



## Using the mouse and keyboard:

### What is a Mouse?



A computer mouse is a hand-held pointing device that allows you to control the movement of a pointer on the computer screen. This pointer is called the cursor. The cursor acts like a virtual finger that presses buttons and selects items on the screen. A mouse has two buttons (left and right) and often features a scroll wheel.

The ability to properly navigate a computer screen with a mouse is essential, as the mouse is used for virtually all movement within the computing environment.

### The Cursor:

The cursor may appear in several different forms, depending on where it is, what is on the screen, and what you are doing. There are many forms, but here are some common ones:

The cursor typically appears as an **arrow**.



If there is a button or a link on to click on the cursor turns into a **hand**.



When the cursor is on a document or a text entry box on a webpage it turns into an **i-beam**.



### Holding the Mouse:

The key to good mouse control is a steady hand. Pinch the mouse firmly between your thumb and third and fourth fingers. Resting your whole arm—or at least your wrist—on the desk helps to stabilize the mouse; otherwise the cursor can jump around on the screen. Many of the items to be clicked are quite small, so you

must be able to stop the mouse on that exact spot and then steadily click the left (or right) button.

### **How the Mouse Works on the Computer Screen:**

To open or select something on the screen, use the mouse to place the cursor over it and click by quickly pressing and releasing the left button. Try not to move the mouse as you click. Sometimes double-clicking is necessary, which means pressing the left mouse button twice in rapid succession.

The right mouse button is used only occasionally. Right clicking displays a menu with more options. The options change based on what was clicked. When this menu appears, chose an option by clicking the left mouse button.

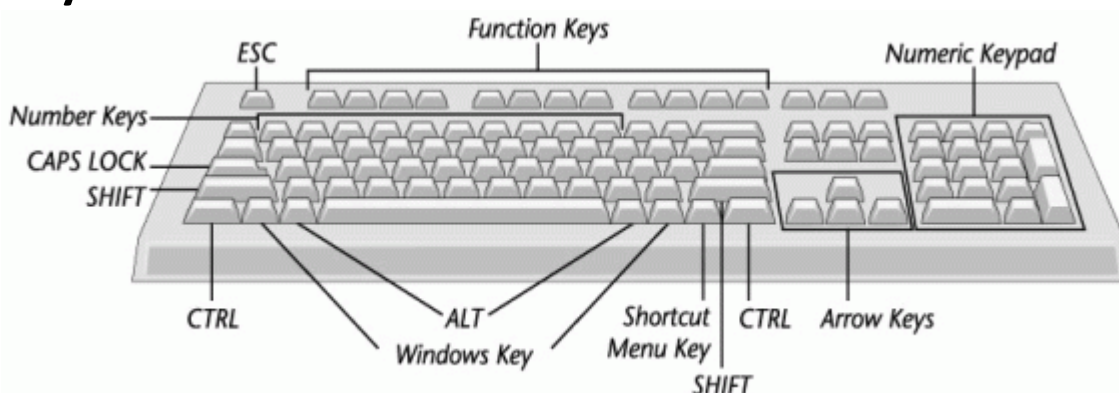
If the mouse has a scroll wheel, moving it up or down scrolls the page up and down the screen.

### **Practice Using the Mouse:**

Now let's practice using the mouse with an online tutorial. Open Internet Explorer by clicking on the blue "e" in the taskbar at the bottom left of the screen. In the address bar at the top, type [www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/intro.htm](http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/intro.htm) Feel free to use this tutorial as many times as needed to feel comfortable.

Additionally, Windows typically includes simple games that can help with mouse agility, including Solitaire, FreeCell, Hearts, and Minesweeper. They can be accessed through the start menu: click *Start (bottom left corner Windows logo)* then click *All Programs* then click *Games* then click to open your game.

### **Keyboard basics:**



The computer takes a familiar tool like a keyboard and empowers it with useful additions and functions. Although a computer keyboard is based on the old typewriter layout, there are some major differences in the ways that keys are used. Computer keyboards also have additional keys. Learning to use the unique keys and special functions of the computer keyboard can save you time and make you more comfortable with your computer.

### **Return or Enter Key:**

This key is usually marked Return or Enter, but sometimes is labeled with only a large arrow. This key is used to enter commands or to move the cursor to the beginning of the next line. Also, in every dialog box there is a default button or box that is recognizable by its bold or segmented outline. Pressing the Enter key will select that choice. (There is sometimes a second Enter key on the numeric keypad. This works exactly like the larger Enter key near the alphabet letters.)

### **Escape Key:**

The Escape key, which is marked ESC on most keyboards, is basically used to exit or escape from programs and tasks. In many cases, it will have no effect at all. However, it can sometimes get you out of trouble by making the computer go back or escape to a previous screen.

### **Control Key (CTRL):**

The CTRL key is used in conjunction with another key. Holding it down while pressing another key will initiate a certain action. CTRL key combinations are defined by the application being used. Some, however, have become a standard. The most commonly used is, CTRL+C to copy and CTRL+V to paste. Also in many programs CTRL+S will save the current file or document, and CTRL+P will print the current file or document. CTRL+Z will often undo your last action.

### **Caps Lock:**

The Caps Lock key is a toggle key. Pressing it once turns it on. Pressing it again turns it off. Some computer keyboards have a light or indicator that shows when the Caps Lock is on and when it is off. When Caps Lock is on, every letter that is typed will be a capital letter. Unlike a typewriter, the Caps Lock key on a computer keyboard affects only letters. It has no effect on the number or symbol keys. The Number Lock or Num Lock key works similarly to Caps Lock.

If you have questions don't hesitate to contact the library by calling or emailing the Reference Desk  
adult@indiantrailslibrary.org  
847-459-4100



**INDIAN TRAILS  
LIBRARY DISTRICT**

355 Schoenbeck Road, Wheeling, IL 60090  
www.indiantrailslibrary.org | 847. 459. 4100