

Welcome to the World of Digital | Digital Skills Worth Learning | Continue Learning

Digital Skills Guide



People matter, results count.

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The Digital Revolution

The Digital Revolution has changed the way people work for ever. There are very few occupations or industries around today that haven't been influenced by the rise and reach of information technology and the speed at which it is changing the world. The few jobs that haven't yet been touched by technology will soon need to adapt to keep up with the constantly changing digital world around them.

Today everyone needs to learn new digital skills, whether they're studying for exams, considering taking further education, or applying for a new job – whether it be in an office, in retail or on an oil rig, they all require digital skills.



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The Four DRAW Skills

Employers have always valued the three core skills of Reading, Arithmetic and Writing. But now there's a fourth - Digital. Having the four DRAW skills enables people of all ages and experience to be a valuable employee in any industry sector, whilst also giving them a solid foundation to keep on studying and learning– whatever they choose to do.

So how do people acquire digital skills? How does one keep them up to date when the world of technology moves ever faster and faster? Which skills are worth learning today? Where can people learn and practice them? This guide aims to provide some of the answers to those questions.

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The good news is that the fast pace of the world of technology is nothing to be scared about. Continuous change means new opportunities. Some digital skills and many digital jobs, didn't exist just five years ago. This trend hasn't stopped and new jobs are being created all the time. It's anyone's guess which jobs will emerge in five years' time, that don't exist today. What is certain is almost all jobs in the future will require some sort of digital skill, even those working in a technology based roles are consistently learning new skills to keep ahead of the game. Many new digital skills are in great demand by employers because few people have had time to become expert at them.



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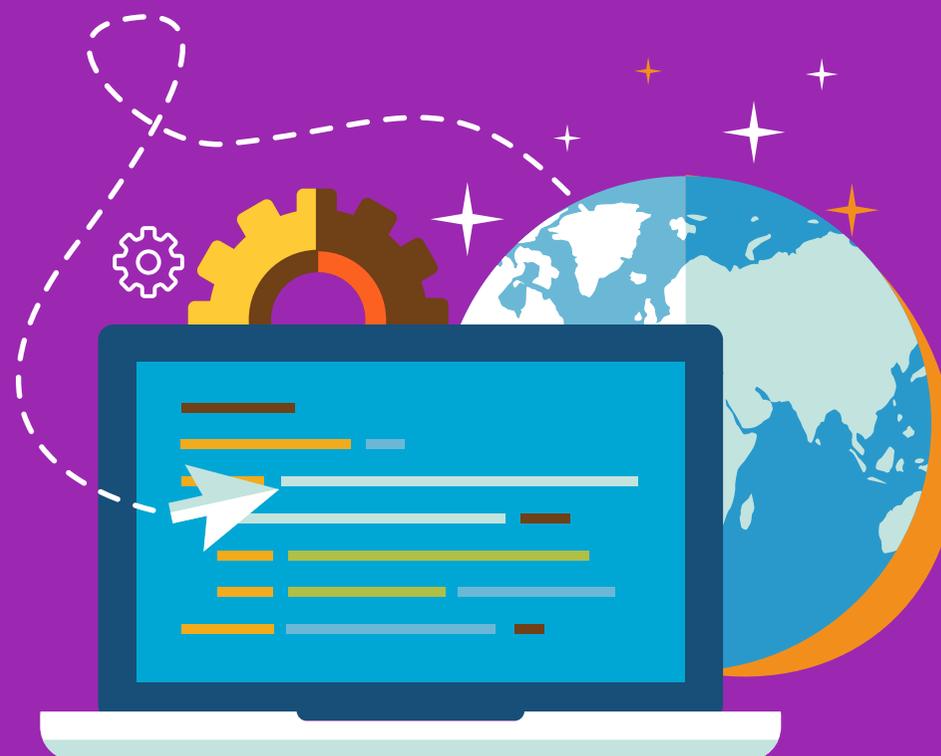
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Navigating the web

Unless you live on Mars you're probably already adept at navigating your way around the Web. In fact, you probably don't even consider it a skill. The truth is that navigating the web and knowing how to find information is a skill, and it's an essential one in the jobs world today. So give yourself a pat on the back because you've already got something employers value.



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Using mobile devices

So many of us own a smartphone, tablet or mobile phone these days. Being able to use them – and being able to quickly learn how to use a model that you’ve never picked up before – is a skill too. You might not believe it, but not everyone can work out how to make the most of modern technology (people get used to what they grow up with). Some adults are even intimidated by it. You don’t need to be an expert at using every computer operating system in use today (most people have a favourite or a system they really don’t like using, anyway) but if you’re familiar and confident with getting tasks done on a device or two then you’ve got skills!

Mobile devices are now coming in multiple formats such as the relatively recent introduction of smart watches and devices such as Google Glass. Fitness monitoring bands are also changing the mobile device landscape, opening up another digital world in wearable technology. If you want to impress business leaders, make sure you check out the week’s headlines if you’re going for an interview and read up on what’s current and what’s expected in the future.

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Managing social media tools

Every week billions of people around the world keep in touch with their friends through social media. But it's not only individuals who want to communicate this way. Every organisation and business that's serious about 'talking' to their customers, their employees and their networks uses social media today. All of them need to employ or recruit people who are competent at using the latest software and devices. Business leaders in Britain repeatedly say that there aren't enough people with digital skills ready for work.



Staying safe online

While the digital world presents us all with lots of opportunities to be connected and carry out our daily lives, it does present some challenges. One of these is your online safety and security. For example, how to protect your personal information, how to avoid fraud, spot scammers and phishing emails. Fortunately, there's lots of great advice on the web; two websites which are good places to start are www.staysafeonline.org/stay-safe-online/ and www.cyberwise.org.



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Managing your personal profile / identity online

As we put more of our lives online for everyone to see, it's more important than ever that we manage what we 'look like' on the Web. So be careful about what images and videos you share, who you share them with, and what you write. You can have fun on the Web, but think carefully about what you're going to do or say before pressing the button. Some social media tools now enable editing and deletion but everything digital is stored somewhere – and possibly for a very long time. Once information is online it's very hard to control how it's shared. If you met someone (perhaps an employer or an investor in your new start up) who hasn't met you before and they look you up online, they may jump to conclusions or form an opinion of you from what they have seen online.

One way you can protect yourself from sharing your content is to check your settings on any social media tools you use – make sure that your personal 'stuff' is on a private setting.

Your user name and email address is also important, avoid creating something that could offend or upset someone, even if you think it's funny, anyone who's never met you might not realise it's just a joke. It's better to be cautious online. These guidelines are well worth following when you get a job.



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Developing websites

The art of website development has evolved over the years. Most sites now require advanced functionality in terms of its building foundations, look and feel for the visitor and having the ability to be viewed a range of devices. Many sites also have additional security features making the most simplest of websites very sophisticated indeed.

Although the world of web design is evolving, the software available to build these sites has also advanced, and software is now available to enable the user to build a basic website quickly from scratch and include a wide range of functions. While website development is not a necessary skill for everyone, it is good to have for anyone wishing to pursue a career in IT, such as a software coder. (See the 'Coding' section below to get started.)



Developing apps

Apps are hugely popular and most mobile phone users will have several, often without even realising! Developing apps is a useful skill for the workplace but it's not essential. However, being comfortable and knowledgeable about apps is something that will be valued by many employers. You should be able to discuss some favourite apps and even how you might enhance them. If you have a passion for something (music? fitness? reading? cooking?) then it's even easier to combine talking about your passion and showcasing your digital literacy.



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Coding

Coding is not just for computer geeks. Anyone of any age or level of education can learn to code. You certainly don't need to have a computer science degree to become a good coder. All you need is to be willing to learn and give it a go. Today technology touches every part of our lives from working and travelling to exercising, playing and socialising. Behind every piece of technology is some software code so those who can code are in demand! Instead of just making use of technology, why not learn to write code too.

We love this [video](#) featuring Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, will.i.am and many others, are you ready to be inspired? Keen to learn more? Then check out this quick-and-easy interactive session: www.codecademy.com and visit www.code.org and www.scratch.mit.edu to watch more inspiring videos and start learning to code right away.



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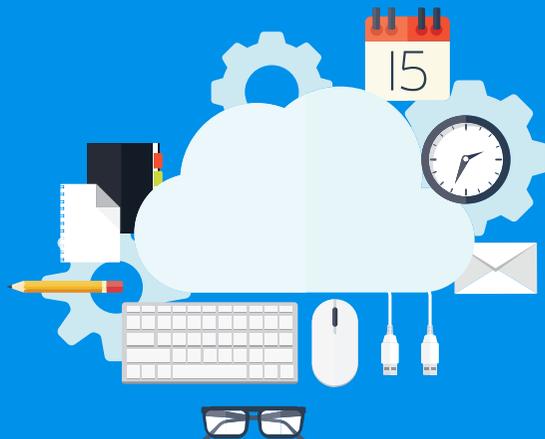
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The Cloud

Services which utilise Cloud storage such as [Dropbox](#), allow you to store your photos, videos, files, homework and much more without taking up valuable space on your device. What's more, you can access your data on multiple devices - whether you want to share a large file with a friend, share your CV with a potential employer or save a file from the web to read offline later, Cloud storage is the solution. Files stored in the Cloud can be accessed anywhere in the world (provided you can get an internet connection). You can do all these things and more with online storage and in addition to this, you can give other people access permissions for the account, a whole folder or just a single file.



Online collaboration tools

There are a wide range of collaboration tools available online today. Google Docs for example is a set of free online tools which allow you to create and edit web-based documents, spreadsheets and presentations. You can also collaborate with other users on the same document at the same time. Learn more about this on [YouTube](#).



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Using online maps

Another tool that's popular among people travelling for work or pleasure is Google Maps. It's great for finding new places – anything from office locations, restaurants cafés or shops. Even if you already use this tool what you might not know is that it's integrated with local transport services to provide bus and train timetables in an easy-to-consume format, as well as route markers to show where to embark and depart. So next time you're planning to travel to an interview, training course or maybe you're just lost, open the app on your mobile device, put in your destination and tap on the public transport mode.

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Editing video, audio and images

The world would be a very boring place if we couldn't enjoy music, videos, photos, animations and all other forms of communication. So digital is as much about creating and editing all these as it is about writing without paper. So it's worthwhile picking up basic skills in editing software such as Adobe Photoshop or a simple image editing tool like Paint, which are useful in producing a limitless range of original, exciting content.

Most laptops and MacBooks come with preloaded video and audio editing suites nowadays. You'll be surprised at how much you can do yourself with a little patience and persistence. In the digital age, moving beyond text is now the norm, and if you are digitally savvy with these tools you can communicate your messages in a more compelling, engaging and entertaining way. And you can

share your content across multiple social media platforms for the whole world or to just a selected audience. So go beyond text, go digital!



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Education isn't only for students at school, college or university, everyone in employment needs to keep learning and evolving. Education is no longer restricted to the traditional classroom. Today, thanks to the internet, there's a new way of learning; via online courses.

There are lots of courses available and most are free, giving you the opportunity to learn the basics in pretty much anything. While there isn't space in this guide to list the thousands of courses available, you can visit any one of these educational websites to browse training courses:

- www.edx.org/
- www.coursera.org/
- www.lynda.com/
- www.khanacademy.org/
- www.digitaltutors.com/
- www.gcflearnfree.org/

And this guide gives a brief description of even more educational resources: www.onlinecoursereport.com/the-50-best-online-course-providers-of-2015/





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