I be safe when I register online?

Think of some sites requiring registration that are relevant to your group. Make it clear that staying safe online doesn't mean never disclosing personal information, but doing this carefully and not publicly. The Tesco registration page is simple but requires further steps. If you want to explore the full process, you might want to create a 'throwaway' email address to use in a demonstration of a complete sign-up.

 **Safety warning: make sure you don't disclose your own personal information during a demonstration. Delete any demo accounts.**

Discuss and show some ideas for strong passwords that aren't a word linked to the person and which combine upper-case and lower-case letters and numbers.

How can I keep my information private?

People often want to share personal information on Facebook, forums or blogs. Discuss why people might do this, what they might want to share, and why it presents a risk. Suggest safer ways to share personal information.

#### Discussion points

- What sites might I need or want to register with?
- What are some other examples of private information I shouldn't share?
- How can I find out how a site stores and uses my personal information? (eg privacy policies)

### 2.3 Protecting your computer

This session may take 30 minutes to complete but everyone learns at a different speed.

This is a broad topic and the hand-out is a brief overview only – expand this topic to suit your group through discussions and demonstrations. You may find that your opportunities for practical tasks are limited by user access on public or shared computers.

What are the risks to my computer?

While it's helpful for beginners to know and understand a little about the different types of risk, it is better to focus on a general understanding that underpins safe practice: how can beginners avoid these risks?

How do I block viruses, spyware and other threats?

Review firewalls and anti-virus software, but focus your discussion on safe practice when opening links, attachments or downloads etc. How can your beginners gain confidence in spotting an unsafe link or site?

How can I keep up to date?

Use this activity to emphasise that beginners shouldn't just rely on software to keep them safe. Updating is vital so that the software knows of the most recent threats, but again the best way to avoid risk is based on safe practice.

#### Discussion points

- How can I protect my computer if other people also use it?
- Is it OK to leave my computer on all the time?
- Who else can help me choose anti-virus software?

