

Communications**Computers in Everyday Life**

The first computers were so large that they would not have fit into your house and were certainly not available to the average person. Nowadays, computers fit on your desk, in your bookbag, or in the palm of your hand. They can be found at school, in libraries, and at most places of work and play. This project will introduce you to everyday functions of using the family PC, as well as computers at school, work, and in the community.

Each interest project contains activities which are organized into four different categories: Skill Builders, Technology, Service Projects, and Career Exploration. By doing these activities, you will gain insights about yourself—your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes. You will have a range of new experiences, and you will develop valuable skills and expertise in specific areas. *To earn an interest project award, you must complete at least seven activities as follows: two Skill Builders activities; one Technology activity; one Career Exploration activity; Two activities from any category that you choose.*

Skill Builders

1. Learn how to use a word processing program. Become proficient in formatting, editing, spell-checking, cutting and pasting, inserting page numbers or symbols, and creating columns and boxes. Be able to take shortcuts by customizing the toolbars, write a paper for school or design a flier using this program. Or if you already know how to do the above, select a software program that allows you to do something totally new. Apply the program to an activity: for example, redesigning your bedroom, creating party invitations, or keeping track of a month-long project.
2. Play three or four computer games, or visit an Internet or Web site that previews computer games, trivia, or murder mystery contests. What games appeal to you? Why? Discuss with others some concerns about playing these games, such as violence or sexist stereotypes.
3. Find out about at least two computer applications that enhance the lives of people with disabilities.

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Technology

1. What amazing things are happening in the movies now? Compare early special effects in the motion picture industry with the computer-assisted effects possible today. Find out about the costs and the advantages of using computer graphics. Host a video night for friends and show movies enhanced by computer effects, or arrange to go with a group to one such movie.
2. Find out how computer technology has changed common household appliances (for example, ovens and clothes dryers.) What are the advantages and drawbacks?

Service Projects

1. Set up a directory of community resources, scan a photo collection into a computer, organize a recipe collection, or develop some other computer application for your own family, someone else's or a service organization.

Career Exploration

1. Compile a directory of Web sites that contain information about careers. Create some major categories, such as technology, medicine, law and education. Share your directory with friends.

This badge can be found in the book *Interest Projects for girls 11 - 17*, page 86. This text has been reproduced with permission from Girl Scouts of the USA—this document may not be copied or reproduced in any way.