

Getting online and digital equipment

Want to know more about how to use digital technology such as the internet, computers, tablet devices, mobile phones and find out what this technology could do for you? You've come to right place! There's lots of support available in Newcastle to help you to get online, learn new skills, access technology and try new things.

Types of digital equipment

With all the options to choose from, it's easily to feel overwhelmed when thinking about buying digital equipment. The first step is to think about what type of device you want and what you might use it for.

The main types of digital devices are:

- **computers** – can be a PC that sits on your desk or a laptop that is portable. You can use computers to type documents, send emails, play games, and browse the Internet. You can also use it to edit or create spreadsheets, presentations, and even videos.
- **mobile phones** are pocket-sized and useful for staying connected when you're out and about. Basic mobile phones can be used to make calls or 'text' other mobile phones.
- **smartphones** are a type of mobile phone but work more like a tiny computer, allowing you to browse the internet, send emails and much more. They usually have a touchscreen so only have buttons to switch it on and off. You can also download 'apps' (short for applications), which you can use to play games, get directions, access news, books, weather, and more.
- **tablets (e.g. iPad)** are small portable devices that let you do many of the same things a computer can do, but are most often used to browse the Internet, read email, and watch videos. They are roughly the size of a book and have a touchscreen, so only have buttons for switching on and off.
- **e-book readers (e.g. Kindle)** are portable devices used for reading books electronically. They are larger than a mobile phone but smaller than a tablet, and can store a large number of electronic books. They also allow you to read in large print
- **games consoles** these devices rely on speed and download time; they can be used to access You Tube and the internet as well.
- **webcams** short for 'web cameras' are a digital camera that you can connect to your computer. It can send live video recording from your computer to another location by means of the internet and they sometimes have a built in microphone so your video recording also has sound. Webcams are commonly built into laptops, tablets and mobile/smartphones.

[Digital Unite](#) have some very helpful [online guides](#), introducing you to various computer basics including emailing, smartphones and tablets, creating documents, Internet security and social networking.

[Ability Net](#) support disabled people to access and use technology to meet their needs.

What's so good about using the Internet?

Using the internet can open up a whole new range of opportunities to you, allow you to connect with family and friends, save money and time and learn new things. For example you could order your food shopping online, watch TV, listening to music and talk to your friends.

Read more on InformationNOW on:

- [What you can do online](#) – including shopping, watching tv and reading the news
 - [Keeping in touch with friends and family online](#) – including sending and receiving emails, and using Skype, What's App and Zoom.
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I'm new to computers where do I start?

There are many courses available in the city for all levels ranging from drop in sessions for beginners , to weekly classes for more advanced computer skills.

For more details on courses and drop in sessions read more on InformationNOW on:

- [Computer Classes and IT Support](#)
 - [Lifelong Learning](#)
 - [Digital Unite](#)'s guide on [using the Internet](#) takes you through the basics including getting connected, searching and browsing and much more.
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I don't have a computer or the internet at home what can I do?

You can access computers for free at your local hubs and [Newcastle Libraries](#). There are many other organisations that offer computer access and computer skills sessions too.

[Online Centres Network](#) offers access to computers and classes. They provide people with the skills and confidence they need to access digital technology. Search for the nearest centre to you on their website.

[Newcastle City Council](#) has created an interactive map to search for places in Newcastle where you can get free or low cost access to computers, training and support.

[Newcastle Carers](#) has computers available for carers to use at their centre in Byker. You can book a computer by contacting them.

Help to buy computer equipment

It can be expensive to purchase new computer equipment, however once you have bought the equipment you could save money when [buying things online](#), or [accessing cheaper energy rates](#). There are some organisations that can help you purchase electrical equipment and access affordable credit.

[Better ConNEcted](#) have more information on their website about

- low cost unlimited phone data for unemployed people
- low cost community wifi
- refurbished phones, laptops or tablets
- donating your old IT equipment
- free IT training

[Getonline@home](#) (operated by Microsoft and Simplifydigital to help people to get online) offer new customers a free refurbished PC or a refurbished laptop for £59 when you sign up to a new broadband and phone deal from your choice of provider. Simplifydigital will help you find the best value broadband service that's right for you.

[Happus.eu](#) provide access to affordable equipment helping everybody buy a PC, laptop or tablet so they can get online and be part of our ever changing world.

[SmarterBuys](#) may support you to buy products if you live in social or Council housing

[Affordable credit](#) may be an option to you if you need to make a big purchase for a laptop or mobile device.

[Affordable electrical items](#) are available. You may be able to purchase a second hand or refurbished device online. Some mobile phone providers offer refurbished handsets at a lower price. Online sellers such as Ebay, Facebook Marketplace or Gumtree may offer cheaper options too. However be careful when purchasing second hand items from individuals online.

Other useful information

[Staying safe online](#)

[Making your mobile phone easier to use](#)

[Digital Candle](#) provide free digital advice for charities.

[Better ConNEcted](#) support local business, organisations and authorities to be more disability accessible, digitally inclusive and offer practical solutions to help more people to get online.

[Digital Pathfinders](#) helps SMEs, charities and social enterprises across Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland become more successful and resilient by adopting digital technology.

[Digital Voice](#) works with people and communities to access the internet and online information

Useful Organisations

Newcastle Carers

Email: info@newcastlecarers.org.uk

Website: www.newcastlecarers.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 275 5060

Address: 135-139 Shields Road, NE6 1DN

Newcastle Libraries

Email: information@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-tourism/libraries

Telephone: 0191 277 4100

Address: Newcastle City Library, NE1 8AX

Digital Unite

Email: du@digitalunite.com

Website: www.digitalunite.com

Telephone: 0191 277 4100

Learn My Way

Email: hello@goodthingsfoundation.org

Website: www.learnmyway.com

Telephone: 0191 277 4100

BrowseAloud

Email: info@browsealoud.com

Website: www.browsealoud.com

Telephone: 028 9442 8105

Address: Lucas Exchange, BT41 2RU

Ability Net

Email: dsa@abilitynet.org.uk

Website: www.abilitynet.org.uk

Telephone: 01926 464 095

Address: MEA House, NE1 8XS

Smarterbuys

Email: info@smarterbuys.org.uk

Website: www.smarterbuys.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 500 0975

Address: Craghead Village Hall , DH9 6AN

Happus.eu

Email: hello@happus.eu

Website: <http://www.happus.eu>

Telephone: 03300 105 599

Address: Britannia House, CF83 3GG

Getonline@home

Email: info@computerrecyclersuk.com

Website: <https://www.getonlineathome.org/>

Telephone: 03300 105 599

Digital Voice

Email: julie@digitalvoice.org.uk

Website: <https://www.digitalvoice.org.uk/>

Telephone: 01207 566 866

Address: Chopwell Community Centre, NE17 7HS

Digital Candle

Email: hello@digitalcandle.org.uk

Website: <https://www.digitalcandle.org.uk/>

Telephone: 01207 566 866

Better ConNEcted

Email: betterconnectedne@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.betterconnected.org.uk/>

Telephone: 07762 946 970

Citizens Online

Email: info@citizensonline.org.uk

Website: <https://www.citizensonline.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0808 196 5883

Address: The Exchange , GL5 1DF

Media Savvy CIC

Email: info@mediasavvycic.co.uk

Website: <https://www.mediasavvycic.co.uk>

Telephone: 07873 176 145

Address: 27 Norfolk Street, SR1 1EE

Digital Pathfinders

Email: hello@digitalpathfinders.uk

Website: <https://www.digitalpathfinders.uk/>

Telephone: 0191 716 5085

Online Centres Network

Email: hello@goodthingsfoundation.org

Website: <https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/>

Telephone: 0114 349 1666

Address: Good Things Foundation , S11 0GU

Related Articles

[Internet and Broadband](#)

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[Staying safe online](#)

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