BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS

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In this class you will learn to:

- Use the Start menu
- Understand the desktop
- Start and exit a program
- Understand the properties of a window
- Use maximize/minimize/restore
- Scroll in a window
- Move and Resize windows
- Switch between windows
- Use WordPad, Calculator, and Paint
- Save a file

KEYBOARD BASICS

One of the most common devices that people use to input data is the keyboard. A keyboard allows the user to enter uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, familiar symbols, and commands by typing them.
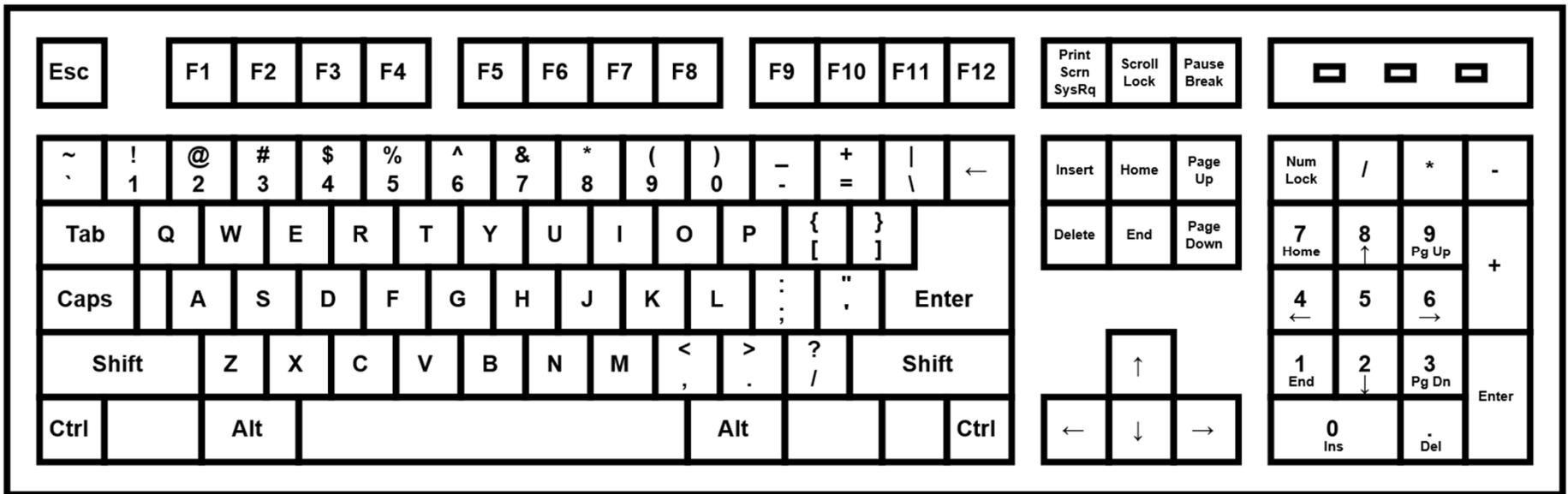
- A typical keyboard contains the 26 letters of the alphabet, a space bar, common punctuation symbols, the digits from 0 to 9, the basic arithmetic operators, as well as a variety of command oriented keys like Delete, Backspace, Enter (sometimes called Return), and Shift and Control keys.

- Simply press the keys for lower case letters. To type a capital letter, press the Shift key, continue to hold it down and press the key with the desired letter.

KEYBOARD BASICS

MOUSE BASICS

RIGHT BUTTON

LEFT BUTTON

SCROLL WHEEL
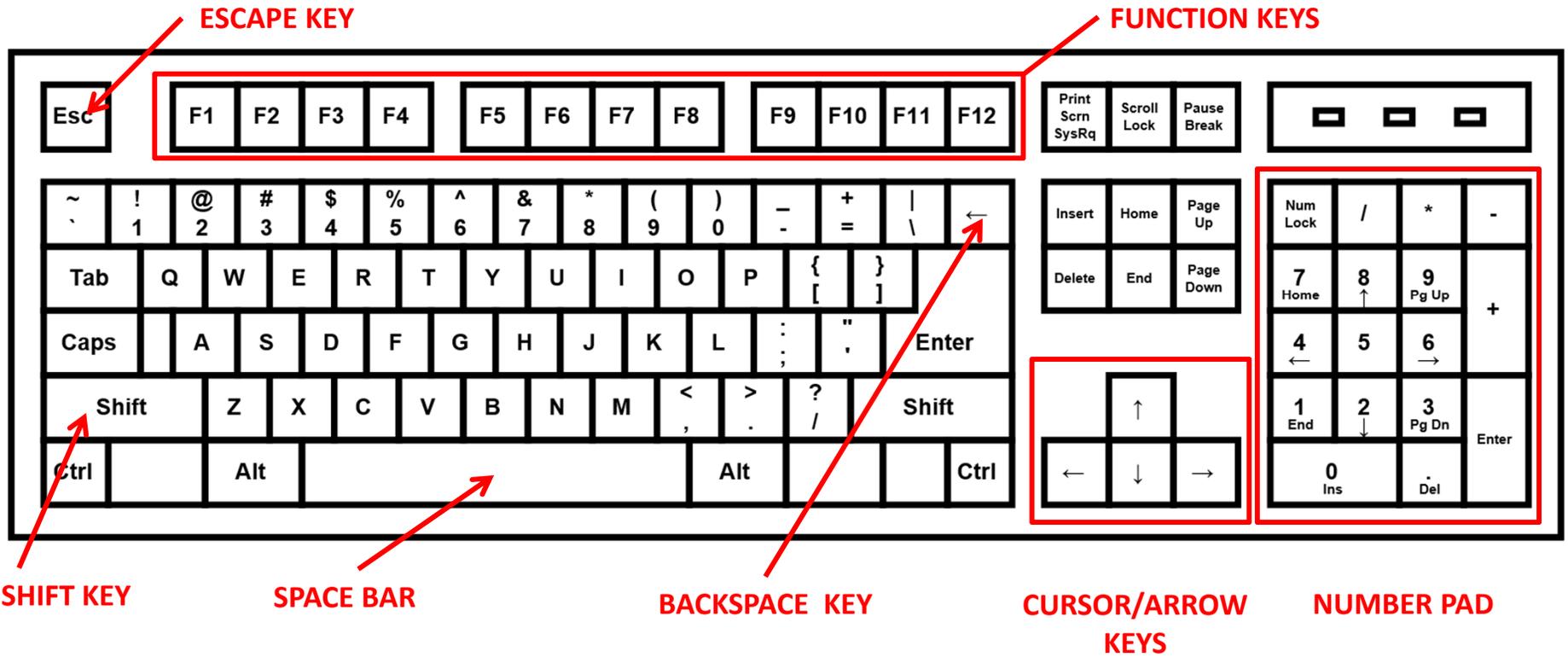
A mouse is a pointer and an input tool that is attached to your computer. It allows navigation around the computer screen. There are different kinds of mice that use different technologies.

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MOUSE BASICS

- **Click**

  Press the *left mouse* button once, **very softly**. When you click, you need to make sure that the mouse does not move, even a millimeter. If you click an icon on the desktop, it will become selected. If you click inside a program like Microsoft Word, the insertion point (vertical blinking line) moves to that point on the page.

- **Double-click**

  Hold the mouse still, and quickly, yet softly click the *left mouse* button twice. A double-click can be used to do things such as opening a program from an icon on the desktop.

- **Highlighting or Selecting**

  Press the left mouse button when the pointer is at the beginning of what you wish to highlight. While continuing to hold the button down, move the mouse pointer across what you wish to highlight. Once the mouse pointer has reached the end of what you are highlighting, release the button. This is useful to highlight or select multiple words that are displayed on the computer screen, such as text on a web page, which you can then copy and paste into a Microsoft Word document.

MOUSE BASICS

- **Drag and Drop**
  Highlight an object. Position the mouse pointer **inside** the highlighted area. Hold down the left mouse button and move the mouse to a new location. Then let up on the left mouse button. This moves the object to the new location. Two examples are, dragging an icon on the desktop to another location on the screen and moving items such as cards in Solitaire.

- **Right-click**
  Press the right mouse button once and a shortcut menu appears with commands that relate to where the mouse pointer is positioned. One example is, if you right-click in an area that contains text in Microsoft Word, the shortcut menu will most likely contain formatting options for text including cut, copy and paste.

- **Mouse Pointer Shapes**
  The mouse pointer will not always appear as an arrow. It will change its shape when it is moved into certain areas or certain processes are being performed by the computer in the background. Below are a few examples including the arrow:

  - **Most Common Shape:** ⬚ or 👆   - **Wait, PC processing:** ⬤ or ⧗   - **I beam or Typing Cursor:** I

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MOUSE BASICS

- If you are left handed, you can customize your mouse to fit your needs. Left click on the Windows start button. Select **Settings** from the list.

- In the box that pops up, click Mouse & touchpad.

- Then change the primary button to Right.
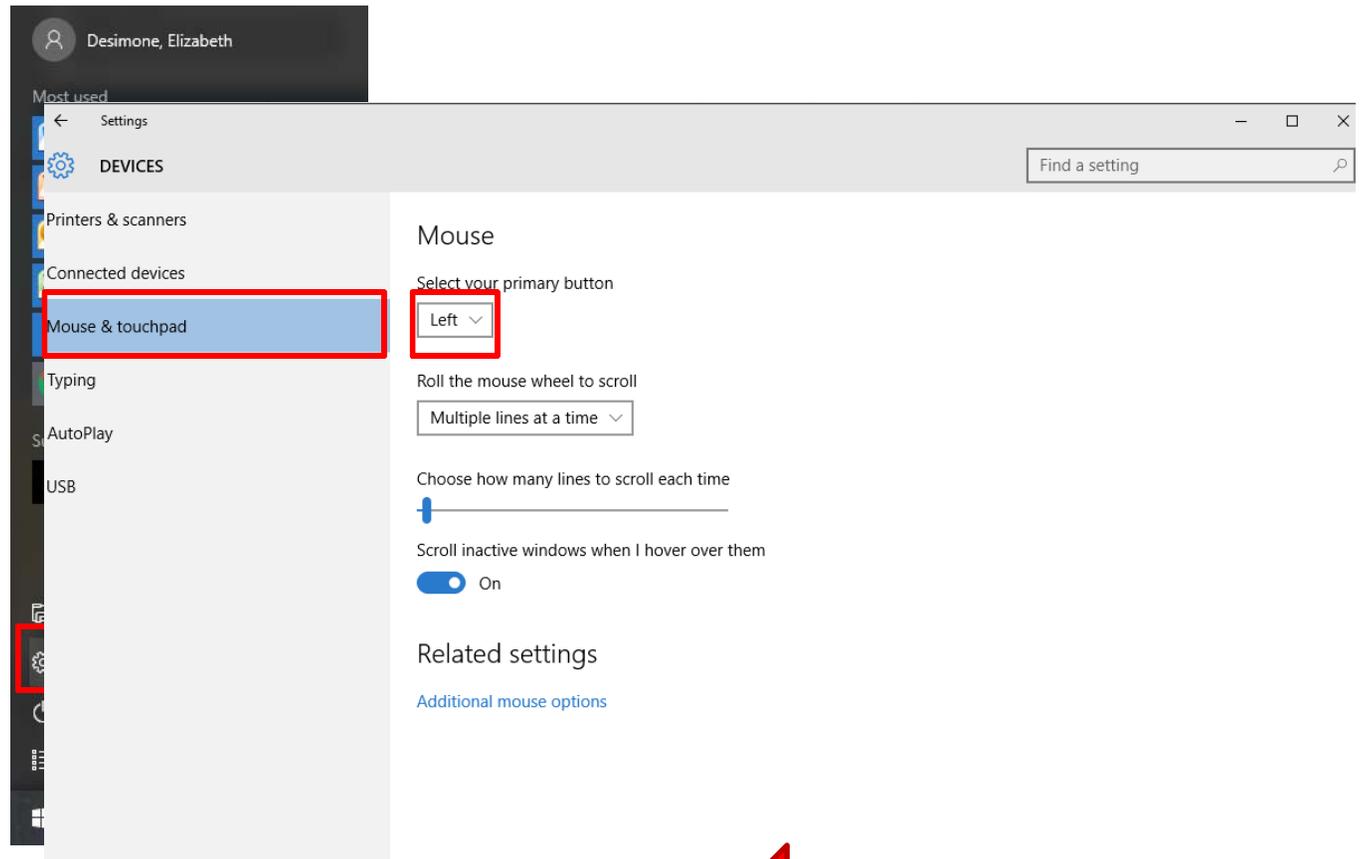
These sites offer exercises to help improve your mouse skills :

- http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/mousercise.htm
- www.seniornet.org/howto/mouseexercises/placemouse1.html

Works in any browser

Works in Internet Explorer

USING THE DESKTOP

- A typical computer desktop is designed to be used just as you would your actual desk or table at work. Items can be arranged in any order, folders and files can be saved on the desktop, and application programs can be accessed and started up from the desktop.

- The Start menu is a component of your desktop. The desktop is the main screen that is displayed when you first start your computer.

- The desktop contains all of the items that you need to get started. You can see the Start menu button in the lower left, the clock in the lower right, and a collection of icons on one side of the screen.

ICONS

START BUTTON

CLOCK
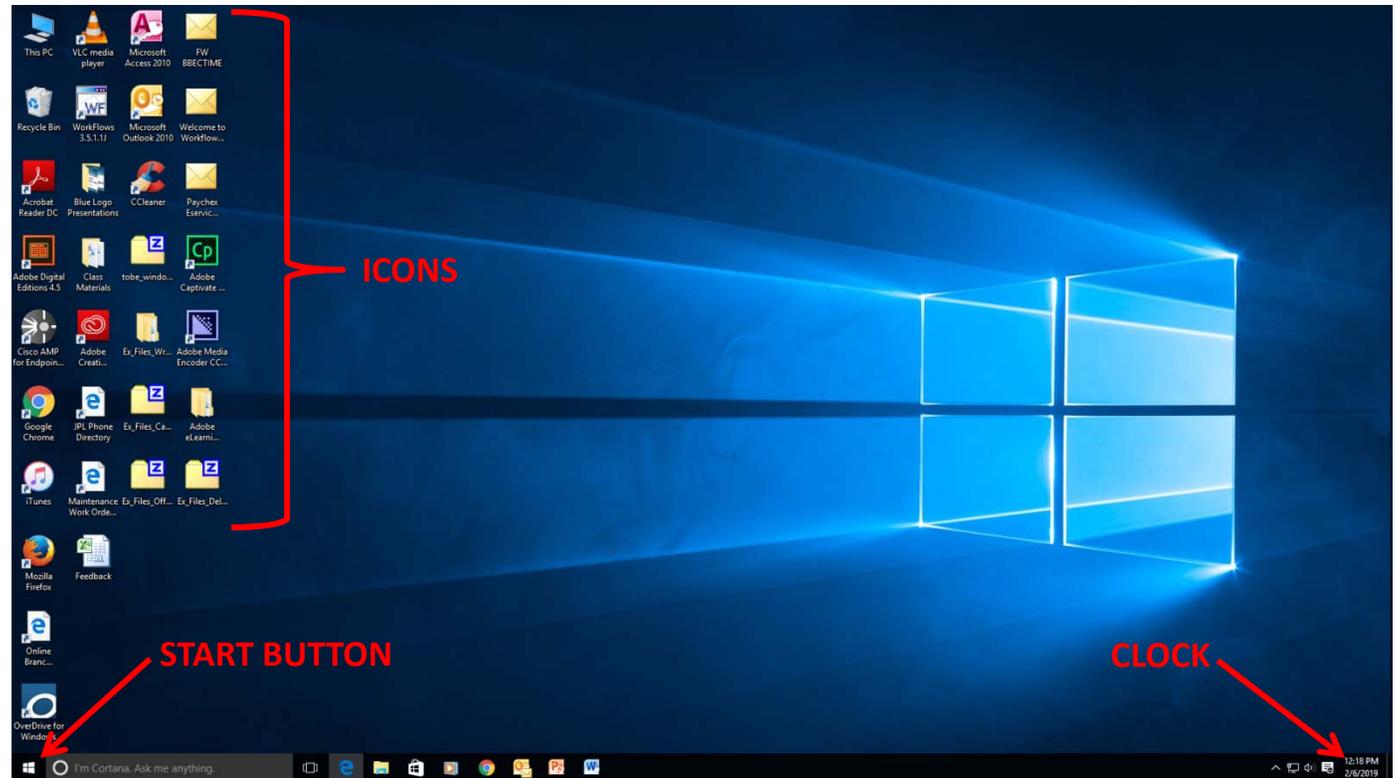
USING THE DESKTOP

SELECTING ICONS:

- You can select an icon by clicking on it. When you do this the icon will appear to be highlighted on your desktop.

- You can select multiple icons on your desktop by holding down the Ctrl button on your keyboard when you click on the icons

- You can also select multiple icons by holding your left mouse button down and dragging with your mouse to create a rectangle around the icons that you want to select.

USING THE DESKTOP

MOVING AND OPENING DESKTOP ITEMS:

- You can *move* icons around your desktop by dragging them with your mouse. To do this, simply left click on an icon and hold your left mouse button down. The icon will be selected, and it will move in the direction that you drag your mouse as long as you are holding the left mouse button

- To *open a file* from the desktop, just double click on the file's icon with your left mouse button. The file will open up in its own window, in the application that is best suited for the file.

- To *open a folder* from the desktop and see its contents, just double click on the folder's icon.
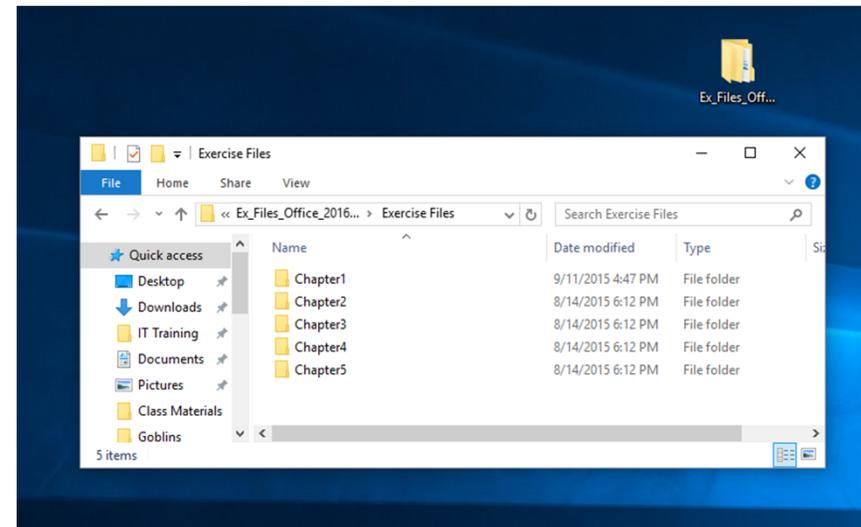
USING THE START MENU

- The START menu is the main gateway to everything your computer has to offer. All installed programs can be accessed here; you can use it to view different locations on your computer, and you can also use it to find files on your computer.

- To view the START menu, click the large button in the lower left corner of the screen. (Older versions of windows will display a button in the lower left that says "Start")

- When the START menu opens you will see a list of your most-used programs on the left and links to popular applications on the right.
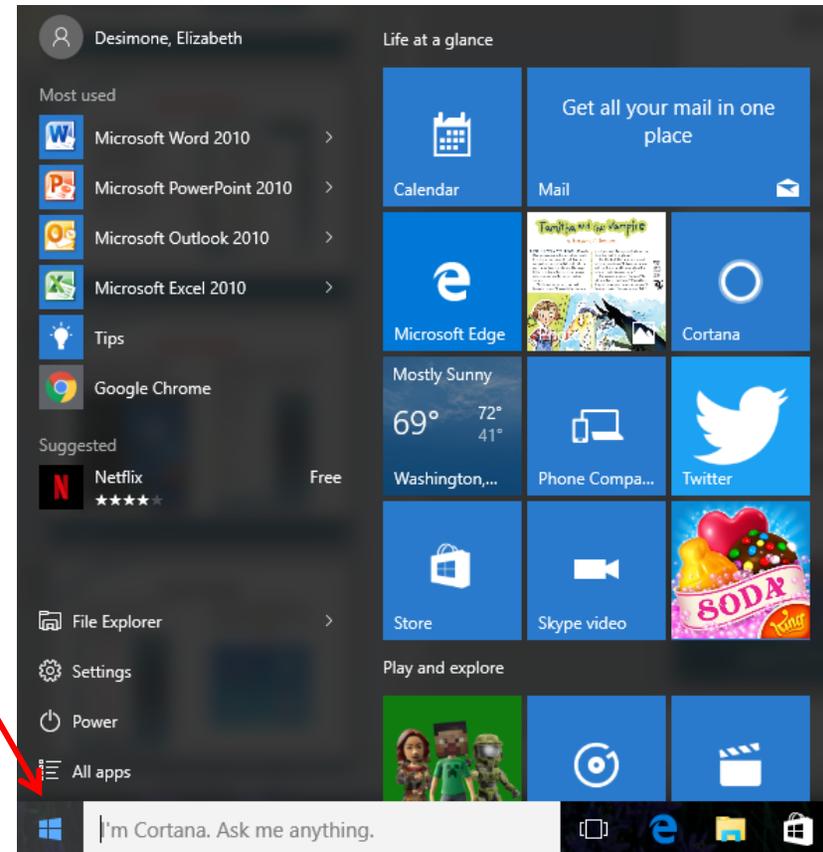
USING THE START MENU

- **FILE EXPLORER**: Navigates to frequent folders or recent files.

- **SETTINGS**: Similar to the Control Panel in earlier versions of Windows; links to controls for input and output devices, network connections, accounts, security, etc.

- **POWER**: Commands to shut down, restart, or go into sleep mode.
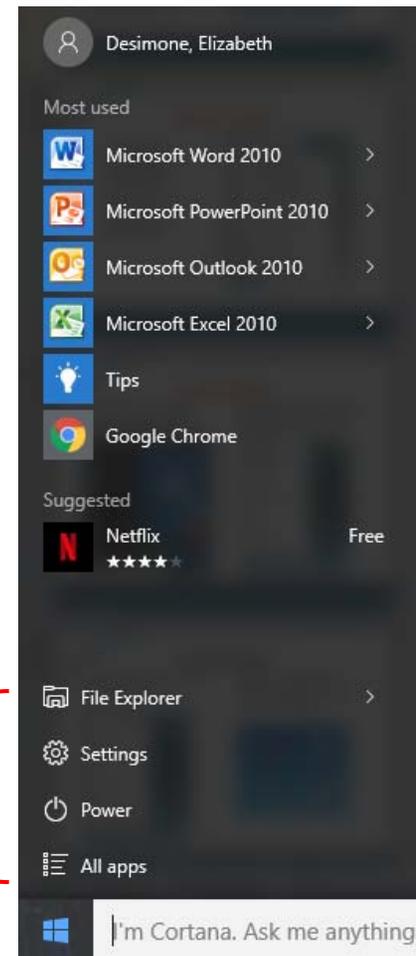
CORTANA

- Cortana is the AI assistant for Windows—kind of like Apple's Siri and Amazon's Alexa.
- Cortana can:
    - function as a search engine through Bing
    - Locate files and programs
    - Perform calculations
    - Create appointments and reminders on your calendar
- You can activate Cortana by typing your question or speaking into your microphone.
- Be sure that you agree to the privacy policy.
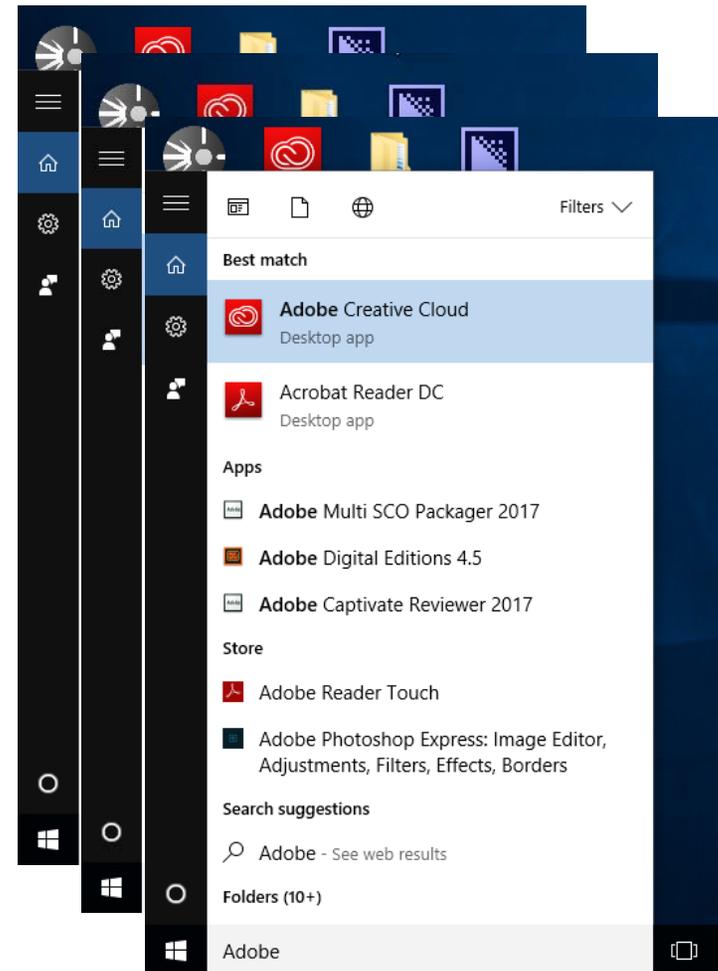
STARTING A PROGRAM

- To start one of your most used program, simply click on the program in the START menu. Click on the arrow next to the program icon to open a recent file.

- All other programs are available by clicking ALL APPS (just above the Search bar). Apps and folders are listed in alphabetical order. Single click an app or folder to open it.
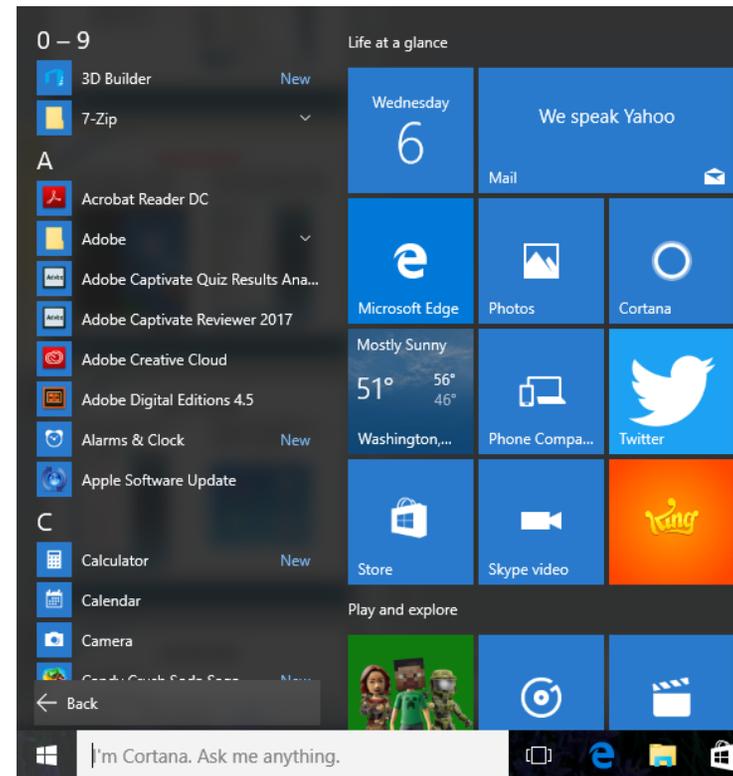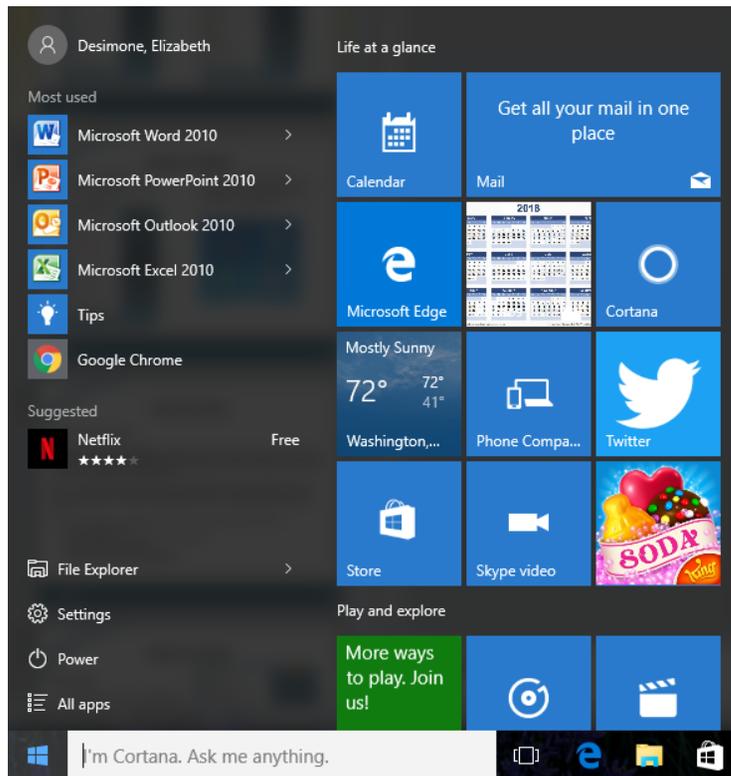
STARTING A PROGRAM

- The second way to launch a program is to click its icon in the TASKBAR.
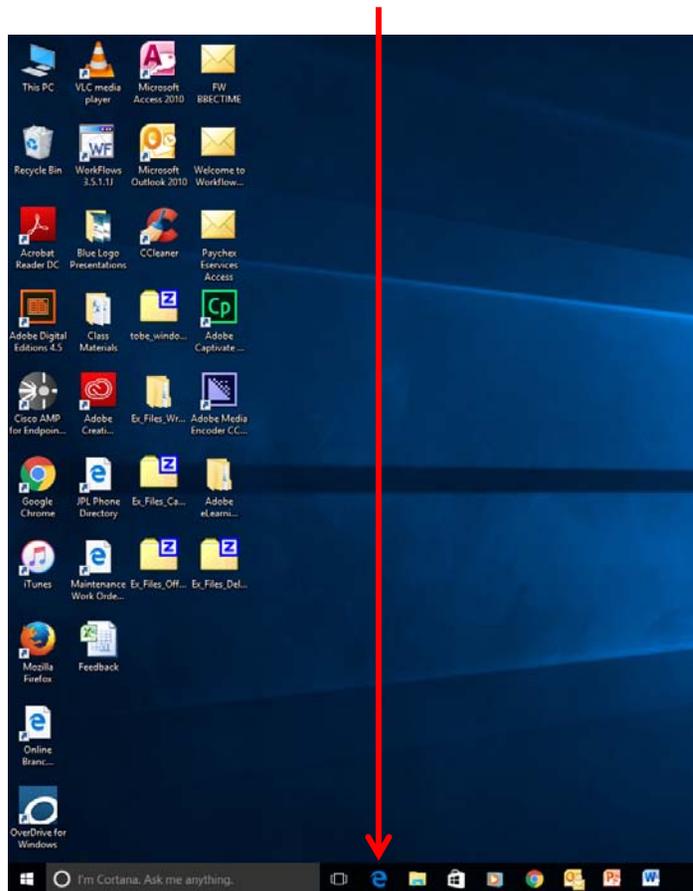
- The final way to launch a program (if applicable) is to double-click a shortcut on the Desktop, or in a folder, such as this shortcut to Internet Explorer:
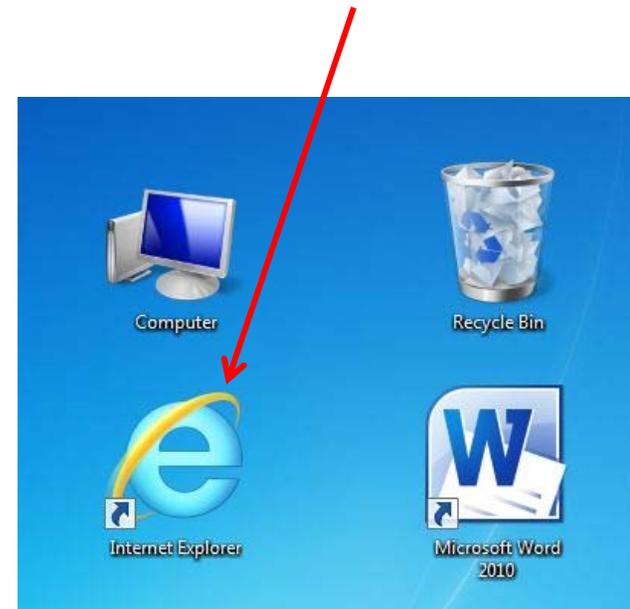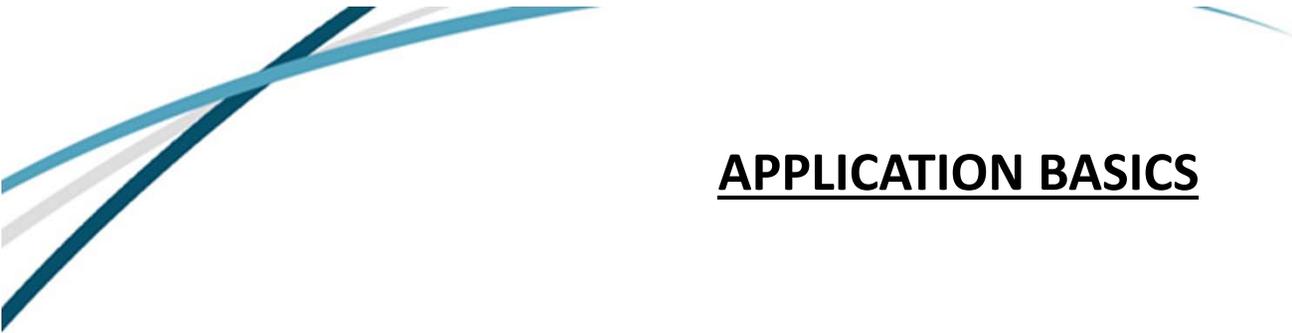
APPLICATION BASICS

WHAT IS AN APPLICATION?

- An **application** is a **software program** that is designed to perform a specific task or set of related tasks. For example, there are applications that are designed to manage or interpret data (spreadsheets and databases), while some other applications are designed to help users create and modify text documents or drawings (such as word processors and graphics programs).

- Some software applications can be very large and complex, depending on their purpose, and they may require substantial time to be mastered by a user. Word processors, spreadsheet programs, and Web browsers are examples of common software applications that are in widespread use in businesses and in homes.

- There are many other software application types in use today, including but not limited to:

    - Video editing applications
    - Security applications (firewalls and anti-virus programs)
    - Computer animation programs
    - Optical disk authoring (burning) programs
    - Audio/music recording and editing software

STARTING A PROGRAM

OPEN WordPad:

1. From the **START** menu, click on **ALL APPS**.

2. Scroll down to the **WINDOWS ACCESSORIES** folder and click to open.

3. Click on the **WordPad** program and it will open in a new window.
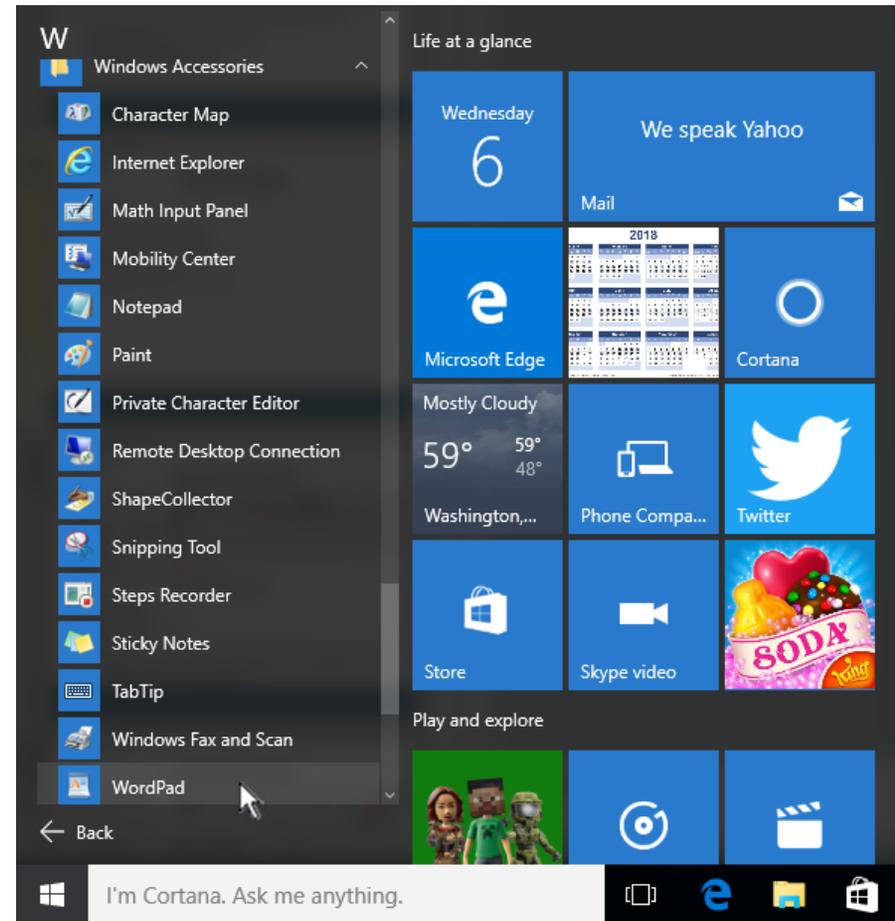
WORKING WITH A WINDOW

Anatomy of a WINDOW:

1. **TITLE BAR** displays the name of the application as well as the name of the current document. A window can be moved around the screen by dragging it with the title bar.

2. **MENU TABS** contain a series of menu headings; which, when clicked, display options related to the given heading.

3. **RIBBON** The ribbon is a set of toolbars at the top of the window designed to help you quickly find the commands that you need to complete a task. The quickest way to show the ribbon is to click on any visible tab, like Home, Insert or View.

1. TITLE BAR

2. MENU TABS

3. RIBBON

4. QUICK ACCESS TOOLBAR

4. **QUICK ACCESS TOOLBAR** is a customizable toolbar that contains a set of commands that are independent of the tab on the ribbon that is currently displayed. You can move the Quick Access Toolbar from one of the two possible locations, and you can add buttons that represent commands to the Quick Access Toolbar.
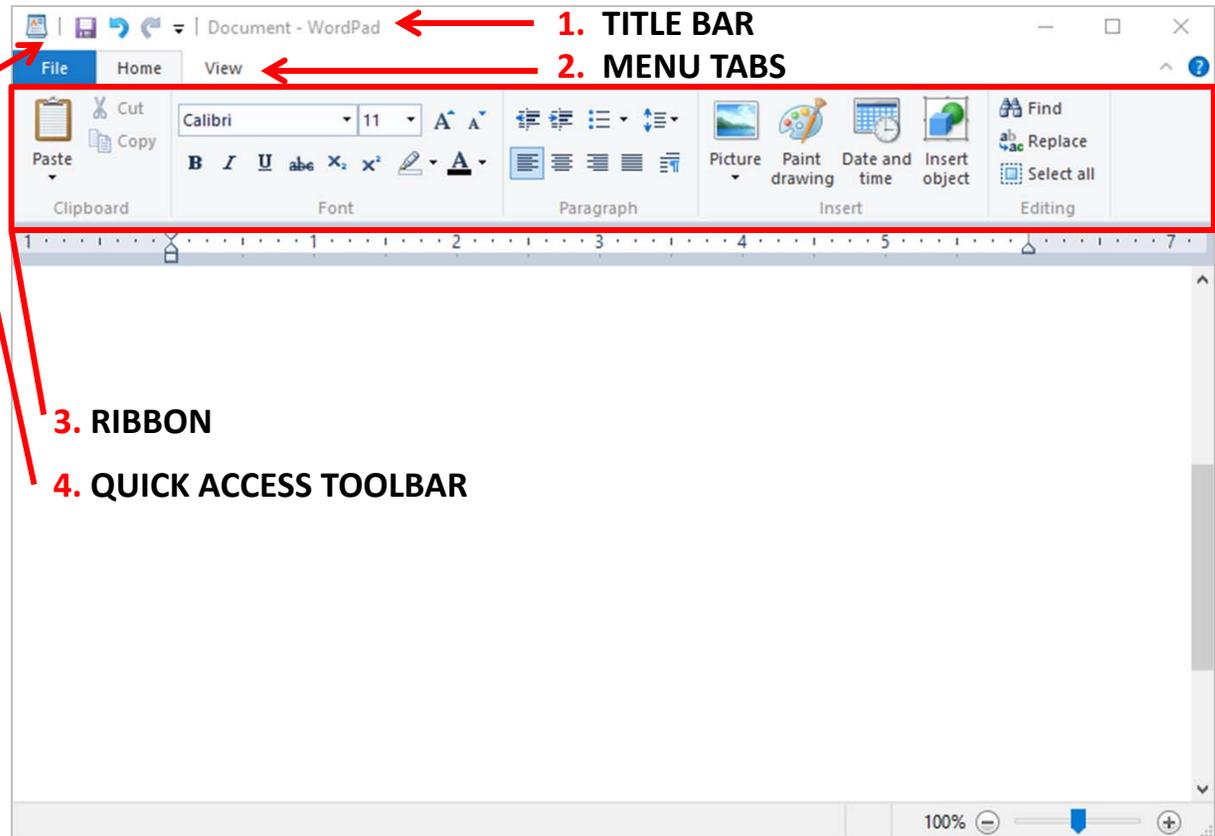
WORKING WITH A WINDOW

Anatomy of a WINDOW:

5. **MINIMIZE BUTTON** The Minimize button (the leftmost one) is used to reduce the window to a single button on the Taskbar.

6. **MAXIMIZE / RESTORE BUTTON** The most common form it takes is Maximize ▢. Click this to expand the window to fill your entire screen. After maximized, it will appear as the RESTORE icon ▢ . When clicked, it will restore the window down to the size it was before it was maximized.

7. **CLOSE BUTTON** The Close button is the X in the top right corner of the window. Clicking this button will close the window and end the program.

5. MINIMIZE
6. MAXIMIZE
7. CLOSE
8. SCROLL BAR

8. **SCROLL BAR** The scroll bar allows you to scroll up and down or side to side through the data. You can click and drag the bar up or down to view the information on the page. You can also click the arrows that border the scroll bars to move through the data.
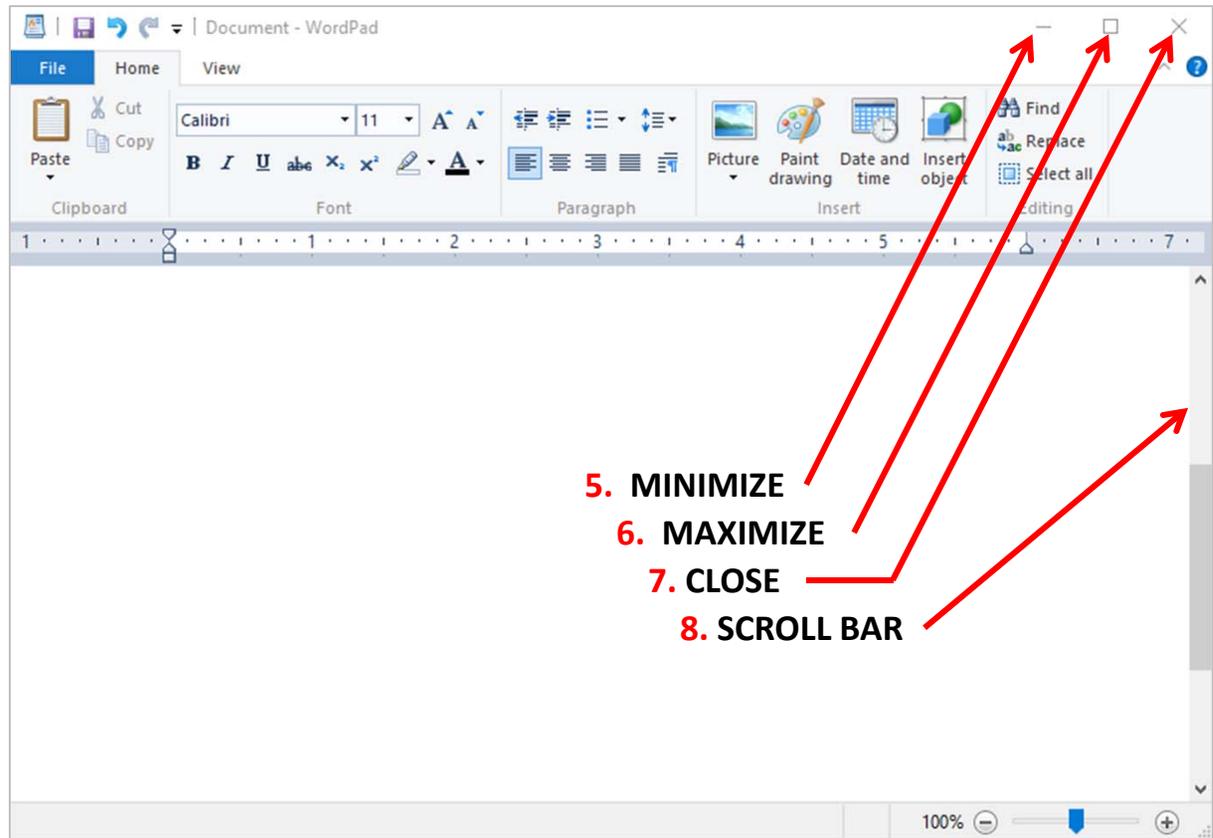
WORKING WITH A WINDOW

- **MOVING A WINDOW** You can move a non-maximized window by clicking and dragging the title bar of the window wherever you like on the desktop.

- **RESIZING A WINDOW** Any window that is not minimized or maximized can be manually resized. Move your mouse pointer to the outside edge of an open window. When the mouse pointer changes to   ,   or   , click and drag the border of the window as large or small as you like.

- **SWITCHING BETWEEN WINDOWS** In the picture to the right, there are two open windows. The Recycle Bin is on top of WordPad. This means that the Recycle Bin is the active window. Simply click on the WordPad window to make it the active window. Any open windows will also appear in the Task Bar located below your desktop.

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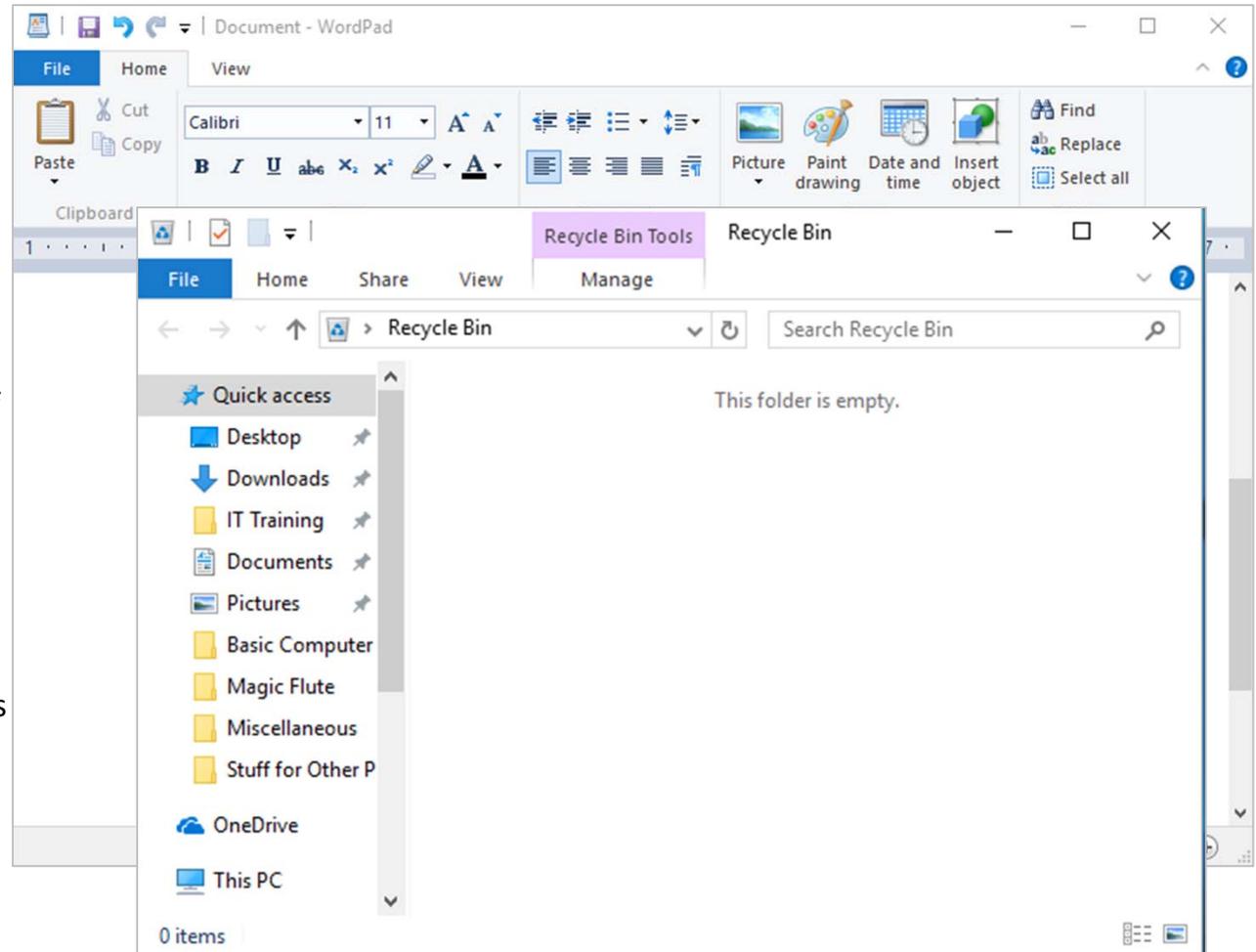
WordPad

- **WordPad** is a basic word processor that is designed for letters and simple documents.

- To enter text in WordPad, just click in the working area of the WordPad window and start typing. WordPad will automatically move to the next line as you type.

- If you have discovered a misspelled word or a sentence that perhaps doesn't make sense, you can use the backspace key to erase the mistake and then fix it. You can also use your mouse cursor and click anywhere inside the document. This will place the text cursor so that you can then fix the mistake.
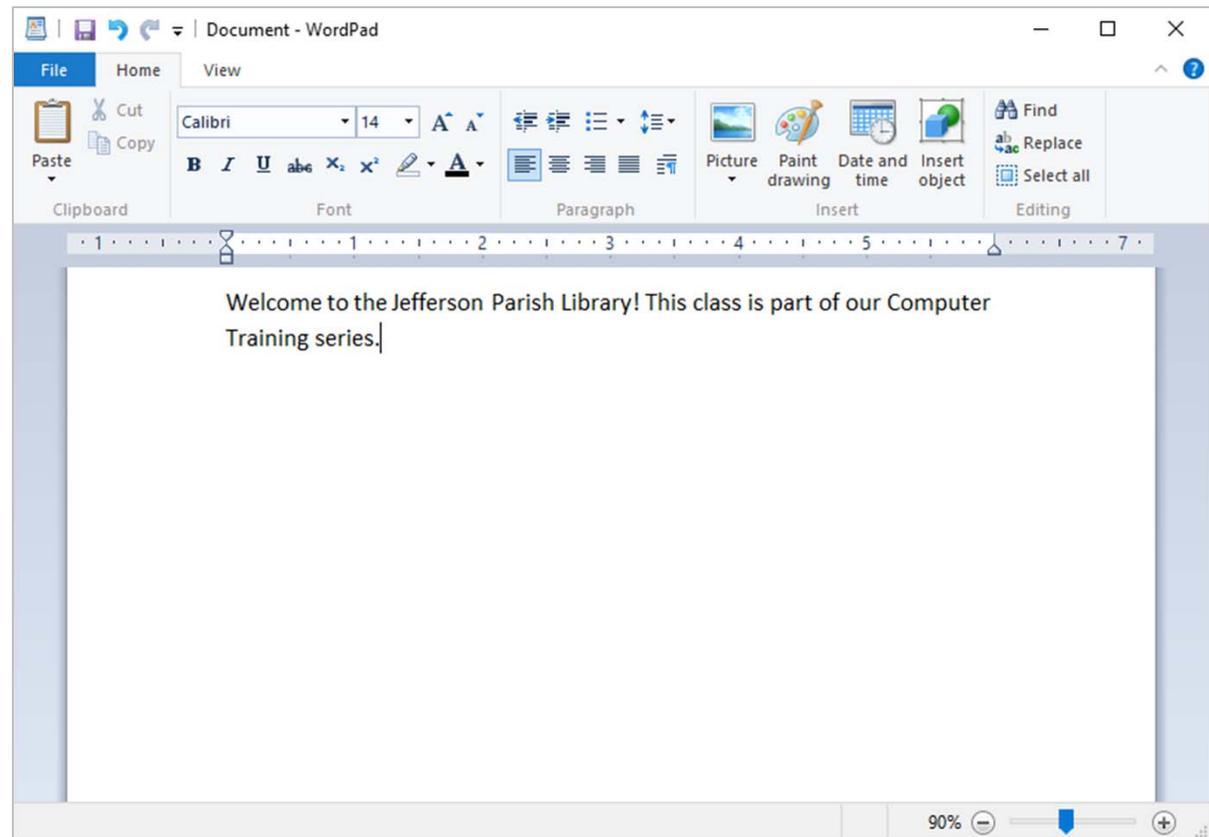
SAVING A FILE

- To save a document that you are working on, first click the FILE menu.

- Next click the SAVE option.

- The SAVE AS dialog box will appear because this is the first time we have saved this document and it does not yet have a name.

- After choosing the location to save your file, you can enter a name for the file in the File Name field.

- Then click the Save button to save it.

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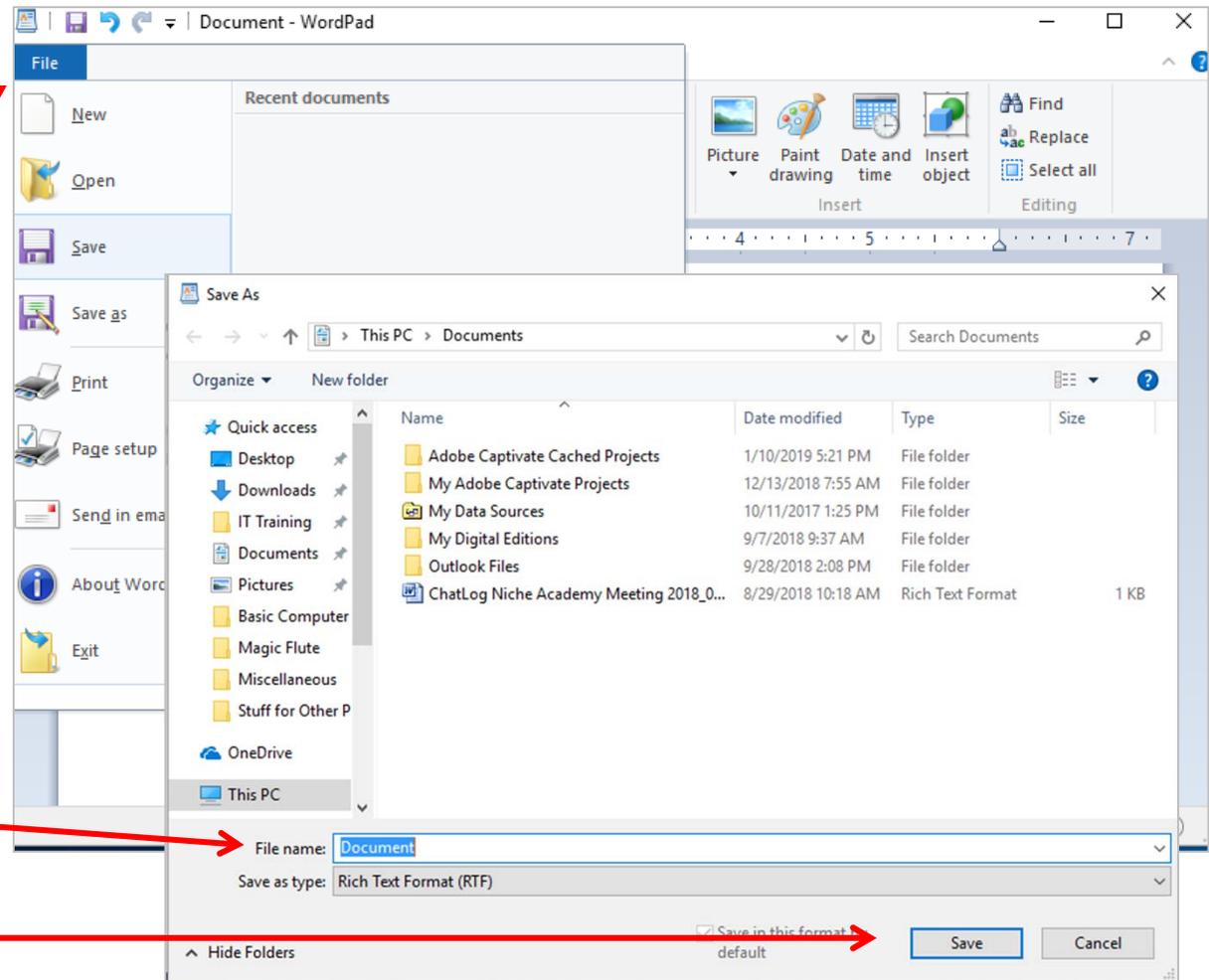
OPENING MORE PROGRAMS – *CALCULATOR*

- **Calculator** includes two interfaces. One is a simple desktop calculator while the second is a scientific calculator. You can switch between the two views by using the View menu.
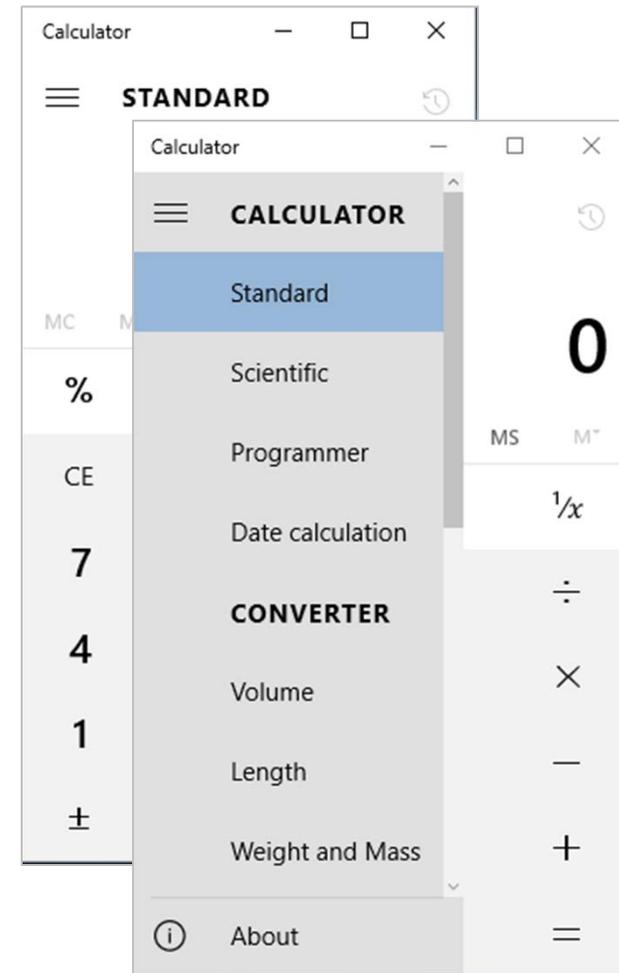
OPENING MORE PROGRAMS – *PAINT*

- **Paint** is a simple drawing and photo manipulation program that can be used to make diagrams as well as open digital photos. Besides drawing pictures, you can use Paint to resize and rotate images; however, Paint is not suited for doing any serious photo editing.
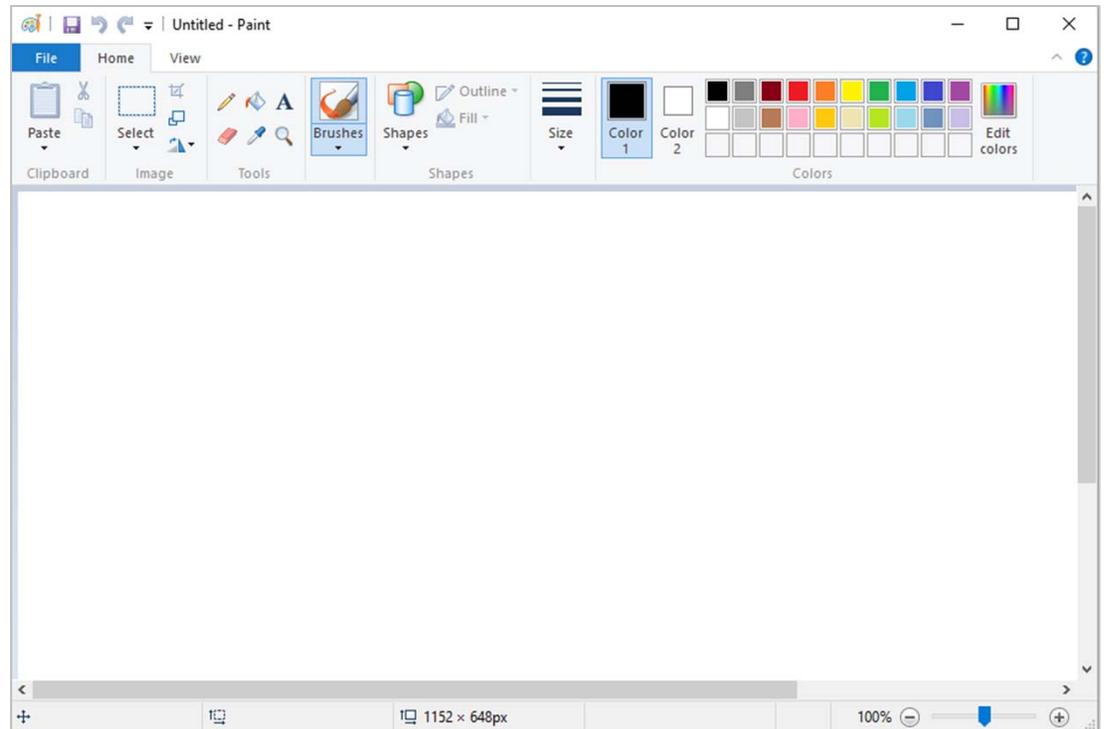
CREATING FOLDERS

In most operating systems that employ a graphical user interface, it is easy to create and name new folders.

- First, browse to the location where you want to create the new folder, and then right-click on a blank area of the Folder window. For creating a folder on the desktop, right-click on any blank area of the desktop.

- When the popup menu appears, click the New option to display a sub menu of further options.

- On the New sub menu, click the Folder option to create a new, empty, folder.

- At this point, you will see a new empty folder appear.
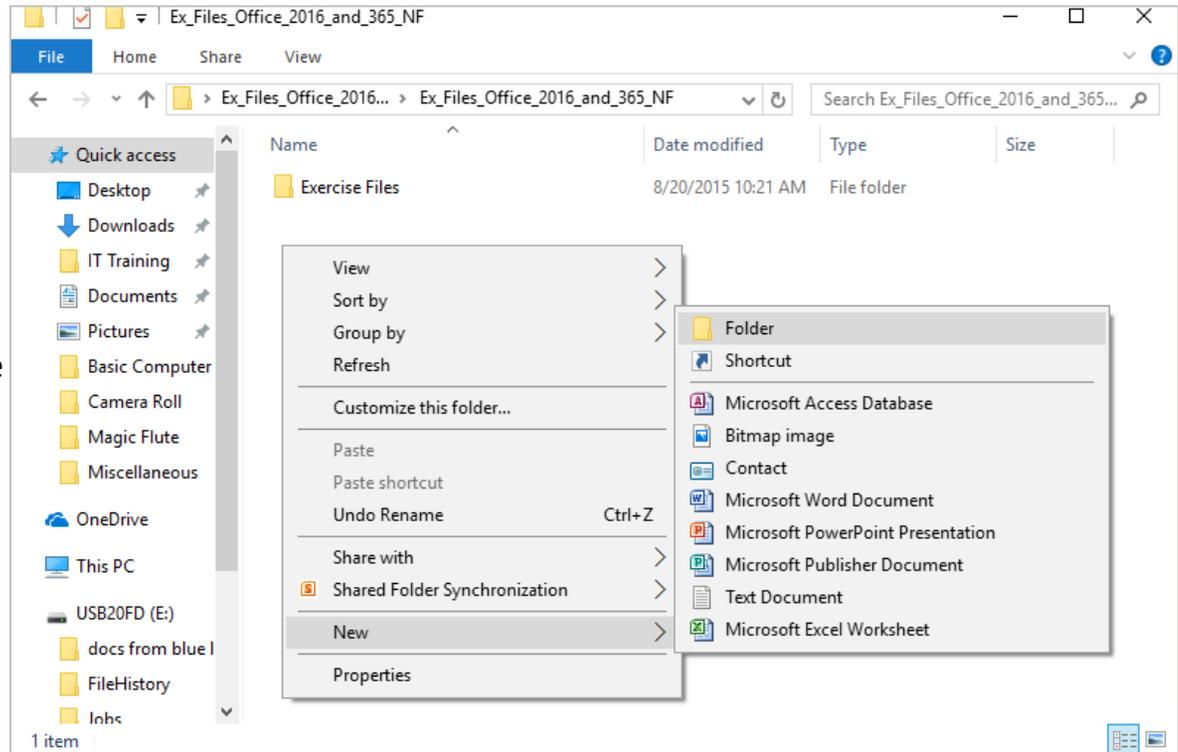
CREATING FOLDERS

- To give the folder a better name than "New Folder," right-click on the new folder icon, and choose the Rename option form the popup menu.

- At this point, the name of the folder will be highlighted in blue.

- Now you can just hit your backspace key to delete the old name, and then enter whatever name you want for your folder.
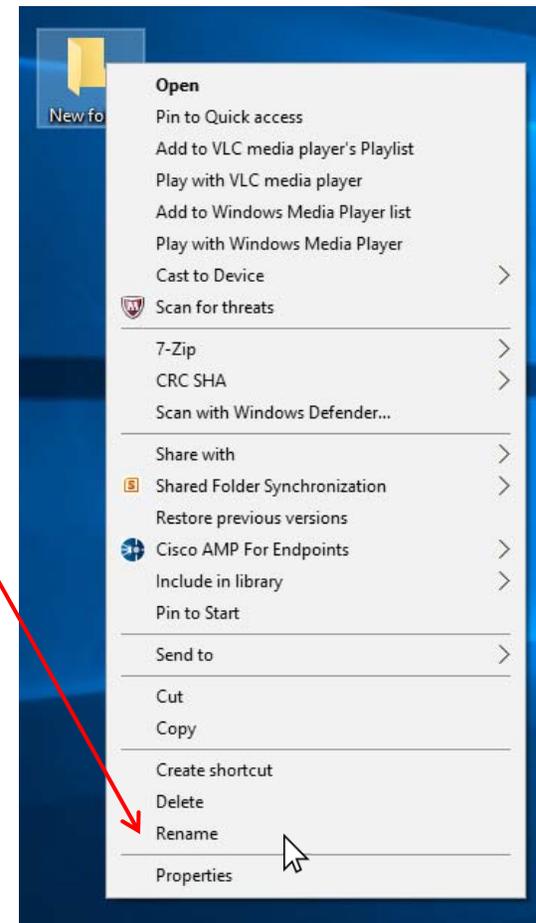
COMMON KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

CTRL + A	Select entire document/page
CTRL + C	Copy selected text/object
CTRL + X	Cut selected text/object
CTRL + V	Paste selected text/object
CTRL + Z	Undo your last action
CTRL + F	Find specific text in the current document
CTRL + S	Save the current document
CTRL + P	Print the current document
CTRL + B	Bolds the selected text
CTRL + I	Italicizes the selected text
CTRL + U	Underlines the selected text
CTRL + N	Create a new document

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional helpful resources can be accessed through our homepage **www.jplibrary.net**

- From the JPL homepage, click on the **Online Databases** link or the **Databases** menu tab.

- Then scroll down and click on the **DigitalLearn.org** icon to access online training resources.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional helpful resources can be accessed through our homepage www.jplibrary.net

- From the library's homepage, click on the **JPL Digital Content** link or the **Digital Content** menu tab.
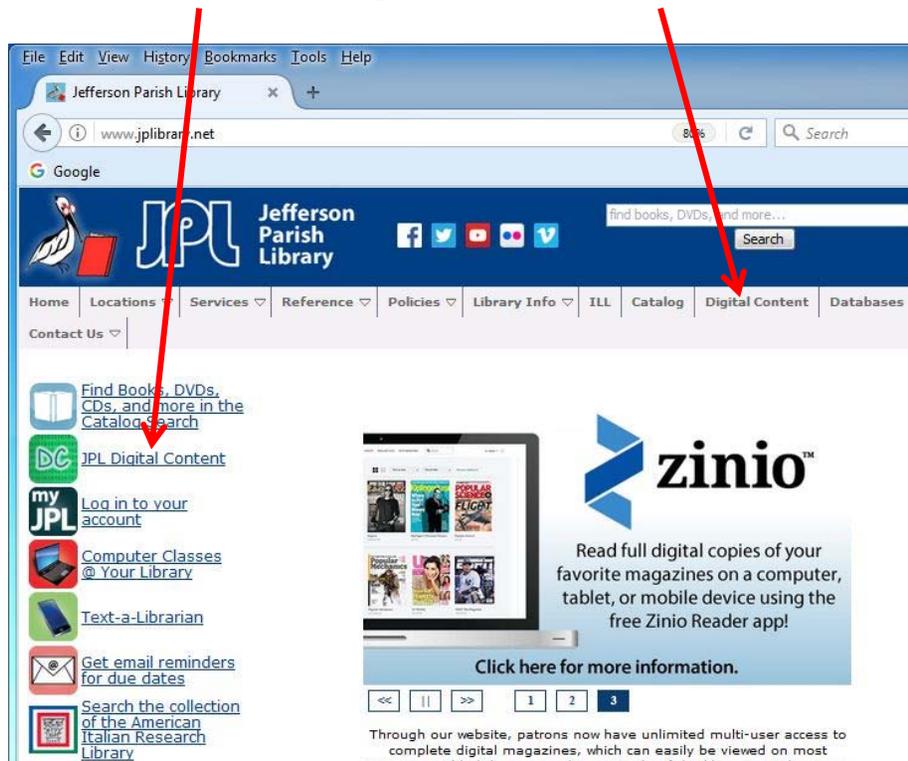
- Then click on the **lynda.com** icon to access online training using your library card number and pin.
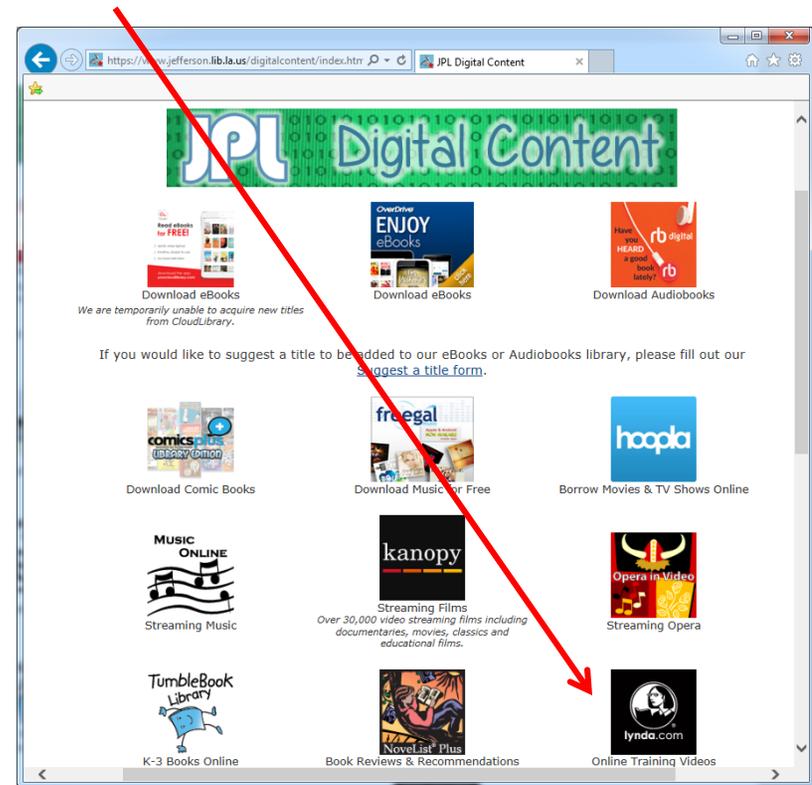
Practice Exercises for Basic Computer Skills at bit.ly/4747JPL

NOTES