Technology Basics

IC3 Digital Literacy Certification, Global Standard 6 (GS6)

6 objectives · Certiport IC3 Digital Literacy GS6

A digital environment is any place where you work with technology: a computer desktop, a phone home screen, a website or a cloud app. This guide covers the operating system and browser that let you reach those environments, how you sign in to them, and how you move between them.

Every objective and its key skills

1.1 Access and navigate between digital environments

The operating system (OS) is the main software that manages hardware, runs apps and gives you a user interface. Examples: Windows, macOS, Linux, Android, iOS.

A web browser is an app that requests and displays web pages. Examples: Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, Safari.

1.2 Identify digital devices and connections

An input device sends data or commands into a computer. Examples: keyboard, mouse, touchpad, microphone, webcam, scanner, game controller, stylus.

An output device presents results from a computer to people or to the outside world. Examples: monitor, printer, speakers, headphones, projector.

1.3 Explain fundamental software concepts

An application (app) is software that helps you do a task, such as writing (Microsoft Word, Google Docs), calculating (Excel, Google Sheets) or browsing (Chrome).

Proprietary (closed source) software is owned by a company that keeps its source code private. Examples: Microsoft Office, Adobe Photoshop, macOS.

1.4 Explain fundamental hardware concepts

Computing devices include desktops, laptops, tablets, smartphones, smartwatches and servers; smart TVs and other connected (IoT) devices also contain small computers.

RAM (random access memory) holds the apps and data currently in use; it is fast but volatile, meaning it is cleared when the power goes off.

1.5 Explain fundamental operating system concepts

The two main mobile operating systems are Android (by Google, used by many phone makers such as Samsung) and iOS (by Apple, only on iPhone; iPad uses the closely related iPadOS).

The main computer operating systems are Windows (Microsoft), macOS (Apple, only on Mac computers), Linux (open source, in many distributions such as Ubuntu) and ChromeOS (Google, on Chromebooks).

1.6 Explain fundamental networking concepts

A network is two or more devices linked to share data and resources such as files, printers and an internet connection.

The internet is a worldwide network of networks; the World Wide Web is one service that runs on it, alongside email, messaging and streaming.

Common pitfalls

- Confusing the browser (the app) with a search engine (a website such as Google or Bing that finds pages).
- Calling a touchscreen only an output device; it is both input and output.
- Assuming free software is always open source; freeware can still be closed source.
- Confusing RAM with storage: RAM is temporary working memory, storage keeps files.
- Thinking iOS can be installed on other brands of phone; it runs only on Apple devices.
- Treating the internet and the World Wide Web as the same thing; the web is one service on the internet.

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