



Beginner handout

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

## Disability and the Internet

This activity will help anyone with a disability find out how to make using the Internet more accessible, and how to find support and advice online.

### What will I learn?

- How you can make using software easier
- Which hardware can help you use your computer
- How you can find out about support and your rights online

welcome to  
*fastershire*  
Faster broadband for Herefordshire and Gloucestershire



## How do I do it?

Be safe! If you're using this hand-out on a shared or public computer, remember to:

- Log on using a 'strong password': one that includes upper and lower case letters, numbers, and isn't something that someone else could guess.
- Never share or write down your password.
- Log out when you're finished.

The web links referred to throughout this document can be found in the Useful Links section at the end.

How can I make using software easier?

1. Your computer comes with accessibility settings that can make it easier to use if your vision, hearing or range of motion is impaired. You can magnify the screen, get your computer to read text for you, use keyboard shortcuts and more.



Example of magnifier tool

2. Go to the Microsoft enable web link in the Useful Links section.
  - Click on 'Products', then 'Windows 7' and read an overview of the Ease of Access Center (or choose another version of Windows).
  - Click to view the demo video about the Ease of Access Center.
  - Use the web page to find one thing you would like to do to make using your computer easier. Explore the links to find out how.

3. Your web browser program also comes with accessibility settings that can help you browse the web:

- From the Microsoft enable web link, click on 'Products' and 'Internet explorer 9', or choose another version. Read the information page to find out what you can do.
- Click on the links to find out how to:
  - use the keyboard to surf the web
  - zoom in on a web page.
- Now have a go at using what you have learned.



Microsoft enable web page

What hardware can help me use my computer?

4. Special computer hardware called 'assistive technology' can make it easier for you to use your computer. Assistive technology products can help people with even the most significant impairment. Whatever your needs, it's important that you buy the right technology.
5. For an overview of assistive technology, go to the Microsoft enable web link and click on 'Products' then 'Assistive Technology Products'
6. Go to the TechReady web link in Useful Links. This is just one of many online shops for assistive technology products:

- Browse the hardware links menu and explore the products that might be helpful to you or someone you know.



TechReady web page

How can I find out about support and my rights online?

7. There are lots of websites that can help you if you have a disability or impairment, from forums to government information.



8. The Directgov website tells you all you need to know about your rights and how to get help and support:

- Go to the Directgov Disabled people web link. Find and explore the links for:
  - disabled people's rights in everyday life (this explains what the Equality act 2010 might mean for you)
  - the disability living allowance and how to claim it.

9. Your local council should provide local information on their website:

- Go to your local authority website (you may need to use a search engine to find it).
- Find the home page for information about help for people with a disability (this might be under 'health' or 'social care').
- Explore what you find and see what services are available to you, and what you can access online.

10. The Internet is also a great source of support. This might be formal help from a charity or voluntary group, or informal support that uses a message forum or chat room for people with a particular disability or impairment.



Disability Alliance web page

11. Disability Alliance is a national registered charity that works to relieve the poverty and improve the living standards of disabled people:

- Visit the Disability Alliance web link and see if there is information that can help you.

## Quiz yourself

- What kinds of changes can you make to your computer to make it easier to use?
- How do you access the controls to change these settings on your computer?
- What is the name for hardware that can help you use a computer?
- Where can you find out about your rights as a person with a disability?
- Where can you find out about local support and advice?

## Try your new skills

- Find an accessibility demo on the Microsoft enable website that shows you what you need to do.
- Go to the Ease of Access Center by clicking on the Windows Start button, then on 'Control Panel' and then on 'Ease of Access Center'. Explore how you can change your settings by choosing a tool, a category or by completing the questionnaire.
- Try using another accessibility option in your web browser software.
- Find the disability information page on your local authority's website.
- Use a search engine to find other sources of help and support for a particular impairment or disability, or for anyone with a disability in your community or area.

Write down any notes that will help you:

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## My learning checklist

- I can identify changes that would make my computer easier to use.
- I can change my computer's settings.
- I can describe some assistive technology that could help me use a computer.
- I know where to find out about disability rights online.
- I know how to search for local and national sources of help.

## Top tips

- AbilityNet has a list of local community organisations that can give you hands-on help and support. Go to the AbilityNet at home web link and get in touch with your nearest group.
- Think about any hardware that could make using your computer easier. You might be able to have your needs assessed and get help with buying the right equipment. Go to the AbilityNet web link and click on 'Paying for your equipment' to download a factsheet to help you apply for funding.
- BT has provided an online guide to helping everyone get the most from the latest communications, whatever their need. You can find the right products and advice to make getting online and making calls as easy as possible. Find out more at the BT Including You web link.

## Where next?

Write down any notes that will help you:

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- Go to the 'Guides' section of the Microsoft enable website and read the right guide for your accessibility needs, or visit the My computer My way web link.
- Use the Ease of Access Center to set up your own computer.
- Use the Internet to make sure you are getting the support and funding available to you. Find out if there are any charities or volunteer groups that could help you make the most of the Internet.
- Find an online forum where you can socialise with others and share tips and advice (Beginner's guides 2.2 and 4.2 will help you do this safely).
- Use Beginner's guides 6.1 and 6.2 to help you access benefits and public services.

## Useful Links

You may want to use these links in your session:

**Microsoft enable:**

<http://www.microsoft.com/enable>

**Firefox Access:**

<http://www.accessfirefox.org>

**My computer My way:**

<http://www.abilitynet.org.uk/myway>

**AbilityNet at home**

<http://www.abilitynet.org.uk/athome>

**Inclusive technology**

<http://www.inclusive.co.uk>

**Direct.gov: Disabled people**

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/index.htm>

**BT Including You:**

<http://www.bt.com/includingyou>

**TechReady:**

<http://www.techready.co.uk>



Connect with us on:

