

TechCenter FAQ

What do I need to get on a computer in the TechCenter?

You will need either a valid library card or a guest pass. If a computer says “available” when you move the mouse, you can sign in without making a reservation. For the majority of the day, you will need to make a reservation at any of the Self Service Stations along the walls.

Do I need to get a new guest pass every time I sign on the computer?

No. Guest passes are good for the entire day. Each customer is permitted only one guest pass per day. Using multiple guest passes and/or making multiple reservations are violations of the usage policy and will result in loss of privilege.

What are the differences among Standard, Web Development, Graphics, and Unfilterable PCs?

Standard PCs run Windows XP and have the following software: Internet Explorer 7, Microsoft Office 2007 Professional (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Publisher, Picture Manager, and Clip Organizer), Adobe Reader 8, Audacity 1.2.6, CoffeeCup HTML Editor 9.0, InterVideo WinDVD, iTunes w/Quicktime, Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing 17 Deluxe, PDF Creator Plus 4.0, Roxio, Windows Live Messenger, Windows Media Player 11, Windows Movie Maker 2.1, Paint, Zoomtext 8.1, Calculator, WordPad, Character Map, and Windows Games.

Web Development PCs have all of the features of a Standard PC, plus Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Standard (Flash, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Contribute, Bridge, Extension Manger, ExtendedScript Toolkit 2), Microsoft Visual Studio 2005, and Mozilla Firefox 2.0 web browser.

Graphics PCs have all of the features of a Standard PC, plus Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Standard (InDesign, Photoshop Extended, Illustrator, and Acrobat 8 Professional), ABBYY FineReader Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software, and Epson Perfection 4490 Scanners.

Unfilterable PCs have all of the features of a Standard PC; the library’s filtering software may be disabled on these PCs.

How long do I have to sign into my reserved computer?

You have five minutes to log into your computer from the start time of your reservation. For example, if your start time is 1:15PM, you have until 1:20PM to log in. If you have not logged in within 5 minutes, your reservation will be canceled and the computer will become available for another customer.

Can I use a computer for a few minutes to check my email?

15 minute X-Press computers are located on the first floor near the Walnut and Vine Street entrances. They only provide access to the Internet and are able to open Word documents (not edit) that are in your email. There are also 60 minute terminals in Information and Reference (2nd floor, south building), Magazines and Newspapers (2nd floor, north building), and Genealogy and Local History (3rd floor, south building).

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Can I log on to another computer in the building while I wait for my reservation?

No. Customers are limited to one reservation at a time. If you log in on a computer anywhere else in the building it will cancel your reservation in the TechCenter.

Can I make a future reservation for a TechCenter PC?

Yes. It is possible to reserve a computer later in the same day or, if you have a library card, up to one day in advance. Instead of clicking “next available PC” at the Self Service Station, select “future reservation.”

Can I make a reservation for a computer online or over the phone?

Customers are able to reserve a computer from home through our website. Visit www.cincinnati.library.org and select “Services” for more information. The TechCenter cannot make reservations over the phone.

Can I step away from my computer for a while?

If you do not move the mouse or type anything for more than 5 minutes, your session will automatically close and the computer will become available for another user. Be sure to at least move the mouse periodically while watching a movie or listening to a CD. A warning message will appear 30 seconds before the inactivity time out.

How do I print a document?

- Select “print” from your computer
- Select either the black and white or color printer
- Select the number of copies you want
- Click “OK” at the next 2 prompts
- Go to any reservation station/print release station to release your print job(s)

You must use your library card number or guest pass number to retrieve your print job(s). Print jobs cannot be retrieved with a print job number or terminal ID (e.g. TC04). All print jobs stay in the print queue for 2 hours, so you may finish your session and retrieve all print job(s) at once. You will be charged for all pages that print, even if they are blank. Use “print preview” to ensure that you only print the pages that you need.

How much does printing cost?

- 15 cents per page, black and white
- 25 cents per page, color

You will need to load either your library card or a print card with money to release your print job(s). Print cards are available near the TechCenter desk, and cost 50 cents (when you place a dollar into the print card machine, you will receive a print card with 50 cents on it). The print card machine only accepts \$1 and \$5 bills (the new colorful \$5 bills are not currently accepted).

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You will need to use a copy machine to load your library card or print card with change. Copy machines are located at the Information and Reference desk on the 2nd floor of the south building.

Where can I get change?

The Circulation desk on the first floor can provide change. The TechCenter does not have any.

Why can't I hear sound on my headphones?

Make sure the headphones are plugged into the green jack on the back of the PC (or the front of the PC if you brought your own headphones). If the headphones are connected properly, check the Master Volume which is found in the lower right-hand corner of the screen next to the clock. There is also a volume control located on the headphones themselves. Be considerate of your neighbors and use a volume that is not disruptive.

Do you sell blank CDs, flash drives, etc?

The TechCenter does not sell any blank media. The Library Friends Shop, located on the mezzanine level below the TechCenter, does sell blank CDs.

Do you have a public fax machine?

No, the library does not have a public fax machine. If the document you are trying to fax is saved on the computer, you may use an online fax service, like FaxZero (faxzero.com). We do have scanners on our Graphic PCs if you need to scan a document. Fed-Ex Kinko's, located across from Fountain Square on 5th Street (approximately 3 blocks from the Library), has the nearest public pay fax machine.

Do TechCenter PCs have floppy drives?

TechCenter PCs do not have floppy disc drives. We do have an external USB Floppy Drive that customers can borrow from the desk. We will hold a library card or other form of ID while you use the floppy drive.

Can I use my flash drive/camera card/MP3 Player other portable storage device in the TechCenter?

Yes, as long as no additional software or drivers need to be installed. TechCenter PCs also have slots for the most popular type of memory cards (SmartMedia/xD, SD/MMC+/miniSD, CompactFlash I/II, and MS PRO/MS PRO Duo). For some digital cameras and MP3 players you will need to use the USB cable that came with the device.

If I save something to the computer, will it be there the next time I log in? –OR- Can the person who uses the computer after me see what I downloaded/saved/what websites I visited?

No. All content from your session (i.e. files, folders, documents, spreadsheets, downloads, web history etc.) will be permanently deleted once the computer is logged off, restarted, or shut down.

Can I install software on a TechCenter computer?

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No. Doing so is a violation of the computer use policy and may result in loss of privilege. However, it may be possible to run some applications from a flash drive (e.g. PortableApps).

Can I burn a CD or DVD on a TechCenter PC?

TechCenter PCs are equipped with CD/DVD burners and software. Customers are responsible for following all applicable laws and may not use the computers to duplicate copyrighted material (e.g. library materials, DVDs, etc.).

Can I eat in the TechCenter?

Food is not allowed in the TechCenter. Beverages must be in a container with a lid. Food can be purchased and eaten on the Mezzanine level below the TechCenter.

Can my friend sit at the computer with me?

As long as you are not disruptive, two people are allowed at each workstation. However, both individuals must be seated in their own chair. Standing behind or “hovering” near a computer is not allowed. More than two people are not allowed at a computer at anytime. If you are going to have two chairs at a computer, please do not take a chair from another workstation. There are extra chairs at the tables directly in front of the TechCenter desk as well as along the row of Self Service Stations.

Can you tell me how to download MP3s, movies, and software?

Due to copyright restrictions and liability issues, staff cannot recommend, direct, or assist customers on many of these and related topics. Users assume full responsibility for their actions and any illegal use of TechCenter computers may result in loss of privilege as well as prosecution by state, local, or federal authorities.

What can staff help me do?

Library staff can provide limited assistance, but customers are ultimately responsible for using the computers and all related hardware and software independently. Staff will not enter personal data for customers or proofread/edit documents. Staff cannot help with financial information (including income tax questions), medical information, or legal questions.

I’m new to computers. Do you offer classes?

Yes. The TechCenter offers a variety of computer classes, including Computers 101 (a basic introduction to computers), Introduction to the Internet, and My First Email, and Introduction to Word Processing. For a full list of upcoming classes see the flyer at the TechCenter desk or ask a TechCenter staff member.

Does the library have WiFi?

Yes. Select the PLCHWiFi network from your laptop or mobile device. You will be asked to enter an email address and accept our terms of service upon launching your Web browser.