



Support materials

Beginner's glossary

www.connectingcumbria.org.uk



Beginner's glossary

A

Accessibility

The degree to which a computer, software or website can be used by anyone, including people who may have additional needs because of a disability, sensory impairment or limited movement.

Account

Your account or 'user account' allows you to log in to a service or website, keep your personal details secure, store information and personalise how you use the site or software. Most online accounts are free and are nothing to do with accessing your bank account details online.

Anti-virus program

A computer program that detects viruses and other malicious software that may be attached to emails, and protects your computer from them.

Application

Any program you use on your computer, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer, Word or Excel.

Assistive technology

Special versions of keyboards, computer mice, monitors and other hardware that make computers and the Internet accessible to people with additional needs.

B

Bandwidth

The maximum amount of information you can receive over your connection at one time, measured in Kilo (thousands) or Mega (millions) bits (binary digits) per second. Bandwidth and broadband 'speed' are different ways of describing broadband capacity.

Bookmark

Any website you like and want to remember can be made a 'bookmark' or a 'favourite' in your Internet browser. When you want to return to that page, you can go there in one click instead of trying to remember the address of the website.

Broadband

Broadband is a permanent high-speed Internet connection. It works over your home phone line to send and receive digital information and is 'always on'.

Browser

A browser is a programme that allows you to view pages on the Internet, eg, Microsoft Internet Explorer, Netscape, Opera or Mozilla Firefox.

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C

Captcha

A captcha is a series of distorted words that you type in when filling in a form on the Internet, for example, when registering with a website. Captchas help to keep online services free from spam and other malicious software.

CD-ROM

CD-ROMs are discs that look like a music CD but can hold software, data, text, pictures, sound and video files. They can be useful if you want to create a safe, permanent copy of any of your photos and files.

Certificate

A form of credential, which binds an identity to a public key. A certificate will typically contain the subject's name, the subject's public key, the certificate issuer's name and digital signature, an expiry date and a serial number.

Chat

Online chat is a real-time conversation with another person over the Internet. Most chat programs let you type in a window on a website's chat room or use a special chat program – such as MSN Messenger or Yahoo! Messenger – and other users can instantly reply.

Checkout

The final stage in shopping online, the checkout page lets you check and edit your purchases before moving to a secure web page to pay for your goods.

Cookie

Cookies are small files that websites place on your computer so they can recognise you the next time you visit. For example, if you changed the way a website looked (by using the 'My Preferences' bar at the top of every page), a cookie would remember which settings you chose the next time you visited that website.

Configure/configuration

Operating systems, software and many websites can allow you to personalise how they look and work. Doing this is called configuring, and the stored settings for your choices are called your configuration.

Cursor

A cursor is the small flashing vertical line that appears on your computer screen when you are typing something. It's used to show you where you are and where the next character you type will appear. The cursor becomes an arrow when you're browsing the web, letting you click on images or text to follow a link to another page.

Cyber bullying

Any form of bullying that happens on the Internet.

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D

Data

Information stored as computer code.

Data limit

The maximum amount of data that you can download from the Internet in a set time period. Most broadband contracts come with a data limit.

Desktop

The arrangement of icons, folders and open software windows that you can see on your computer monitor. Your desktop may also include toolbars or menus, such as the Windows Start button.

Dialogue box

A box that opens in a software program when you need or want to make a choice, for example when opening, closing or printing a file.

Directgov

A very large government website that is a good starting point for any information about public services.

Display

Another name for your computer monitor or screen.

Document

A computer file that you can create and change, such as a letter, spreadsheet or picture.

Double click

Press the left mouse button twice in quick succession.

Downloading

When you 'download' something, you are getting a file on to your computer from the Internet. With broadband, it's quick and easy to download files, videos, pictures and more because it's a fast connection.

Drop-down menu

A menu that lets you choose from a set of options that appear when you click on it.

DVD

Digital Versatile Disc: A disc the same size as a CD but which holds seven to fourteen times the amount of data or music. DVDs usually store movies, but you can store any computer data on a DVD.

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E

eBay

An online auction website.

Email

Email stands for 'electronic mail'. Think of it as a letter that you write on the computer, which is then sent over the Internet to another person using another computer. Emails (sometimes with attachments such as photos or files) can be sent to one or more email addresses at a time. There is no extra charge for either sending or receiving emails.

F

Facebook

A social networking site that lets you share updates, photos, web links and more with people that you 'make friends' and connect with using the site.

File

A file refers to a type of/piece of data stored on your computer, most commonly a 'data file' such as a letter or a photo.

Filter

A filter can mean two things:

- 1 Software (such as parental control software) that limits access to websites containing violent or offensive content.
- 2 A device needed when you have a broadband Internet connection at home – see 'microfilter'

Firewall

A firewall is a program that sits between your computer and the Internet and watches for hacking, viruses or any unauthorised access to your computer.

Flickr

A photo sharing website that lets you upload photos and albums, and share them publicly or with selected people.

Folder

Folders allow you to organise and store documents on your computer, just like a real filing system. You can create and name new folders, decide where they will go and which documents you will put in each one.

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Forum

A website that lets people post messages and have online conversations. Some forums are about specific topics while others allow general chat.

Free site

A website where you don't have to pay for some or all of the content. Free site can also mean a web page or website that you can build and host for free, for example by using the BT Community Web Kit at www.btck.co.uk

G

Google

The world's most popular search engine.

H

Hardware

Hardware is the physical things to do with computers like monitors, keyboards, printers, modems, scanners, CD-ROM drives etc.

Highlight

Selecting text or documents by left-clicking with your mouse and then dragging the cursor over the text or document names. Highlighting allows you to then do other things, like moving documents or formatting text.

History

Every website you visit using your web browser is kept in your 'history', so you can find websites you visited several days ago. You can adjust the number of days that the history file will keep on your web browser.

Home page

A home page is normally the 'front page' of a website, where you're told what's on the website, how to get around it and how to search for things that'll interest you. You also have a home page on your web browser – this is the page that loads automatically when you open your web browser.

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I

Icon

A small graphic that provides a link to a computer program.

Identity theft

A form of fraud where someone steals someone's personal information and uses it to obtain goods or money, or to do things online in that person's name.

Inbox

The inbox is the folder in your email program where you go to read emails that have been sent to you.

Install

When you add a new program to your computer, you 'install' it. The most common ways to install programs is from a CD-Rom or by downloading the program from the Internet.

Internet

The Internet is a network of millions of computers (and the data stored on them) around the world connected by telephone lines, cables or satellites.

Internet-enabled device

Anything that can connect to the Internet, including computers, modems, routers, some printers, and some mobile phones.

Internet radio

A radio station that you can listen to using your computer and an Internet connection.

Internet Service Provider (ISP)

iPlayer

BBC software that lets you watch recent TV programmes online, from the BBC and many other TV channels.

iTunes

Apple's music storage and playing software. iTunes lets you store your own music from CDs, buy tracks from the iTunes store online, and listen to your music using iPods, Apple's music players.

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J

Junk mail

Junk mail refers to unwanted emails that are sent to you by businesses. They are usually adverts for a product or service. Your email program will usually have a 'junk mail' folder. It will detect what it thinks is junk mail and place it in there so you don't have to read it.

K

Keyboard

The hardware device that lets you type on your computer.

L

Laptop

A laptop, notebook or netbook is a small, portable computer which can be battery operated as well as run from the mains electricity.

Left click

Computer mice usually have two buttons on top. To 'left click' is to press the button on the left, usually using your index finger, to select something.

Link

A link is a word or a picture on a website that can be clicked on. When you click on a link, you'll be taken to another place on the Internet. If you want to return to the page where you clicked the link, just press the 'back' button on your web browser.

Links in text on a website are usually in bold text, or are underlined. You can check if something is a link by moving the mouse arrow over what you think is a link. If the arrow turns into a picture of a hand, then it is a link, and you can click on it.

Login

Some websites will ask you to login – this means they want you to enter a username and password so they can recognise you. If you haven't visited the website before, they may ask you to register, which means you fill in a short form giving some of your details.

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M

Malware

Malicious software that may take control of your computer, try to steal your personal information, or make you pay for software that you don't need.

Menu bar

The part at the top and/or bottom of your computer screen that lets you access drop-down menus for your operating system or software.

Message board

See 'Forum'

Microfilter

A small device that you need to plug between your phone and your phone socket when you have a broadband modem or router also connected, the microfilter prevents interference with voice calls.

Modem

Technically, a 'modulator-demodulator'. You need one at your home or office linked to another in the telephone exchange to receive and transmit high-speed digital signals over your copper wire phone line. Your service provider may provide or recommend a particular modem. A modem capable of providing service to more than one computer at your home or office is called a router.

Monitor

The monitor is the screen for your computer where everything is displayed. If you are using a laptop, the monitor is the inside of the lid where everything is displayed.

Mouse

The small piece of computer hardware that you use to move your cursor around the computer screen.

Music library

The folder on your computer that stores all the music you have loaded onto it.

N

Notebook

A notebook, or netbook, is another name for a laptop. It's a small, portable computer which can be battery operated as well as run from the mains.

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O

On-demand

A service that lets you watch TV or listen to radio or other music when you want to, rather than on a schedule.

Online

When you are connected to the Internet you are online. If you're not connected, you're 'offline'.

Online banking

The secure website that lets you manage your bank account online.

Online service

Anything that you can do online, such as pay a bill, find information, make a reservation or complete a test.

Open

You can open a document, folder or programme by double-clicking on its name or icon or by selecting it from a menu or dialogue box.

Operating system (OS)

The program that makes your computer 'work'. Windows, Linux and Apple OS X are all operating systems. The OS runs both your computer's hardware and the other software programs that you use.

Optical drive

The slot or tray on your computer into which you put CDs, CD-ROMs and DVDs.

P

Paid-for site

A website where you need to pay to access some or all content.

Parental control

Parental control enables you to decide which websites your children can and can't see, protecting them from porn or sites with violent or offensive content.

Password

A password is a series of letters and numbers you enter to get into your computer, Internet connection, email or any websites that you are registered with.

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PayPal

An online payment service.

PDF

A PDF is a type of file you can download from the Internet. It's an easy way of reading a brochure, or other types of information. For example, you can get your BT bill as a PDF, so you can download it to your computer and choose whether you want to print it or not. PDF files will print exactly as they appear on your computer screen. You need the free Acrobat Reader program to open a PDF file.

Phishing

Phishing is emails pretending to be from a known and trusted company, like your bank, phone company or eBay, where they ask you to re-submit your personal details, password or even account number. They can be hard to distinguish from genuine emails as the look and design will look like official communications. This is a tool for fraud and identity theft.

Playlist

A list of songs from your music library that you've chosen and put into order.

Podcast

An audio or video recording (such as a radio show) that is released regularly and that you can download to your computer.

Price comparison site

A website that lets you compare the cost of goods or services (like insurance) from lots of different shops or providers, by only entering your details once.

Privacy policy

Every website that stores your personal data must have a privacy policy that explains how this will be stored, used and shared. Look for the privacy policy web link, which is often at the bottom of a web page.

Privacy settings

These let you control how your personal information is shared with friends and strangers on social networking sites like Facebook. It's important to manage your privacy settings so you don't share personal information with people that you don't want to see it.

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R

Register

Some websites ask you to give your name, email address and other personal information in order to view Internet pages. This is called registering.

Right click

Computer mice usually have two buttons on top. To 'right click' is to press the button on the right, usually using your middle finger, to open a small menu of options.

Rip

Upload music tracks from a CD to your computer's music library.

Router

A modem that can allow more than one computer to connect to the Internet.

S

Save

Store a document on your computer so you can retrieve it at a later date.

Scareware

Malicious software that you don't realise has been downloaded from the Internet, and which tries to scare you into buying fake security software by telling you that your computer is infected with lots of viruses.

Screen time

The amount of time children spend using a computer, game console or TV each day.

Search engine

A search engine is a website that lets you search the Internet for information. The most common search engines are Google, Bing and Ask. When you visit a search engine, just enter what you're looking for – for example 'vegetarian recipes'. The search engine will then return a set of results about vegetarian recipes.

Search field

A box into which you can type the words you want to search for on a website.

Secure payment

A payment made online at a secure web page. You should only make online payments using secure web pages – see below.

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Secure site

See 'Secure web page'

Secure web page

A web page that starts with 'https' and which sends data securely to and from your computer, making it unlikely that other people can obtain your personal information such as bank card details.

Security certificate

See 'Certificate'

Security controls

Settings on your computer that let you manage how you access the Internet, share information and download files onto your computer.

Shopping basket

A record of the items you've chosen to buy using an online shop. You can edit the contents of your shopping basket when you go to the 'checkout' page.

Social network

A website like Facebook that lets you interact with people online.

Software

Software refers to any program on your computer, such as word processors, email programs or web browsers.

Spam

Spam is another word for junk emails that are sent to many people at once, usually involving advertising or offering services.

Spyware

Spyware is software that covertly gathers user information through the user's Internet connection without his or her knowledge, usually for advertising purposes. Spyware applications are typically bundled as a hidden component of free or shared software programs that can be downloaded from the Internet; however, it should be noted that the majority of shareware and freeware applications do not come with spyware. Once installed, the spyware monitors user activity on the Internet and transmits that information in the background to someone else. Spyware can also gather information about email addresses and even passwords and credit card numbers.

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Streaming

Listening to audio or video online without storing the file on your computer.

Strong password

A password that someone can't easily guess. Will usually not be a word connected with you, and which contains a mixture of numbers, upper-case and lower-case letters and maybe also punctuation.

Subscription

Subscription can mean two things:

- 1 Signing up (usually for free) so that you receive regular updates, emails or podcasts.
- 2 A regular payment, usually monthly, that you pay in order to use a paid-for website.

Surfing

Making your way around the Internet from site to site.

T

Tag

Words you use to describe the content of some computer files such as photos. Some photo-viewing software lets you add tags to photos so you can search for all photos with the same tags, such as ones you've tagged with 'Uncle Bob' or 'beach'.

Terms and conditions

The page on a website or online store that explains your rights, such as how to return goods, cancel your subscription or what you pay for delivery (this might be covered elsewhere). It's important to read the terms and conditions before signing up to a website or making a purchase.

Toolbar

The toolbar is the selection of buttons displayed vertically or horizontally on computer programs, letting you print, save, copy etc. The buttons on a toolbar commonly have symbols on, to let you know what they are. For example, the symbol for 'open' shows a folder opening; the symbol for 'cut' shows a pair of scissors.

Trojan

Malicious software that tries to secretly install itself on your computer without you knowing it. Trojans usually try to steal personal information.

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U

Update

Installing a newer version of software on your computer. It's important to update your operating system (eg Windows), web browser and any security software, so your computer is protected when you go online.

Uploading

Sending information from your computer to any other computer on the Internet, for example adding a photo to your Facebook page.

USB

Universal Serial Bus: USB is a simple pluggable technology used to connect all kinds of devices including keyboards, mouse, digital cameras and disc drives to your computer.

Username

A username is a series of letters and/or numbers you type into your computer, Internet account or on a website to tell it who you are. Usernames are usually used with a password to identify you.

V

Virus

Viruses are pieces of code that are designed to damage your computer or data. Before going on the Internet for the first time, it's important you have anti-virus protection.

W

Webmail

An email service that doesn't use a program on your computer, but which works entirely online. You can access a webmail account from any computer connected to the Internet.

Webcam

A webcam is an inexpensive, simple video camera that can sit on top of, or near, your computer monitor and can send live video over the Internet to one or more people.

Web link

See 'Link'

Website

A location on the Internet allocated to a particular person or organisation eg BTs web site at www.bt.com.

Wi-Fi

Wireless broadband that is available at 'hotspots' in thousands of public locations across the UK and around the world. Airports, railway stations, motorway services, cafes, shops and bars increasingly offer broadband access. All you need is a notebook computer with a wireless networking card fitted - you can buy vouchers for access online.

Windows Media Player

A Microsoft program that plays music and video files.

Wireless

Using a special router, you can link your computer and other devices to your broadband line wirelessly. Each device needs a wireless networking card fitted.

Wish list

Some online shops allow registered users to store a list of things that they would like to buy in the future. This is your wish list.

Y

YouTube

A videosharing website that allows musicians, businesses and individuals to upload and share videos online.

In association with



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