

Littleborough Silver Surfers

Course intro

I'm Jocelyn Lavin. I was a secondary school teacher for twenty years, teaching mainly maths and music. In 2007 I quit teaching in order to pursue a career as a freelance musical arranger. This hasn't worked brilliantly so far, but it's getting better! Currently, apart from selling musical arrangements by commission via my website, I'm working at Wardle High School for a few hours a week (running their choir and doing a few other musical things), and I also have several private piano and singing pupils. I've been running these Silver Surfers sessions since September 2007, and I don't get paid for them!

(If you want to see what sort of things I do - and maybe even recommend me to people - please look at my website at <http://vampillready.com>)

This course is likely to last for twelve sessions. However, the aim of the course is not to teach you everything there is to know about the internet (that would take a lot longer than twelve sessions!) but to give you some basic knowledge, plus enough self-confidence to try things on your own. If, after a few weeks, you already feel that you have got what you need, I will regard that as a success - don't feel that you have to stay till the end.

The most important information is all in the first two sessions, so please try not to miss either of these. For later sessions, though, it is less of a problem - you should be able to catch up with what you miss by looking at our website (www.wardle.demon.co.uk/silversurfers.html)

I hope you will understand that it is very difficult to provide a course that goes at the correct speed for ALL the members of the group. There are always some people who are quite confident using a computer but want to know more about the internet specifically... and there are others who have never used a computer before and want to know EVERYTHING. The latter group would obviously benefit from going quite slowly, with lots of repetition, but this would drive the former group away!

Therefore, I try to not go TOO slowly, but not too fast either. This means that there are likely to be some topics that you, personally, would like to spend more time on. I will try to provide you with enough knowledge that you can practise (and explore further) outside the sessions. (You can use the library computers any time for free.) There will be hands-on computer time in each session (some sessions will have more than others), but most sessions will start with explanation and discussion. Also, since not all members of the group have their own computer at home, we won't spend much time covering computer care, but it will be mentioned where appropriate.

One thing that is always an issue is that many members of the group are not very confident about using the mouse and/or keyboard. This gets easier very rapidly with practice, but a few minutes in a group session once a week is not really enough. I have included several links to online practice games on the website - if you get the chance to try any of these outside the sessions, it will really help your progress, because it can get very frustrating when you know what to do but your fingers won't do it!

In the first session I will attempt to explain roughly how the internet works... Most of the rest of what we will cover is on the website.