

# Getting to Know Your Computer

**A Very  
Warm  
Welcome  
to the  
Exciting  
World of  
Computers**



**Let's get  
Started  
- It's easy  
with my Step-  
by-Step  
Instructions**

## **Step - by - Step Tutorials**



These Step-by-Step Tutorials are being taught at several High Schools, Community Centres, Retirement Villages and Public Libraries in Western Australia. They can now be downloaded from:

<http://www.a-to-z-of-manners-and-etiquette.com/computer-tutorials.html>

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# Getting to know your Computer

*or*

## *Buying a new Computer*

Many of our students have asked what questions to ask when looking at buying a new or used computer.

Many students have a blank look when asked questions like;  
“What version of Windows do you have” or  
“Do you have Microsoft Office on your computer at home?”

This very basic lesson will help you answer some of these questions.

So let’s get started:


What you can and cannot do on your computer and how long it takes to do it depends on –

 Which **OPERATING SYSTEM** is installed on it (**Windows 98; Windows 2000, XP, Vista** etc?)

 The **TYPE** of computer (**AMD, CELERON, PENTIUM, DUAL CORE** etc.)

 It’s **CLOCK SPEED** (1.6 GHz, 3.4 GHz etc.)

 The size of its **HARD DRIVE** (40GB, 300GB etc.)

 The type of **PROGRAMS** and the versions that are installed on it. For example: (**Microsoft Office 2003/7, Games, Adobe, Internet Explorer, Outlook Express** etc.)

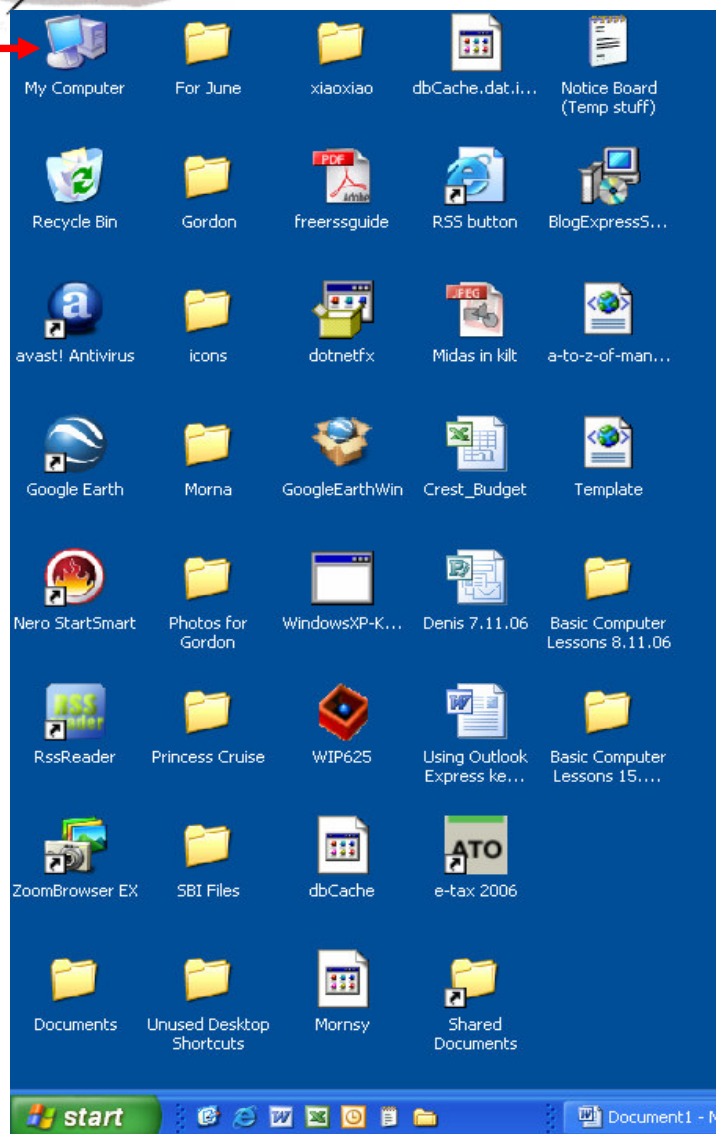
## Step-by-Step Tutorials

Stupid computer  
keeps saying  
"you got mail"



It is useful to know a few basic details of the **HARDWARE** and **SOFTWARE** of your computer. This is very easy to discover for yourself by doing the following on your OWN computer (so take notes from the **SUMMARY** at the end of this lesson to help you remember these instructions):

On your **DESKTOP** –



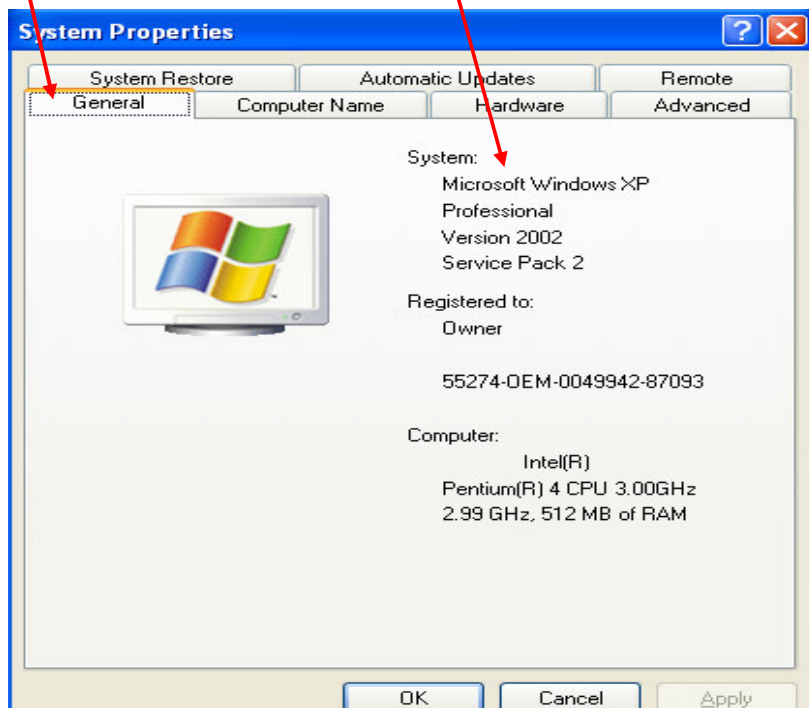


1. Right Click on the “My Computer” icon.

This will produce a small menu on the desktop.

2. Click on “Properties.” This will produce some information in a small box titled “System Properties”.



The “General” tab will provide you with information about the operating System, e.g. in the diagram here - it is: “Microsoft Windows XP Professional, Version 2002 Service Pack 2.”



It might also show who the computer is registered to. This is not usually vital information.

You would need to know what follows eg. – “Pentium ® 4” with a clock speed of 3.00GHz and “512 MB of RAM.”

Depending on what you wish to use your computer for, the following is a general guide only for most home applications.

<p><b>OK, but slow with limited capacity</b></p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Windows 2000 or Windows ME</b></p> <p><b>Pentium 2, Celeron or AMD 1.0GHz Processor speed 256MB of RAM</b></p> <p><b>20 GB Hard Disk Drive</b></p> <p><b>Pre-Office 2003 versions</b></p> 	<p><b>Preferred, has ample capacity</b></p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Windows XP Home or Windows XP Pro or Vista</b></p> <p><b>Pentium 4 or Dual Core 3.0GHz processor speed 512MB to 1024MB of RAM</b></p> <p><b>100 GB Hard Disk Drive</b></p> <p><b>Office 2003 version Office 2007 version</b></p> 
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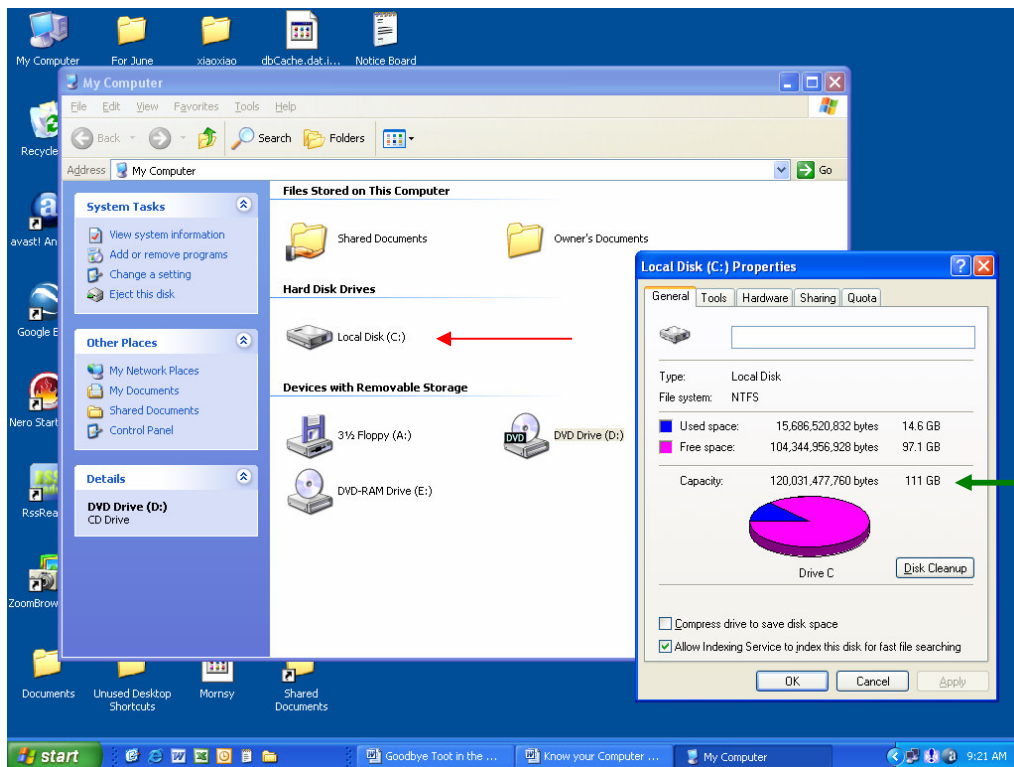
**3. Click “Cancel” to close the System Properties box.**

## How big is your Hard Disk Drive (HDD)?

4. To discover the capacity of your Hard Disk Drive (HDD), Double-click on the “My Computer” icon.

A window opens.


5. Right-click on “Local Disk (C:)” (see the thin red arrow below). A menu opens. Click on “Properties.” A small window opens. The thick Green Arrow in the following illustration shows where the capacity of the HDD is.



This window also shows how much disk space has been used and how much Free Space remains. Very useful if your Hard Drive is small.

**What Application Programs do you have?**



6. Click on “start”  in the bottom left corner of your computer screen. A window appears showing lots of useful information, don’t be afraid to explore here.

*Click on the various icons and have a look around, I promise it won’t explode or go up in smoke (smile).*

7. Hold your mouse pointer over “All Programs.” In a second, a list of all programs will appear. Look carefully for “Microsoft Office.” If it is not there, there is a good possibility that you do not have this software product and will have to purchase it.

8. Hold your mouse pointer over “Microsoft Office” to discover which Microsoft Applications are in your suite of Microsoft programs. You should have:

## Step-by-Step Tutorials

👉 Microsoft Office **WORD** 

👉 Microsoft Office **POWERPOINT** 

👉 Microsoft Office **EXCEL** 

👉 Microsoft Office **ACCESS** 


👉 Microsoft Office **PUBLISHER** 

👉 Microsoft Office **PICTURE MANAGER**

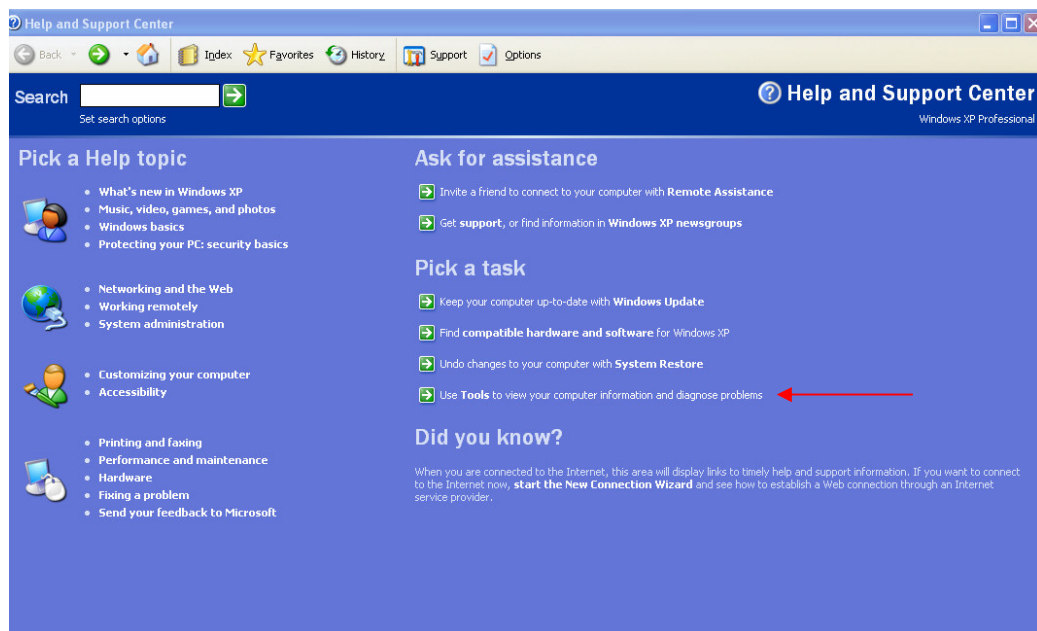


👉 Microsoft Office **OUTLOOK** 



One of my favourite computer sayings is ...   
'there are many ways to skin a cat!' - In other  
words there are always several ways to do exactly the  
same thing on a computer. Let me show you another  
way to discover what your computer is all about:

1. **Click on START (bottom left hand corner of your screen)**
2. **Click on HELP & SUPPORT**

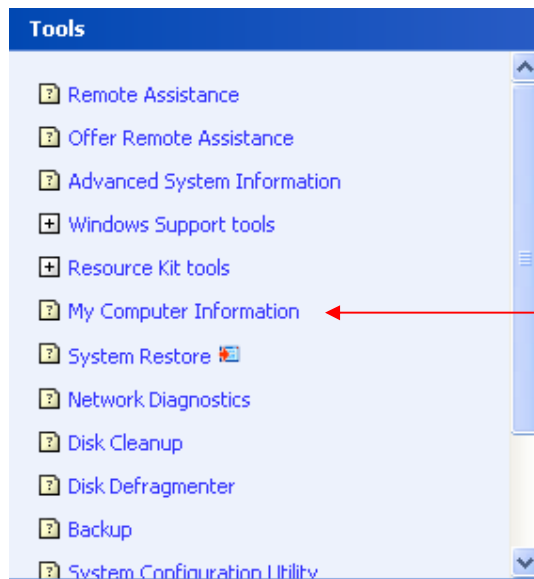


The screenshot shows the Windows XP Help and Support Center window. The title bar reads "Help and Support Center" and "Windows XP Professional". The address bar shows "Support" and "Options". The main content area is divided into three columns:

- Pick a Help topic:** Includes links for "What's new in Windows XP", "Music, video, games, and photos", "Windows basics", "Protecting your PC: security basics", "Networking and the Web", "Working remotely", "System administration", "Customizing your computer", "Accessibility", "Printing and faxing", "Performance and maintenance", "Hardware", "Fixing a problem", and "Send your feedback to Microsoft".
- Ask for assistance:** Includes links for "Invite a friend to connect to your computer with Remote Assistance", "Get support, or find information in Windows XP newsgroups", "Pick a task", "Keep your computer up-to-date with Windows Update", "Find compatible hardware and software for Windows XP", "Undo changes to your computer with System Restore", and "Use Tools to view your computer information and diagnose problems" (highlighted with a red arrow).
- Did you know?:** A section for timely help and support information.








3. Click on 'Use tools to view your computer information'



4. Click on 'My computer information' on the left hand side of your screen.

5. Then click on 'View general system information about this computer' *this computer*

-  View general system information about this computer
-  View the status of my system hardware and software
-  Find information about the hardware installed on this computer
-  View a list of Microsoft software installed on this computer
-  View Advanced System Information

Your computer will ask you to wait while it gathers the required information for you.

Yes, it is a very polite little machine.

To make life easy, just print out this page and take it along with you to refer to if you are buying another computer and don't forget to ask questions if you don't understand something.

I'll stress again, don't be afraid to explore ... however, if you are not sure of what you are doing, don't agree to change or save anything. Your computer will usually ask if you are sure you want to change or save anything. If not sure, just say NO!

If you want to see what hardware and software you have on your computer, after viewing 'View general system information about this computer' simply click on 'View the status of my system hardware and software' and also on 'View a list of Microsoft software installed on this computer'.

- ➔ View general system information about this computer
- ➔ View the status of my system hardware and software ←
- ➔ Find information about the hardware installed on this computer
- ➔ View a list of Microsoft software installed on this computer ←
  
- ➔ View Advanced System Information

Another question we are regularly asked is -

### Desk top or Lap Top?

Only you can answer that one. The prices are much of a muchness with so many options available. So, ask yourself:

Will I need to move my computer from room to room? Would I like to move it from place to place – indoors or outdoors? Will I take it with me when I travel so that I can access the net (to send and receive e-mails) download digital photos, etc? Am I prepared to mess with recharging and/or replacing the battery and keeping the computer secure from the weather and theft?

If you answered 'Yes' to some of the above then a lap top might be your preferred option despite some of the disadvantages of their compact keyboard, quirky navigation method, potential to overheat, generally slower clock speed smaller RAM and hard disk drive and the need for battery maintenance.

You might opt for an external plug-in mouse or keyboard to overcome the inconvenience of the compact built-in ones. But then you would be compromising the portability factor.

But if you have the space for a desk top computer and no need for portability, then you will appreciate the better keyboard, mouse, speed, greater data storage capacity and larger screen that a desk top has to offer.

The choice is entirely yours (smile)!

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### To Summarise

#### 1. (For Operating System, Computer Type & RAM)

On desktop  
Right-click MY Computer  
Click on Properties  
Click the 'General' tab if not already open

#### 2. (For size of Hard Disk Drive (HDD))

On desktop  
Double-click MY Computer  
Right-click Local Disk (C:)  
Click on Properties

### 3. (For Application programs)

**Click on Start**

**Hold Mouse pointer over 'Programs' or 'All Programs'**

Checkout the above on your home computer so that you are able to compare your computer's speed and capability against other computers that you may use. You will also know when your computer is becoming obsolete by comparing these statistics against computer advertisements in the newspapers and brochures.



*See how easy it is with my step-by-step lessons?*

*Hope you found this information interesting and helpful.*

*Why not download a few more lessons to keep in your library?*

**END**