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Oxford English for

Information Technology

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Contents

Page	Unit / Title	Language Work	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing
4	1 Computer Users	Revision: Past simple and Present perfect		Noting specific information	Exchanging information	Writing a brief description
10	2 Computer Architecture	Describing how an item functions Prepositions of place	Locating specific information		Exchanging technical information	Sequencing instructions
18	3 Computer Applications	Present passive	Reading diagrams Ignoring irrelevant info		Describing a process	Describing a process
24	4 Peripherals	Revision: Comparison and contrast		Listening for detail		Describing function Comparing and contrasting
32	5 Interview: Former Student	Revision: Past simple questions Word Study: <i>up-</i> and <i>-up</i> verbs		Listening for detail		Describing function
36	6 Operating Systems	<i>-ing</i> form: as noun and after prepositions	Matching text and diagram Prediction		Exchanging technical information	
44	7 Graphical User Interfaces	V + obj + <i>infin</i> V + obj + <i>to-infin</i> <i>allow, enable, help,</i> <i>let, permit</i>	Reading diagrams		Providing explanations	
52	8 Applications Programs	Instructions and complex instructions	Note-taking		Exchanging information	Making recommenda- tions
60	9 Multimedia	<i>-ing</i> clauses: cause and effect	Locating information in diagram and text		Providing explanations	Describing a process
68	10 Interview: Computing Support	<i>If</i> -sentences, types 1 and 2 Word Study: noun + noun compounds		Matching diagrams and spoken output	Giving instructions	
72	11 Networks	Relative clauses with a participle	Matching text and diagram		Providing explanations	Describing advantages and disadvantages
80	12 The Internet	Warnings	Computer mediated communication			Writing a newsgroup contribution
88	13 The World Wide Web	Time clauses		Information transfer, listening and note-taking		Describing a process
96	14 Websites	Giving advice	Understanding the writer's purpose		Exchanging information	Evaluating

Page	Unit / Title	Language Work	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing
102	15 Interview: Webpage Creator	<i>would</i> Word Study: definitions and collocations		Listening for specific information	Exchanging information	Advising
108	16 Communications Systems	Predictions: certainty expressions	Reading for specific information	Listening for predictions and certainty	Exchanging information to complete a diagram	Describing a system
116	17 Computing Support	Diagnosing a fault and giving advice		Information transfer from telephone call to form	Giving advice on technical problems	Reporting a problem
124	18 Data Security 1	Cause and effect <i>cause to/make</i> ; causative verbs; <i>en-</i> and <i>-en</i> verbs	Scanning		Exchanging information	Explaining a computer crime
132	19 Data Security 2	Cause and effect using <i>allow</i> and <i>prevent</i> links	Reading a table		Exchanging explanations	Describing how a system operates
140	20 Interview: The ex-hacker	Phrasal verbs Word Study: semantic groups		Listening for specific information	Role play	Writing a short news item
146	21 Software Engineering	Revision: <i>If X, then Y.</i> <i>Do until, do while</i>		Listening for specific information	Exchanging information and options	Describing advantages and disadvantages
154	22 People in Computing	Requirements: <i>need to, have to, must, be + essential/critical</i>	Reading and note-taking		Asking targeted questions	Writing a c.v.
162	23 Recent Developments in IT	Ability: <i>can, could, be able to</i>	Reading and note-taking	Comparing different versions of a text	Making a presentation	Writing a report
172	24 The Future of IT	Predictions: Future perfect and <i>It</i> in subject position	Reading and note-taking	Listening for points of view	Persuading others to your point of view	Writing a summary
178	25 Interview: Electronic Publishing	Emphasising: cleft sentences Word Study: prefixes; <i>-ise</i> verbs		Listening for points of view	Planning group presentation Defending a decision	

184	Pairwork Student A
190	Pairwork Student B
196	Listening Script
203	Glossary of computing terms

Computer Users

STARTER

1

Work in groups. Share information on how you use computers in your free time. Compare answers with other groups and make a list of uses for your class.

LISTENING

2

You are going to hear four people talk about how they use computers. Before you listen, try to predict the uses they describe.



User

Possible use

primary school teacher

Open University student

girl (Louise), aged 6

artist

3 🎧 Now listen to the recordings and note the actual uses described.

User.	Actual use
primary school teacher	
Open University student	
girl (Louise), aged 6	
artist	

4 🎧 Now listen to the recordings again to find the answers to these questions:

- 1 How does the story-telling program encourage children to work together?
- 2 In what way is the children's reaction to this program different from other uses they make of computers?
- 3 What is the OU student studying?
- 4 What opportunity has she to meet other students?
- 5 What can you do with Pets 3?
- 6 What does Louise do with clipart?
- 7 How did the artist display work to dealers in the past?
- 8 What is the difficulty in selling through a website?

LANGUAGE WORK

Revision: Past simple and Present perfect

Study these examples of the Present perfect from the recording of the artist.

- 1 *I've scanned* in about a third of these photographs.
- 2 *I've organised* the paintings into themes.
- 3 *I've added* a sound track.

Why doesn't the speaker use the Past simple?

- 4 *I scanned* in about a third of these photographs.
- 5 *I organised* the paintings into themes.
- 6 *I added* a sound track.

We use the Present perfect to describe past actions with present relevance. The artist uses the Present perfect because he is describing a CD he has just made and what he is going to do with it in the near future.

We use the Past simple to describe completed actions in the past. It is often used with time expressions such as *last year*, *before PCs were introduced, in 1998*. Note these examples from the recording:

- 7 *I made* one for Mary's birthday *last week*.
- 8 *We tried* it out *last term*.



The artist is being interviewed. Make questions to match his answers. Use the correct form of the Past simple or Present perfect, whichever is correct. For example:

Question: What *did you do yesterday*?

Answer: Worked on the computer.

- 1 Q What ...
A Worked on a CD of my paintings.
- 2 Q How many ...
A About a third.
- 3 Q What ...
A I destroyed them.
- 4 Q How ...
A I scanned them in.
- 5 Q How ...
A I've organised them into themes.
- 6 Q Have ...
A Yes, I've added a sound track.
- 7 Q How long ...
A It's taken me about a week.
- 8 Q When ...
A I started about ten years ago.
- 9 Q What ...
A Before I had a computer, I had to use slides.
- 10 Q Have ...
A Yes, I've sold a few.



Put the tenses in this dialogue in the correct form: Past simple or Present perfect.

- 1 A What (do) today?
- 2 B I (work) on my project. I (search) the Web for sites on digital cameras.
- 3 A (find) any good ones?
- 4 B I (find) several company sites – Sony, Canon, ... but I (want) one which (compare) all the models.
- 5 A Which search engine (use)?
- 6 B Dogpile mostly. (ever use) it?

- 7 A Yes, I (try) it but I (have) more luck with AskJeeves. Why don't you try it?
- 8 B I (have) enough for one night. I (spend) hours on that project.
- 9 A I (not start) on mine yet.
- 10 B Yeh? I bet you (do) it all.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

- 7** How do you think these professions might use computers? Compare answers with others in your group.

architects
interior designers
farmers
landscape gardeners
musicians
rally drivers
sales people

SPEAKING

- 8** Work in pairs. Find out this information from your partner. Make sure you use the correct tense in your questions. For example:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| download music from the Internet | [what site] |
| A <i>Have you ever downloaded music from the Internet?</i> | |
| B <i>What site did you use?</i> | |
| 1 send a video email attachment | [who to, when] |
| 2 fit an expansion card | [which type] |
| 3 replace a hard disk | [what model] |
| 4 fix a printer fault | [what kind] |
| 5 make your own website | [how] |
| 6 have a virus | [which virus] |
| 7 watched TV on the Internet | [which station] |
| 8 write a program | [which language] |

WRITING

- 9** Describe how you use computers in your study and in your free time.



Find the answers to these questions in the following text.

- 1 Name some types of devices that use 'computers on a chip'.
- 2 What uses of handheld computers are mentioned in the text?
- 3 What are the benefits of using computers with the following items?
 - a Security systems
 - b Cars
 - c Phones
- 4 What smart devices are mentioned in the text?
- 5 What are smart cards used for?
- 6 What are the advantages of multimedia?
- 7 What can medical expert systems do?
- 8 How can computers help the disabled?
- 9 What types of computing systems are made available to people in remote locations using electronic classrooms or boardrooms?
- 10 What aspects of computing can people power determine?

Computers Make the World Smaller and Smarter

The ability of tiny computing devices to control complex operations has transformed the way many tasks are performed, ranging from scientific research to producing consumer products. Tiny 'computers on a chip' are used in medical equipment, home appliances, cars and toys. Workers use handheld computing devices to collect data at a customer site, to generate forms, to control inventory, and to serve as desktop organisers.

Not only is computing equipment getting smaller, it is getting more sophisticated. Computers are part of many machines and devices that once required continual human supervision and control. Today, computers in security systems result in safer environments, computers in cars improve energy efficiency, and computers in phones provide features such as call forwarding, call monitoring, and call answering.

These smart machines are designed to take over some of the basic tasks previously performed by people; by so doing, they make life a little easier and a little more pleasant. Smart cards store vital information such as health records, drivers' licenses, bank balances, and so on. Smart phones, cars, and appliances with built in computers can be programmed to better meet individual needs. A smart house has a built-in monitoring system that can turn lights on and off, open and close windows, operate the oven, and more.

With small computing devices available for performing smart tasks like cooking dinner, programming the VCR, and controlling the flow of information in an organization, people are able to spend more time doing what they often do best – being creative. Computers can help people work more creatively.

Multimedia systems are known for their educational and entertainment value, which we call 'edutainment'. Multimedia combines