



# A Guide to *Windows Vista*

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# SECTION 1

## GETTING STARTED ON THE PC

### 1.1

### Introduction

This guide aims to introduce you to the PC and Windows Vista.

The principles outlined in this guide are simple and intuitive. So even if you have never used a computer before, do not be intimidated. This guide assumes no previous experience of computers, although a basic understanding of the common elements of the keyboard is assumed.

The PC comes equipped with a monitor (screen), a base unit (the box housing the computer and hard disc drive situated under or alongside the monitor), a keyboard and a mouse (a plastic device with a wire coming out of it and two buttons on top). All of these components will become familiar to you as you read through the guide.

When you switch on the PC it starts up a computer program known as Windows which allows you to manipulate information or files.



## 1.2

### Turning on the PC

To use the PC both the monitor (screen) and the base unit need to be switched on.

- Turn on the monitor by pressing its ON button, which can be found on the bottom of the monitor or along one of its sides.
- Turn on the base unit by pressing its ON button, which can be found on a button at the front of the base unit.

The computer will now start-up, and this may take several minutes.

**Problem?** The screen has been completely blank for over a minute.

**Solution:** Perhaps the electricity is not getting to the computer. Are both the monitor and the base unit switched on? Are they switched on at the mains electricity supply? Seek assistance if you still have problems.

## 1.3

### Turning the Computer Off

It is important to follow the correct steps to switch off otherwise you can damage the computer. If you are using a program, make sure you exit from the program, saving your work before you do.

If necessary log off, and then from the **Start** menu choose **Shut Down** from the pop-up menu.

Unless the computer switches off automatically, switch off the computer both at the button on the monitor and on the base unit. See Section 1.2.

## SECTION 2

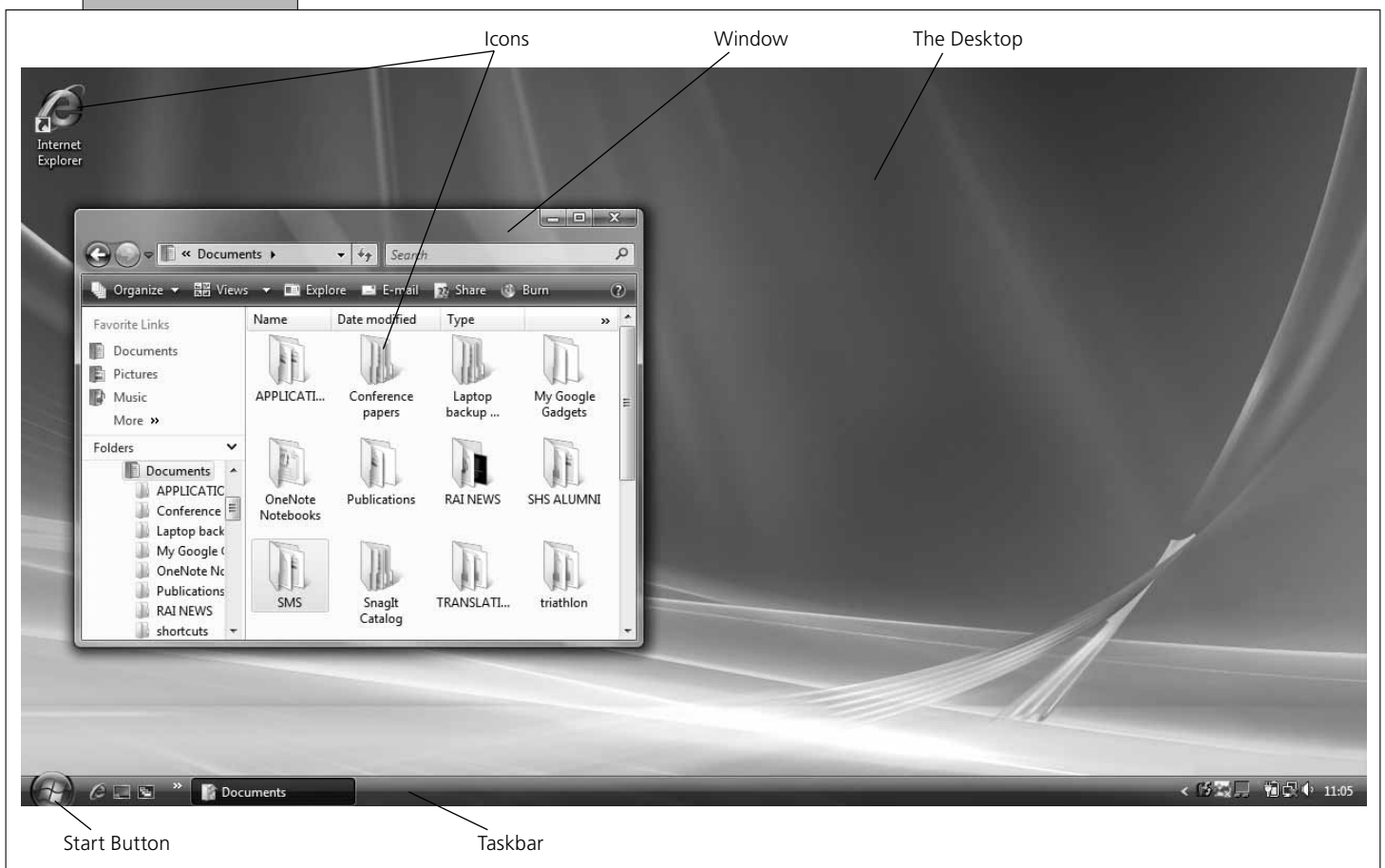
### GETTING STARTED WITH WINDOWS

# 2.1

#### Windows and the Desktop

When the PC is starting up you may be asked to login, particularly if the computer you are using is part of a network or in use by several people. Once started up the screen display should now be similar to the figure below.

The Desktop is the large blank area of the screen on which windows and icons are displayed. In the illustration below the icons for Microsoft Outlook, Internet Explorer and the Recycle Bin are shown.



The Taskbar is also displayed along the bottom of the screen and to the far left is the Start button.

On the illustration above a typical window is also displayed, in this case the important **Documents** window which is where you will save all your important files/documents. You will notice that icons are also displayed in the window.

After you learn how to use the mouse you will be able to arrange windows and the items on the desktop in the way that you want.

## 2.2

## Using the Mouse

Using the Mouse is central to the way Windows works and you will find that you can do most things you want to do just by using the mouse.

You will notice a black outlined white arrow somewhere on the screen; this is known as the Mouse pointer or Pointer. Every move you make with the mouse resting on the desk moves the pointer in exactly the same way. Usually the pointer is shaped like an arrow, but it changes shape depending on what you are doing.

You will have best control over the pointer if you hold the mouse with the mouse cable pointing directly away from you. If you run out of room for the mouse, if it goes off the table, for instance, lift the mouse up and put it down again where you have more room.

Lifting the mouse does not move the pointer. Using the mouse might feel a little awkward at first, but it will soon be second nature to you. Like most things it needs a bit of practice.

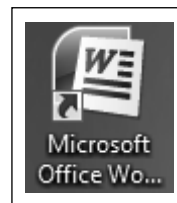
There are two buttons on the top of the mouse, though generally only the left hand button need concern us. This button is used to select items on the screen.

## 2.3

## Icons

Icons are intended to convey their meaning and function to the user and often they correspond to their purpose, eg. the Recycle Bin is used for discarding what you no longer need.

Occasionally icons are less meaningful like the **Internet Explorer** and **Microsoft Word** icons. You will soon grow familiar with their appearance and function.



To do anything with an icon it must first be **Selected**. This is done by moving the pointer until its tip is on the icon you wish to select and by clicking the mouse button once. To indicate that it is selected the icon and name will be shown highlighted.

Selecting is an important idea with Windows, and it has a specific meaning: you must always first select the icon you want to adapt or amend. To change your mind, de-select the icon by clicking on something else, perhaps the desktop.

Once an icon has been selected you can use the mouse to move it. This is useful if you want to re-arrange your desktop. For example, position the pointer on any icon, then press and hold down the mouse button while you move the mouse. As you do this the pointer moves and drags the icon together with its name. And when you release the mouse button, the icon snaps into its new position. This technique is called **Click and Drag**.

## 2.4

## Programs and Documents

The main use of a computer is to use particular Programs to create Documents. Once created a document can be edited, organised, printed and saved and returned to at a later date. Windows is responsible for co-ordinating all of these functions.

### PROGRAMS

Also commonly referred to as Software Applications these are used to perform a particular type of task, for example:

- Wordprocessor for writing
- Spreadsheet for calculating
- A Graphics program for drawing

### DOCUMENTS/FILES

Most of these are created by Programs and may include:

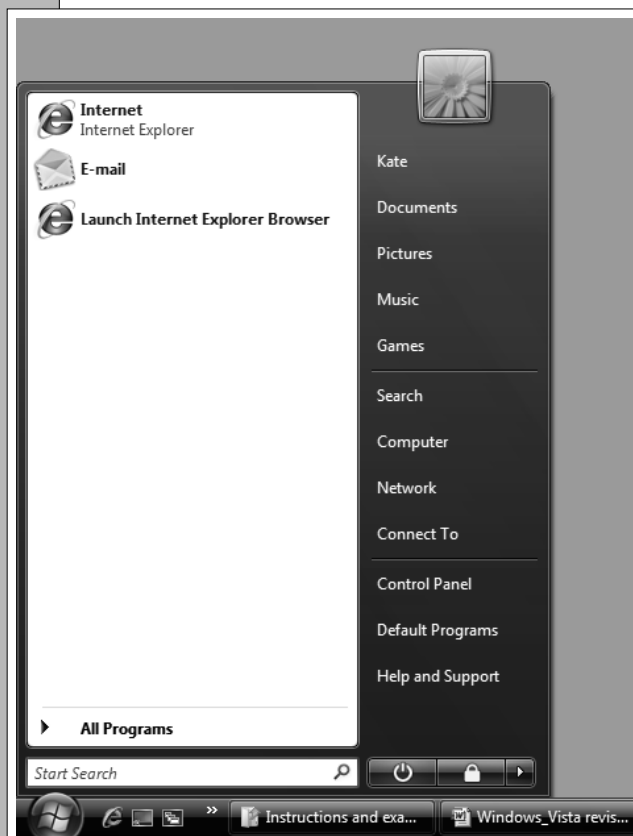
- Text written on a wordprocessor
- Budget calculated on a spreadsheet
- Map drawn using a graphics program

There are several ways in which you can start a program such as the wordprocessor Word. This guide will show you two of these ways – Using the **Start** button and by double-clicking on the document you wish to open.

## 2.5

## The Start Button

The left-most button on the **Task Bar** is called the **Start** button. This is used to control most of your everyday use of the computer such as starting up programs like Word, opening recently used documents, searching for information, finding help and many other things besides.



To use the **Start** button, move the mouse so that the tip of the pointer is on top of the button, press the left mouse button once and then release the button. This reveals a list of items (commands) called a menu. The commands on the menu are chosen by moving the pointer on top of the command and clicking the mouse button ONCE. Alongside some of the commands are small arrow heads and moving the pointer to one of these reveals a further menu of related commands. These, too, may display small arrows alongside indicating that further refinement in the menu choice can be made.