

# Exploring your computer

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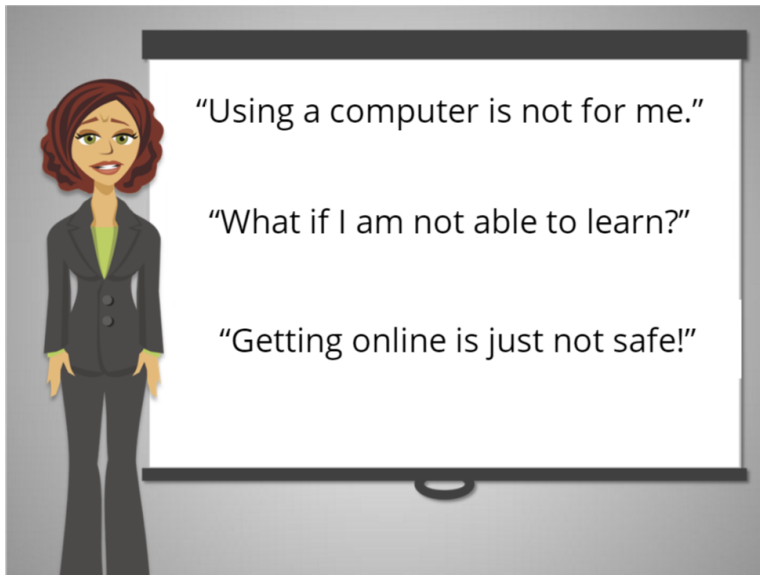


Ed just got a present from his favorite niece, Anita.



When he takes it out of the bag, he is excited to see a laptop computer. He's honored by her generosity, even though he thinks it's too much. But he has never had one before.

What thoughts might be going through Ed's mind?



He hasn't had a computer of his own before and he's not sure where to start. And he might feel overwhelmed for not knowing anything about computers. He might also be worried about staying safe.



Many people are very intimidated by learning new things. Computers can be particularly scary. It doesn't come naturally to many of us, perhaps because we can't see what makes it work.

Learning just the basics first and then going step by step will make learning to use your computer easier and more fun.



Sometimes new skills are hard to learn at first, but get easier with practice.



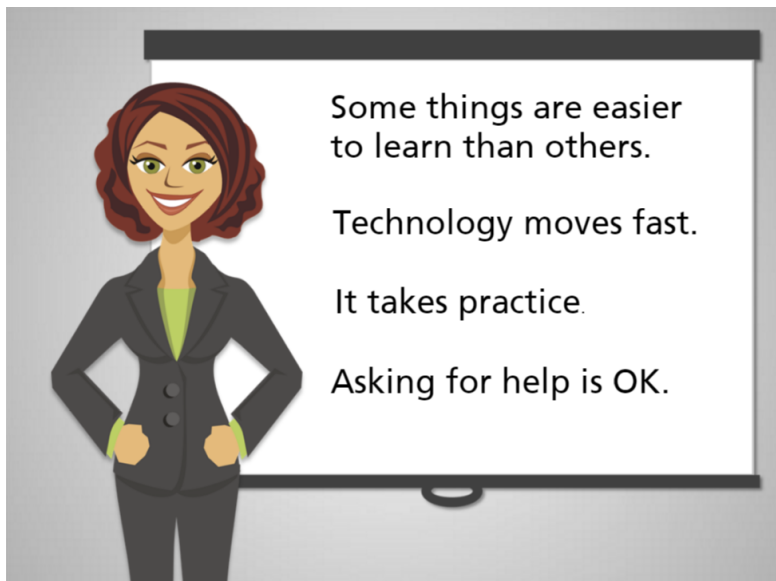
For example, learning to ride a bike or learning to cook.



For many of us, learning to drive took a long time. Sometimes it felt easy and other times it was really hard. Luckily, you didn't need to know exactly what's going on under the hood to become a good driver. You just needed to practice, and leave the mechanical work to the experts.



Ed likes thinking about when he got his first cell phone. It took him awhile to learn which keys to press and to remember to charge it. He still has it and Anita teases him about it being old fashioned.



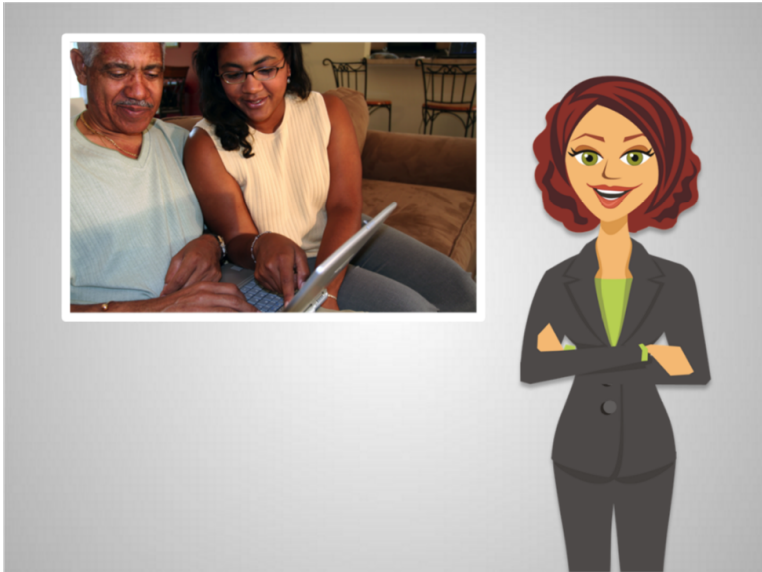
Here are the four things Ed needs to remember as he gets ready to start using his new computer:

First: some things are easier to learn than others. As an adult learner, you have learned a lot and can call on that experience to learn this new thing, too.

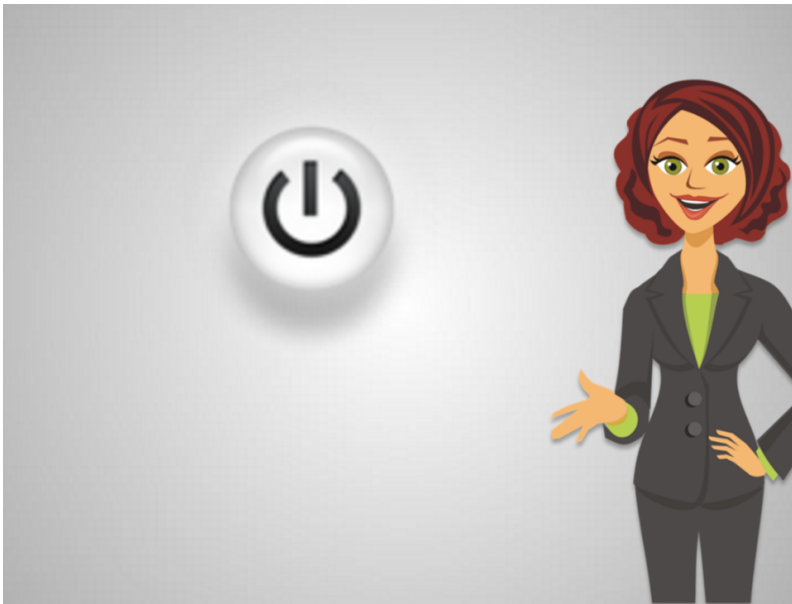
Second: technology moves fast and sometimes it's hard to keep up. Ed doesn't have to know everything in order to keep in touch with his friends and family, pay his bills, and look for things online.

Third: just like learning to drive a car, getting comfortable with a computer takes practice. Luckily, computers aren't as "breakable" as they used to be, so Ed can always practice on his own. One of the best ways to learn is to make your own mistakes.

Lastly: no matter how simple the question might seem, he should not feel embarrassed to ask for help whenever he needs it.



Let's follow Ed as he starts using his new computer.



The first thing is to turn on the computer. This is the symbol for power on most computers. It's pretty much universal, although not always easy to find. Ed finds it on his computer and presses it to turn it on.

Look for the power button on the computer you are using now. But make sure not to press it or you will turn the computer off! Where is it? Select the option that applies.

- On the **back** of the monitor
- On the **front** of the monitor
- On the **side** of the computer
- On or next to the **keyboard**
- On a different place
- I cannot find it!



Anita helps Ed identify the important parts of the computer.

[highlight the Computer]—Anita tells him that many things have computers in them, like phones and other electronic devices,





But generally laptops, tablets, and desktop computers are called computers.



She shows him the 3 essential parts of a mouse: left click, right click, and scroll wheel. She realizes he will need more practice to use the mouse, but that's OK because that will come with time.



The keyboard is the most common way to enter information in a computer, Anita explains to Ed. It's just like a typewriter.



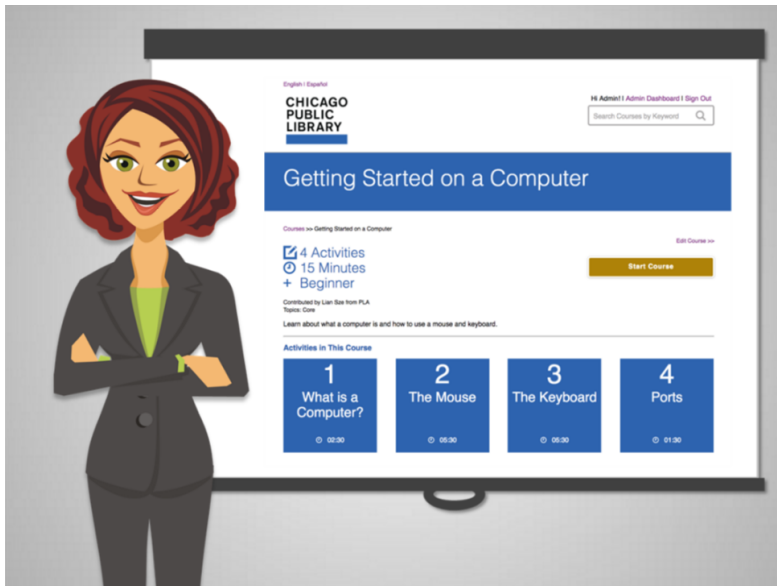
She said that he can also get special keyboards, like those designed to keep your hands from getting too tired



and some can use his voice to do a lot of the navigation.



And of course, this is the monitor, just like watching TV.



Anita lets Ed know that he can look for resources to help him get used to the mouse and keyboard.

She recommends watching the course Getting Started with a Computer so he can get more practice.

If you need practice with the keyboard and mouse, you can do the same!

Don't forget – this site has many short lessons just like this. And after each course there are some good opportunities to practice the skills you just learned.

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