

You Can Always Learn More

For many of us it is a long time since we had any training in the use of a computer. We use them every day, often for significant lengths of time, but make very little investment in improving our skills, and improving the efficiency of the time we spend on the computer. Many of us have never had any formal training in the use of a computer. Either way it is a reasonable assumption that our skills could be improved with a little time and experience.

Continual Improvement

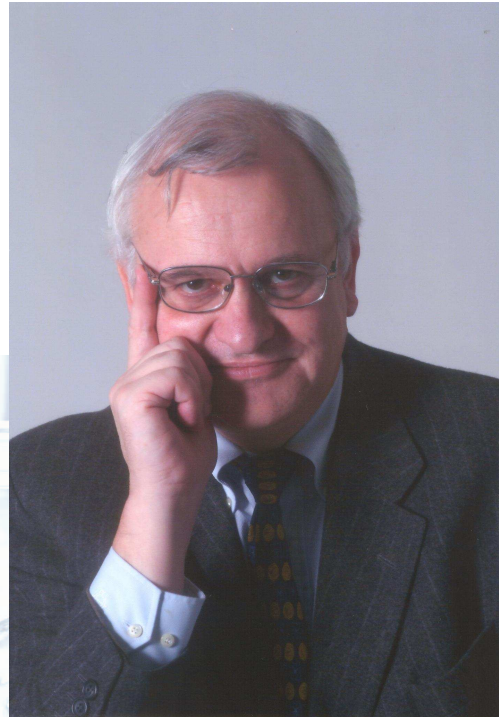
After all, computers have been improving. For example, for most of us the main operating system of our computers will have changed since our first experience with a PC. Perhaps you started on Windows 98 but now work with the latest version of XP, or you are on a network based on Windows 2000 machine. Do you know the full capabilities of either? Many of us started our word processing on WordPerfect, but were forced to switch to the ubiquitous Word. And do you still browse with Internet Explorer? Maybe Firefox offers something, or perhaps you would get more out of email if you knew more about Outlook. In the last few years computing has changed faster than at any time, and the rate of change is accelerating. With the use of broadband the Internet offers so many useful possibilities, from diary and contacts organization to disaster protection. It is important to keep up-to-date with the changes, so you can make the most of them for your business and home computing needs

Horses for courses

Different people have different needs. For many people a formal course could be the answer, while for others working through a book such as 'Computing for Dummies' would be good. But try to make sure you have the latest UK edition of any computing book. Or if you have an enquiring mind consider just working methodically through the menus of a particular program, and don't be shy of turning to the help section, it can be a great help in trying to understand the various functions. And if there's the manual, even a quick skim through it may show you things you didn't know about. Alternatively try typing a program name followed by 'tutorial' into Google. If you choose carefully there is some excellent free, web-based, material out there.

Practical Steps

It's a cliché, but the longest journey starts with a single step. Why not put some time aside each day, or each week, to learn more. Buy a book and work through a chapter each week. Consider a training course, or a web tutorial.



Handy Hint

To make a quick table in Excel, enter the values you want (for example, the dates of two consecutive Fridays) in two adjacent cells and then select the cells and drag the bottom right hand corner. This extends the values into further cells, giving, in this example, column headings of weekend dates.

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