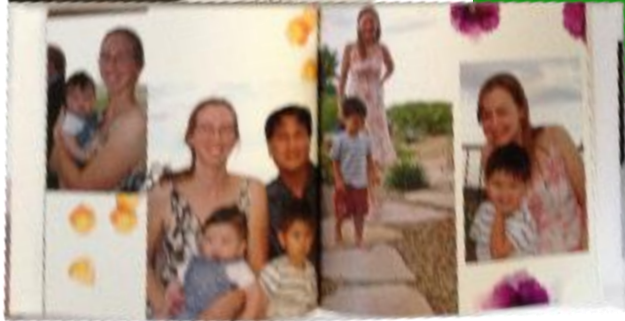# Getting Creative with your Computer

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Create!

Getting Creative with Your Computer

Ideas and resources for creating personalized holiday gifts, greetings, and more…

Getting Started
- or What's the Occasion?

- Holidays

- Birthdays

- Special occasions

- Personal projects

- Just because

Computer Based Projects

- Cards
  - Online e-cards or print cards
  - Printed cards using greeting card programs
  - Personally designed cards, newsletters, labels, banners,…
- Self-designed projects printed / produced by an outside company
  - Photo books, calendars, puzzles, photo cards, mugs, blankets,…
- Animated slideshows, personal videos,…
- Self-written e-books and interactive books
- Crafts designed on a computer

Choosing Online E-card Sites

- When sending e-cards, be sure to select a reputable site, so that you do not accidently send malware

- Some friends need to know an e-card is coming

- Varied sources for e-cards:
  - AmericanGreetings.com/ecards
  - BlueMountain.com
  - Hallmarkecards.com
  - JacquieLawson.com
  - JibJab.com

E-card Personalization

- Some sites, such as JibJab.com let you personalize images in your card or animated card, such as below:

Cards and Desktop Publishing

- Dedicated card making programs:
  - Hallmark Card Studio (Mac, Windows)
  - Greeting Card Factory Deluxe by Nova Development (Win)
- Some other programs that can generate cards, fliers, and more:
  - The Print Shop (Mac, Windows)
  - Microsoft Publisher (Windows)
  - Pages (Mac)
  - Microsoft Word (Mac, Windows)

Graphics and Fonts

- Download only from reputable sites.

- Be aware of the permitted uses for your graphics and fonts.

- Images are tagged with keywords, which helps in searching.

- Clipart and extra fonts are included with some programs, plus font and clip art collections can also be purchased separately
  - Don't load *every* font onto your computer!

Finding Your Fonts

- Before using fonts, be sure that you have the right to use them in your project

- Many sources for fonts - free, paid, or by subscription - boxed or downloaded
  - Included with many programs and operating systems
  - Fontspace - fontspace.com
  - Font Squirrel - fontsquirrel.com
  - Adobe Typekit - typekit.com
    - By subscription
    - Included with Adobe Creative Cloud subscriptions

Getting Your Graphics

- Before using a graphic, be sure that you have the right to use it in your project
    - Read the licensing agreement to determine permitted uses
    - Just because you found it by Googling, does not necessarily give you rights to use an image as you please

- There is a wide range of images and many come in different resolutions, file types, or as vector images

- Keep a folder of the downloaded images that you have purchased, as well as any receipts or licensing agreements

Paid Graphics Sites

- There are a number of excellent sites which sell images, clipart, and even stock video footage
  - Not cheap - various pricing plans
  - Adobe Stock - stock.adobe.com
  - 123RF - 123rf.com
  - Fotolia - fotolia.com
  - iStock by Getty- istockphoto.com
  - Shutterstock - shutterstock.com (photos and video footage)

Create Your Own

- Use your own photographs
  - Again a caution if the work will be sold or posted online
  - Edit them for appearance, as well as appropriate resolution for the project

- Create your own graphics
  - Be original and don't just copy someone else's work
  - Even fonts can be designed, but few people actually do

Creating Printed Photo Books

- There are a number of sites where you can design and publish photo books, using online templates.
  - blurb.com
  - shutterfly.com
  - snapfish.com

- iBooks Author (Mac)
  - apple.com/mac/print-products/

Photo Project Sites

- There are many types of projects that you can make using your photos from books or cards to physical objects such as mugs, calendars, totes.

  - Shutterfly.com
  - SnapFish.com
  - SnapTotes.com - Photo bags, pillows, novelties
  - Apple.com/mac/print-products/ - Apple iPhoto and Photos print products through Apple
  - Local businesses such as Kinko's, Walgreen's, Wal-Mart, OfficeMax, Office Depot…

Write an Interactive Book

- Apple's iBooks Author is a free download for Mac users from Apple's App store
  - Use it to create beautiful books from a template or design your own
  - Add multimedia and interactive elements
  - Many ways to output and read final product
    - Publish to Apple's iBooks Store
    - Output as an iBook to be read on an iOS device or computer
    - Output as a pdf either to be read on a computer, tablet or smart phone, or to be printed
  - Adobe InDesign is a professional solution for print and interactive book creation

Photo Prep Tips

- Choose clear in focus pictures.

- Pictures should be at least 300 dpi and a suitable size for the project.

- Pictures need to be straight and well lit.

- Crop images appropriately.

Photo & Video Editing Programs

- Free - each is of these is either originally included with a new computer or available as a free download.
  - Photos, iMovie, Pages (Mac) – originally included with a new Mac and also available in iCloud
  - Windows Movie Maker
  - Picasa (Mac, Windows, Linux)
  - Gimp (Mac, Windows, Linux)

Photo & Video Editing Programs

- Retail programs
  - Adobe Photoshop Elements and Premiere Elements (Mac, Windows)
    - The full versions of Photoshop and Premiere Pro (Mac and Windows) are available for the serious or professional users
  - Adobe Lightroom (Mac, Windows)
  - Corel PaintShop Pro (Windows)
  - Final Cut Pro X (Mac)
  - Pinnacle Studio (Windows)
  - Roxio.com (Mac, Windows)
  - Sonycreativesoftware.com/products/default.asp (Windows)

Desktop Publishing Programs

- These are great for producing newsletters, brochures, labels, postcards, …
  - Microsoft Publisher (Windows)
    - Great for all sorts of desktop publishing projects, as well as being able to handle oversized items, such as posters
  - Pages (Mac)
    - Great for many types of publishing projects on a Mac
  - The Print Shop (Mac, Windows)
  - Microsoft Word (Mac, Windows)

Animated Slideshows

- You not only will need a group of your pictures; you will also need some music

- Use the mp3 format for the music to help keep file size down

- If uploading to sites like YouTube, you have to have original or royalty free music
  - There are programs that will let you easily create your own soundtracks
    - Apple's Garage Band, Sony's Acid Music Studio, Adobe Premiere Elements
    - You can also add narration

Programs for Slideshows

- Adobe Photoshop Elements (Mac, Windows)
  - For additional DVD creation features, use the Adobe Photoshop Elements / Premiere Elements bundle.

- Adobe Lightroom (Mac, Windows) which is sometimes used in combination with Photoshop

- Photos app, which replaced iPhoto (Mac)

- Windows Movie Maker

- Picasa (Mac, Windows, and Linux)

Computer Inspired Projects

- Pinterest pinterest.com is a site for those interested in crafts and projects
  - Full of ideas with lots of color pictures
  - Some people sell patterns and kits
  - You pin items of interest
  - Pinterest e-mails suggestions based on what you've already pinned
- Design your own

Designing on a Computer

- Beyond specialized programs for project design, such as CAD and embroidery programs, patterns can be designed and printed with your computer.

- Using a graphics program such as Photoshop Elements or Photoshop, which have layers, a project can be designed and patterns printed out.

- If you plan to make items for each grandchild over a period of time, consider saving all the upper and lower letters in the desired font and size on different layers in a program like Photoshop Elements.

  - Also save as jpg files, since original fonts can be lost

Printing Oversized Patterns

- Use Microsoft Publisher, which can print a large object on multiple pages, which can then be taped together

- Take a jpg file of the object to a place such as Kinko's, which can print it on a single piece of large paper, using a specialty printer.

Several Holiday Examples

Create!

Now It's Time to Get Creative!