

Keeping in Touch Online

There are many ways that you can keep in touch with friends and family online. Email and Video Chat are very popular (and free) ways to communicate with others.

Email

Email (or Electronic Mail) is a written form of communicating with others. You can set up a free email account online to send messages to your friends and family. In addition to sending written messages you can also send pictures and videos. It is also possible to send an email to more than one person. Email is great for communicating with companies too. If you have a query or a complaint you can now contact many organisations via email.

To send and receive email you will need;

- a computer
- an internet connection
- the email addresses of the people that you would like to contact
- your own personal email account
- to share your email address with those people who you would like to stay in touch with

Setting up your Email Account

You can choose from a variety of different email providers such as [Hotmail](#), [Google](#) and [Yahoo](#). All of these companies provide email addresses for free. You will be asked to choose your own username (your own personal email address for example, joe.bloggs@informationnow.co.uk) and password to keep your account secure.

E Newsletters

You can sign up to receive E Newsletters from organisations, such as [InfoNOW news](#) and the [Elders Council Newcastle](#) to stay up to date with news and information about things that interest you. Most organisations send E Newsletters, including magazines, newspapers and sports clubs.

Video chat

You can use a computer to speak to someone online and see them too. A popular video chat service is provided by [Skype](#). This is often used by people who have family and friends abroad to keep in touch.

It is free to use this service and you can often access this technology through your local library if you don't have a computer at home.

If you have access to a computer you will need, access to the internet, a webcam and to download the software from a company such as Skype or [Zoom](#). Once you have set up your own account you can start calling your friends and family who also have a Skype account.

If you use an Apple Mac, an iPad, iPhone or iPad, you will use a slightly different programme called [Facetime](#). This application (also known as an app) can be downloaded for free from iTunes and is used in the same way as Skype.

If you have a smartphone then you can video call for free on [WhatsApp](#) or alternatively download the software app to your Windows PC or Mac.

See [Digital Unite](#)'s guide on [Skype](#) for more information.

[Citizens Online](#) run online events, provide a free digital support helpline and a trained team of digital champions who will call you back and offer friendly, patient support over the phone.

Social networking and blogs

[Social networking](#) is a way of using your computer to talk to other people, make connections with new people, exchange pictures, invite people to an event; whatever you want to do.

Popular social networking websites include Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. 'Blog' is short for 'web log' and is basically an online diary created by someone to record in writing their thoughts, feelings or views on a specific subject or on life in general.

[Digital Unite](#) have some very helpful online guides introducing you to various computer basics, including one on [social networking](#).

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Other Useful Information

- [Learn My Way](#) offer useful short online courses which you can work through online. You can learn the basics of computers and the internet and then you can start learn a little bit more.
- [Media Savvy CIC](#) run a variety of digital skills courses for marginalised groups, including:- Basics, Social Media, eSafety, Employability, Money Matters.
- [Mobile Phones article](#) on Information Now
- [Computer Classes and IT Support Available](#) information.

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Useful Organisations

Newcastle Libraries

Email: information@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-tourism/libraries

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Newcastle City Library, NE1 8AX

Digital Unite

Email: du@digitalunite.com

Website: www.digitalunite.com

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Learn My Way

Email: hello@goodthingsfoundation.org

Website: www.learnmyway.com

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

AbilityNet

Email: enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk

Website: www.abilitynet.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 180 0028

Address: Acre House,, NW1 3ER

Citizens Online

Email: info@citizensonline.org.uk

Website: <https://www.citizensonline.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0808 196 5883

Address: The Exchange , GL5 1DF

Media Savvy CIC

Email: info@mediasavvycic.co.uk

Website: <https://www.mediasavvycic.co.uk>

Telephone: 07873 176 145

Address: 27 Norfolk Street, SR1 1EE

Related Articles

[Internet, WiFi and broadband](#)

[Digital support](#)

[Finding friends and Befriending services](#)

[Getting online and using digital equipment](#)

[Staying safe online](#)

[What you can do online](#)

[Social Networking](#)

[Making your computer or mobile device easier to use](#)

[Mobile phones](#)