

ICT

Chapter 4

Using ICT-based information

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ICT

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Chapter 4: Using ICT-based information

- Chapter 1: Using ICT systems
- Chapter 2: Safety and security
- Chapter 3: Find and select information
- Chapter 4: Using ICT-based information
- Chapter 5: Entering, developing and combining information (part A)
- Chapter 6: Entering, developing and combining information (part B)
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- Chapter 8: Communicating using ICT
- Chapter 9: Test preparation

How to use the Functional ICT materials

These materials have been developed to help you learn the skills that are listed in the Functional Skills Standards for ICT, which the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) produced in 2007.

How have these materials been structured?

The chapters follow the standards, and each chapter is divided into sections that cover the individual standards in sequence. You will find the standards at the start of each chapter, although we have adapted the language slightly to make it clear what you are expected to learn.

Just because the materials follow the standards in this way, it does not mean that your teacher will necessarily teach them in this order. They will organise your learning sessions to suit your individual needs.

Who are these materials aimed at?

These materials are for learners working at both Level 1 and Level 2. The content and activities have been written to be accessible to learners at both levels. Your teacher will know which activities are most suitable for you.


In functional skills, the difference between levels is more to do with what you produce than with the activities you are asked to do. The differences are measured by the **complexity** of the activities, your **familiarity** with the context you are working in and the task you've been asked to perform, how **technically demanding** the task is and how good you are at working **independently**. The materials, and their activities, have been developed with this in mind.


We hope that the materials will engage you in the learning process, and give you the opportunity to discuss what you have learned and to see how other learners approach the same tasks.

What will you find in each chapter?

The chapters follow the standards and are divided into sections that cover what is laid out in the standards. Within each section you are asked to 'Learn the skill', which gives you information and facts for discussion and exploration; and you are asked to 'Develop the skill', with activities that let you practise the skills, test your understanding and take your knowledge further.

You will also find two other features on the pages that are designed to increase your understanding. These are electronic resources in the form of 'skills demonstrations' and 'assets'.

 Skills demonstrations are screen-based demonstrations of points made in the text, which you can click on for instruction or information.

 Assets are files of information provided or stored digitally, which may include photographs, sound clips, databases, spreadsheets, etc. These may also include material you will need to perform the activities (e.g. tables to complete).

We hope you find it easy to learn from these materials and that you enjoy using them.

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4 Using ICT-based information

By the end of this chapter you should be able to:

- ▶▶ access the internet and search information on it
- ▶▶ use appropriate search techniques to locate information
- ▶▶ use and evaluate information from different sources

You will learn to:

- ▶▶ enter a web address into a web browser
- ▶▶ browse the world-wide-web
- ▶▶ use search engines to locate the information you require
- ▶▶ save and use bookmarks to make it easy to return to a web page
- ▶▶ construct search strings for required information
- ▶▶ use wildcards, quotation marks and relational operators
- ▶▶ search for information in files, spreadsheets and databases
- ▶▶ select information that is fit for purpose
- ▶▶ judge the value of information

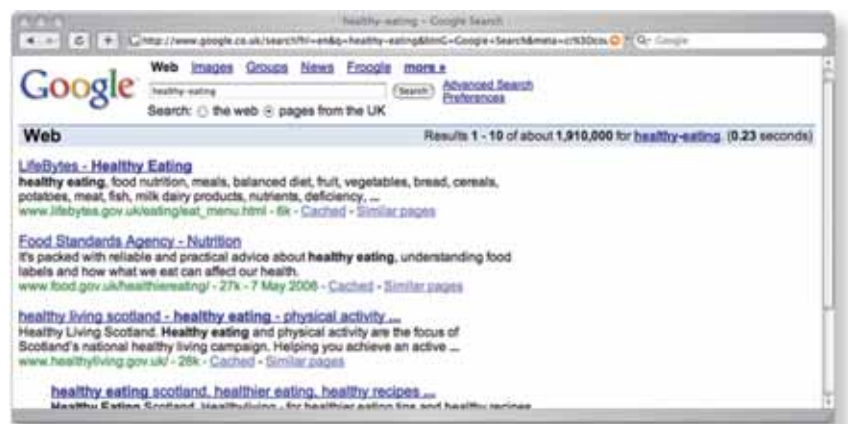
A World-wide-web

Learn the skill

The world-wide-web is part of the internet and is a vast source of information. But anyone can put just about any information on the web, so not all the information is accurate or reliable.

Always think carefully about what information you need and what you are trying to do with it.

Web addresses



`http://www.` This bit tells your browser that it is looking for a web page – nowadays it's enough just to write 'www.bbc.co.uk'.

This is a BBC web address:
`http://www.bbc.co.uk/index.shtml`

`/index.shtml` is the name of the file containing the web page. Web addresses do not always have this part.

`bbc.co.uk` is the domain. This is the name of the computer which stores the file containing the web page.

A browser is an application used to view and navigate pages on the world-wide-web. It can display internet resources such as text and graphics and present multimedia information, including sound and video. To make a browser go to a particular website or web page, enter the address into the browser's address bar, like this:



Bookmarks

Browsers allow you to automatically build and store collections of favourite web addresses. These are known as 'bookmarks' or 'favourites'. Clicking on an entry in the favourites makes the browser load that web page without you having to enter the address into the browser address bar.

Using a search engine

A search engine is a program that searches a database of web pages to find pages that match the search keywords. For example, if you type the words 'healthy eating' into Google, you get over 7 million 'hits'. If you search pages from the UK only, you get around 500 thousand. By adding keywords we can narrow down the search further to get information that is more relevant.

➔➔ Open up and watch these skills demonstrations

- Use an internet browser
- Navigate through the pages
- Refresh the browser
- Use page history
- Bookmark a page
- Use hyperlinks within sites

- Copy and save information
- Print a page
- Use one criterion in a search engine
- Use multiple criteria in a search engine
- Refine a search in a search engine

➔ Develop the skill

- A1** Think of a question related to healthy eating that you would like to know more about, such as 'How much fruit should I eat each day?' What keywords could you add to 'healthy eating' to find the relevant information?
- A2** Open the list of favourites in your browser. Click on an entry in the list. What happens?
- A3** Find out how to add a web page to the list of favourites. Add the address of a website that interests you to your browser's favourites.
- A4** Try the **Test me** sections of the skills demonstrations.

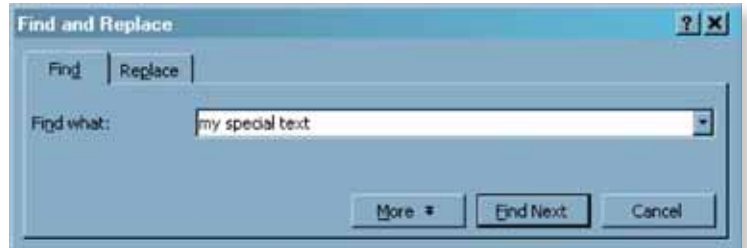
B Search techniques

Learn the skill

Text searches

Sometimes you may want to find a word or phrase in a document or spreadsheet. A software search tool is useful especially if the document is quite long. This will very quickly find every use of the word or phrase.

Here is a 'Find' dialog. The user has entered the words to be found ('my special text' in this case). Each time the 'Find Next' button is clicked, it will find the next place in the text that these words occur.



Database searches

A database is a collection of data that is set up in a way that makes it easy to search for information.

Examples of online databases are Yell.com and National Rail Enquiries. You can search online databases for specific information quickly and easily.

Searching in one field

If you want to search a FILMS database for all films that cost £11.99 exactly, you enter the criterion **11.99** in the Sales cost field. If you want to search for all films costing less than £11.99, the correct criterion is **<11.99**.

Relational operators

'Operators' can help you to search a database. The database program does not understand instructions written in sentences and so operators are used as a form of shorthand. Here are some examples:

Operator	What the symbols mean	Example	Means
<	Less than	<10	Less than 10
<=	Less than or equal to	<=10	Less than 10 or exactly equal to 10
>	Greater than	>50	Greater than 50
>=	Greater than or equal to	>=50	Greater than 50 or exactly equal to 50

Logical operators

If you want to search for more than one thing in the same field you must use the operators **OR** and **AND**.

OR finds records containing either one criterion or another, e.g. **PG OR U** in the rating field will find all films that are either PG or U certificate.

AND finds records where both criteria are true, e.g. between two values. **>=9 AND <=12** in the sales price field would find all the DVDs that cost £9 or over and less than or equal to £12.

 **Develop the skill**

B1 Find out how to open the Find dialog in your word processor. (In Word, use the Edit/Find menu option or the keyboard shortcut Ctrl + F.) Make sure the 'Match case' checkbox is ticked. This makes sure the text that you are searching for is matched exactly, including upper- and lower-case letters.

 **B2** Open the file Chocolate.doc in your word processor.

- Open the Find dialog and enter the word 'Falsity'. On what page of the document does this word first appear? Does it appear on any other page?
- The words 'ancient' and 'antient' both appear in the document. How many times do these words appear? What is the correct modern spelling?
- Find out how many different spellings are used for Cocoa.

Hint Look at the status bar.

B3 Go back through the database skills demonstrations and try the Test me sections.

B4 Look at the Hideaways website.

- Choose an area of the country that you would like to visit.
- Choose a week when you want to go on holiday. When you click 'Go' a list of properties appears that are available for that week. The database searches for properties that meet your requirements.
- Name three fields that you think are stored for each cottage.

B5 Yellow Pages is a paper-based business telephone directory. There is an internet version called yell.com.

- Find out the locations and phone numbers of pet shops in your area using both of these sources.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each source?



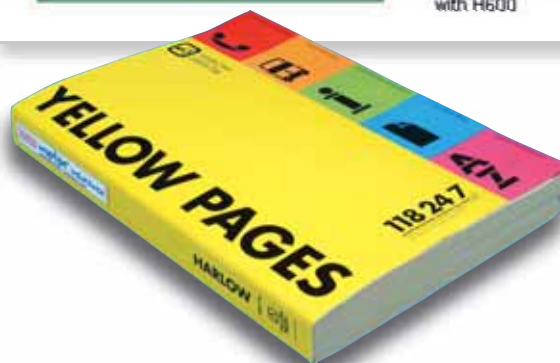
The screenshot shows the Hideaways website interface. At the top, the URL is http://www.hideaways.co.uk/. The main heading is "Hideaways" in a large, stylized font, with the tagline "Country and coastal cottages in typically English settings" below it. A navigation menu contains links: Home, About Us, Useful Information, Special Offers, Brochure Request, Booking Procedure, How to use this site, Insurance, Owners' Information, Contact Us, Short Breaks, and Reservation Form.

The "Search Options" section includes:

- Quick Search:** A dropdown for "Locations", a "Sleeps" dropdown, and fields for "START DATE" (26 June 2006) and "FINISH DATE" (26 June 2006), with a "Go" button.
- Refined Search:** A "Go" button.
- Property Reference No.:** A text input field and a "Go" button.

The "Property of the week" section features a photograph of a large stone building with a garden. Below the photo, the text reads:

Castle - Large Apartment (ground and first floor)
 Castle, nr Lostwithiel, Cornwall
 Sleeps: 6/8 + cot or 10/12 (max 10 adults) with H600

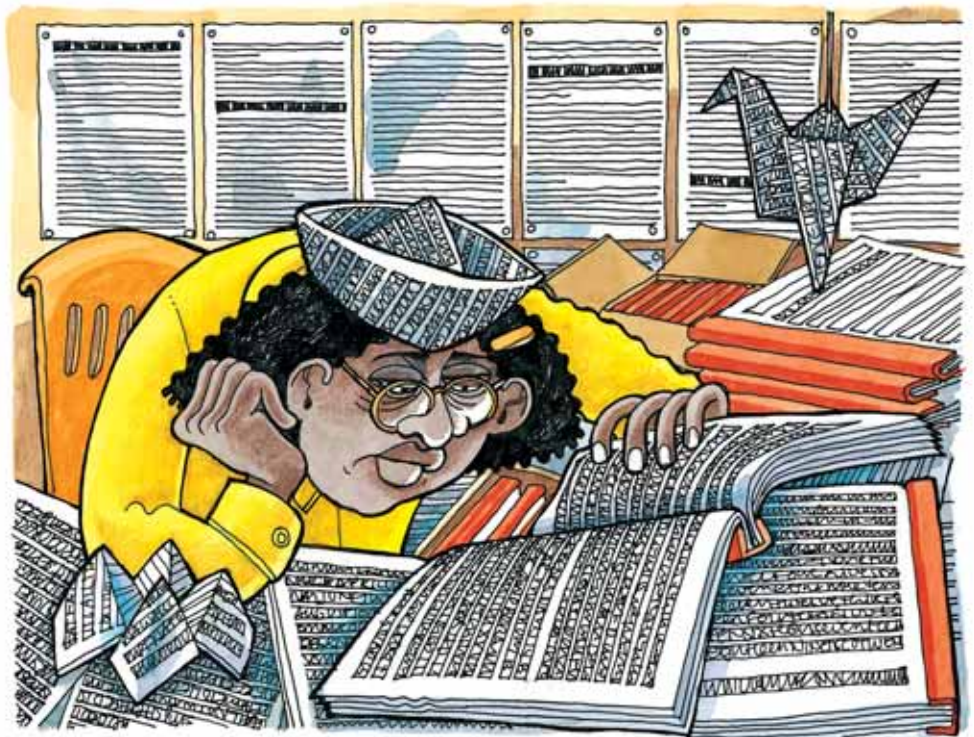


C Evaluating information

Learn the skill

We need information to help us make decisions and form opinions. The better the information, the more confident we can be about using it. These are the sort of questions we need to ask when choosing information:

- Where does it come from?
- Is it fact or opinion?
- Is it biased in any way?
- How relevant is it to my needs?
- Is it up to date?



Source

Knowing where information comes from can help you decide how good it is. Information found on the internet is likely to be more reliable if it comes from a government, academic or not-for-profit website rather than a blog or personal website.

Fact, opinion and bias

You need to be aware that information that tries to sell products or make people either vote a certain way or believe in something will be biased. This does not mean that the information has no value but it may be necessary to look at information from several sources to get a wider view.



Does the information relate to your needs?

When searching the internet, make sure that the search words accurately describe what you are looking for. Search engines find the most relevant pages first, based on your search terms: if you are looking for car insurance, don't just search for 'insurance' – there will be too many results. Searching for 'car insurance' will return pages that are much more relevant.

Remember

If the information you need changes quickly with time, you need to be careful that your sources are up to date or that you state the dates to which the information relates.

Develop the skill

- C1** List these sources in order of how reliable and accurate the information in them is likely to be:
- www.wikipedia.org
 - a personal blog website
 - www.bbc.co.uk
 - www.direct.gov.uk
- C2** Buying goods over the internet is becoming more and more common, but can you trust the retailer? Use the internet to find information on how to check if a retailer can be trusted.
- C3** Not all information on the internet is safe. There are many scams in operation that try to steal money from people. Go to the Office of Fair Trading website on scams at www.offt.gov.uk/oft_at_work/consumer_initiatives/scams/ and then do the following:
- Read the leaflet 'How to recognise a scam' and the guide to beating the scammers
 - Work through the 'scambuster' quiz
 - Play the 'phishing' and 'spam scam' games
 - Look at some of the descriptions of the different types of scam

Hint Find out about the 'safe shops list'.