

Digital Discovery

Guide for Community Groups



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Australia Post
Digital Discovery
Community Guide

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Introduction

Welcome

For many people in Australia, the internet has transformed almost every aspect of life - we use the internet to socialise, shop, work and do everyday tasks online. But for 3 million¹ Australians who are not online, the education, health, social and financial benefits of being connected remains out of reach.

As digitisation continues to reshape our country and our economy, people who never or rarely use the internet are at risk of being left behind. As a business that's had to go through a digital transformation of our own, we know firsthand the importance of not being left behind.

It's why we want to help everyone in Australia become equipped with the skills and confidence to participate in the digital world.



¹Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/8146.0>

Let's work together

Working with Deakin University we've developed Digital Discovery – a free online course for those who lack the skills and confidence to navigate the web.

We know that building digital skills and confidence will best be achieved with the active support of an on-the-ground mentor.

If you regularly use the internet, chances are you've already helped a friend or relative through an online activity.

Digital Discovery is a supportive, encouraging, structured, online environment where you can help your friends and family discover the online world. This guide is designed to help you help others get online.

Who is Digital Discovery for?

Digital Discovery has been designed for people in the early stages of engaging with computers and the internet.

Some questions you can ask to see if your friend or relative is ready for Digital Discovery are:

- ✓ Do you have a computer or tablet with which you can access the internet?
- ✓ Can you do at least one of the following:
 - send an email?
 - search the web? or
 - use social media?
- ✓ Would you like to gain the skills and confidence to navigate the web?

Anyone with digital skills and know-how can help those less able get online. After all, everyone prospers when we're better connected.

How is Digital Discovery Different?

We know there are already a number of online resources available to support digital training. Digital Discovery provides an online experience that:

- ✓ Is free and simple to access
- ✓ Offers content that is relevant to an Australian audience and context
- ✓ Provides a guided structure that begins with the basics, addresses key concerns and helps to extend internet usage
- ✓ Enables an online social experience, with constant opportunities to share and connect with peers and educators a moderated chat function
- ✓ Finally, rather than focusing on exact 'how to' instructions, which will quickly become outdated, Digital Discovery prioritises building general online problem-solving skills and confidence that will be transferable to a range of situations and sites.

In essence, Digital Discovery presents a guided, supported environment where people beginning their digital journey will be encouraged, exposed to other online opportunities, and develop digital skills and confidence.

Digital Discovery overview

The course at a glance

Digital Discovery provides a gentle introduction into the digital world, building on skills and confidence over two courses. Each course runs for two weeks.

The key themes include:

Digital Discovery 1:
Build your confidence online
Course 1, 2 weeks

Digital Discovery 2:
Expand your world online
Course 2, 2 weeks

Inviting participants

The first step to make the most of Digital Discovery is to identify who might benefit from it.

As described earlier, this initiative is aimed at people who are in the early stages of their digital journey. People who are using the internet occasionally for things like web searches and to connect with people online.

Some participants will be already eager to learn new online skills such as banking or shopping online. Other people may need support to see the merits of becoming more digitally capable.

Benefits of Digital Discovery

People who participate in Digital Discovery may:

- ✓ Become more independent by more effectively accessing information and services
- ✓ Make more connections with people using social media
- ✓ Learn how to stay safe online and protect personal and financial information
- ✓ Grow confidence in their ability to explore and learn online

Start a conversation

You can help participants identify how the course will benefit them by asking: *'How would improving your digital skills and confidence help you?'*

An ideal follow up question might be: *'What might prevent you from taking part in this course?'*

This will present you both with an opportunity to discuss any barriers or challenges that might arise, and to talk through how the participant might overcome them.

Mentoring tips

Working with people individually allows you to work at their pace and address specific challenges. Here are some tips to consider when mentoring an individual:

- ✓ Establish expectations and boundaries early, for example when are you available to provide support and when aren't you?
- ✓ Establish how you'll communicate, for example will you primarily work in regular face-to-face sessions and/or will you also call each other on the phone?
- ✓ Explain that as a mentor, you are one part of their support, and discuss strategies that the learner can use to find answers for themselves also.

As you progress through the course, some additional tips include:

- ✓ Being sure you have sufficient time and patience before each session and if you don't, to reschedule or explain your situation upfront
- ✓ Where possible, keep your hands away from the computer and let the learner 'drive' (i.e. use the mouse/device). This can be challenging as it can take longer, but is important.
- ✓ Look for points of encouragement, acknowledging any progress or accomplishments
- ✓ Where appropriate, rather than giving a set answer, provide guidance and ask further questions to encourage them to reflect on what they're doing and think about how to solve a problem

Sometimes you might need to be more hands-on or provide clear answers — especially when someone is frustrated — but in general think of yourself as a coach or guide who is preparing them to work without your involvement.



Group tips

Working with groups allows you to ‘scale up’ your support and help multiple people at the same time. However, the main challenge with sessions on digital literacy is that each individual in a group will require their own personalised support, so it might feel as though you’re trying to mentor a group of individuals all at the same time.

With this in mind, we recommend groups of about 2 to 8 people where possible. It’s okay if the skills level of the group is slightly mixed as part of the aim of the group is to support them to learn from and support one another.

This might take some effort to set up and encourage. You can begin by introducing the first session explaining that:

- ✓ The participants will learn as much from each other as they will from you
- ✓ When someone makes a mistake or hits a challenge, that sharing their experience will help others to learn also.
- ✓ Members of the group should feel free to offer guidance or ideas but avoid doing things for the person where possible

Some considerations in setting up the group include:

- ✓ It is simpler to facilitate if participants use the same device as each other, for example provided tablets. However, it might have more impact if they are able to bring their own devices that they will be using in their environment.
- ✓ The room should allow for discussion between group participants and for the facilitator to quickly move amongst the group and view what they’re working on
- ✓ Ideally the room will include a projector connected to a spare computer which the facilitator can use for demonstrations

Demonstrations are useful when it’s clear that a particular challenge is relevant to multiple participants or if there is an important technique to reinforce.

For example, in the first week of the course participants are introduced to using the back button and ‘right clicks’ to open new windows. Both of these techniques can be demonstrated to the group via this projected screen.

Week by week guide

Structuring your sessions

Each Digital Discovery course runs for two weeks. A good way to work through these with your learner is to schedule 'getting started' and 'what next' sessions before and after each course, making eight sessions in total.

This format is just a starting point - you can adapt this structure to suit the needs of you and your participants.

Here is an overview of how participants can best be supported through their experience of Digital Discovery through eight face-to-face sessions.

Digital Discovery 1: Build your confidence online

Calendar	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Face-to-face Sessions	Session 1 of 4: Getting started	Session 2 of 4: Digital skills and confidence	Session 3 of 4: Staying safe online	Session 4 of 4: What's next?
Online experience on Digital Discovery online experience, Course 1	Not commenced	Week 1 of 2: Digital skills and confidence	Week 2 of 2: Staying safe online	Ended

Digital Discovery 2: Expand your world online

Calendar	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Face-to-face Sessions	Session 1 of 4: Getting reconnected	Session 2 of 4: Expand your world online	Session 3 of 4: Improve your life online	Session 4 of 4: What's next?
Online experience on Digital Discovery online experience, Course 2	Not commenced	Week 1 of 2: Expand your world online	Week 2 of 2: Improve your life online	Not commenced

Digital Discovery 1: Build your confidence online

Course 1 Overview

Now, let's look at each session in more detail. Please view this guide as a starting point that can be adapted to your needs and situation. Refer to the end of this guide for common variations that might better support your group.

Getting started: Why and how to register with Digital Discovery

Face to face: Session 1 of 4

Online experience: Not commenced

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deciding whether to commit to the course Enrolling in Digital Discovery 1: Build your confidence online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't see the benefits of the course or improving digital capability Don't see personal relevance Benefits don't outweigh the effort and blocks Want to enrol but the practicalities seem too hard Concerned about privacy and safety when 'signing up' online 	<p>Introduction (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and purpose of group Introduce focus of today's session All introduce themselves and share an example of something new you have learnt in your life What kind of things do you already do online? Why each person is here – what do you want to learn to do/ gain by improving digital skills? How would you benefit from being more digitally literate? <p>Setting up for success (20 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which computer or device will you use? When will you do the course? Set day, time and place. Who will support you to stay on track? Let's get signed-up! Help everyone get registered. <p>Wrap-up (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm session schedule for all group's sessions Each person share what you are looking forward to being part of this group

Building digital skills and confidence

Face to face: Session 2 of 4

Online experience: Week 1 of 2

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting the online course Working through the first week of content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimidated by the platform and not sure how to navigate around the course. Difficulties, concerns or hesitation around adding a comment in the online forum. Not sure whether to commit and/or how to find time. 	<p>Introduction (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Share something positive that happened since the last time the group met Introduce focus of today's session <p>Learning by doing (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go through steps 1.1 to 1.4 together with the group Find the best way to give everyone the chance to interact directly with the course online based on the number of computers or tablets available <p>Reflection (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you identify with any of the course characters? What did you find easy? What did you find difficult? What do you need to be able to finish Week 1 at home? <p>Wrap-up (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round of shout-outs / appreciation from today's session

Staying safe online

Face to face: Session 3 of 4

Online experience: Week 2 of 2

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working through the second week of content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimidated by the website user experience and not sure how to navigate around the course. Difficulties, concerns or hesitation around adding a comment in the online forum. 	<p>Introduction (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Share favourite thing you learnt last week Introduce focus of today's session <p>Reflection (10 mins) Based on Week 1 steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you find easy? What did you find difficult? Trouble shooting <p>Learning by doing (25 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go through steps 2.1 to 2.3 together with the group to introduce overall content <p>Reflection (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What experiences have you had so far with the topics you will cover in Week 2? What do you need to be able to finish Week 2 at home? <p>Wrap-up (5mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round of shout-outs / appreciation from today's session

What's next?

Face to face: Session 4 of 4

Online experience: Ended

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalising the second week of content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't see the benefits of the next course or improving digital capability Feeling overwhelmed by the number of new things learned in this course Don't see the personal relevance of new topics 	<p>Introduction (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Share something positive that happened since the last time the group met Introduce focus of today's session <p>Reflection (15 mins) Based on Week 2 steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you find easy? What did you find difficult? Trouble shooting and additional help <p>Celebrating (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think back to Session 1 – write down all the things that you have learnt to do since then What most helped you to learn? <p>Staying motivated (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What habits do you want to keep to help you stay 'digital' and practice what you've learnt? What are the new things you want to learn to do online? Quick outline of the next course, Digital Discovery 2: Expand your world online, including commencement dates. Who will commit to the next course? Enrolment is same as last time. Ideally enrol during/just after session. <p>Wrap-up (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round of shout-outs / appreciation from sessions in group

Digital Discovery 2: Expand your world online

Course 2 Overview

Getting reconnected: Why and how to register with Digital Discovery

Face to face: Session 1 of 4

Online experience: Not commenced

Please note that you may need to adjust the exact content suggested for these sessions depending on how many people in the group also participated together in the sessions related to the previous course and how many new people there are.

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deciding whether to commit to the course Enrolling in Digital Discovery 2: Expand your world online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think they have learnt enough already from the previous course Feel overwhelmed by number of new things from Digital Discovery 1: Build your confidence online Don't see personal relevance of new topics Concerned privacy and safety when 'signing up' online 	<p>Introduction (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and purpose of group Introduce focus of today's session All introduce themselves and share an example of something new you have learnt in your life What kind of things do you already do online? What did you learn from Digital Discovery 1: Build your confidence online? Overview of topics in Digital Discovery 2: Expand your world online Why each person is here – what do you want to learn to do/ gain by improving digital skills? How would you benefit from being more digitally literate? <p>Setting up for success (20 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was most helpful for setting you up for success in the previous course? Which computer or device will you use? When will you do the course? Set day, time and place. Who will support you to stay on track? Let's get signed-up! Help everyone get registered. <p>Wrap-up (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm session schedule for all group's sessions Each person share what you are looking forward to being part of this group

Expand your world online

Face to face: Session 2 of 4

Online experience: Week 1 of 2

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting the online course Working through the first week of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimidated by not knowing which online communities or platforms might be relevant for them. Difficulties, concerns or hesitation around adding a comment in the online forum. Not sure whether to commit and/or how to find time. 	<p>Introduction (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Share something positive that happened since the last time the group met Introduce focus of today's session <p>Learning by doing (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go through steps 1.1 to 1.3 together with the group Find the best way to give everyone the chance to interact directly with the course online based on the number of computers available <p>Reflection (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you identify with any of the course characters? What did you find easy? What did you find difficult? What do you need to be able to finish Week 1 at home? <p>Wrap-up (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round of shout-outs / appreciation from today's session

Improve your life online

Face to face: Session 3 of 4

Online experience: Week 2 of 2

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working through the second week of content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimidated by sharing around personal topics like health or finances. Difficulties, concerns or hesitation around adding a comment in the online forum. 	<p>Introduction (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Share favourite thing you learnt last week Introduce focus of today's session <p>Reflection (10 mins)</p> <p>Based on Week 1 steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you find easy? What did you find difficult? Trouble shooting <p>Learning by doing (25 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go through steps 2.1 to 2.3 together with the group to introduce overall content <p>Reflection (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What experiences have you had so far with the topics you will cover in Week 2? What do you need to be able to finish Week 2 at home? <p>Wrap-up (5mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round of shout-outs / appreciation from today's session

Staying safe online

Face to face: Session 4 of 4

Online experience: Ended

Participant Experience/ Topics	Possible Challenges for Participants	Session Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalising the second week of content Reflecting on the course content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel overwhelmed by the number of new things from this course Feel that it will be difficult to continue to practice new skills learnt during the course 	<p>Introduction (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Share something positive that happened since the last time the group met Introduce focus of today's session <p>Reflection (15 mins)</p> <p>Based on Week 2 steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you find easy? What did you find difficult? Trouble shooting and additional help <p>Celebrating (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think back to Session 1 – write down all the things that you have learnt to do since then What most helped you to learn? <p>Staying motivated (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What habits do you want to keep to help you stay “digital” and practice what you’ve learnt? What are the new things you want to learn to do online? Does the group have any interest in staying in touch and continuing to support each other? <p>Wrap-up (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round of shout-outs / appreciation from sessions in group

Variations and tips

Remember, the sessions outlined in this document are just a guide. There are many different ways you could run support sessions. Some possible variations include:

- ✓ Consider scheduling two additional sessions during the actual online course which will allow participants to complete more of the online course in a group setting
- ✓ In the case of varying skill levels, use the first face-to-face session to identify possible buddy groups where participants can more effectively support each other
- ✓ Where appropriate, encourage the group to communicate with one another between sessions (but please consider privacy issues before doing so).
- ✓ During the two weeks of the online course, consider running an optional extra half-an-hour after the one hour session, for additional help and trouble shooting.

Additional resources

Other places to refer participants for additional information

- BeConnected: Learning resources about 'going digital' and peer network **beconnected.esafety.gov.au**
- TechSavvy Seniors: Learning resources for senior citizens to improve digital skills **www.telstra.com.au/tech-savvy-seniors**
- GoDigi : Platform and directory of learning resources and support to realise online potential **www.godigi.org.au**
- FutureLearn: Frequently Asked Questions and Resources about MOOC platform **about.futurelearn.com/about/faq**

