

Digital Tools for Low-Skilled Learners

A friendly, practical guide for getting started

Digital skills are learnable. People begin with different experiences, access, confidence, and ways of learning. No starting point is wrong.

Skill levels vary, and learning is supported through patience, repetition, accessible instructions, and choice. You can go at your own pace, practise one step at a time, and choose the tools that matter to you.

Remember: You do not need to know everything before you begin. Asking for help, trying again, and taking a break are all part of learning.

How to use this guide

- **Choose** one useful task to practise first.
- **Follow** the steps slowly and repeat them when needed.
- **Adapt** the instructions to your device, access needs, language, and preferences.
- **Notice** what you can do now, even if it is one small step.

1. Getting started

Begin with the basic actions you will use often. It is fine to practise the same action several times before it feels familiar.

- ☐ **Power and charging.** Find the power button, connect the charger safely, and check whether the device shows that it is charging.
- ☐ **Connect to Wi-Fi.** Open the network settings, choose the correct network name, and enter the password carefully. Ask before joining an unfamiliar network.
- ☐ **Adjust sound.** Use the volume controls or sound settings to make audio comfortable. Check that sound is not muted when you expect to hear something.
- ☐ **Change text size.** Look in display, accessibility, or text settings and choose a size that is easy for you to read.
- ☐ **Use safe passwords.** Create a different password for important accounts. Avoid easy-to-guess details, and do not share passwords in public or ordinary messages.
- ☐ **Ask for help.** Tell someone what you were trying to do, what you expected, and what happened instead.

A helpful sentence: “I am trying to open my email. I tapped the sign-in button, but I cannot see what happens next. Can we look at it together?”

2. Communication tools

Digital communication can help you stay connected, organise plans, and ask for support. Choose the method that feels clearest and most comfortable.

- **Email.** Write a clear subject, greet the person, explain your main point, and check the recipient before sending. Attach only the files you mean to share.
- **Messaging.** Use short messages when that helps. Check who will receive a group message before sharing personal details or images.
- **Video calls.** Test the camera, microphone, sound, and connection before the call if possible. You can turn video off if you prefer.
- **Calendars.** Add the date, time, place or meeting link, and a reminder. Check the time zone when people are in different places.

Respectful digital communication

- ☐ **Pause before sending.** Reread the message and check the tone.
- ☐ **Be clear and kind.** Use plain words, and allow time for a reply.
- ☐ **Protect privacy.** Share only what is needed with the people who need it.
- ☐ **Check understanding.** Ask, “Does this make sense?” or “Would another format be easier?”

3. Finding and understanding information

The first result in a search is not always the best answer. Take a moment to compare information and decide whether it is useful for your purpose.

1. Start with a few clear search words, such as the topic, place, service, or question you need help with.
2. Read the heading and a short part of the page before deciding whether it answers your question.
3. Check the source. Look for the organisation or person responsible, the date, contact details, and information from other trusted sources.
4. Notice warning signs: urgent pressure, promises that seem too good to be true, extreme language, missing evidence, or requests for money or private information.
5. Compare important information in more than one reliable place, especially for health, money, legal, or safety decisions.
6. Save useful information in a way you can find again, such as a bookmark, a note, or a clearly named file. Write down where it came from and when you saved it.

Pause before sharing: If a message makes you feel rushed, frightened, or unusually excited, stop and check it with a trusted person or another reliable source.

4. Creating and sharing

You can create useful digital content without making it perfect. Start with a simple document, note, image, or message and improve it as you learn.

1. Open a writing tool or choose a simple template for a letter, list, poster, or plan.
2. Write the main information first. Use headings, short paragraphs, or a list to make it easier to read.
3. Add an image or link only when it helps. Check that the image is appropriate and that the link goes to the place you expect.
4. Save your work early and save again after important changes.
5. Name files clearly, for example “Appointment questions - May” or “Budget plan - first draft.”
6. Before sharing, check the people who can view, comment on, or edit the file. Choose the least access that still lets others help.

Choose your first tools

Choose one row that matches something you want to do. A person who supports you can help you practise the first step.

Tool or task	What it helps with	First step	Who can support me
Email	Sending messages and files	Open the inbox and find “New message”	A trusted person, tutor, or colleague
Messaging	Quick contact with a person or group	Open one conversation and send a short hello	A friend, family member, or support worker
Video call	Talking with people face to face from different places	Join a practice call and test the microphone	A tutor, colleague, or trusted person
Map or directions	Planning a journey	Search for a place and review the route	A travel companion or local support service
Online form	Applying, registering, or making a request	Read the first question and identify what information is needed	A service worker, tutor, or trusted person
Simple document	Writing, planning, or keeping notes	Open a blank page and write a title	A colleague, tutor, or library worker

5. Everyday practical tools

Digital tools can support ordinary tasks. You can use them in the way that works for you, alongside paper, conversation, or other support.

- **Maps and directions.** Search for a place, check the route, notice travel time, and confirm the starting point. Keep a written note or screenshot if that helps.
- **Online forms.** Read one question at a time. Look for required fields, save a draft when available, and review your answers before sending.
- **Bookings.** Check the date, time, location, cost, cancellation information, and confirmation message before finishing.
- **Translation.** Use translation to support understanding, then check important details with a person or trusted source when accuracy matters.
- **Accessibility features.** Explore text size, contrast, captions, screen reading, voice input, magnification, keyboard settings, or reduced movement. Choose what makes the task easier.

- **Online services.** Find the official service page, keep confirmation details, and ask for another way to complete the task if online access is difficult.

Make it work for you: A digital tool is useful when it supports your goal. It is always reasonable to use a different format, more time, or another person's help.

6. Staying safe and private

Safety habits help you make informed choices. If something goes wrong, you deserve support and there is usually a next step.

- **Notice scams.** Be careful with unexpected messages about prizes, payments, deliveries, account problems, or urgent requests.
- **Check suspicious links.** Do not open a link just because a message tells you to. Check the sender and use the official app or website instead when possible.
- **Review privacy settings.** Check who can see your profile, posts, location, files, and contact details. Choose settings that feel right for you.
- **Protect personal information.** Treat passwords, identification numbers, banking details, addresses, and private images carefully. Share them only through a trusted service when necessary.
- **Use two-factor authentication.** When available, add a second sign-in step, such as a code or an approval on another device.
- **Be careful on public Wi-Fi.** Avoid sensitive tasks on open networks when possible. Sign out when finished and use your own connection for private activity if you can.

If something goes wrong: Stop and do not send more information. Close the message or page, tell a trusted person or service, change the affected password from a safe place, and report the problem when appropriate. You are not to blame for being targeted.

7. Learning strategies

Learning works best when it is steady, practical, and connected to your own goals.

- ☐ **Start with one task.** Choose something useful, such as sending one message or finding one route.
- ☐ **Use step-by-step instructions.** Follow one action, check what happened, and then continue.
- ☐ **Practise safely.** Use a practice file, test message, or pretend form before using important information.
- ☐ **Take breaks.** Pause when you feel tired, frustrated, or overloaded. Return when you are ready.

- ☐ **Keep a personal glossary.** Write down words such as “attachment,” “ settings,” or “sign in” in language that makes sense to you.
- ☐ **Celebrate progress.** Record what you completed, including small steps and things you can now explain to someone else.

Quick practice plan

Use these three short activities for a first session. Stop after any activity if you need a break.

- ☐ **Activity 1. Find your way around:** Locate the power, volume, text-size, Wi-Fi, and help settings.
- ☐ **Activity 2. Complete one safe task:** Open a practice document, write a title, save it with a clear name, and close it.
- ☐ **Activity 3. Explain the steps:** Tell a support person how you completed the task, or write the steps in your own words.

When I need help

Asking for help is a normal part of learning. These prompts can help you describe the problem without shame:

- “I am trying to _____.”
- “I expected _____, but I saw or heard _____.”
- “The last step I remember is _____.”
- “I have already tried _____.”
- “Could you show me slowly, explain the words, or write down the steps?”
- “I need a break. Can we continue later?”

My personal action plan

Choose one small goal and fill in the fields. You can update this plan as your confidence grows.

Field	My notes
Tool I want to learn	_____
Why it matters to me	_____
First small step	_____
Support person	_____
Practice date	_____
What I can now do	_____