



Part of the **tech4me2** series



PCs MADE SIMPLE **WORKBOOK**



Step-by-step guide to buying, setting up, customizing,
maintaining, and troubleshooting your personal computer.



JOHN CLITES

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook is designed to be used alongside the [PCs Made Simple](#) course.

You may choose to:

- Complete each section immediately after finishing the corresponding module in the course, or
- Watch the entire course first to gain an overview, then return to complete the workbook.

Not every section will apply to every user. For example, if your Wi-Fi is already set up and working properly, you may simply review that section briefly and move on.

The purpose of this workbook is not to duplicate the content of the course. Rather, it is intended to guide you through actually implementing the concepts covered in the course. In this workbook, you will:

- record important information,
- clarify decisions,
- create an organized plan, and
- prepare yourself to deal with issues which may arise.

Taking a few minutes to write down information and decisions as you go will save you significant time later.

THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO

Name: _____

Date Started: _____

PC model*: _____

*If you have more than one computer, you may wish to complete a workbook for each.

MY COMPUTER INFORMATION

To locate PC-specific information such as device name, processor, and system type, go to: Settings → System → About

Brand / Model: _____

Purchase Date: _____

Serial Number: _____

Warranty Expiration: _____

Purchased From: _____

Customer / Order Number: _____

Microsoft Account Email: _____

Windows Version: _____

Wi-Fi Network Name: _____

Router Model (if known): _____

Keep this workbook in a safe place. It serves as your personal setup record and long-term maintenance reference. You will need the information on this page if you need to contact Tech Support or exercise a warranty.

1. YOUR GOALS & BUYING DECISIONS

For most of us, buying a new PC is a significant matter. So if you plan to buy a new PC, give due thought to what you really need. There are more options available than ever before, and while this is certainly a good thing, you can be left standing in the middle of Best Buy totally befuddled. Before beginning your shopping, get a clear idea of what you really need and want.

“If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else.”

Yogi Berra, famed Yankees catcher

How do you plan to use your new PC?

Primary uses (check all that apply):

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Video calls
- ☐ Online banking
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Photo storage
- ☐ Web browsing
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Online shopping
- ☐ Other: _____

The Three Most Important Things I Want This PC to Do Well

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Frustrations I Want to Avoid (Consider Current Frustrations)

Buying Considerations *

Budget Range: _____

Laptop or Desktop: _____

Preferred Screen Size: _____

Storage Target: _____

Memory (RAM) Target: _____

Must-Have Features:

*For help choosing specifications based on your needs, see Unit 2 of the course.

2. SETTING UP YOUR PC

Before you begin setup, make sure you know your:

- ☐ Microsoft account email
- ☐ Microsoft account password
- ☐ Wi-Fi network name and password

Initial Setup Checklist

- ☐ Unboxed and inspected computer (compare contents to packing list)
- ☐ Plugged into surge protector
- ☐ Completed Windows setup (generally Windows is pre-installed)
- ☐ Signed into (or created) your Microsoft account
- ☐ Connected to Wi-Fi (if not yet set up, refer to course)
- ☐ Installed system updates (usually is automatic once the PC is online)
- ☐ Restarted computer after updates (necessary for updates to be activated)

Setup Notes or Issues Encountered:

3. CONNECTING PERIPHERALS

- ☐ Printer connected and test page printed
- ☐ Webcam tested
- ☐ Microphone tested
- ☐ Speakers tested
- ☐ Drivers updated (if needed)
- ☐ Camera privacy settings reviewed

For recommended accessories, visit the [Tech4Me2 Hardware page](#).

4. WINDOWS BASICS & FILE ORGANIZATION

My Main Folders

Include standard predefined folders (e.g., Documents*, Photos, Videos), but also any that you have created (e.g., Financials, Kids, Projects).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

*Nesting subfolders under a macro folder such as “Documents” can facilitate backups, as the entire macro folder can be selected rather than several subfolders.

Photo and Video Storage Plan

Photos and videos can consume a great deal of space, so give some consideration to whether they will be kept on your hard drive, and for how long.

☐ On this PC

☐ In the cloud

☐ On an external drive

☐ Combination

Downloads Plan

The Downloads folder can become filled with random files (install programs, attachments, images, etc.).

☐ Review weekly

☐ Move important files to appropriate folders

☐ Delete unnecessary files regularly

My Backup Plan

Too often users don't create a formal backup plan, instead only moving files and photos off the hard drive when they need to create space. But those who have ever lost important data know the importance of creating and sticking to a structured backup plan. Complete the grid on the next page to begin your plan.

BACKUP PLANNING WORKSHEET

Use the grid below to create a high-level backup plan. Begin by identifying your most valuable files. These should be backed up more frequently, and perhaps on more than one medium, such as the cloud and an external drive.

Folder / File Type	Stored on PC	Cloud Backup	External Drive	Backup Frequency
Documents	☐	☐	☐	_____
Photos	☐	☐	☐	_____
Financial Records	☐	☐	☐	_____
Projects	☐	☐	☐	_____
Other	☐	☐	☐	_____

Notes: _____

If you use any cloud service for backup, such as OneDrive or Google, be sure to review their synchronization settings to ensure important folders are included in backups.

For backups done manually to external drives, schedule regular times (e.g., Friday afternoons) to perform the backups.

5. GETTING ONLINE

My Internet Setup

Wi-Fi Network Name: _____

Wi-Fi Password*: _____

Password Last Updated: _____

Internet Service Provider (ISP): _____

ISP Customer Support Number: _____

Router Location in Home: _____

Router Brand (if known): _____

*Reminder: Passwords should not be easy to guess. Record the password and store it securely, preferably in more than one safe location.

Connection Check

☐ Connected to Wi-Fi successfully

☐ Tested web browsing

☐ Tested email access

☐ Tested video call

☐ Tested cell phone connection

6. CHROME BROWSER & ONLINE TOOLS

Chrome Browser Setup

- ☐ Signed into Chrome
- ☐ Bookmarks reviewed and organized
- ☐ Password manager selected or default confirmed
- ☐ Autofill reviewed
- ☐ Extensions reviewed
- ☐ Default search engine confirmed

Browser Review & Cleanup Plan

- ☐ Removed outdated bookmarks
- ☐ Removed unused extensions
- ☐ Reviewed saved passwords
- ☐ Cleared browsing data

Cleanup frequency: _____

7. PERSONALIZING YOUR PC

PC users often neglect to review the settings noted below. This is unfortunate, as a couple of clicks is often all that is required to make using your PC a more pleasant experience.

Comfort & Display

Settings → System → Display

- ☐ Adjusted text size
- ☐ Adjusted brightness
- ☐ Adjusted scaling
- ☐ Confirmed resolution

Notifications

Settings → System → Notifications

- ☐ Disabled unnecessary notifications

Startup

Settings → Apps → Startup

- ☐ Disabled unnecessary startup apps

Apps disabled at startup are still available when needed. They simply are not automatically activated each time your PC is booted up. If your PC takes a long time to boot up, be sure to check this setting.

8. GMAIL REVIEW & ORGANIZATION

Gmail Account Check

- ☐ Signed into Gmail
- ☐ Sent test email
- ☐ Received test email
- ☐ Checked Spam folder

Labels & Organization Review

- ☐ Reviewed default labels
- ☐ Reviewed custom labels
- ☐ Removed outdated labels
- ☐ Added needed labels

Filters

- ☐ Reviewed existing filters
- ☐ Confirmed they are working properly
- ☐ Considered creating simple filters

For a focused inbox reset system, see [Emails Made Simple](#).

9. YOUR PC MAINTENANCE PLAN

The key to avoiding major problems is consistent maintenance. A few minutes on a regular basis will avert many issues, and extend the life of your investment.

Weekly

- ☐ Wipe screen (microfiber cloth or unscented alcohol wipes recommended)
- ☐ Clean keyboard (completely shut down PC first)
- ☐ Clear Downloads folder
- ☐ Remove unneeded Desktop icons
- ☐ Empty Recycle Bin
- ☐ Restart computer (if not done during cleaning)

Note: Many updates will not take effect until your PC is restarted, so be sure to do so weekly at a minimum.

Monthly

- ☐ Check Windows updates
- ☐ Run antivirus scan
- ☐ Verify backups
- ☐ Review storage usage

Quarterly

- ☐ Dust vents and keyboard
- ☐ Review startup apps
- ☐ Remove unused programs
- ☐ Review browser extensions

Annually

- ☐ Review and update passwords
- ☐ Review backup strategy
- ☐ Evaluate storage capacity
- ☐ Confirm warranty status

Recommended: Add recurring reminders in your Calendar **now**.

10. USEFUL TIPS & TROUBLESHOOTING NOTES

BEFORE CONTACTING TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Most computer issues are resolved more quickly when they are described clearly and calmly.

What Happened, Precisely?

What Was Happening Immediately Before the Issue?

1.

2.

3.

What Has Changed Recently?

- ☐ Installed new software
- ☐ Updated Windows
- ☐ Changed settings
- ☐ Connected new device
- ☐ Unsure

When Did the Issue Begin?

During the Support Call, You

- ☐ Took notes
- ☐ Asked for a case number
- ☐ Confirmed next steps
- ☐ Clarified follow-up process

Case Number: _____

Support Representative Name: _____

Next step: _____

Making it easier for support to understand your issue increases the likelihood of a faster resolution.

MY DIGITAL CONFIDENCE SNAPSHOT

After completing this course and workbook, I feel confident in the following areas:

- ☐ Selecting the right PC for my needs
- ☐ Setting up a new PC
- ☐ Adjusting system settings
- ☐ Managing files and folders
- ☐ Backing up important data
- ☐ Performing basic maintenance
- ☐ Troubleshooting common issues

If there are areas where you still feel uncertain, review the relevant course module or seek additional assistance.

Congratulations on completing the PCs Made Simple course! With the habits you've developed here, your computer should remain a helpful tool rather than a source of frustration.

For questions or feedback, contact: support@tech4me2.com

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Print and keep handy as a reminder of the most important steps for keeping your computer running smoothly.

Essential PC Settings

Find key system information

Settings → System → About

Adjust display and text size

Settings → System → Display

Control notifications

Settings → System → Notifications

Manage startup apps

Settings → Apps → Startup

Disabling unnecessary startup apps can significantly speed up boot time.

Regular Maintenance Checklist

Weekly

- Clear unnecessary files from Downloads
- Remove unused Desktop icons
- Empty the Recycle Bin
- Restart your computer

Monthly

- Check Windows updates
- Run antivirus scan
- Confirm backups are working
- Review storage usage

Quarterly

- Clean keyboard and vents
 - Review startup apps
 - Remove unused programs
 - Review browser extensions
-

Backup Reminder

Important files should exist in **at least two locations**.

Common backup approach:

- Primary files on your PC
- Cloud backup (OneDrive, Google Drive, etc.)
- Optional external drive backup

Set a recurring reminder in your calendar to verify backups.

When Something Goes Wrong

Before contacting technical support:

1. Restart the computer.
2. Write down exactly what happened.
3. Note what you were doing just before the problem occurred.
4. Check if any recent updates or software installations occurred.

Clear information helps support resolve problems more quickly.

Good Everyday Habits

- Keep Windows updates enabled
- Be cautious with email attachments

- Install software only from trusted sources
- Clean the Downloads folder regularly
- Restart your PC periodically