

Techtender Tutorial Workbook Prototype

What is this?

This is a self-paced tutorial designed to help you become a more adaptable computer user. It won't teach you how to use a specific program.

Technology changes constantly, as you well know. Remember the last time some software got updated on your computer and changed how everything looked?

The basis for this tutorial is the idea that learning to interact with a computer is a lot like learning a language.

We'll help equip you with skills and knowledge that will help you orient to and make sense of what's happening on your screen. Those skills will help you explore new programs and figure out how to do things

There's a lot of information on your computer screen at any particular moment.

The key is to figure out how to make sense of it.

Through exploratory exercises, we'll get you noticing and //being more aware of what's going on on your screen.

A note on public or shared computers

Ideally one where you can leave your notes set up. If you are using a computer somewhere where you can't leave your notes and sticky notes at the computer all the time (e.g., at a library or media center), you'll need to commit to taking your notebook and that week's sticky note with you *every* time you go to use the computer. And make sure to actually stick the sticky note on the computer before you get started each time.

Also, if you use a computer at a facility where there are a variety of computers, it's best that while you're completing this tutorial, you stick to using only computers that use the same operating system and version.

What this tutorial is, and is not.

This tutorial *is* a way for you to learn a framework for interacting with your computer better. It will help you become a more confident and adaptable computer user. It will equip you with skills that can help you explore and learn specific tasks better on the computer.

This tutorial is *not* going to teach you to be an expert computer user. It will not teach you everything you need to know about your computer, or about any particular program/application/software.

It is not to meant to help you use other devices (smartphones, tablets), though I have a hunch that some skills you learn here will be helpful in learning to interact with other digital devices.

Is this tutorial for you?

You know how to do at least a few things on the computer. You probably use a computer at least a couple times a week.

[does this sound like you?]

Some of the software I use got updated, it changed everything. I couldn't figure out how to do my regular tasks. I spent an hour trying to figure out something that usually takes me 15 minutes.

Some kind of message popped up while I was checking my email. What should I do to get rid of it?!? There are a couple buttons/options, but I don't know which to press. I really don't want to mess anything up.

You feel limited in your use of a computer. You feel trapped into just those specific tasks you do

How to use this tutorial

A Note About Pacing

We recommend doing about one lesson per week. It works best to set aside a particular day and time to do your computer lessons. Then, during the rest of the week, make sure to do the “This Week” activities. They’ll help reinforce the things you learned during your lesson as you’re performing your routine tasks.

If you currently use a computer less than three times a week, you might want to commit to using it more frequently while going through this tutorial. You’ll be learning new skills, and any skills require frequent practice to really reinforce them.

When you sit down to do a new lesson, make sure to first take a few minutes to review what we did in the previous lesson, so it’s fresh in your mind.

Don’t overdo it. This tutorial is not meant to be done all in one sitting. Science shows that it’s actually good to spread out your learning over some time (that’s why you didn’t remember much from that history test you crammed for in 9th grade). But the other extreme is also not great- doing one lesson and then setting the book down for a month means you’ll probably have to backtrack. You’re learning *skills*, so just like musicians or athletes, you need to practice regularly to keep them up.

So, why *are* you here?



This is your first written activity.

Take a minute and think about why you're here. Write down why you're interested in working through this tutorial. Maybe there's some trouble you had recently that was the straw that broke the camel's back, maybe you just want to expand your skills.

It doesn't need to be complicated, but do be honest with yourself. (Again, this only helps with learning).

And now one more (we'll reference this list a lot later):



Write down 3 tasks you regularly perform on your computer (check email, take notes, look at your calendar, shop, etc.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ok, let's get started!

We're going to start with something you're probably pretty familiar with- your desktop

Your desktop is what you see after you turn your computer on and you're logged in, before any programs are open. It's sort of the default screen of your computer, and it's always there in the background, even when you have programs open.

So, sit down at your computer, and get yourself comfortable.

Make sure your computer is turned on, and that you've logged in (if that's something you usually do) and that it's ready to use.

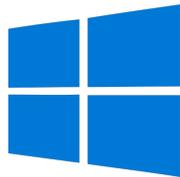
Now, take a look at the following page, marked "Desktop Templates".

Which of those templates best matches the desktop on *your* computer?

Some questions that might help:

- Where's the time shown on your computer?
- Does it have a little apple in the upper left corner?
- Or does it have an icon with four little boxes in the lower left corner?

That icon has changed a lot over the years, sometimes it looks more like a colorful flag. It could look like either of these:



It might be on a button with text, like this:



or in a circle, like this:



Once you've figured out which template best matches your computer, take a look at the top of your page and see which desktop template it says you're using (Windows or Mac). This is the name of your **operating system (OS)**.

Basically, your OS is a program that runs in the background of your computer, to help everything else run. It provides a sort of architecture for your computer.



Write down your OS here: _____

Now, tear out the template page. Cross out the side that does not match your desktop, you won't be needing it.

And now tear out all of the pages in the tabbed section that does *not* match your computer. So, for instance, if you're working on an Apple computer, tear out the section called "Windows OS intro" and vice versa.

Great!

Now, let's take a closer look at the desktop on your computer. Take a few minutes to sketch what you see on your desktop on the template provided. It doesn't have to be perfect, or incredibly detailed. This exercise is for your own noticing and reference, so just sketch what jumps out at you from your desktop. And this sketch will be a work in progress; you can always add more later.

Where are images, icons or buttons do you see?

What kind of text is on your desktop?

Once you feel like you've captured the significant parts of your desktop in your sketch, move on to the next section.

Mac OS- Intro

So, now that you have your sketch, we're going to take a brief tour of your Macintosh desktop. I know you probably know most of it, but just bear with me for a minute, to make sure we're on the same page.

Take a look at your computer desktop. In the upper right corner, you should see a little magnifying glass like this:



That magnifying glass is how you access something called "Spotlight," which searches across everything on your computer.

Once you find it on your computer screen, label it on your sketch. You can use Spotlight to find most things on your computer.

We'll talk more about each of these elements later, but for now, we're just going to identify each in its place.

There's a long skinny rectangle along the top of your screen that goes the full width of your screen. This is called the "menu bar".



Once you've located that, label it on your sketch.

Usually along the bottom of your screen, but sometimes along one of the sides, there should be a row of different little pictures, or icons that looks something like this (the pictures may be different):



This is called your **dock**. Each of those icons is for a different program. This doesn't show *all* of your programs, though, just some of them. You can choose which programs are here, but we'll talk about that later.

Locate your dock on your computer, and label it on your sketch.

Two things to make particular note of:

- on the far left (in the image), the little face icon represents a program called **Finder**. For now, just know that this is your file manager.
- on the far right is the trash can, which represents, you guessed it, your trash on the computer.

Take a minute to label Finder and your trash on your sketch before we move on.

Now, take a closer look at what's on your dock. What kinds of icons do you see?

As I'm sure you've noticed, computers are full of all sorts of little pictures, or icons. It can be hard to tell sometimes what all of them *mean*. Especially when the original image has been shrunk down so much.



Pick a few of the icons on your dock. Do a quick sketch of the icon, and then write down what program you think it represents (or even the kinds of things you can do with the program, if you don't know the name). Even if you don't know, just take a guess. See what clues you can glean from what the picture looks like.

Icon

Program, action, or what it represents

Great, now, let's look at one way to get a little more information about those icons, buttons, and other things you encounter on your screen.

Hovering



If you hold your mouse pointer over something on the screen (an icon or button, for instance), for a second or two *without clicking on anything*, it's called "**hovering**" your mouse.

Lots of times this gives you a little more information about what you're looking at, and occasionally it will reveal some hidden buttons or menus.

But be warned, sometimes it doesn't do anything.

Ready to give it a shot?

Try hovering your mouse over one of the icons in your dock.

What happened?



Ok, now pick something different on your screen (an icon or button, or even some text) as a target. It doesn't have to be on the dock, it can be anywhere on the screen. *Before* you hover over it, write down a prediction of what you think will happen.

Remember, don't worry about right or wrong here- making a prediction helps solidify the learning you're doing, regardless of if it matches what actually happens. You're exploring your computer.

Target

Hovering prediction:

Now, go ahead and hover your mouse over your target.

What happened? Anything?

Write down what actually happened (even if it was nothing):

Target

Hovering result:

Ok, take a couple minutes and do the same thing with at least 4 other targets on your screen. Write a prediction down first, and then see what actually happens. Remember, don't click on anything, just hover for right now.

Target:

Prediction: _____

Result: _____

Great.

Once you've done that, think about all the hovering you've done so far.

Was there any text that showed up? If there was, what do you think it's telling you (e.g., program name, file title, updated time, something else entirely)?

Have you noticed any patterns? Which targets *didn't* show you anything when you hovered over them? Do particular kinds of targets yield particular kinds of hovering results? (write down anything along these lines that you noticed)

Ok, that's the end of this first lesson. Now comes the really important stuff- your weekly reinforcement.

1. Take one of your sticky notes and write "hover!" on it, nice and big, maybe in a bright color.
2. Stick your sticky note somewhere on your desk or edge of your laptop or somewhere else where you'll see it every time you use your computer this week.
3. This week, while you're doing whatever you normally do on your computer, try hovering on different things, and see what happens.
At least 6 times this week, make a prediction ahead of time, just like we did before. Make sure to try it out as you're doing other tasks, not just on the desktop.

Target:

Prediction: _____

Result: _____

Target:

Prediction: _____

Result: _____