

Learning to use the Computer and the Internet

So often I hear folks who have just purchased a computer and sometimes from people who've had a computer for years say, "there's just so much to learn!"

All it takes is a warm body and a willing spirit! We all started right where you are now.

I retired and moved to The Villages in June, 1997. My previous experience with computers was with specific programs built for the clinical laboratory, Quicken and a couple different word processors. I had no previous experience with the internet. Most of what I know about computers now, I learned since about August 1997. Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks? You can learn too **if you're willing to spend the time and make the effort.**

Here are a few tips that helped me. I went to Windows Explorer and double-clicked each and EVERY yellow folder. I had no idea what most of them were. I would then scroll down the right side of the page where the files were listed and any file that was named README, I doubleclicked to bring it up and printed it.

When we went away on trips, the 3 ring binder with the README files went with me along with my Windows for Dummies and AOL for Dummies books. I read these, highlighted them and turned corners down for things that I would try when I got home. I got a laptop later so I could try things while away.

Yes, I was scared to death at first to do anything, for fear I would destroy this expensive 'toy', my computer. Often, I couldn't make it do what I wanted it to do. So I would click the X at the top right corner to get out of that program and search and read some more, and ask more questions.

I learned to look for each program's tutorial by bringing up the program and then clicking on HELP(or clicking the ? at the right end of the menu bar) and typing in tutorial or just scrolling down the list of the HELP indexes. Often I found items that "clicked" with my memory so I would click on that help word and read about it. Most Operating Systems have a Tutorial. Use Help and Search to find these if they're not listed under Accessories/System Tools.

These are just a few of the things that I did to reduce the learning curve quickly that is part of every learning experience. I am still learning new things every day, but it does require effort and time. Learning has always been an exciting adventure for me.

My motto is **"to learn and to pass it on"**. The best way to retain what you learn is by teaching another person.

God speed, Jmax