

Quick Start - Common software program and computer skills at Northwestern

Throughout your time at Northwestern, use [this IT webpage for Northwestern students](#).

This document lists a few of the most commonly used software programs for Northwestern students and links to introductory information. All Northwestern students have free access via their netIDs to the library of courses in LinkedIn Learning. ([Log in directions to LinkedIn Learning](#).) Go there for more in-depth training on many types of software, including Microsoft Office and Google docs, or use these quick links below to get started.

Managing your Computer

Keeping your computer updated with antivirus software will help protect your identity and data. As part of your Northwestern Microsoft 365 subscription, you are able to download and install the antivirus software Microsoft Defender on [Windows](#) and [macOS](#) at no cost. Northwestern IT also recommends Sophos Antivirus software for [Windows](#) and [macOS](#) at an additional cost. Additionally, keep your operating system updated and allow security patches when available.

Windows

If you are new to using a Windows computer, complete the [Windows 11 Essentials Training](#) through LinkedIn Learning.

These links point to specific points in the training which may be of particular use.

- [First time setup and log in](#)
- [Adjust system settings](#)
- [Install and manage applications](#)
- [Set app privacy and permissions](#)

Mac

If you are new to using a Mac computer, complete the [macOS Ventura Essentials Training](#) through LinkedIn Learning.

These links point to specific points in the training which may be of particular use.

- [First time setup and log in](#)
- [Install and manage applications](#)
- [Set app privacy and permissions](#)
- [Back up files manually](#)

Microsoft Office 365 is a suite of applications designed to help with productivity and completing common tasks on a computer. Two often used Office applications are Word and Excel. Northwestern students, faculty, and staff can [download Microsoft 365](#) free of charge. If you have issues with downloading Microsoft 365, please write to consultant@northwestern.edu.

[Log into Microsoft 365](#) to access Word, Excel, and other programs. See Install Apps at the top right side of the screen. OneDrive is cloud storage.

1. **Word** is a word processing software used for creating a variety of documents.
 - a. [Get Started with Word](#)
 - i. See left-hand navigation bar for more step-by-step instructions.
 - b. Got questions? Go to the [Word support center](#)
2. Excel is a very commonly used spreadsheet software.
 - a. [Get Started with Excel](#)
 - i. See left-hand navigation bar for more step-by-step instructions
 - b. Got questions? Go to the [Excel support center](#).

Use the [Microsoft Office 365 training library webpage](#) for instructions on how to use any other Microsoft applications, like **Outlook**, **PowerPoint**, or **OneDrive**.

Google Workspace is a similar suite of applications designed to help with computer tasks. Google Docs and Google Drive are two widely used applications. Northwestern students can [access their Google Workspace](#) by using their Northwestern email address. You probably activated your G Suite account as part of your NetID activation process. Otherwise, you can activate it at <https://umail.northwestern.edu/activate>.

1. Google **Docs** is a word processing application used for creating a variety of documents
 - a. [Get Started with Google Docs](#)
 - b. Got questions? Go to the [Google Docs support center](#)
2. Google **Drive** is an online storage platform where users can store files and access Google Docs and other applications.
 - a. [Get started with Google Drive](#)
 - b. Got questions? Go to the [Google drive support center](#)

Use the [Google Training Center](#) for instructions on how to use any other Google applications, like **Gmail**, **Slides**, or **Sheets**.