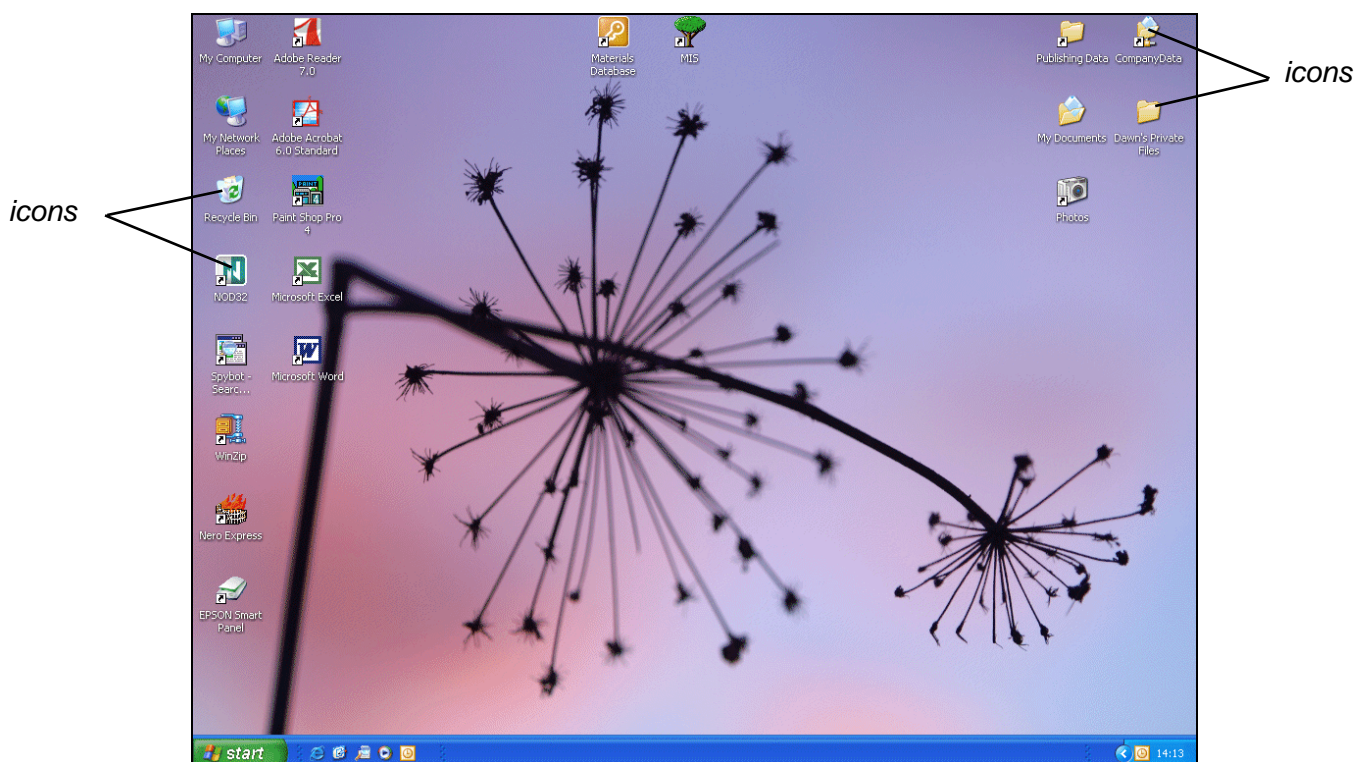


Exercise 1 - The Windows Desktop

Most computers use the *Windows* operating system. The main screen of the system, shown whenever *Windows* starts is the **Desktop**. *Windows* uses icons (small pictures with text) on the **Desktop** as shortcuts to various programs that are available. Clicking an icon twice will start that program.

You can change the way the **Desktop** looks. Icons can be added for any programs you like; some **Desktops** may be almost filled with icons. The size and shape of icons can vary, and lots of background colours, pictures and effects are available. Here's an example of a **Desktop** with a picture background.



Important

Because you can change the way the **Desktop** looks, the screens shown in this guide may look quite different to those on your computer. Don't worry, because they should still work the same way.

continued over

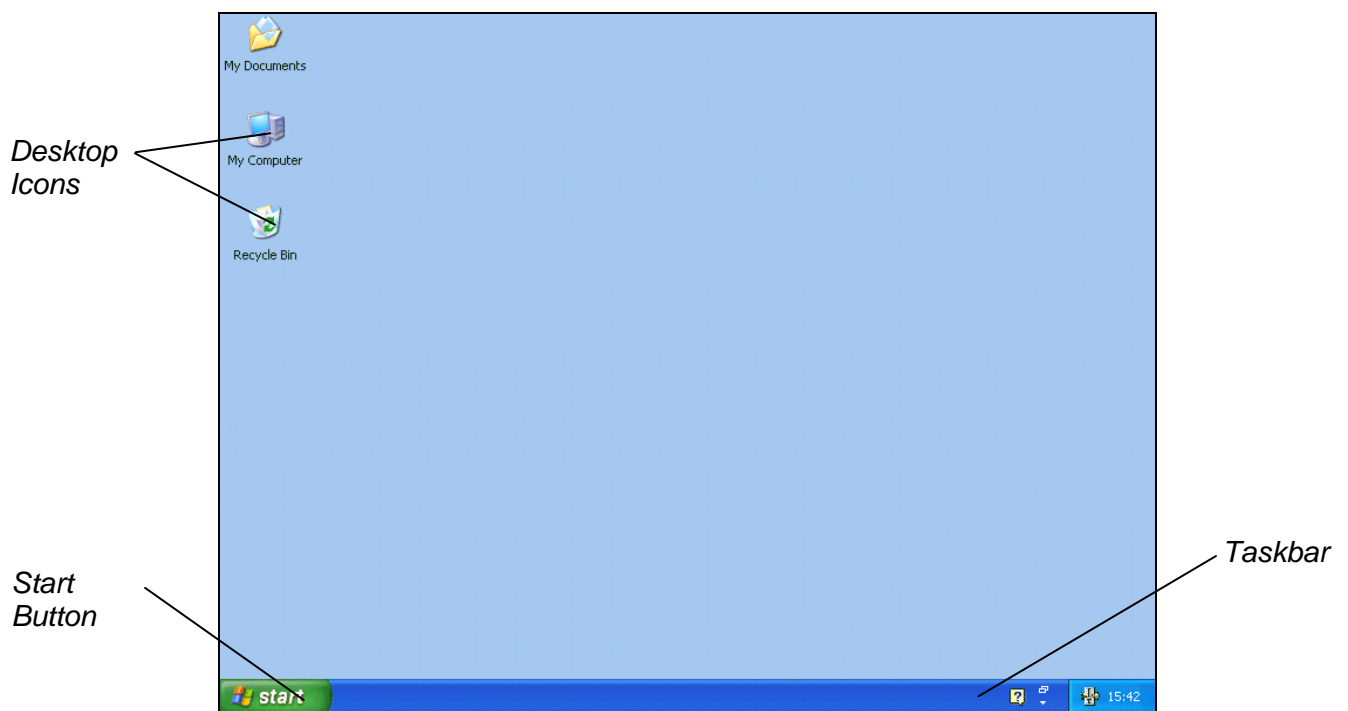
Exercise 1 - Continued

Activity

1. If your computer is not switched on, switch it on now.
2. The screen shows the **Desktop**. From here it is possible to access all the programs on the computer, manage how it works and use all the features of *Windows*.
3. The basic screen is shown below.

Info

Your screen may have different icons and a picture as a background (like on the previous page) rather than a plain colour.



4. The **Desktop** is split into two parts. Along the bottom of the screen is a bar known as the **Taskbar**. This is used as a quick way to get to certain features. This bar usually remains on screen at all times.

continued over

Exercise 1 - Continued

5. The rest of the **Desktop** is taken up by **icons**, which are shortcuts to programs, folders, files, etc., available on your computer. Some icons are shown below.



My Computer



Photos



Recycle Bin

Talking Point



If you are working near to someone else, have a look at the icons on their **Desktop**.

Do they have the same icons as you?

Do they have more or fewer icons than you?

Exercise 2 - Using the Mouse


You can use the mouse to do nearly all tasks on your computer.

There are a few different ways of using the mouse, they are:



- **Point:** position the mouse pointer until the tip of the pointer on the screen rests on the required position
- **Click:** press and immediately release the left mouse button without moving the mouse
- **Double click:** click the left mouse button twice very quickly
- **Right click:** click with the right button of the mouse

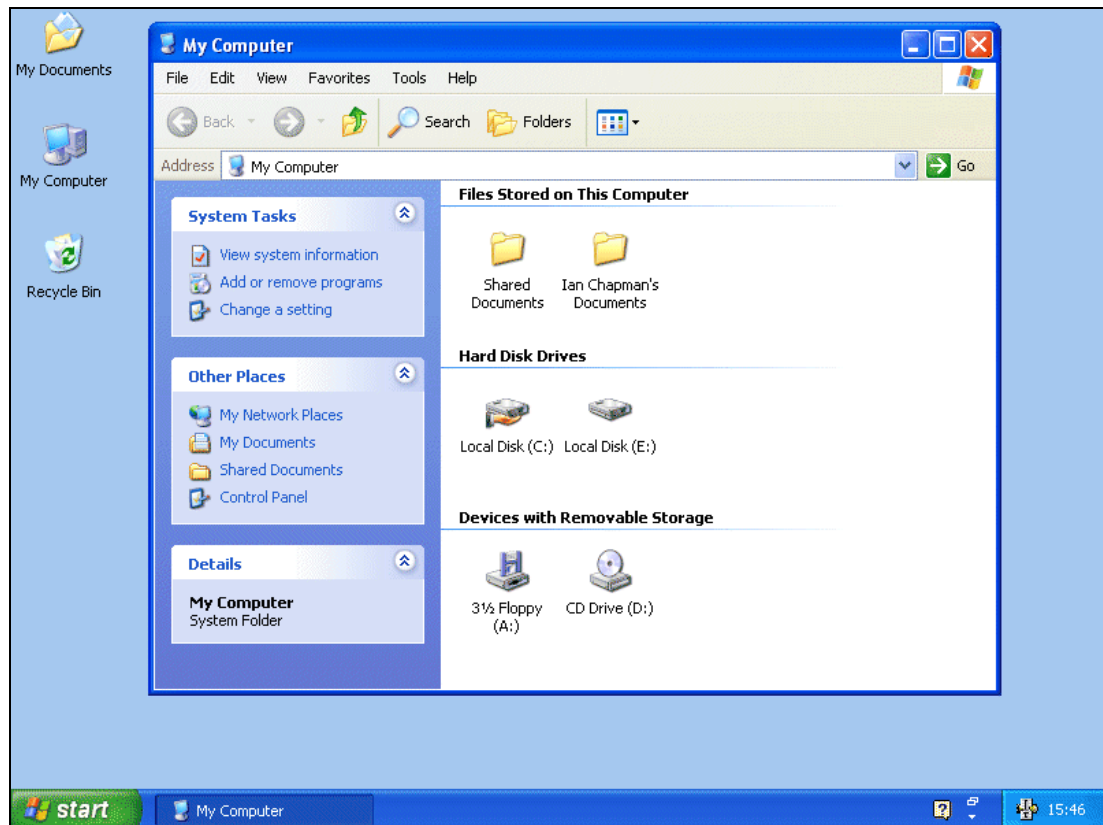
Activity


1. Move the mouse pointer over the **My Computer** icon on the screen. Holding the mouse steady, click once on the icon. It becomes highlighted (darker) to show that it has been **selected**.
- 
2. Move the mouse pointer to a clear part of the **Desktop** and click with the mouse button to **deselect** the icon.
 3. In *Windows*, one click nearly always selects an item. Double clicking does something different. Move the mouse over **My Computer** again.
 4. Hold the mouse steady and quickly click twice on the icon.

continued over

Exercise 2 - Continued


5. If you have managed to double click correctly you should now be able to see a **window** (frame) open on the **Desktop**. This is the **My Computer** window. It shows the disk drives and hardware connected to the computer and some of its folders.



6. If the window fills the screen click once on the **Restore Down** button, , at the top right of the window.

Tip

If the window is not visible, just click once on a blank part of the screen, and then try again to double click on the **My Computer** icon. You will need to click quickly.

7. Now you need to close the **My Computer** window. At the top right corner of the window there is a small button with a cross, .

continued over

Exercise 2 - Continued

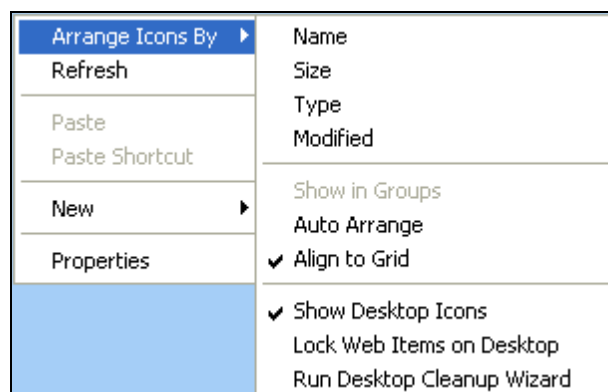
8. If the mouse pointer is left over the button for a few seconds a caption for the button will appear in a feature called a **ScreenTip**. This button is the **Close** button.



9. Click once on the **Close** button to close the window.
10. Now try right clicking. Move the mouse pointer over a blank part of the **Desktop** and click once with the right mouse button.
11. A **Shortcut Menu** is displayed.



12. Place the mouse pointer over **Arrange Icons By** and a further menu appears.



13. If **Auto Arrange** has a tick at its left (to show this option is selected), then click on the word **Auto Arrange** to turn it off ready for the next exercise.

continued over

Exercise 2 - Continued

Info

Auto Arrange keeps the icons on the left of the **Desktop**; they cannot be moved.

14. If the menus are still on screen, click once on a blank area of the screen to remove them.

Exercise 3 - Dragging with the Mouse

The mouse can be used to move items around the screen. Using the mouse in this way is known as **drag and drop**. You can use the same action for many different purposes, for example, to move icons around the **Desktop**, to move windows, to move images around a page or to move blocks of text in a document.



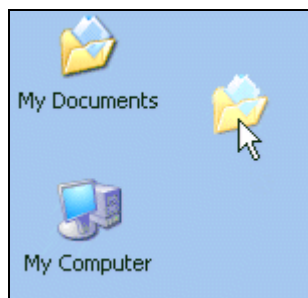
The same action can be used at other times to either select several objects at the same time or to resize objects by moving their edges. The action is then sometimes referred to as **click and drag**. This will be covered later.

Activity

1. With **Auto Arrange** turned off, the icons on the **Desktop** can be moved about. Move the pointer over any icon, press the left mouse button and keep it pressed down.
2. Drag the icon around the screen by moving the mouse with the button held down.

Tip

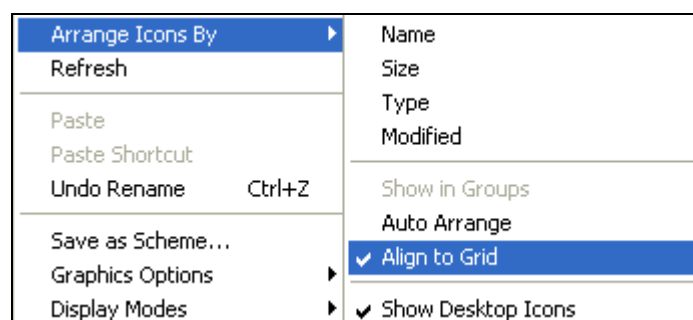
It may look like the diagram below, where the icon becomes paler as it is dragged and the original looks as if it has not moved.



continued over

Exercise 3 - Continued

3. Release the mouse button to place (drop) the icon at the new position.
4. Move the icon back to its original position.
5. By dragging and dropping, move some of the icons about the **Desktop**.
6. Right click on a blank part of the screen to display the shortcut menu.
7. Select the **Arrange Icons By** option and make sure **Align To Grid** has a tick next to it.



8. If not, click with the left button on **Align To Grid**. The icons are kept in the same order but automatically spaced.
9. Click with the right mouse button again.
10. Select the **Arrange Icons By** option and then **Name**. The icons on the **Desktop** are now arranged neatly, in alphabetical order by name.

Tip

If you can't notice a difference, the icons might have already been arranged by name.

continued over

Exercise 3 - Continued

11. Click with the right mouse button again and select **Arrange Icons By** and then **Size**. The icons are now arranged with the largest file first.
12. Rearrange the icons by **Name** again. A little later you will practise drag and drop some more.

Talking Point



Why do you think you might want to move icons around on the **Desktop**?

Hint: Think about having lots of icons.