

YOU CAN'T BREAK IT BY PUSHING BUTTONS!

The On Switch: Most of the time, College computers will already be on. If not, there is a short sequence that you should follow:

1. If the machine is dark, just wiggle the mouse or press a key on the keyboard. If it doesn't come on, you'll need to find the "on" switch. These days, it's often a cute decoration in the front center of the computer's case, near the disk slots.



Mouse Exercise: Windows machines use the metaphor of a desktop to manipulate material. Unfortunately, there's no way to actually reach inside that screen to push a button, or move a file. The mouse was invented to allow this. As you move the mouse on the desk, an electronic extension of your hand moves on the screen: the **mouse pointer**.

Mouse Pointer: Another way Windows

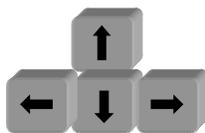
communicates is by the changing mouse pointer image: from , to , to , to ; each shape tells you something about what the computer is going to do next. When you have positioned the pointer over the desired screen object, you act by **clicking** or **dragging**:

Clicking: The pointer can go anywhere, just as you can wave your hands around. The computer equivalent to poking something is **clicking**. There are two areas of the mouse that will, well, "click" when you press them lightly – these are the left and right mouse buttons. This may set the position of the cursor for typing, select a program to run, or activate a button on a form.

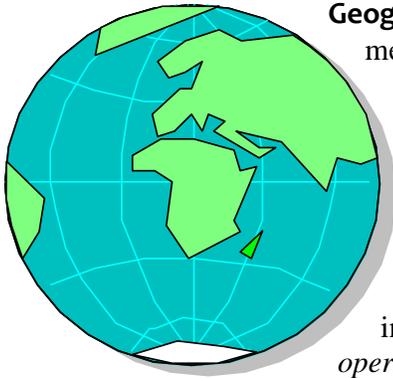
The left button is the "normal" one to use for most operations. Clicking the right button often produces a menu of possible actions that relates to where the pointer is at that time.

Double-Clicking: This is similar to flipping a switch. Left-click twice, like rapping on a door. This control is often used for **starting** a program, **highlighting** a word in a word processor, or **opening** a file folder.

Dragging: Once you've double-clicked on an item, you can hold the mouse button down and slide the mouse itself sideways to a new position. This can **move** files from one place to another, or **highlight** a block of text.



Mouseless mousing: the Arrow keys: Often, you may be able to point to what you want without taking your hands off the keyboard. You can use the arrow keys. You can **select** an item in a list, or (by holding the **SHIFT** key while pushing arrow keys) even **highlight** words in a document.



Geography: Windows programs share a number of images. It is the common meaning of these images that magnifies the power of Windows: once you've learned an action in one program, you have a hint about what to do in the next, if it looks similar.



Use Help! Try out the help files – look up something you know about and see how it is explained. There are a lot of words listed; use the index to find the idea you want to know about. *The way you express an operation and the way the programmers refer to it may be different.* Try different words that describe what you want.

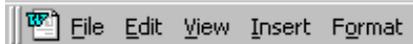
You may keep the help screen open while you work by clicking on **Options**, then **Keep help on top**, **On top** once you find the information you need.



Tool Bars: Those rows of obscure little pictures at the top of the screen are toolbars. Each individual image is called a **button**. They allow you to quickly tell the program to do some action – provided you know what they mean. To help you, Word has provided...



Labels: If you leave the arrow pointer on a button for a moment, the actual name of the button will appear. This paper is littered with images of buttons – when I show you one, you should make sure you can find it on the screen.



The Menu Bar: All programs have a list like this one. This contains all of the possible functions of the program, often in a form that is easier to figure out than the images on the tool bars. **Speed tip: Pressing ALT and an underlined menu entry is the same as clicking on it!**

Scroll Bars: This picture at the right side of the screen tells you that there is more than can be shown on one screen. To view the rest, click on the arrows at top or bottom. **Speed Tip:** If you're feeling mouseless, use the **Page Up** or **Page Down** keys instead – or even the arrow keys.



Quit: Click on the  at the top left corner of the screen.



Flash Drives: This is where you **CAN** break something. Flash drives are sturdy, but they **CAN** be broken. They are often plugged into the front of the computer case, where a knee can often snap them off.

In addition, while a flash drive can hold an entire college career of writing, it can fail without warning for about one student every semester.

The solution is to back up your work: make copies of your files to a second non-College computer.