



TIPS FOR DISK/FILE SAFETY AND LIBRARY COMPUTER USE

Vincennes University's Home Page - <http://www.vinu.edu>

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The library's **Computer Commons** is heavily used throughout the library's working hours and usually operates very well. However, there are problems that occasionally occur, and the following tips compiled by librarians may help prevent some of these. **Feel free to visit the Reference Desk to ask a Reference Librarian or library reference assistant for help with these or other matters.** Use of library computers is considered a privilege, not a right, and a Code of Conduct for computer use is posted in the library.

- **FOOD AND UNCAPPED BEVERAGES ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE LIBRARY.**
- **RULES PROHIBIT PLUGGING ANYTHING (COMPONENTS, PERIPHERALS, ETC.) INTO THE BACKS OF PCS. (HEADPHONES AND THUMB DRIVES IN FRONT PLUG ARE ALLOWED.)**
- **USE OF WEB PHONES IS PROHIBITED, ACCORDING TO THE DEAN OF LEARNING RESOURCES.**

I. THINGS TO KNOW: WORD PROCESSING

Tip #1: BRING A DISK

It is your responsibility to bring your own disks to the library when doing computer work. Since **disks seem to be unreliable**, it is a good idea to bring **two disks** and save everything (especially your important work) twice. The Reference Desk may have a disk to loan you (used disks, quality not guaranteed) if you are in trouble, but don't wait until you have **already lost/deleted/locked up** your document before asking for help. It will be too late.

Tip #2: RUN A QUICK TEST

It is a very bad idea to write anything on a public access PC without first inserting a disk, making sure it works by typing a small (just a few words) test and saving the file. This lets you know if your disk has gone bad or is damaged and won't work, or if the PC's disk drive is disabled. If you lose your entire 15-page term paper because the computer locks up and you didn't bring a disk to first save on, **you have a big problem**. You will have to write your paper over again!

Tip #3: SAVE YOUR DOCUMENT FREQUENTLY

This cannot be emphasized enough. Save it as you begin when you write one sentence, then **every two minutes** click the save icon (or use the File/Save option). This will **save you a lot of grief** some day.

Tip #4: DO NOT EVER REMOVE YOUR DISK FROM THE PC...

...without first closing out your document. This is very important. If you don't do this you will unlikely ever retrieve whatever it is you have written.

Tip #5: REBOOTING THE PC

Often a PC will not work correctly (disabled A drive, programs that won't work correctly) because the person using it before you damaged it in some way (often accidentally doing something he or she was unaware of that damages the system files, etc.). Try to find out if the PC is working first by testing your program (such as Microsoft Word). **If in doubt, reboot the machine** by clicking **Start**, then **Shut Down**, then **Restart** and then test the program again when it boots up.

Tip #6: TAKE CARE OF YOUR DISK

Disks are fragile. Countless times students are unable to retrieve their document because their disks are damaged due to careless use. The sliding metal disk protector is especially easy to damage. Treat your disk with care.

Tip #7: VIRUSES

Viruses are everywhere. Any viruses that have infected the library PCs will be cleaned after a reboot. If you suspect your disk has a virus, ask the Reference Librarian for assistance. It is possible (but never guaranteed) that your disk can have viruses removed.

Tip #8: POWERPOINT CREATIONS/GRAPHICS/EXTREMELY LARGE FILES

Be aware these are usually too large to save to a single floppy. Sometimes you can break them up and save them on several floppies. It is best to buy a Thumb Drive, Memory Stick or other large-capacity storage device (available at VU Bookstore) and save your work on this.

Tip #9: DO NOT SAVE TO HARD DRIVE

Data left on hard drives is wiped clean whenever a PC is rebooted, also early every morning as the computers are automatically refreshed. If you save a file to the hard drive it will NOT be there later.

II. THINGS TO KNOW: INTERNET/WEB/PRINTING

Tip #1: PRINTING

Printing: The library uses **networked printers** (including a color printer) with touch-sensitive screens. One print station is located in the Computer Commons beside the Reference Desk and another print station is located by the computer lab (to the left as you enter the library). Cost for printing is **10 cents per page (50 cents for color)**.

Tip #2: LIBRARY RESEARCH

After calling up a browser (Explorer), it is recommended that you start your library research (for use in writing term papers, making speeches, writing essays, etc.) at the library's home page at <http://www.vinu.edu>. This home page has numerous **professional databases** such as EBSCOhost (Inspire), NewsBank, Proquest, and SIRS (among others) that will serve you with **better, reliable, often faster information** than generic Web-based news browsers such as Google.

Tip #3: GRAPHICS

The web is a good source of graphics (pictures, animations, etc.), but due to the large size of many graphics files **printing may be nearly impossible** with some of them (this includes Excel spreadsheets or charts that fill the computer screen). Solution: download the graphic to your disk and take it somewhere else to print (perhaps a local printing company where you will pay for this service).

Tip #4: OTHER WEB PRINTING

Once in a while, for some odd reason, certain web pages will not print at all. One cause of this might be solid black backgrounds on the page. If you need the text from such a page, it is recommended that you **copy the text and paste** it into Microsoft Word, then print it from Word. Another option is to use the Page Setup menu in Netscape and change the setting to black text (click on **File, Page Setup, Black Text, Okay**). On Internet Explorer **access Tools/Internet Options/General/Accessibility**, then click on **Ignore Colors Specified on Web Pages**.

Tip #5: USING YOUR LAPTOP

Laptop Internet connections are available in the Computer Commons. For this to work, your laptop computer must be equipped with an Ethercard. A connecting cord is available for checkout at the Lending Services Desk. Under no circumstances are laptops to be plugged into the backs of the library's PCs. Please keep in mind that your laptop will not have the printer drivers necessary to print to the library's printers, so if you want to print you must save your work to a floppy and use a library PC to print.

Tip #6: WIRELESS

The library has wireless laptops available for checkout to students, faculty and staff. For security reasons, logons for personal wireless computers are not available.