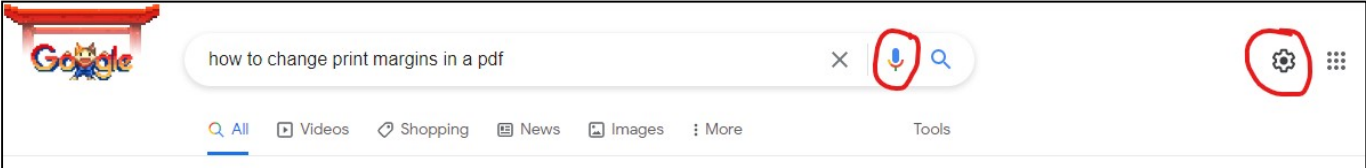# How to Find Help & Learning

The Internet can provide a wealth of free information. It may take looking at several links to find a solution, but you should be able to find help & Learning for just about anything in the world.

How and Where to Search

I recommend using Google, but most any major search engine will do. Most engines contain the advanced search options I describe below. With the Chrome or Edge Browser and Google search, you can use the microphone icon to search using your voice like you can on your tablet or SmartPhone. If typing, don't worry about spelling or capitalization, it does not matter. Be as specific as possible. Example: How to change print margins in a pdf

You can limit results to just Videos, Shopping, News, Images, and others using the simple filter or select "Settings\Advanced search" to use the following filters:

all these words:		Type the important words: tricolor rat terrier
this exact word or phrase:		Put exact words in quotes: "rat terrier"
any of these words:		Type OR between all the words you want: miniature OR standard
none of these words:		Put a minus sign just before words you don't want: -rodent, -"Jack Russell"
numbers ranging from:		Put 2 periods between the numbers and add a unit of measure: 10..35 lb, $300..$500, 2010..2011
language:	any language	Find pages in the language you select.
region:	any region	Find pages published in a particular region.
last update:	Anytime	Find pages updated within the time you specify.
site or domain:		Search one site (like wikipedia.org) or limit your results to a domain like .edu, .org or .gov
terms appearing:	anywhere in the page	Search for terms in the whole page, page title, or web address, or links to the page you're looking for.
SafeSearch:	Show most relevant	Tell SafeSearch whether to filter sexually explicit content.
file type:	any format	Find pages in the format you prefer. PDF, PPT, DOC, etc.
usage rights:	not filtered by license	Find pages you are free to use yourself

Tips:

- Search results with the first word "Ad" are from companies that pay to have their result shown and not a true indicator of how popular the results really are. Be skeptical of their reviews or recommendations.

- First search a Vendor site and leave a question if you do not find help.
  - Examples: https://support.microsoft.com, https://support.google.com, or https://support.apple.com/
- Use https://www.pcmag.com, https://www.zdnet.com, https://www.tomsguide.com, or https://www.makeuseof.com for product reviews and specific articles on the latest in computer technology.
- Use https://computer.howstuffworks.com/pc.htm to learn about things you do not know.
- There are many ask a question sites. Some are from the vendor and others are the general public.
- Contact me with a question or sign up for a time slot with the Carondelet Computer Tutor.
- Microsoft's "Get Help" app - Part search engine and part portal for reaching customer support. Installed with Windows 10 and free to use. You start with a virtual chat bot providing answers to your questions. If you want to "Message a Person", type in "human" in the virtual chat bot.

Manuals, Tutorials, Classes, and Help

Most vendors no longer provide a printed manual with their products, but you can find many full PDF manuals online. Search using the vendor and model number along with the word manual. When you find the manual, save the .PDF on your PC in a directory like C:\...\Documents\Manuals and use the vendor name and model and date as the file name. DO NOT PRINT. PDFs are easy to search and find exactly what you are looking for. When buying a new smartphone, PC, TV, or tablet you should download the manual and read it cover to cover. This will expose you to the 100s of features and functions you most likely would never know about. Most people only know 10%-20% of what their smartphone camera can do. I buy used PC equipment at church and garage sales and can find almost any manual online. Example: Netgear AC1000 Manual

- Tutorials - Check under Help or hit F1 to see what is available the help with the software or an application.
- Tutorials or Classes - Millions of videos are out on YouTube on every subject you can think of. Other sites like the Khan Academy offer 100s of free classes. TED talks. Libby by OverDrive app - free public library books and resources using your Library card.
- I do not recommend buying a book when you can find so much free content on the web. Most books are outdated compare to web content.
- Search for Help when you are trying to do something or run into a problem or question. The more specific you are with the search, the better the results will be. Example: how to filter in excel

Troubleshooting Tips

- Don't panic.
- Most computer problems have simple solutions, although it may take some time to find them.
- Reboot and restart your PC. This can solve a lot of issues with hardware and software. If the device is frozen you may have to hold in the power button for 10 seconds to cause it to turn off. All devices should be restarted at least once a week, desktop, tablet, router, modem, or phone.
- If your PC or software gives an error message, be sure to write it down exactly or capture the screen so you can then search for it or show the person helping you.
- If you're having trouble with a specific piece of PC hardware, like a monitor or keyboard, your first step is to unplug and plug in all related cables.
- Use the process of elimination - Make a list of things that could be causing the problem and then test them out one by one to eliminate them. Example printer is not printing. Print a test page from the printer to see if it is in the printer or computer. Check the printer queue. Try printing from different software. Is it a Wi-Fi/Internet problem. etc.
- Try to narrow your problem down to see if it is a hardware or software problem.
- Hardware problem? Figure your options on when to buy new, restore/use backup, or reset OS.
- For OS problems/questions go to a Apple store or Microsoft's "Get Help" app for free expert help.
- In the past, some Computer Stores did free estimate to fix a hardware problem. Most now change with cost going toward the bill if you choose to use their service.
- If a software or app is not working right. Uninstall and reinstall.
- Make sure you have the most current version or patch of software. Look under the Help/Settings to see if there is an update.
- Seek help from others. You may be heading down the wrong path. Contact me with a question or sign up for a time slot with the Carondelet Computer Tutor.
- Write down/document your steps in case you need to undo your changes. Also, if you ask other people, let them know what you have tried to save time.
- If you think you may be making many changes to Windows that you might want to undo, you can create a "Restore" point. Open the Windows Start, search for "Create a restore point", and click the top result which uses the "Control Panel", then under the "Protection Settings" section, click the Create button.
- Run a thorough virus scan after making sure it is up to date.
- Make sure you have not run out of hard drive/SSD space.
- Uninstall software/apps you no longer use.
- Last resort reset the device.

Additional Links and Information

Questions or comments can be sent to TCKreuzer@gmail.com