

How To ... A simple guide to your PC.



F. Wallace ©

Chapter one.

What is a computer?

Good question! What is a computer? Is it a bird, is it a plane? No, it's a computer.

A computer basically is a piece of hardware (hardware means all you can touch for our purposes), with software (programmes) loaded on it to make it work.

The parts of a computer we can see is the following:

Monitor



Keyboard



Mouse



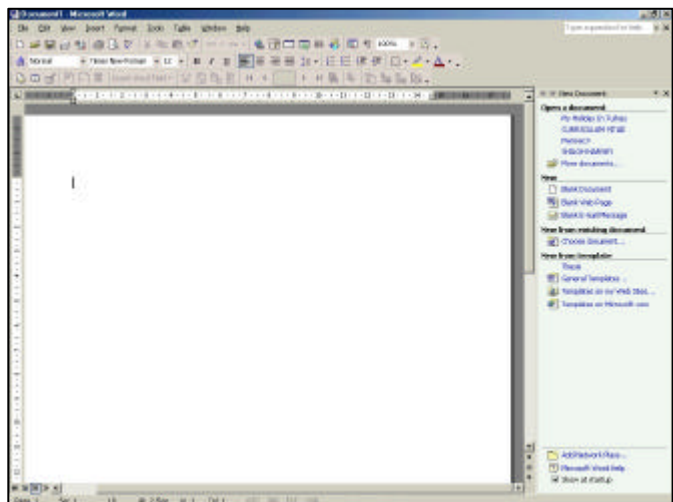
Printer



These, and many other things like scanners are called the hardware. Software, is programmes which make the computer work, things to tell the computer exactly what you want it to do.

Firstly, the computer needs an operating system. Most computers use a version of Windows®, whether it is **Windows 95®**, **Windows 98®**, **Windows ME®**, **Windows XP®**. Many moons ago, computers used MSDOS® (Microsoft Disk Operating System), which was a line and command orientated system, where you had to type everything in you would like the computer to do. Today, with Windows®, all we need to do is to drop and drag to copy files, but with MSDOS®, it would have looked something like this to copy a document to a floppy. **C:\> Copy c:\docs\guideict.doc a:\docs\guideict.doc** Just imagine the process if you wanted to copy about 20 files!

Other software you may use, are programmes written for specific tasks. For Example, if you want to do some typing, you will use a Word processor, like Microsoft Word®. This programme enables you to type, modify and create your own documents. It allows you to send it over the internet, or save it onto disk for later use.



What do I need to know about the “brain” of the computer?

To be honest, this answer depends on you as a person. Most people is more than happy to know that this is the brain, and as long as it works, they are fine! But, the brain is the brain, so let's have a look!

The brain consist of a motherboard. This is where all the circuits and electronic parts of the processor is kept. The processor is the “thinking” part of the computer. It is described as a **Intel Celeron**®, **Intel Pentium**®, **AMD**®, and it's speed is described in MHz GHz. So, you will see some computers will have a **Pentium 4 2.2 GHz** system, and others will have a **Intel Celeron 2 GHz** system. This is just to describe how fast the computer can do it's calculations.



The memory is expressed in Megabyte (MB) or Gigabyte (GB). It ranges from 128 Mb to 1 GB and more. This means, how much the computer can remember at a time. When a computer's memory is full, it needs to write to the hard drive and every now and then, it needs to collect the information from the hard drive. So, the more memory you have onboard, the more the computer can remember at a time. Memory is always expressed in multiples of 4 Mb units. E.g. 32 Mb, 64 Mb, 128 Mb, 256 Mb, 512 Mb. Etc.



The Hard drive is the storage media for the computer, on here, all information is stored to be retrieved at later stages. The size is also expressed in Mb or Gb. And here you can have basically any size you want! Think of the Hard drive as one big floppy drive.



These are the most important parts of the computer inside. Let's look at some other hardware we find on the motherboard. Some of these hardware, is on-board, this means that it is build in and can't be changed or removed, others are add-on, meaning you can add them onto the computer and remove them again.

A Graphics Card - this is what enables you to see pictures on your screen.



A Network Card - enables you to communicate with other computers on a network.



A Soundcard - good for listening to music and playing games.



These are the main hardware on a computer. We will look at some other hardware, as we go along.

Chapter Two.

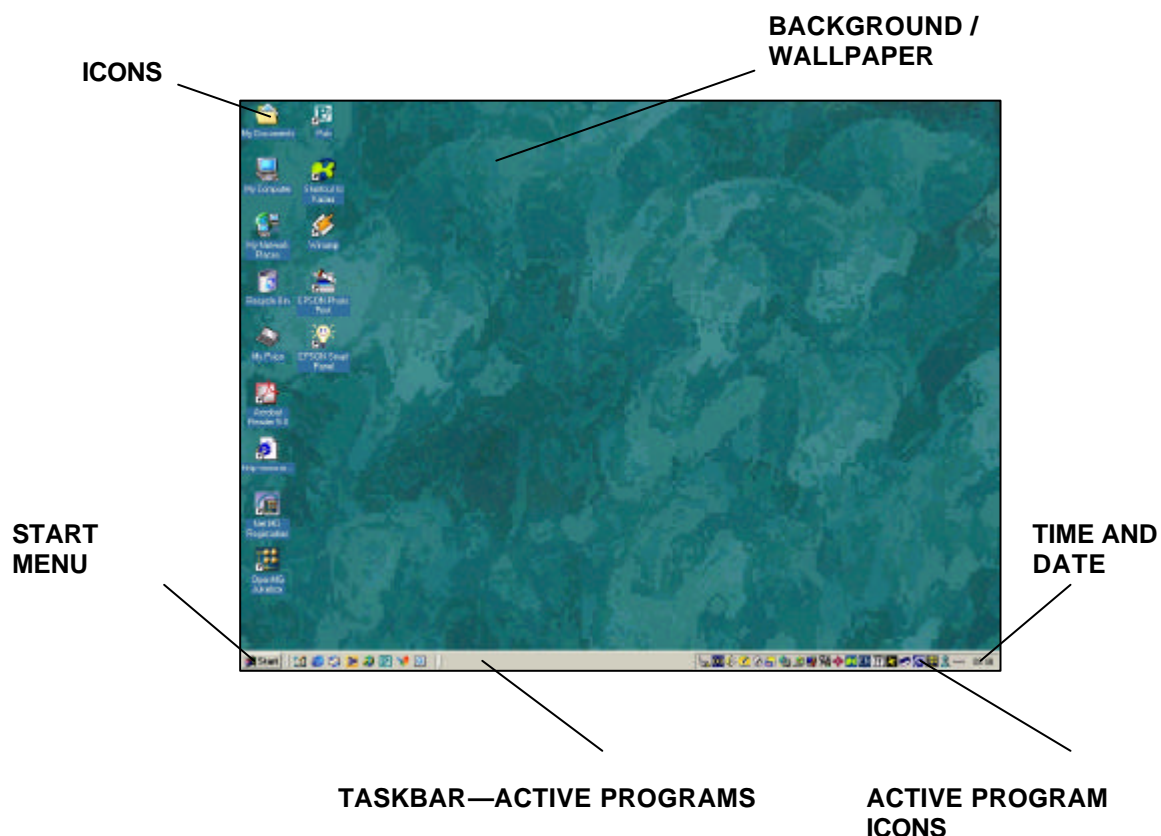
So what now?

So, we now know the basic stuff of computers. Let's get on to the next part.
Working with the PC.

Very important to remember is that there is a big difference between a PC (personal Computer) and an Mac. Firstly, the operating system is different. You can't use Mac Programmes on a pc and visa versa. And personally, I hate MACs! But let's leave it there!

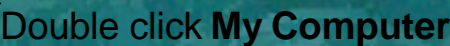
So, we've switch on the computer, and what now? Hold on, and after about two minutes it will make you a cup of tea! You wish!

The first screen you will notice is the start-up screen. It is also known as the **desktop**. From here, you can access programmes and perform various functions. The desktop will be different from every computer. But all Desktops have some things in common, they are

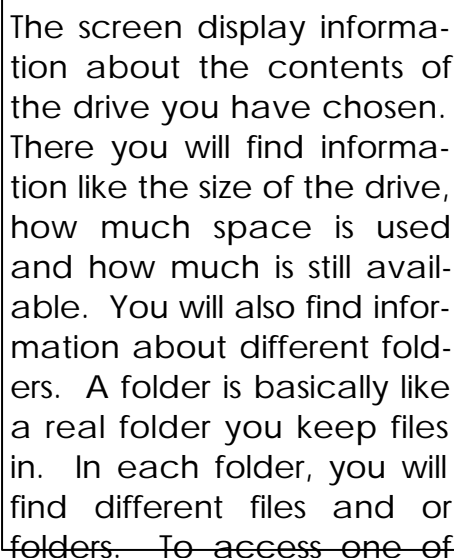


Now, as I said, the desktop will be different for each program. Even the versions of Windows® may look different, but in principle they are all the same. You can access a program directly by double clicking the icon on the desktop. Some programs do not have a shortcut on the desktop, so for them, you need to do the following. Click on **START -> PROGRAMS ->** and then find the program you

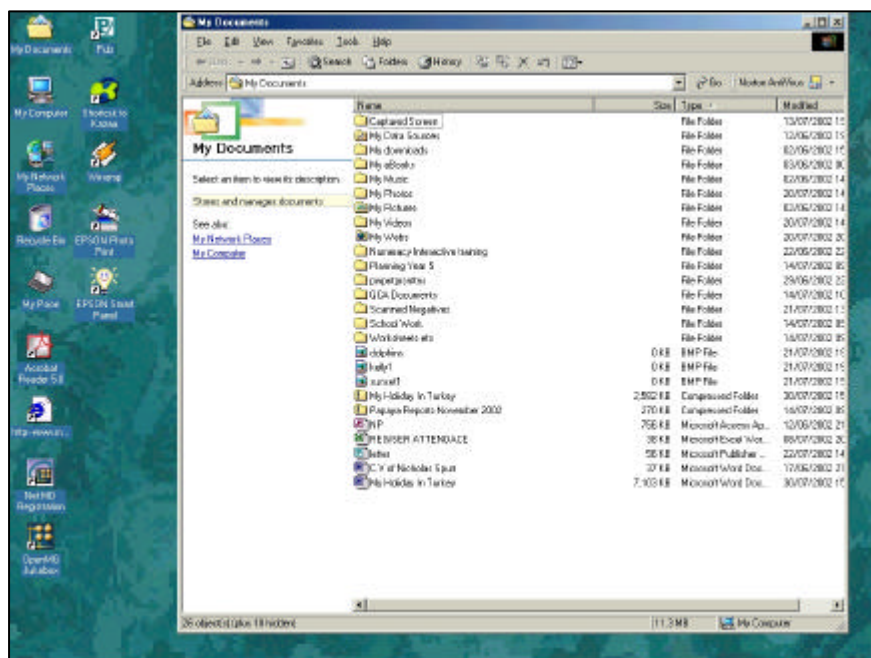
You can also have access to your computer's different drives by double clicking on my computer.



If you want to access a specific drive, simply double click on the drive, and the screen will change to something looking like this...



these folders, for example, **My documents**, simply double click the folder.



As you can see, this folder, consist of different folders and files. If you want to access a file, simply double click the file. There are many other things you can do with these files (icons), but we will get to that later, no need to worry about this now...

There are some information about the folder on this screen.

Next to each file or folder, you will see information like size of the file, the type of file it is, and when it was created or modified. This is very useful if you have files with nearly the same name, to distinguish, which file is the newest file. In the top right hand corner, you will see a _ (underscore), double blocks and a x. Each of these buttons have a function. The _ underscore minimize the window and place it on the taskbar. The two blocks will make the window half size, and the cross will close the window. To restore (maximize) a window which has been minimized, simply click the active window on the taskbar.



Chapter Three:

Accessing your first program ...

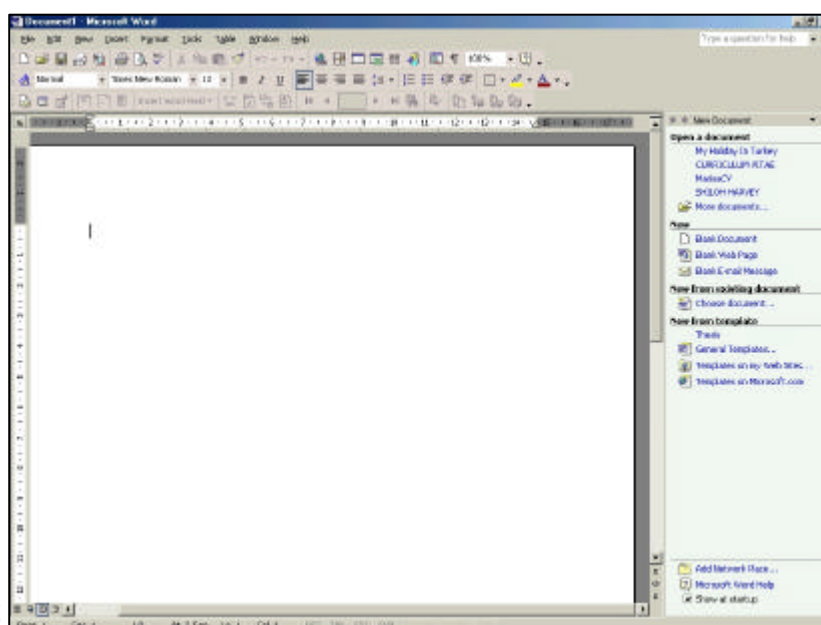
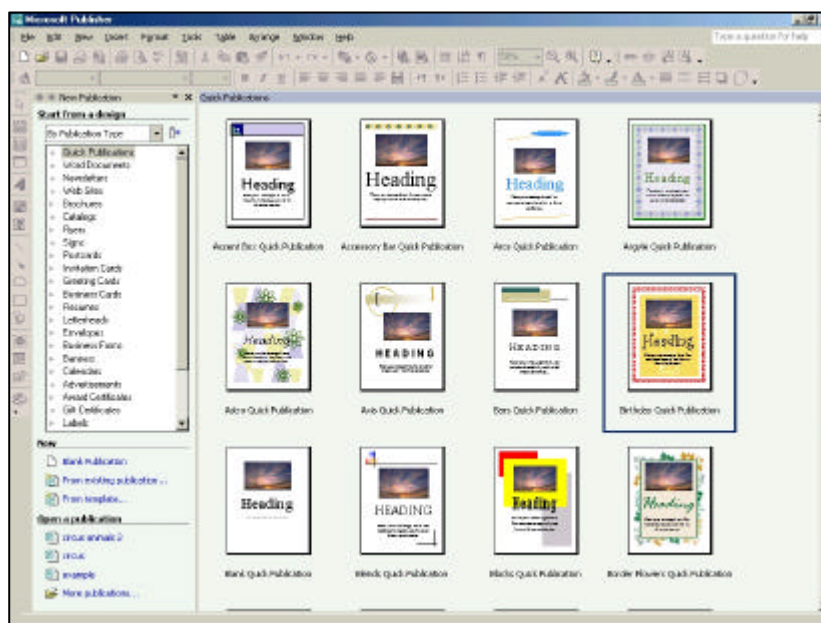
Right, ready to access your first program? Just remember, each computer has different programs on, so the programs shown in this information booklet, may not represent the software / programs on your computer.

Microsoft Publisher® and Microsoft Word®

Click on **Start -> Programs -> Microsoft Publisher**. This will bring up the following screen, also known as the introduction screen. Microsoft Office has a similar screen. To activate Office, click on **Start -> Programs -> Microsoft Word**.

These two programs are part of the **Microsoft Office®** package and are loaded on most computers. Word is a Word processor, and Publisher is a desktop Publisher. We will have an in-depth look at these two programs in a later chapter.

Other programs can be accessed in a similar way. Ever you double click the icon for the program on the desktop if it is available, or you do the **Start -> programs -> action**. **NOTE: Windows XP works a little different, but is nearly the same ... to figure it out is easy.**



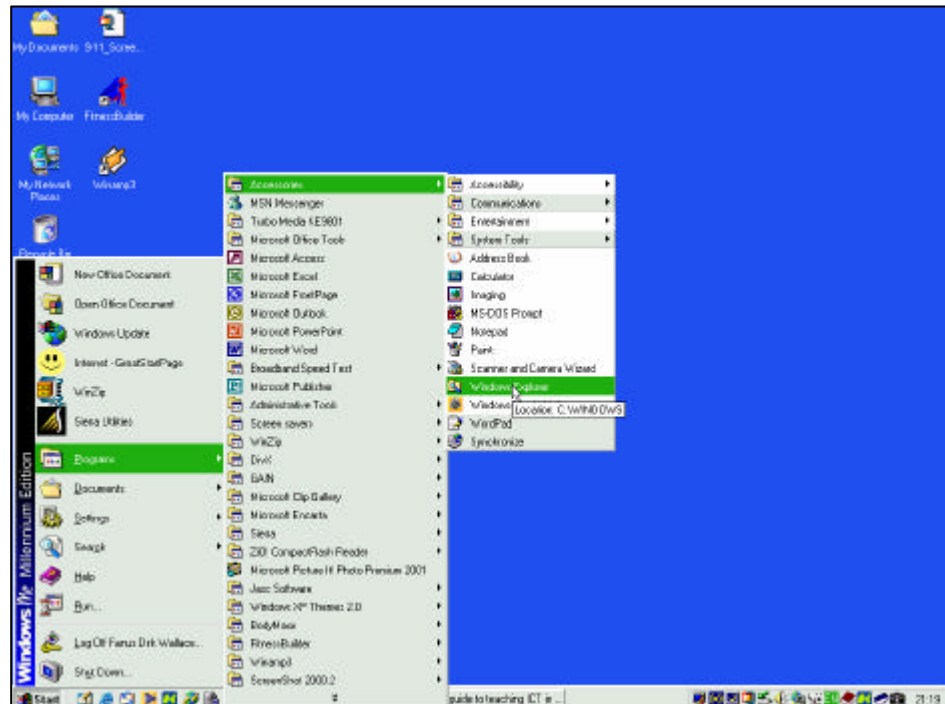
Right, so now you have a basic idea of what is going on in Windows. Let us have a look at a few other interesting things which you can do with Windows!

Chapter Four:

Getting to know Windows Explorer.

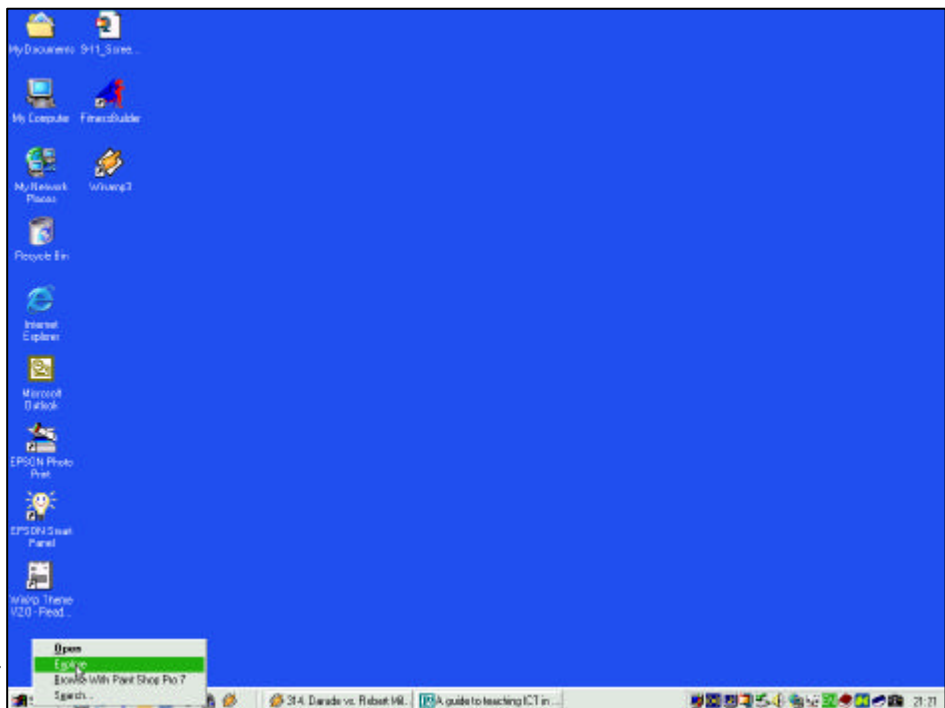
Windows explorer is extremely flexible, and there are many different ways you can open the program.

The first method is illustrated below:



A second method is illustrated below:

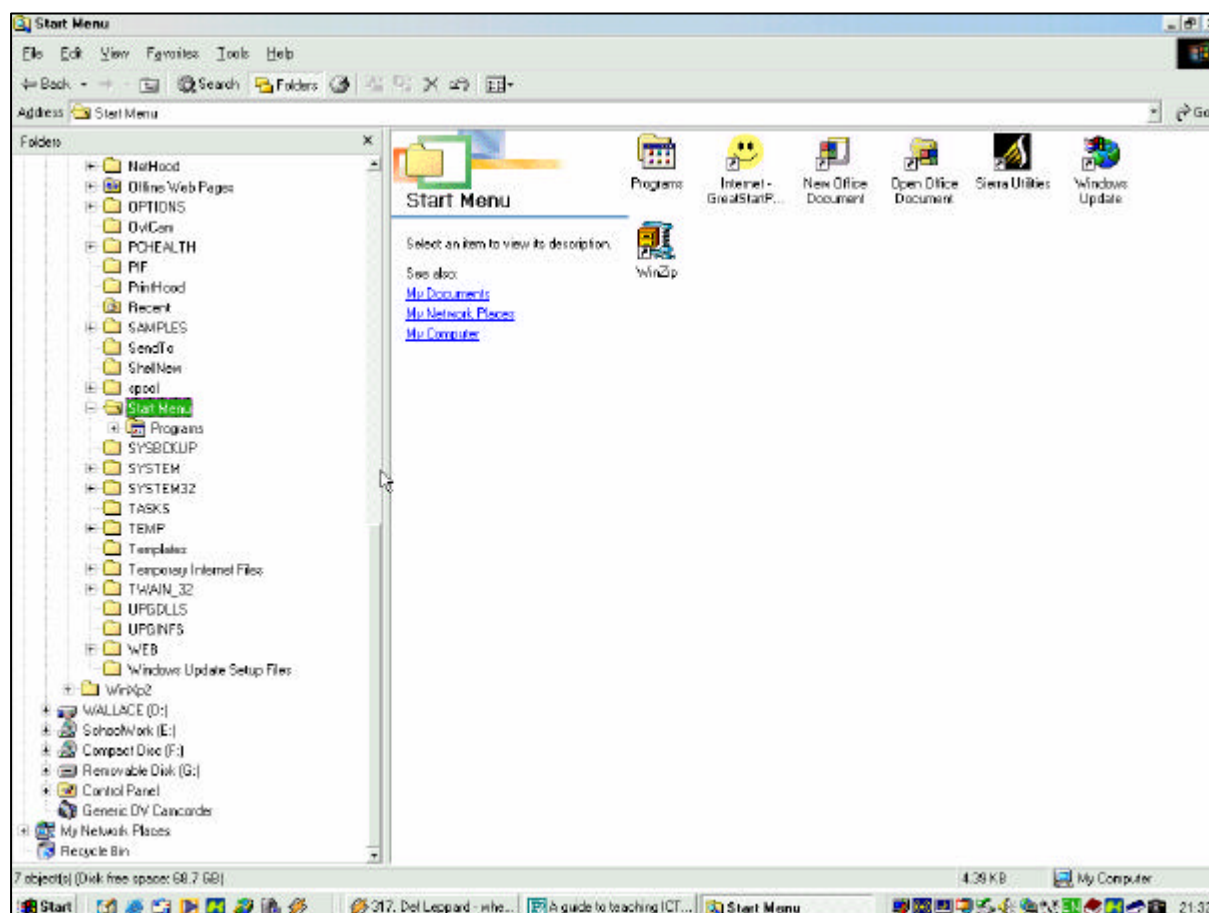
Right click on the start button, and this will bring up the following window. Doesn't matter which method you choose, you will get there, and you will notice, that the more you get accustomed to the computer, you will get to know the short-cuts for all the programs.



So you visit a folder quite often!



If you often explore a particular folder on your Pc, you may want to use a Windows Explorer trick to make this task easier. While Windows Explorer is open, use the right mouse button to drag the folder onto your desktop. Choose create shortcut here. Windows Explorer will place a icon for this folder on your desktop. Simply double click the icon and you



You can also use Explorer to access files anywhere on your computer! Simply double click on the folder you want to access and whalla! You have access to the folder. The plus sign next to a folder, means that there is still folders under this folder. A minus symbol means that there are only one folder and that is the one shown.

Pressing F5

If you press F5 at any time during a session, the screen refresh. Sometimes after you have deleted, copied, renamed or moved files, it still appears on the screen or not on the screen, pressing



A open folder, means that you are currently working with this folder.
Moving and copying files with Explorer ...

Sometimes, for what ever reason, you would like to copy or to move some files

Difference between moving and copying!

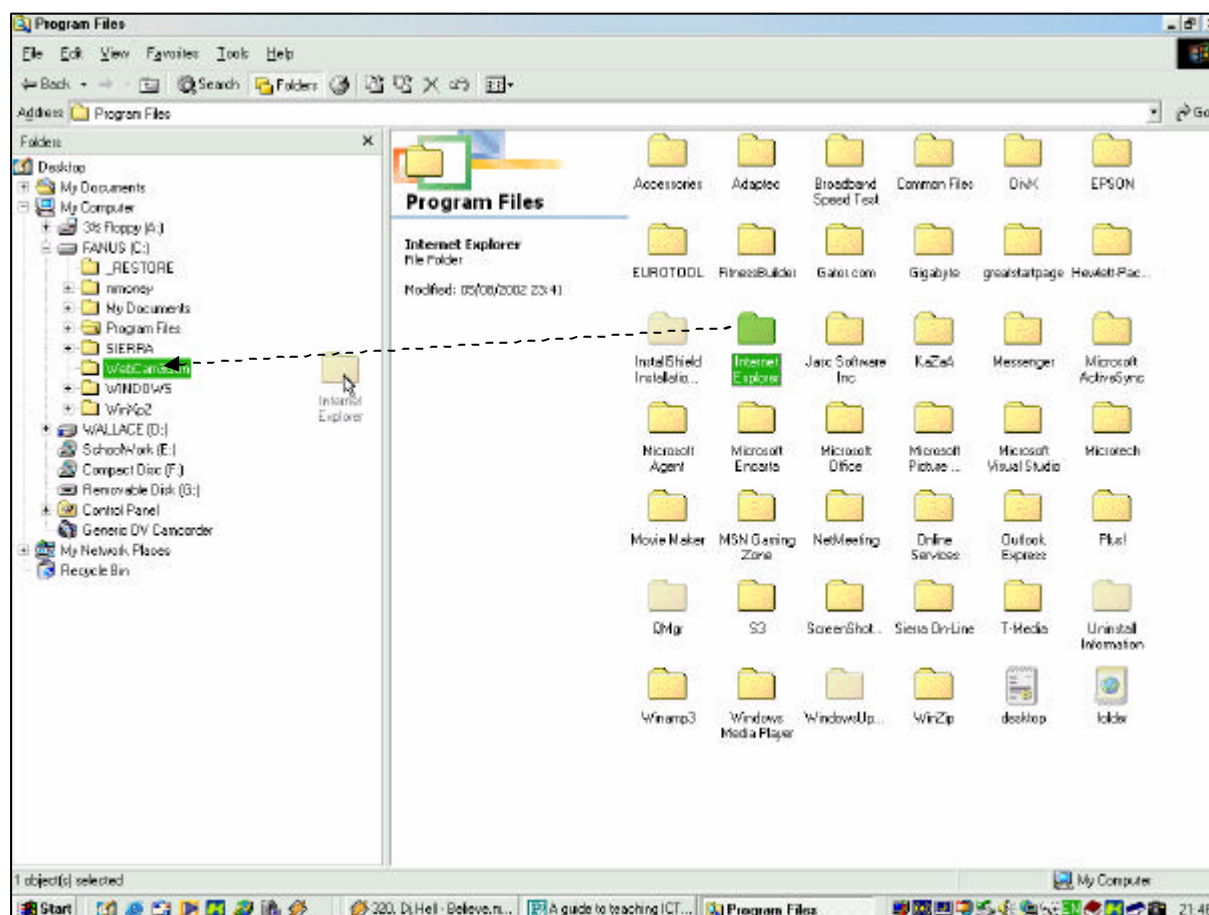


If you **move** a file, you simply do what it says. You move the file from it's current location to the new location, it is like moving house! Copying a file, leaves the original file in the original location, and makes a copy of the file in the location where you have specified. If you want to make a copy of a file in the exact same location / folder / directory, make sure that you change the name of the new file, for files must have

from one directory or disk to another.

Another easy way of moving files or copying files to a new location, is simply to drag and drop the file. This is very good if you want to save some time. Just remember that you must be able to see the current file(s) and the new location of the file(s) when you want to do this!

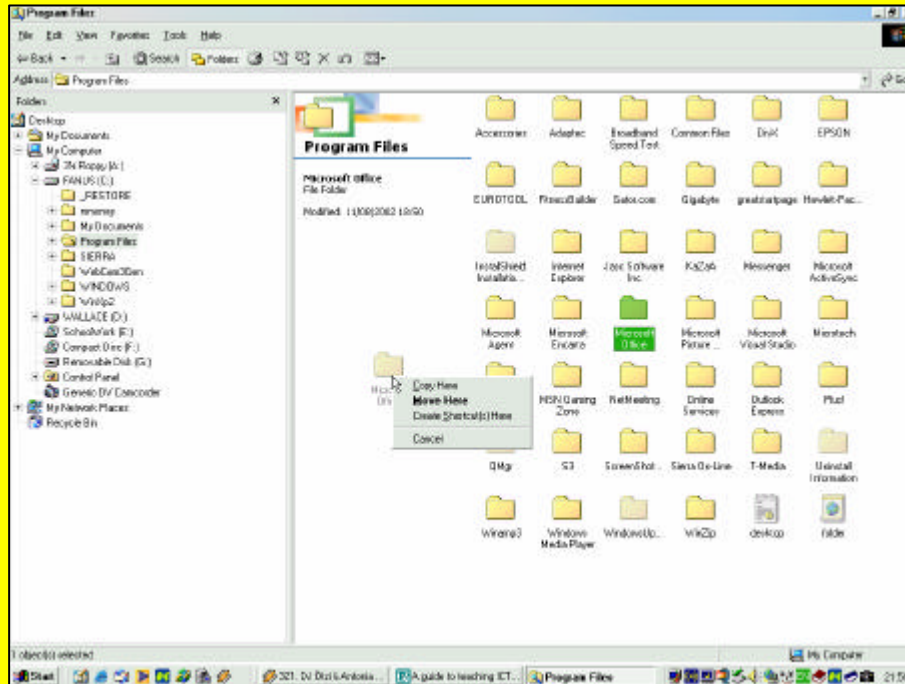
Simply right click on the file and drag it to it's new location. This will move the file to the new location. If you want to copy the file, simply hold down the CTRL key



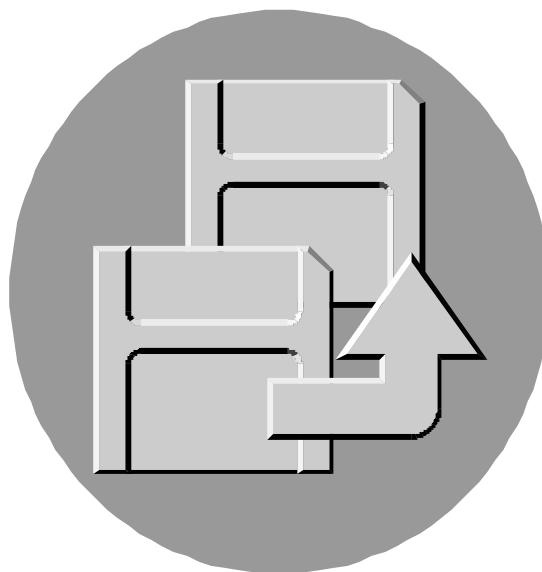
Difference when pressing left and right button on mouse when dragging!



When you drag the folder or file with the right button, it will ask you whether you want to do with the file, where the left button automatically assume that you ever want to move or copy the file to the new



as you drag the file to the new location.



Chapter Five:

Programs:

The programs you install on your computer, is what makes you do wonderful stuff, from surfing the Internet, to typing letters, do Tax calculations, even play games. Windows is a multi-tasking program, which means that you can have more than one program open at a given time. This is especially useful if you are working with a Spreadsheet and a word processor at one time.

Programs can also be set to start up with Windows every time you switch your computer on.

1. Installing Programs:

This is a very easy feature of Windows. These days most programs are available on a CD, and usually this has AUTOPLAY. This means, that when you insert the CD in the CD Rom, it starts to load and install the program immediately. All you have to do is to answer "yes" or "next" to the questions asked. Only when you are an

Automatic INSTALLATION:

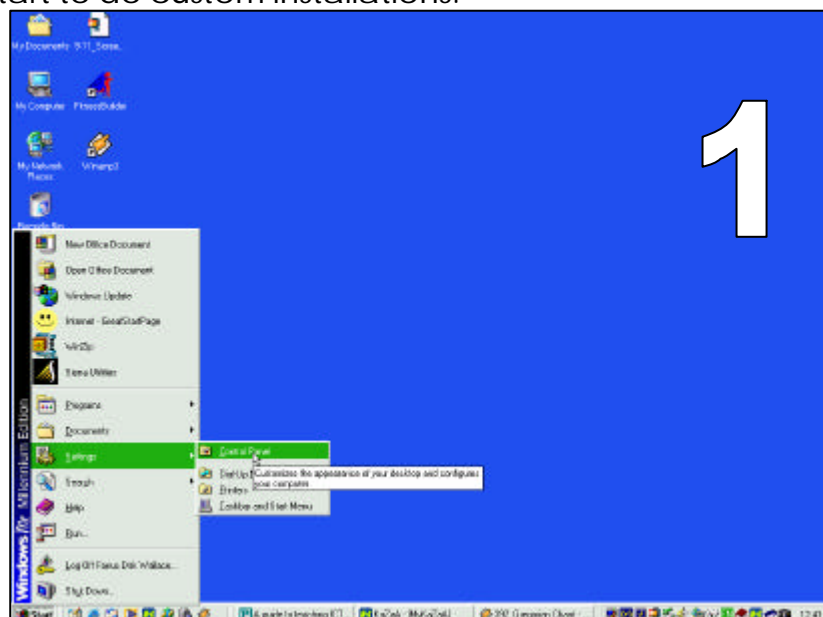
When you do a automatic installation, the computer automatically assigns the installation directory to the program, as well as creating the desktop icons as well as the Start Program Icons.

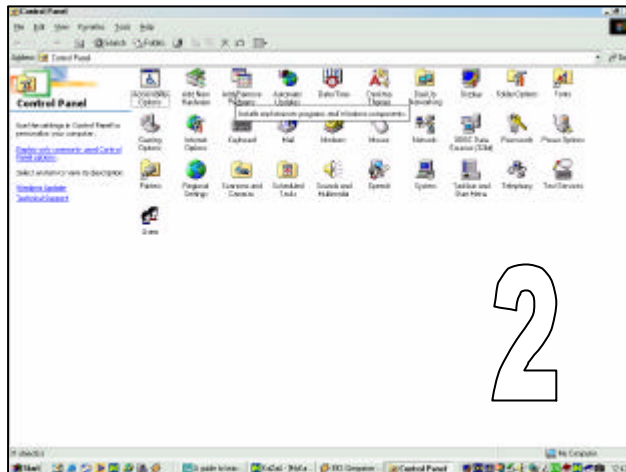


For this installation, all you have to do is to click either "next" or "yes" to the questions asked. This feature also installs the most common used features of a program. As you get to know all the types of questions, you can start to do a custom installation, where you specify the installa-

advanced user, you will start to do custom installations.


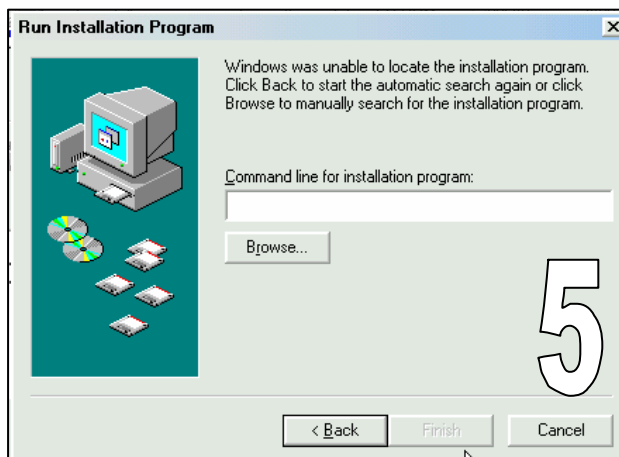
The following is a method to install a program which do not have auto run installed on the cd.






SETUP.EXE

Most programs use setup.exe as the installation file. Double click this icon and it will start to install the program. Sometimes they use install.exe as well. Browse for this file to help you with the installation.

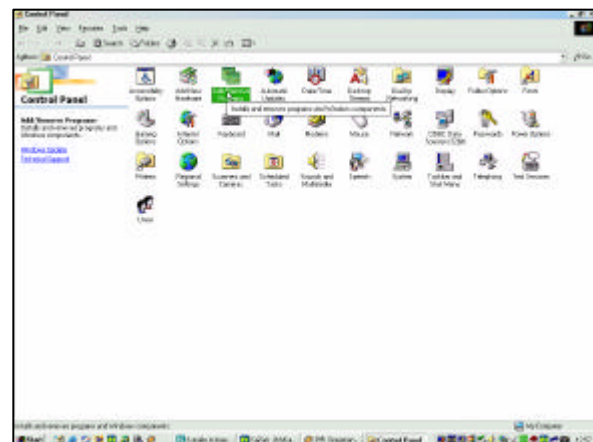
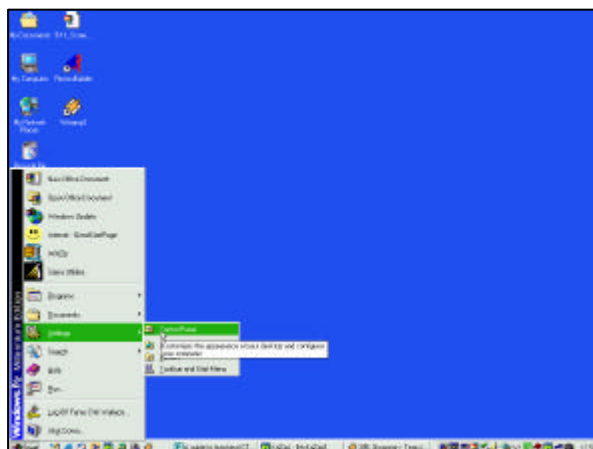
You can use the browse button to search for the location of the file you want to install. This is very useful if you have downloaded a program for example from the internet and want to install it.

Be careful if you install software in WINDOWS XP, some software is not compatible with XP, so make sure that the software you buy is compatible with the version of windows you have installed.



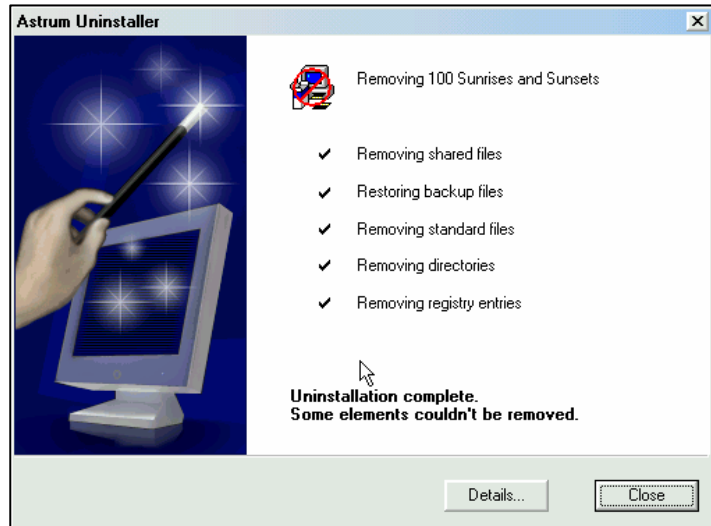
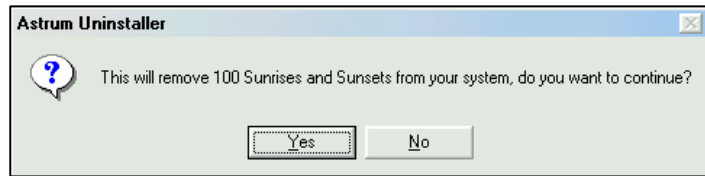
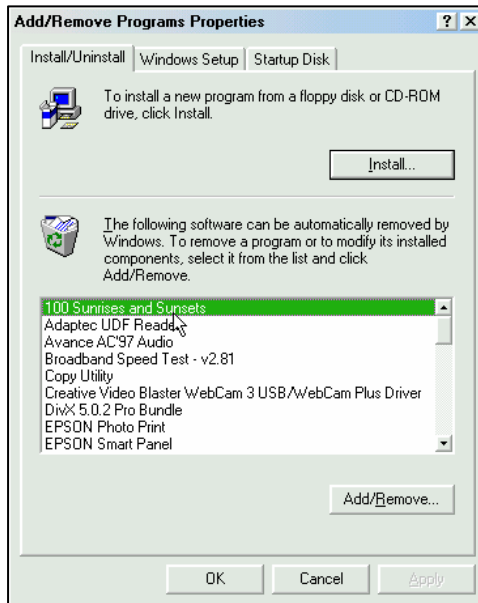
Many programs have a uninstall function, which you can find under the program group of your computer.

The screenshot shows a Windows XP desktop environment. The Start menu is open, displaying a list of programs. The 'Programs' menu item is selected, and a sub-menu is visible showing various applications. The 'Windows XP Theme 2.0' option is highlighted, and a context menu is open next to it, showing 'ReadMe' and 'Remove WinXP Theme 2' options. The taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including Internet Explorer and various utility programs.



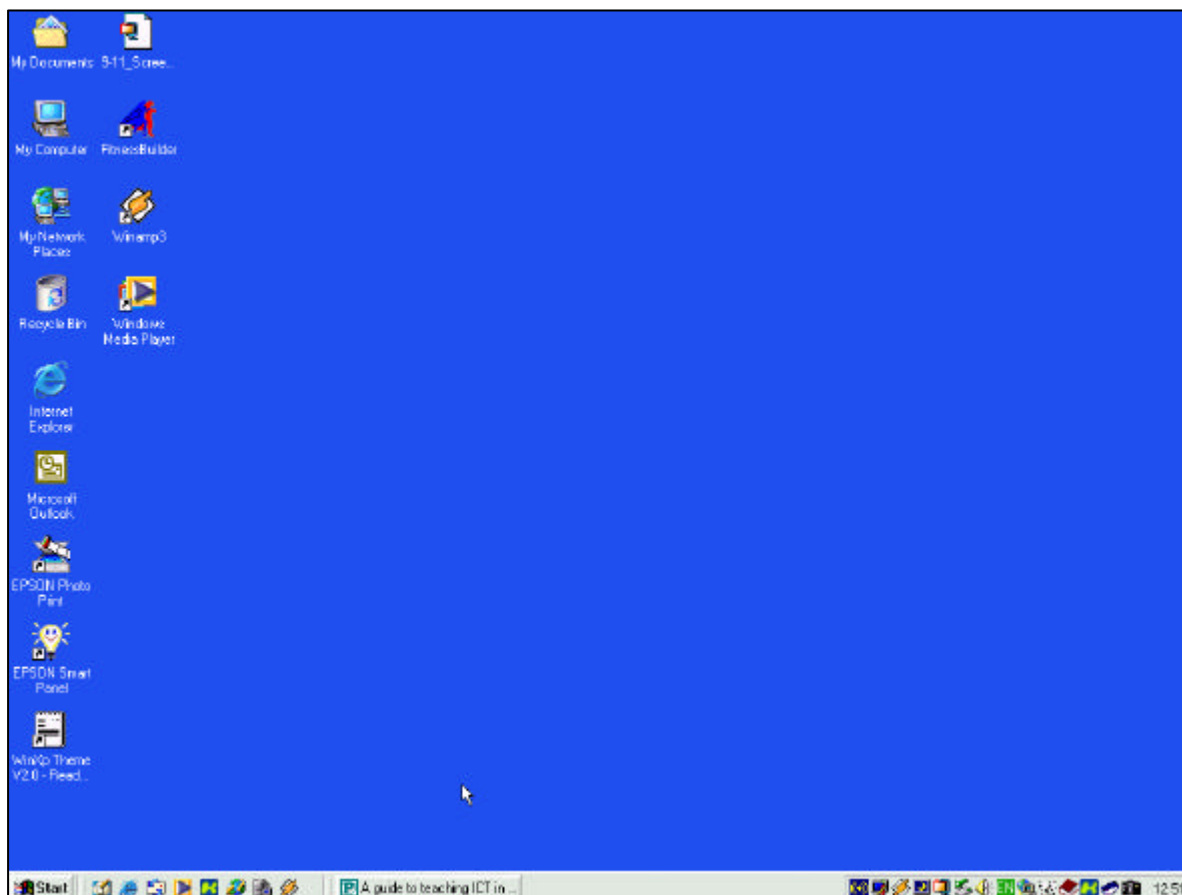
If you have uninstalled a program, it is important that you restart your computer, to make sure the files are all deleted. Sometimes the computer will prompt you to reboot your computer. Also remember, once a program is uninstalled, the only way to get the program back, is to install it again! So think twice before you uninstall the program!





Chapter Six: Changing the look and way Windows work:

1. **Configuring the Desktop.** (refer to page 5 for explanation of the content of



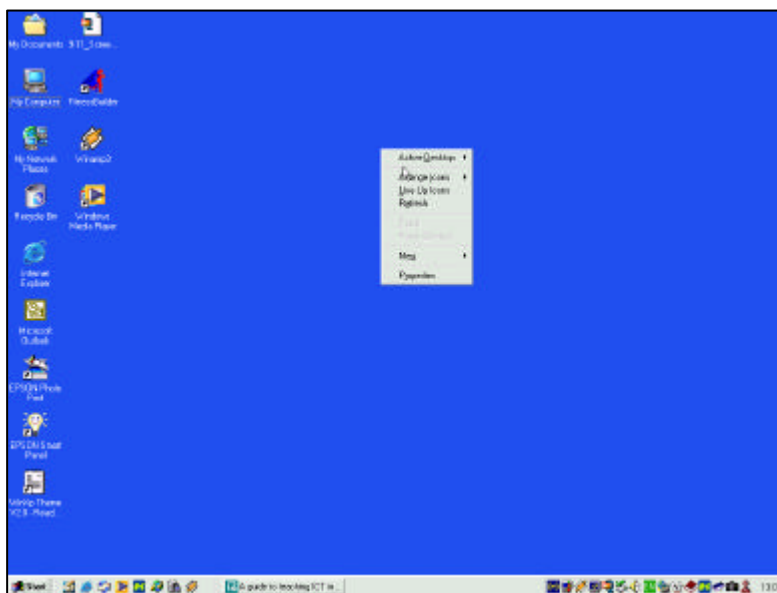
Remember:

Each version of windows works in a different way, so the desktop may appear slightly different from computer to computer but the basics are still the same, which works for the one, works for all!

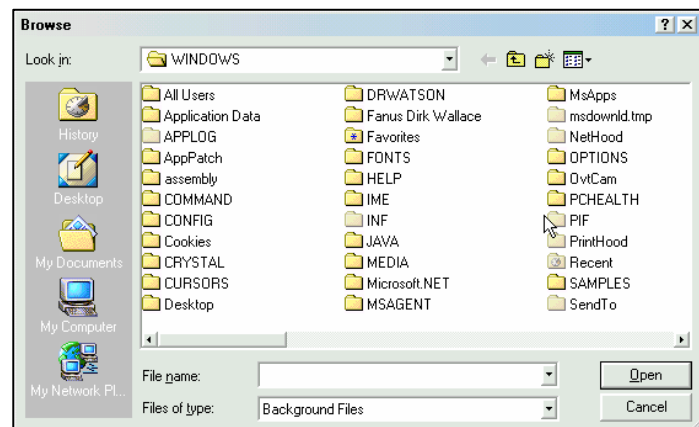
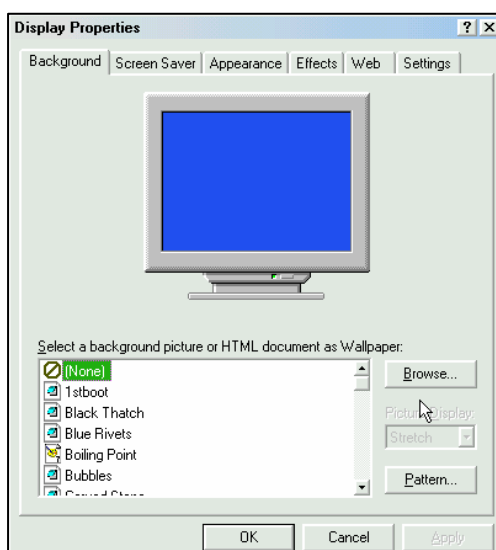


the desktop:

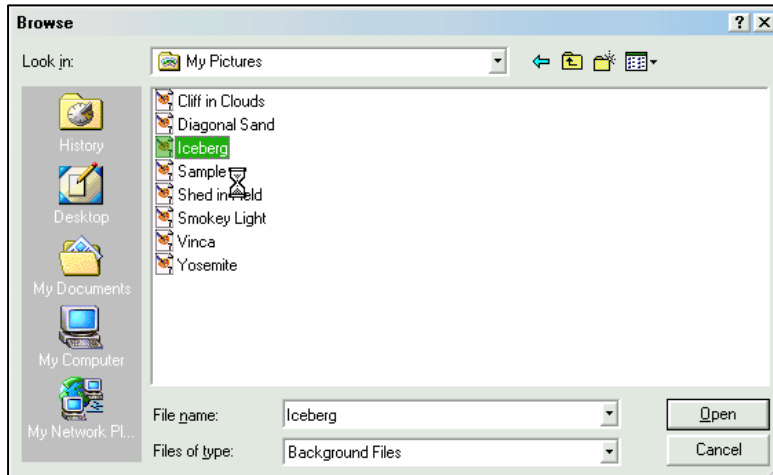
The desktop shows, you the time. can access and per- functions / wants to individual, goes for the make that adding col- pictures do many Let's have a can do!



is the part of Win- will see most of From here, you many programs, form various tasks. Everyone make their house now, the same desktop, you can your own, by ours, background (wallpaper) and other things. look at what you

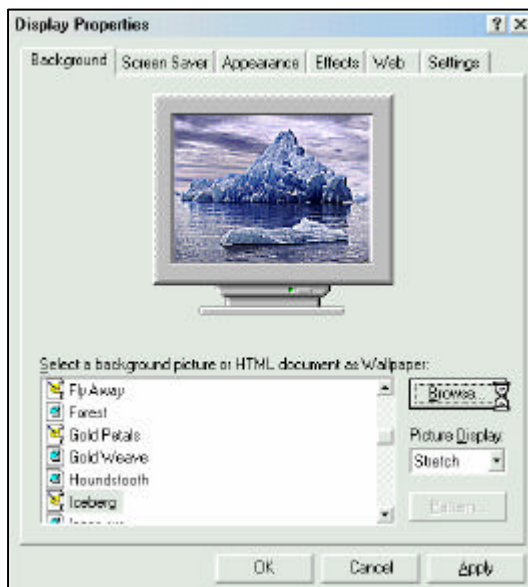


Adding a different wallpaper to your desktop.



By adding a different wallpaper to your desktop, you can change the background of the screen. All the icons will appear on the wallpaper you have chosen, so therefore, it is very important that you choose a wallpaper that will enhance your desktop, you do not want to go looking for a icon on the wallpaper.

The type of pictures you can use for backgrounds is mostly either JPEG or BMP pictures, but with later versions of windows, you can use basically any type of picture.



BE Careful:

Sometimes, if you pick a picture which is very big, windows will take a long time to load it. This will also cause your computer to run more slowly, because the picture has to be in the computers memory, that makes less memory for running programs. So.



Step One:

Left click on the desktop where there isn't any icons, this will bring up a screen.

stretch



Tile

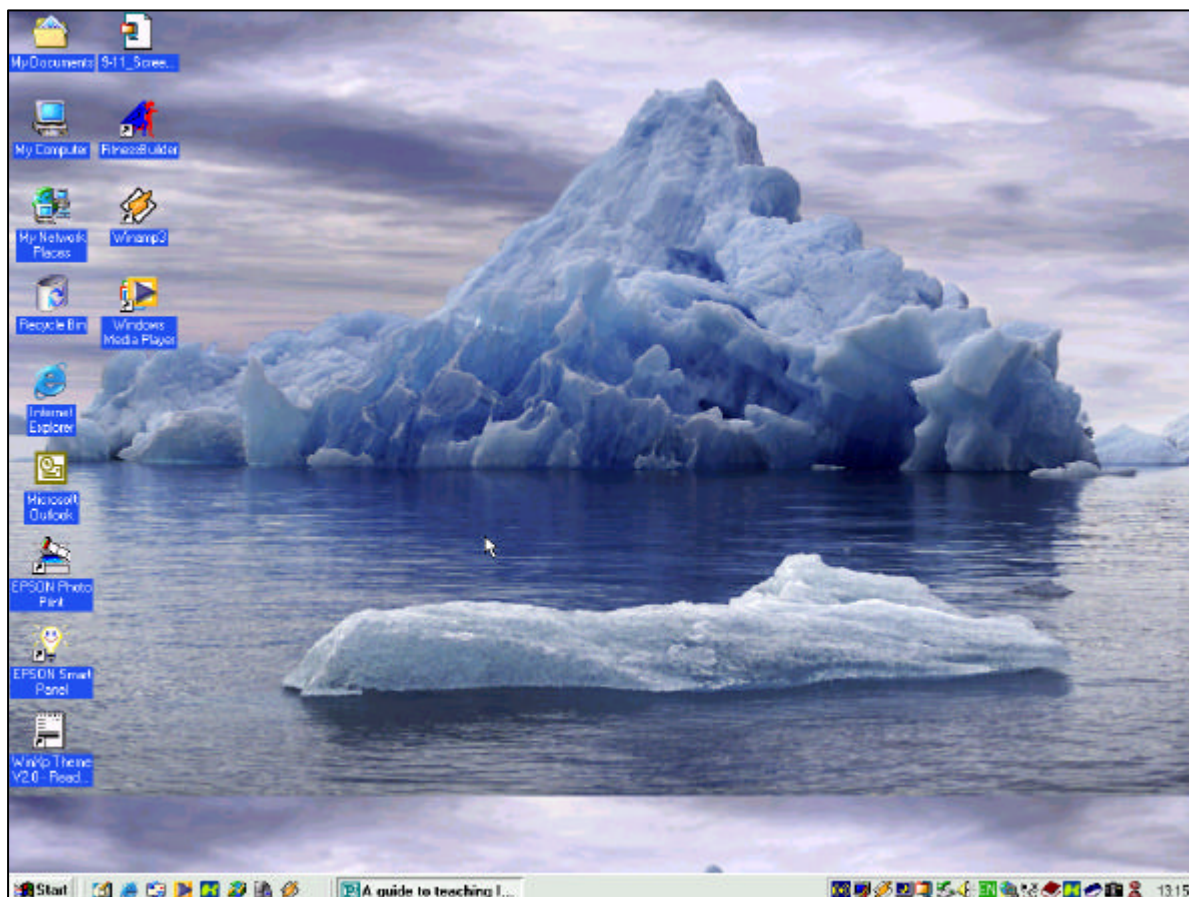


Centre



Step Two:

Step Three:



OR YOU CAN ...

Alternatively, you can click the pattern button to open the pattern dialog box, choose a pattern from the list box, or you can



Choose properties.

Click on browse or pick a picture from the list below.

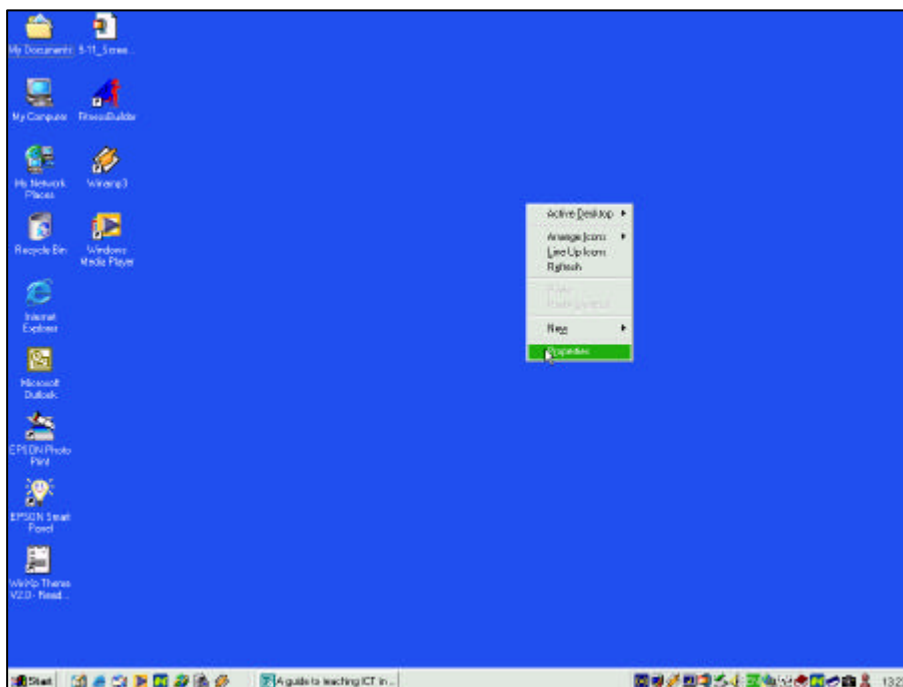
Browse to locate the file you want to use.

Step Four:

After location the file, double click it or click open.

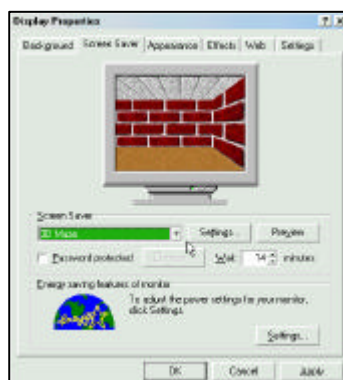
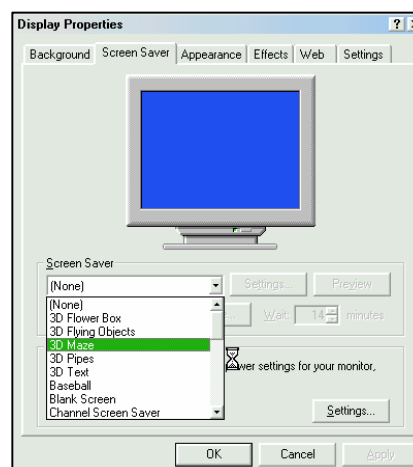
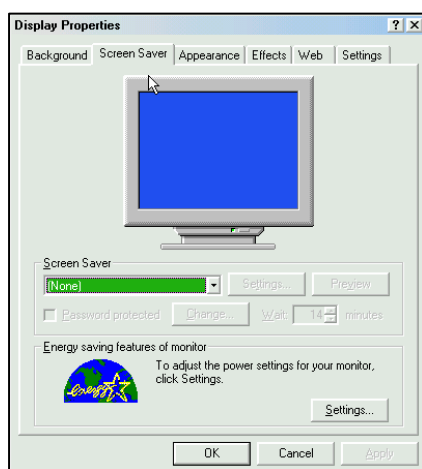
Step Five:
This will put
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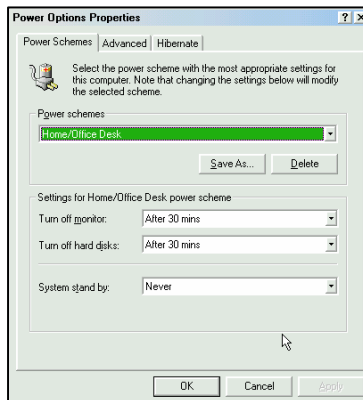
Step Six:
Click on
display,
have the
stretch, tile



the pic-
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little com-
screen.

picture
there you
options of
or centre.





SETTINGS:

You can set the computer to switch it-self off after a while, or just the screen, you can also set various other timers here, but play around with it yourself! It is quite good fun. With the settings set correctly, it will work out that you will never have to switch your pc of at



2. Using a Screen Saver:

You can set your computer to activate a screen saver if your computer has been inactive for a prolonged period of time. A screen saver, is a small program, which helps to prevent your screen from damage.

Here is how you go about setting the screen saver...

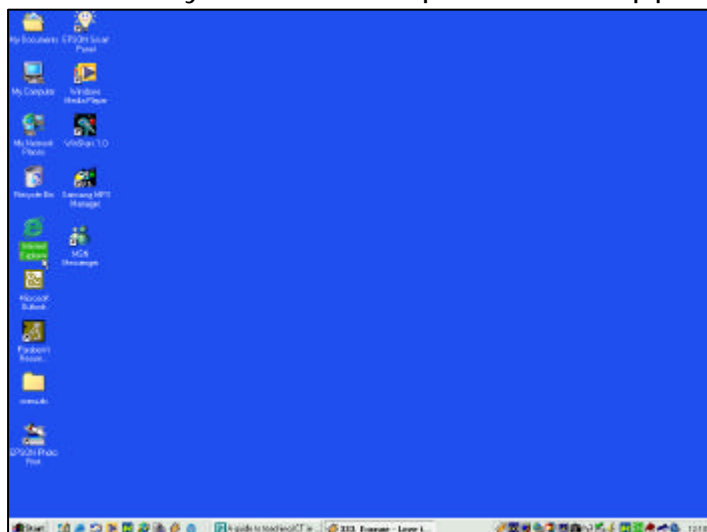
Firstly, left click your desktop where there isn't any icons, and click on properties (the same as when you've changed the wallpaper).

Step Two:
Click on the Screen Saver tab.

Step Three:
Choose your Screen Saver.



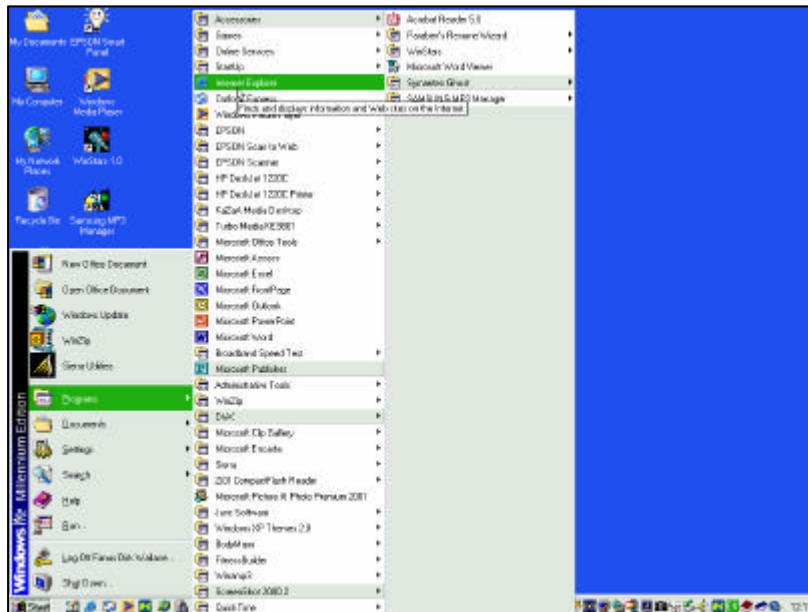
Pick the screen saver you like, and a preview will appear on the screen.



Step Four:
Click on the amount of time the computer has to wait before it activates, this can be anything from one minute up to 99 minutes.



Step Five:



Set your time before the computer switch off screen.

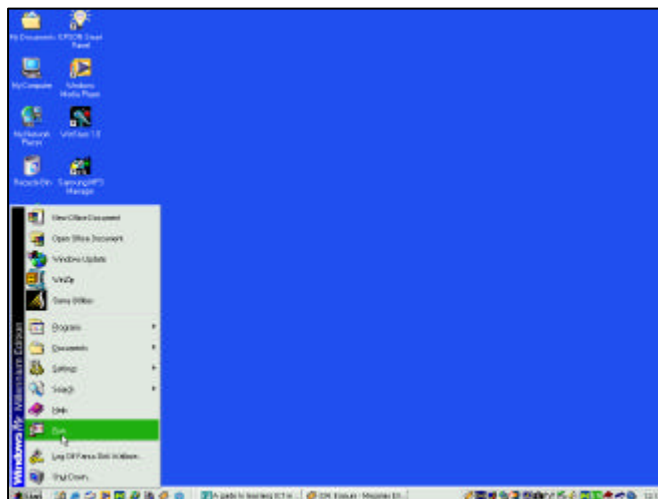
Click on Settings:

Chapter Seven:

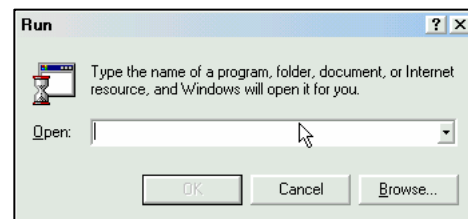
The Internet ...

The internet—a porthole to the world. Today, basically every computer in every household has access to the internet.

1. Configuring your Internet Connection:



Depending on the setup of your computer, the connection to the internet will differ. Usually, your service



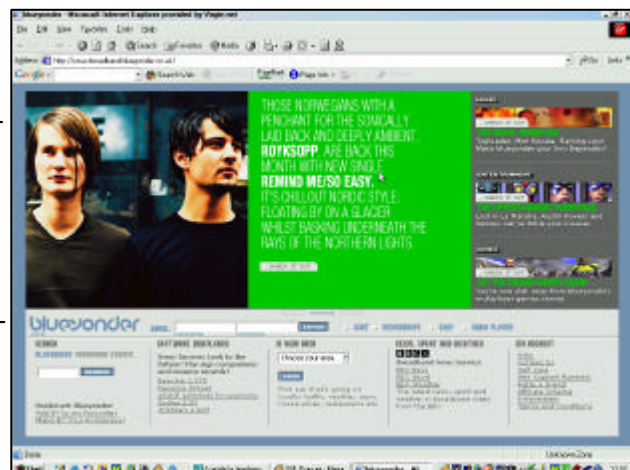
provider will provide you

with all the detail you need to configure your computer to access the internet.

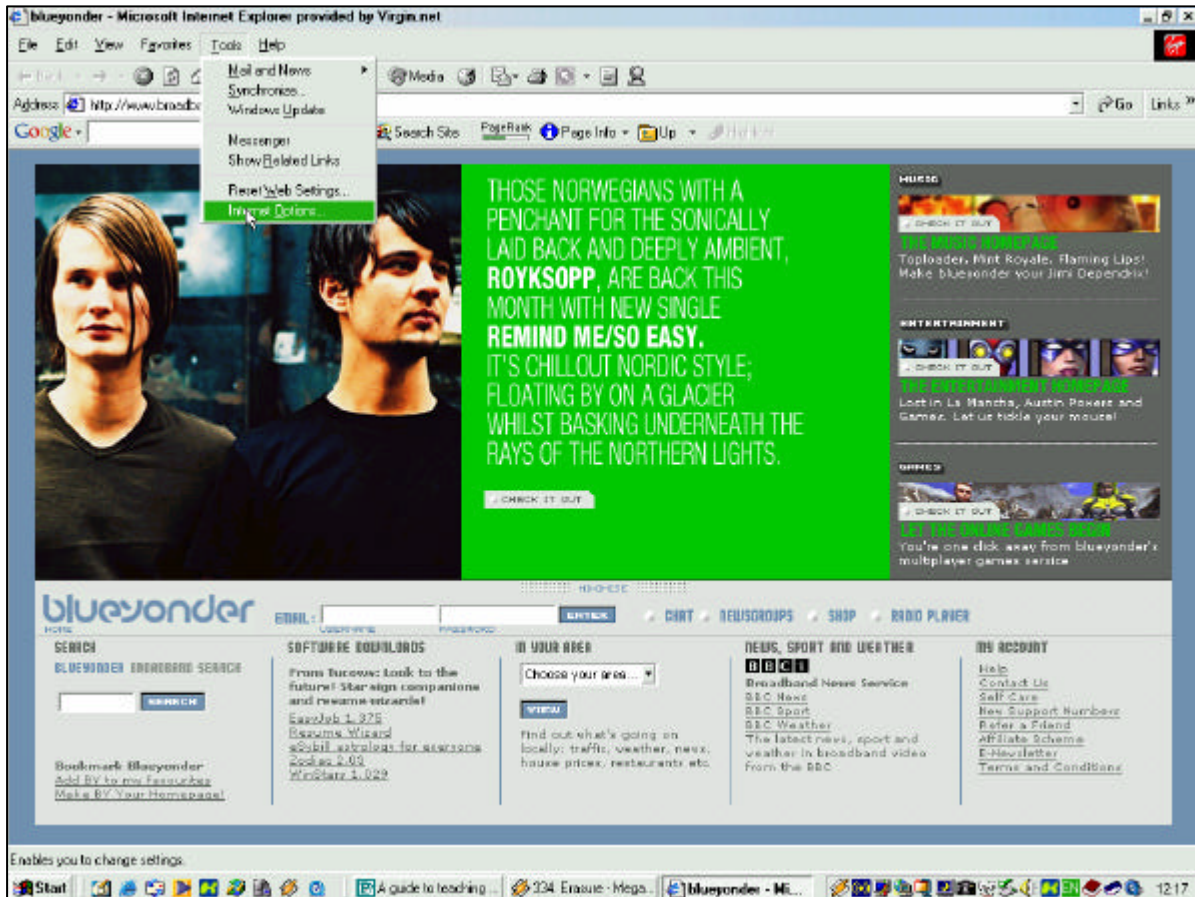
2. What do I need for Accessing the Internet?

Firstly, you will need either a modem (for Dial-up) connection through your telephone line, or you will need a network Card (NIC Card), for connection through a network or Cable Broadband.

These days, most computers are equipped with a modem and a network card, so all you need to do, is to decide which one you would like to use.



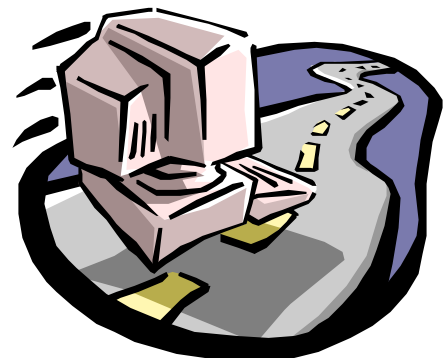
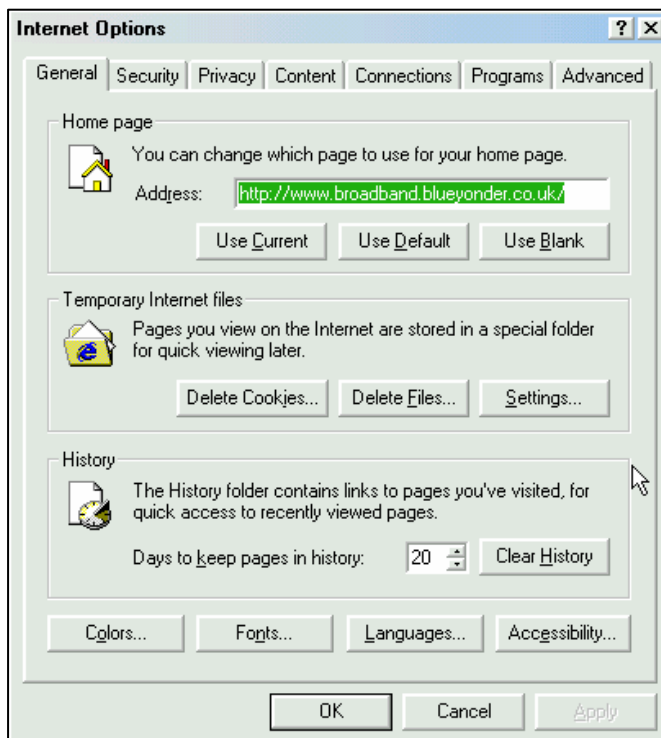
- **MODEM:** Usually, a modem connection is maximum 56kb/s. This is the speed



the computer is capable of transferring data between your computer and the service provider. The modem is connected to the telephone line, and that means, that while you are on the internet, you can not use the phone.

Service providers using a modem is; Free serve, AOL etc.

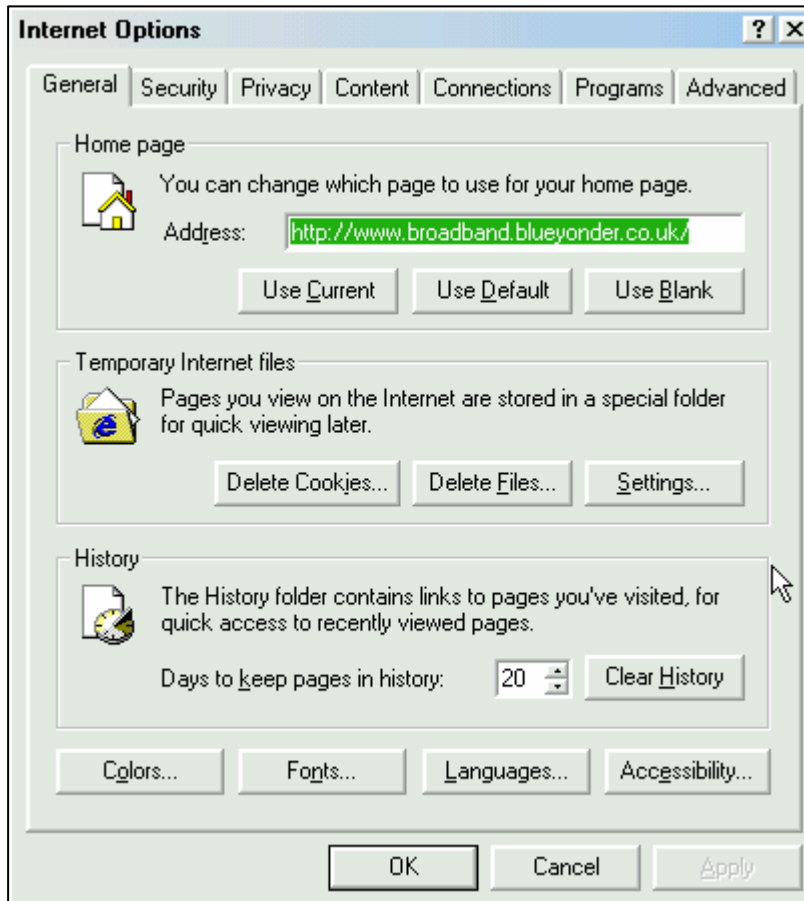
- **Broadband:** A broadband connection is for example Telewest's Blueyonder, or Broadband from BT. This is a high speed connection, via the cable network, and can run anything from 128kb to 1 MB. Here you need a network card, also known as a NIC (Network Interface



Card), a modem installed through your Service provider. This connection

for

Sec -
Internet
mally
pc, but
ers, will
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ware.
every
plorer—
much
scape!



freed up your telephone line, is 24 hours active, and is much much faster than a normal modem connection. There is no waiting a dial up (connecting to the service provider).

only, you will need Explorer. This comes with your most service provider—it provides it with the training their software. Microsoft is in court today, regarding Explorer—but I like Explorer more than Net-

Explorer is the program which allows you to access the different websites. We can think of it as the translator between your pc and the World Wide Web.

■ Going onto the Internet...

There are a few ways of accessing the internet, and as you get used to surfing the net—the easier it will become!

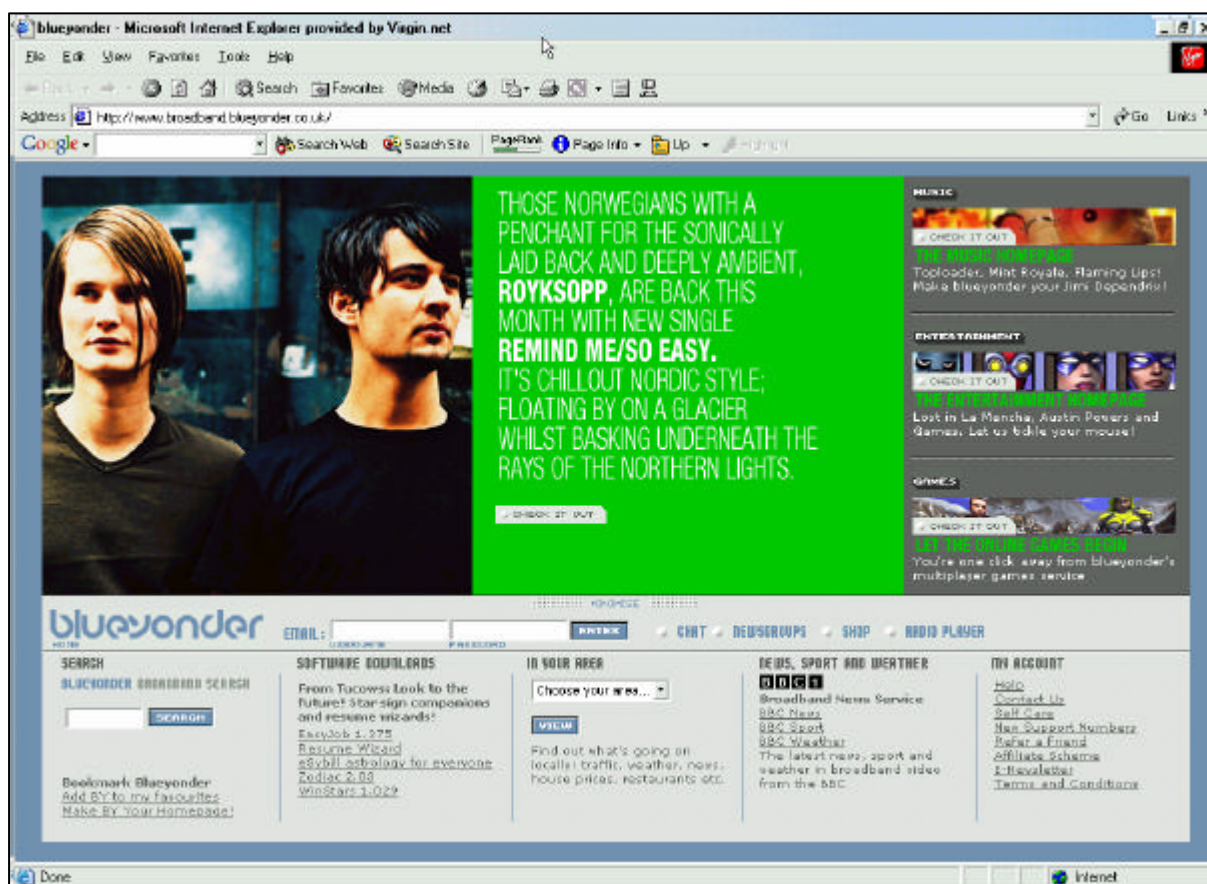
Method 1: Click on the Internet Explorer Icon on the Taskbar!

Method 2: Double Click Internet Explorer Icon on the Desktop!

Right Click for help ...

If you right click on a button, it will bring up a little window, "what's this" click on that window to find some basic help on the button!



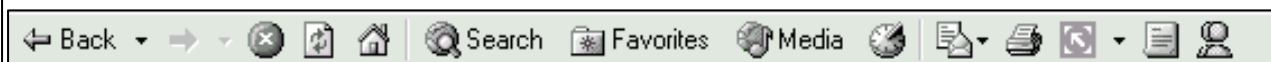


Method 3: Search for Internet Explorer in the Programs ...



FIREWALL: Due to the Firewall installed, also known as a filter, some websites can not be accessed, this is to protect the pupils from going to any porno-graphic or explicit web-sites. So just make sure, when you prepare a lesson, that you try the web-





Method 4: Type your address in directly ...



No matter which way you choose, you will go to Internet Explorer from there!

Your Homepage:

Your homepage is the page or Internet address Explorer will revert to, when you access the internet. You can change this to what ever you like, it is very useful if you visit a page very often, Most service providers set the homepage to be their website. You can pick it for yourself. Here is a simple way to change the page for your homepage ...

~~Step One: Click on Tools when you have opened Internet Explorer.~~