

Computer Skill Building Resources for Beginners to Seniors

Many fear the computer, but basic computer skills are very easy to learn – more so today when everything is designed to be user-friendly and visually accessible. Anyone can attend classes at these eight websites that teach basic internet and computer skills...not only for senior citizens, but also for any newcomer.

Skillful Senior

(<http://www.skillfusenior.com/>)

The screenshot shows the Skillful Senior website interface. At the top left is the logo 'skillfusenior make your life easier'. Below it is a navigation menu with a plus icon and the following items: 'Ergonomics', 'Mouse Tutorial', 'Arrows Tutorial', and 'Touch typing'. On the left side, there is a digital character of an elderly woman with glasses and a purple top. The main content area is titled 'Ergonomics' and features a diagram of a person sitting at a desk with a computer. The diagram shows the person's head, neck, shoulders, and back, with red circles indicating points of interest. A dashed line indicates the angle between the neck and the torso, labeled '90°-120°'. A speech bubble from the digital character says: 'Head should be kept straight and not tilted back or forward to see the screen.'

Skillful Senior is a computer skills site where the focus is basic skills. The site has interactive animated tutorials that teach how to use a mouse, the arrow keys on the keyboard, and touch typing. But first learn a bit about ergonomics too (how to use your computer in a way that won't result in pain). Each tutorial is helped along with a voiceover by a digital character.

Courtesy of <http://www.makeuseof.com/> mjb@mpl 05/2012

BBC – Webwise

(<http://h30440.www3.hp.com/learningcenter/Classes/ClassAll.aspx>)

Webwise making the most of being online

Home | Your computer | Using the web | Email & sharing | Living & interests | Safety & privacy | Glossary | **Courses**

Video & Audio | Blog | Newsletter | What's in WebWise?

Manchester Ship Canal

Watch the remarkable video stories of how computers have touched the lives of people living along the course of the Manchester Ship Canal.

[Watch now](#)

Jump straight in...

- Your computer**
An introduction to the basics of how to use a computer
- Using the web**
Advice and guides to help you get kick-started online
- Email & sharing**
An introduction to the basics of how to use a computer

Online Courses

- The WebWise Online Course**
A step by step guide to using the internet, email and mobile devices.
- Internet Basics**
An introductory video guide to getting online
- Computer Basics**
Follow the video guide and get to know your computer
- Social Media Basics**
Get the most from online social networks

Webwise is a beginner's guide to using the internet. But that's just one part as the online guide starts off with an introduction to the basics of using a computer. The guides on Webwise cover a facet of computer use – each explained very simply and a few of them are supported with interactive multimedia which makes learning computers lot of fun. Webwise meets the usual standards of quality associated with BBC and all its learning resources.

Microsoft Accessibility

(<http://h30440.www3.hp.com/learningcenter/Classes/ClassAll.aspx>)

Microsoft
Accessibility
Technology for Everyone

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Guides

Guides Accessibility Guide for Boomers

10 Tips for the Awkward Age of Computing

Boomers can use Windows to personalize and customize their computers to make them easier to see, hear, and more comfortably use.

As we rack up birthdays, sooner or later we all experience some loss of vision, hearing, or physical dexterity. Fortunately, personalization options in Windows make it easy to adjust your PC.

Here are ten tips from cartoon Brian Bassett on how to counter the effects of aging to make your computer more comfortable to use.

#1 A Screen Too Far



Do you find yourself fighting the urge to press your nose against the screen because you can't see text and objects clearly? Consider changing your monitor display settings to increase the size of icons or text for individual documents and Web pages. Learn how to make the

[Download enlarged image in PDF format \(1.3 MB\)](#)

More Information

- [Computing Guide for Boomers](#)

I'm looking for:

Windows 7

- Accessibility Features
- Demos
- Tutorials

Internet Explorer 9

- Accessibility Features
- Tutorials

Office 2010

- Accessibility Features
- Tutorials

Assistive Technology Products

- Shop and Select Assistive Technology Products

Microsoft Accessibility is a Windows resource that lists guides helpful for specific types of difficulties and impairments especially among seniors. For instance, senior citizens can check out the Windows features that make it easier to view what's on the computer screens. Available guides cover the assistive technologies built into Windows 7, IE9, and Office 2010.

GCF Learn Free

(<http://www.gcflearnfree.org/internet>)

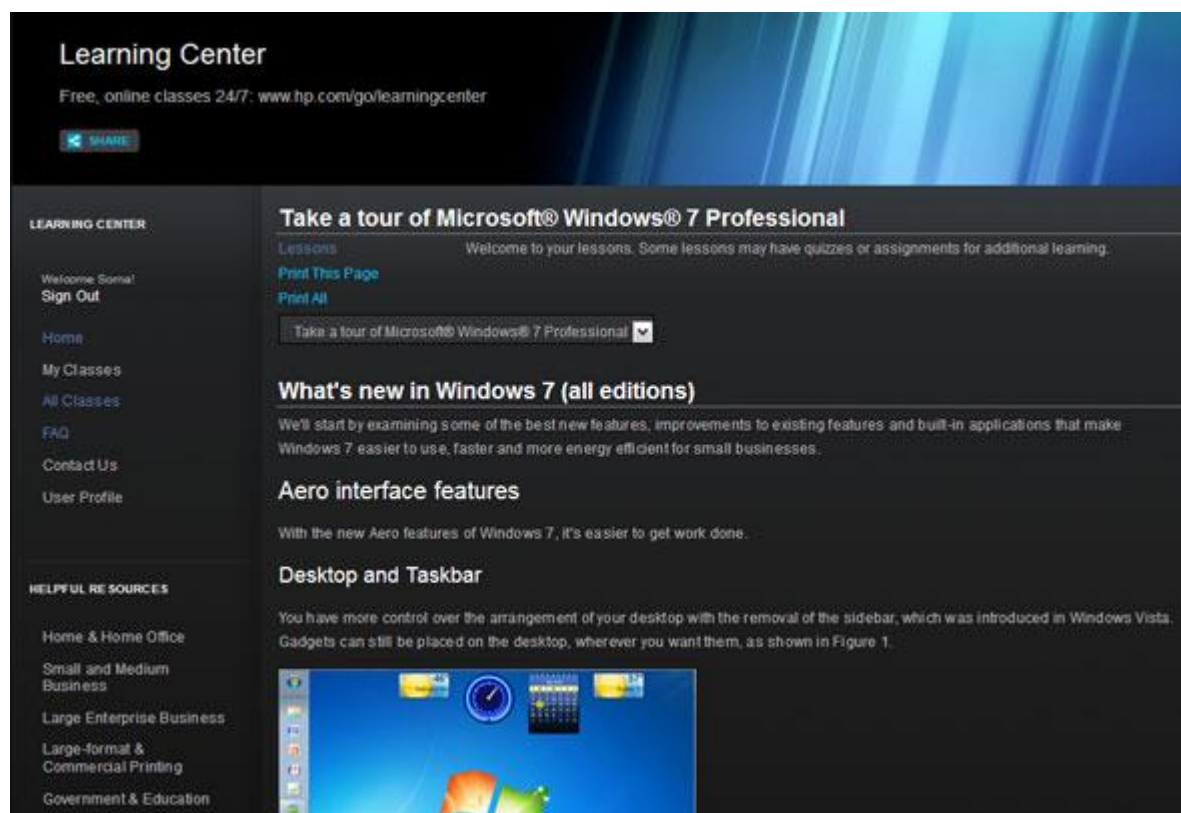


The screenshot shows the GCF Learn Free website interface. At the top left is the GCF LearnFree.org logo. A search bar is located at the top center. The top right corner features the Goodwill Community Foundation International logo. The main navigation path is 'Home > All Topics > Computers > Computer Basics'. The main content area is titled 'Computer Basics' and includes an introductory paragraph: 'Are you new to using computers? Do you wonder what people mean when they say the Cloud, Windows, Blackberry, Lion, etc.? Perhaps you would just like to know more about how computers work? When it comes to learning today's technology, Computer Basics has all the basic concepts covered.' Below this is a navigation menu with 'Interactives' selected. Two interactive lessons are listed: 'Getting to Know the Windows Desktop' and 'Getting to Know the Mac OS X Desktop', each with a 'Play' button. To the right, there are three video thumbnails: 'WHAT IS A COMPUTER?', 'UNDERSTANDING OPERATING SYSTEMS', and 'UNDERSTANDING APPLICATIONS'. On the far right, a sidebar titled 'Read More On the BLOG' lists 'You Might Also Like' topics: 'Email 101', 'Internet 101', 'Internet Safety', 'Reading', 'Microsoft Office', 'Math Basics', and 'Computers'. Social media links for Blog, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook are also present.

GCFLearnFree.org is an online platform for courses that cover technology, online literacy, and math skills. The site lists around 750 lessons that are designed for basic and intermediate levels. The easy on the eyes design of the site should be suitable for senior citizens to grab basic internet and computer skills. A look down their [topics](#) page reveals the range of tech related courses they cover (there's even a course on how to use an ATM). Courses are interactive and supported with articles, videos, and animation.

HP Learning Center

(<http://h30440.www3.hp.com/learningcenter/Classes/ClassAll.aspx>)



The screenshot shows the HP Learning Center website. At the top, it says "Learning Center" and "Free, online classes 24/7: www.hp.com/go/learningcenter". There is a "SHARE" button. On the left, there is a navigation menu with "LEARNING CENTER" and "HELPFUL RESOURCES". The main content area features a lesson titled "Take a tour of Microsoft® Windows® 7 Professional" with a "LESSONS" section and a "What's new in Windows 7 (all editions)" section. Below that, there are sections for "Aero interface features" and "Desktop and Taskbar". A small image of the Windows 7 desktop is shown at the bottom of the main content area.

The HP Learning Center is not specifically for senior citizens, but as the classes (with 2 to 6 lessons) are easy to follow, they too can pick up pointers on how to go about with a digital lifestyle. You need to do a free registration before you pick a class to start off. Classes include two to six lessons and may also include interactive demos, quizzes and assignments. For quick sessions check out the 5-minute how-to videos or short lessons.

Meganga (<http://good50.com/>)



Online computer training for seniors and beginners is arranged in a blog-styled layout. You can use the category listing on the right to wade through the free lessons. The site is incomplete in some areas and still looks like a work in progress, but you can definitely use it to pick up some free beginner lessons on how to use computers.

Good50 (<http://good50.com/>)

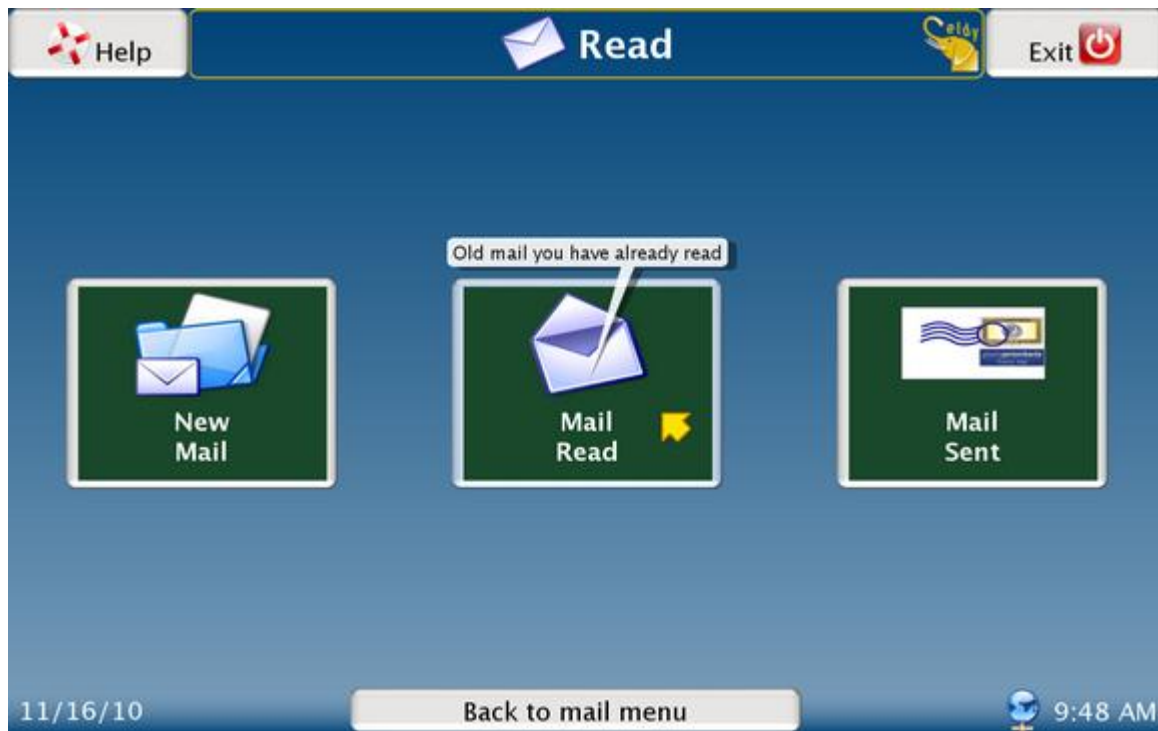


Good50 is not a website for senior citizens and related tech skills. It is a Google powered search engine customized to be more readable and user-friendly to everyone including older adults, senior citizens, and school-aged children. The larger text on the search page and the optional high-contrast setting makes it easier for older adults to access content on the web.

Courtesy of <http://www.makeuseof.com/> mjb@mpl 05/2012

Eldy

(<http://www.eldy.eu/>)



Eldy is not a website but a free download that turns any standard PC into an easy-to-use computer for first time computer users. Jessica has taken the software through a run and explains its use when she shows how to [Teach An Elderly Person How To Email, Browse The Web & More With Eldy](#). A reader also sends a helpful suggestion with another similar program called [Maavis](#). Both installs are for the elderly and are simple to use with nice big navigation buttons.