



GET DIGITAL WITH USDAW

Usdaw
*Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers*

Union
Learning
Fund

with unionlearn

Introduction



This leaflet is part of Usdaw's campaign to make sure everyone has the digital skills they need to get by at work, at home, in their union and their local community. It explains:

- What digital skills are and why everyone needs to have them.
- Where you can get learning to develop these skills.
- What support is available to you.
- Where and how you can use it/practice your skills.

Many Usdaw members lose out because of their lack of digital skills. Don't be one of them – Get Digital with Usdaw. It's free and it's fun.

What Are Digital Skills?



Over the last 10 years there has been a huge growth in both the services available through the internet and new devices to access these services:

- Laptop computers.
- Smart phones.
- Tablets (iPads , Kindles, Hudls).
- iPods.
- TVs.

It's been called the digital revolution and the ability to get the most out of it is called digital skills. So far, it's been possible to ignore it but life for those without these devices and the skills to use them is becoming more difficult and much more expensive.

The Benefits of Going Digital



Latest research shows that nearly eight million people don't have the skills to get the benefits that come with digital technology. People who can't shop and pay their bills online pay nearly £600 a year more than those that do. And that's not all. Poor digital skills mean people may:

- Struggle to cope at work.
- Find it harder to get work if they lose their job.
- Struggle to get information and services when they are only available online.
- Be isolated as more and more communication takes place digitally.
- Miss out on new developments such as taking pictures, getting music etc.

Breaking down the barriers



Learning a new skill can be quite scary, and for many people computers are a bit of a mystery. The problem is getting started. People give all sorts of reasons why they can't:

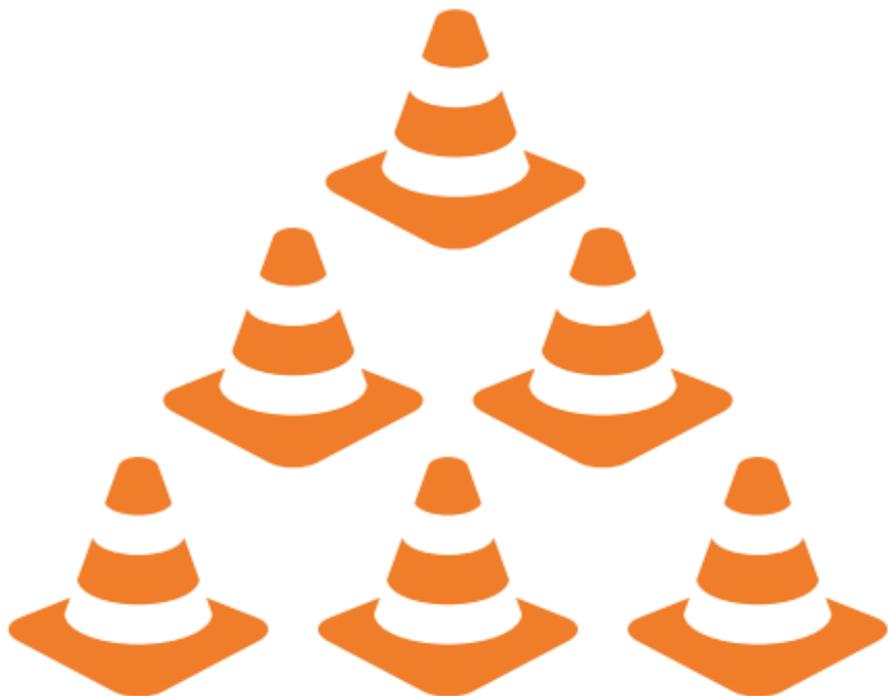
- Too old to learn new skills? Not true, age is no barrier to learning.
- Can't afford it? Many introductory courses are free.
- Haven't got the time? You can learn almost anywhere and at any time.
- Haven't got a computer? Use a tablet or a smartphone. You can use a computer at the local library and the internet at many stores and pubs.

Recognise any of these reasons?

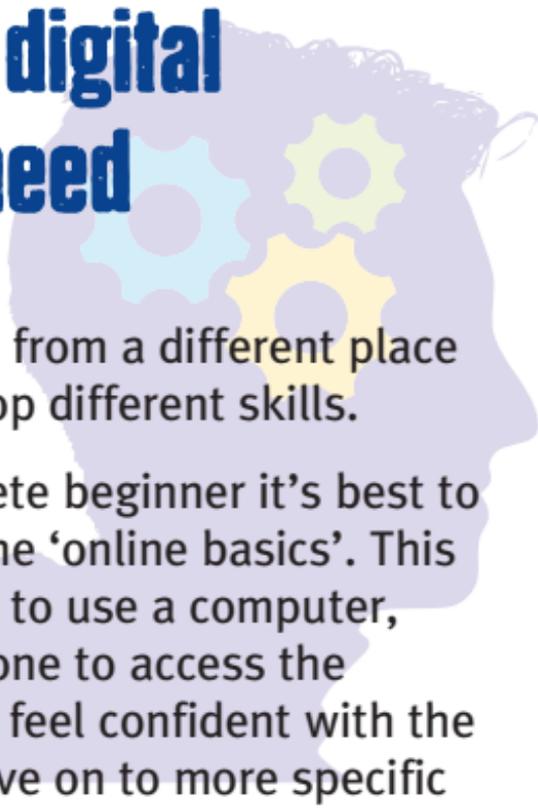
Sometimes the real reason behind them is the confidence to learn. People are worried that they will fail or look stupid – that's what many remember from school.

But learning is not like that with Usdaw. People are supported, have fun with friends and develop the practical skills they need in life.

So read on and find out how Usdaw can help you to give it a go.



Getting the digital skills you need



Everyone will start from a different place and want to develop different skills.

If you are a complete beginner it's best to start by learning the 'online basics'. This will show you how to use a computer, touchscreen or phone to access the internet. Once you feel confident with the basics you can move on to more specific skills. A good foundation of skills will include:

- Using email – email addresses are free and are often needed to register for different services.
- Using online services such as banking, making appointments and paying bills.
- Shopping online.
- Staying safe online when shopping or using social media.

Getting started

There are many free courses to help you get the basics. If your workplace has an Usdaw Union Learning Rep (ULR) it may be possible to learn at work. If not then there are plenty of other ways to get started. Usdaw's course – Get Online with Usdaw – is a good starting place. It's free and available for every member.

You can actually learn online or if you prefer face to face learning there may be a Learning Centre, a local course or a library close to you. Your rep may be able to help you find the nearest one. Go along with a friend if you feel nervous – it's good to learn together.

Check out our **Famous Five websites** later on in this leaflet. They will help you get started.



Getting help and support

You can get help and advice from many different places:

- Your Union Learning Rep (ULR) or other Usdaw reps may be able to help you get support. Usdaw is developing a network of Digital Champions. Ask your rep if there is one in your workplace.
 - Check out Usdaw's learning portal on the Lifelong Learning website.
 - Libraries have free computers with internet access. Some have staff that can support you.
 - Learn My Way has a number of centres where support is free. You can get this information from the site or from the local library.
 - Some local councils run free courses and offer free advice.
- 

The Famous Five Websites

We have picked out five websites that will help you develop your digital skills and have some fun at the same time.

- **Usdaw** – Information on a range of courses as well as details of member benefits, resources for activists and campaigns.
- **Learn My Way** – Information and courses to help you develop your digital skills. It should be the first site to browse.
- **DigitalUnite** – Lots of courses and information as well as providing links to a range of community sites.
- **BBCWebwise** – Courses but also includes the BBC's news and entertainment services including radio and TV programmes.
- **YouTube** – For fun and information whether it's your favourite song, endless cat videos or how to fix that leaking tap.

The logo for Usdaw features the word 'Usdaw' in a stylized font. 'Us' is in red and 'daw' is in blue. Above the 'a' in 'daw', there are three horizontal lines in red, blue, and red, suggesting a flag or a stylized 'a'.

*Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers*

www.usdaw.org.uk

Usdaw

The Usdaw website contains a wide range of information for Usdaw members and activists. You can check out the different benefits and special offers for members available through the Union.

The site also allows you to take part in surveys, download handbooks and advice and change your membership details.

We have developed a special course to help Usdaw members use the site. It's called 'Get Online with Usdaw'. Look at Usdaw's website and check out the learning portal or ask your workplace rep for more information.

www.usdaw.org.uk

Learn My Way



Absolute beginner?

Learn My Way is a good place to start. It has courses which will help you with the basics of getting online. It will help you to develop the skills to use keyboards, a mouse or a touchscreen. It also has several staying safe online courses.

There are many follow on courses for more experienced users and those who have developed their skills and confidence.

You can take the courses directly online and can access the site from any device. If you would like a 'tutor-led course', you can use the site to find out where you can get tuition and support from your nearest Learning Centre.

www.learnmyway.com

DigitalUnite

DigitalUnite also offers a full range of courses – everything from computer basics through hobbies to getting your TV online and using social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

They provide a tutor service where someone will visit you at home to help you through any problems. This is not a free service and can cost between £20 to £30 an hour.

You can also use the Community Q and A service to ask questions about any digitally-related matters and get an expert response.

www.digitalunite.com



The BBC website is another great source of free learning and offers courses for beginners and more experienced users.

It has a very good section on different digital topics and provides straightforward advice and facts through text and video links. It's a good place to widen your understanding of the digital world.

You also have access to the whole range of resources on the BBC website. Everything from news and entertainment through to the weather forecast and the different BBC radio channels.

There are also links to the BBC iPlayer site which allows you to get TV and radio programmes you may have missed.

www.bbc.co.uk/webwise

YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing website which allows users to upload, view, and share videos. You need to register if you want to put material on YouTube but anyone can watch what's on there.

The vast range of content includes music, videos, TV clips as well as original users material. Usdaw has its own YouTube channel.

YouTube also contains an enormous range of educational and instructional videos. Everything from sign language and yoga through to instrument tuition and DIY advice. It's a very good learning tool.

www.youtube.com





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on your smartphone

www.usdaw.org.uk/III

**to scan the code, download a QR reader
app from your app store. A charge may be
applied by your network provider.



For further information ring our helpline

0845 60 60 640*

*calls charged at local rate.



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*Union of Shop, Distributive
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Improving workers' lives – Winning for members

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