



ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET AND LIBRARY PUBLIC COMPUTERS

Revised 3/17/05

The library's public computers allow users to search a variety of electronic resources. **Library resource stations** are exclusively for searching the library's holdings and selected electronic databases. **Internet computers** provide information beyond the confines of the library's collection. Internet computers offer a full range of the most popular Internet browser plug-ins for searching the Internet, displaying files, and viewing multimedia content. Internet computers also provide access to word processing. No station provides support for all file types, browser plug-ins, or Internet technologies. Use all library computers in accordance with this policy and the Multnomah County Library [Behavior in the Library](#) policy. Copies of these policies are also available from a library service desk.

ACCESS TO INTERNET RESOURCES

Multnomah County Library is committed to providing access to informational, educational, recreational and cultural resources for library users of all ages and backgrounds. Throughout its history, the Multnomah County Library has made information available in a variety of formats, from print materials to audiovisual materials. The library's computer system provides the opportunity to integrate electronic resources from information networks around the world with the library's other resources.

The library's goal in providing Internet access is to enhance its existing collection in size and depth and, as a public access agency, give opportunity to anyone who wishes to participate in navigating the Internet.

Library staff continuously identifies and posts on the library's Internet site specific starting points for searches that are appropriate to the library's mission and service roles. [The KidsPage](#), [Outernet](#), [Homework Center](#) and [Electronic Resources](#) have been provided to assist users in finding age- and topic-appropriate sites. Library staff will help you use the computers to find the information you need. Library staff and volunteers also will help you learn to use search tools on the Internet computers, although they cannot provide extensive one-on-one instruction. Ask at any reference desk for information about training offered through the library, or check [Event Finder](#) for a list of classes at your neighborhood library.

INTERNET FILTERING

The Internet offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages. However, it also enables access to some material that may be offensive, disturbing and/or illegal, inaccurate or incomplete. Users are encouraged to be good information consumers by evaluating the validity of information accessed via the Internet.

Tests by the library and by independent agencies have shown that filtering software may help to block access to objectionable Internet sites. However, the software cannot

block out all objectionable sites, and it does sometimes block useful material, including sites that are suitable for children, teens and adults.

Public Internet computers are equipped with commercial filtering software. The library's filtering policy upholds the principles of intellectual freedom, allowing adults to make their own choices regarding filtering. The policy also aims to ensure that our libraries are safe and welcoming places for children, and affirms the right and responsibility of parents to make choices for their own children and teens.

- Adults may choose filtered or unfiltered searching at each login
- Teens (13 – 17) have the choice of filtered or unfiltered Internet access unless their parent or guardian designates filtered access.
- Children (12 years and younger) have filtered Internet access unless a parent or guardian designates they can choose between filtered and unfiltered access.

Parents may choose to override these default Internet access options for their child. See [Parent's Guide to Filters & the Internet](#).

CHILDREN'S COMPUTERS

The children's areas throughout Multnomah County Library are designed to be welcoming for children. These areas include a limited number of computers, many of which offer resources especially for children. To best serve children, all computers in designated children's areas are for the use of children age 14 and younger, and for adult caregivers accompanying or assisting children. Children's Internet computers open to a special children's interface, and allow filtered use of the Internet only.

We suggest that you post clear, easy-to-read "house rules" on or near your computer monitor at home, and remind your children that these rules apply to their Internet use at the public library. Whenever possible, supervise your child's online activity. If you are not familiar with computers and the Internet, we invite you to take a free class at the library. Then, sit down with your children and have them show you the Web sites they visit and how they navigate through the Internet.

Parents and children should read *Child Safety on the Information Highway* (www.safekids.com/child_safety.htm) and *Teen Safety on the Information Highway* (www.safeteens.com/safeteens.htm), available online from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

TIME AND OTHER LIMITS

To access the Internet a customer must use his or her own library card number. A visitor who does not have a library card may receive an Internet guest pass by signing up and showing identification at a library circulation desk. Visitors without identification, or those of any age whose identification does not show proof they are age 13 or older, will receive a guest pass for filtered access only. A library cardholder may not receive a guest pass, and no visitor may receive more than one guest pass per day.

Each individual is limited to one hour per day of Internet access and must use his or her own library card number or guest pass number to sign up for a computer and to log in. Ask at any desk for help to sign up for an Internet computer.

Staff may free up special purpose stations, such as those provided for children and people with disabilities, and take other measures that will manage Internet use and achieve the goals of this policy.

The library's computers are set up for use by a single individual. A maximum of two persons may sit/work together at any one computer, except in special cases such as a parent/guardian with children.

PRIVACY

The library takes a variety of measures to protect your privacy when you use library computers. See the Statement on Privacy and Confidentiality of Library Records <http://www.multcolib.org/about/pol-privacy.html>.

Internet computers are equipped with internal privacy screens. However, these screens cannot completely prevent other library users from seeing what a computer user is viewing.

PRECAUTIONS

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PRIVACY

Illegal activities or activities that interfere with or disrupt the network, users, services or equipment are prohibited and not protected by the library's privacy policy. The library does not routinely monitor public computers, but reserves the right to do so when a violation of this policy or illegal activity is suspected. Staff is authorized to take immediate action to protect the security of computers and the network. This includes confiscating any removable media, requiring a user to leave a search station or the premises, and contacting law enforcement authorities. and take other measures that will manage Internet use and achieve the goals of this policy.

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PRIVACY

Users are responsible for complying with copyright law and licensing agreements. Software and other files downloaded from the Internet may contain viruses or spyware that may infect other computers.

RULES GOVERNING USE OF LIBRARY COMPUTERS

1. Sign up for an Internet Computer before using it (where required); log on using your own library card or guest pass number and promptly give up the computer when your time has elapsed.
2. Promptly give up the computer when requested by staff.
3. You may download files using supported media. The library is not responsible for damage to your media or for corruption of your data, including damage caused by mechanical malfunction or corruption caused by virus or spyware infection while using library computers.
4. There is a charge for printing from the search stations, except when printing your patron record or Event Finder search results. The charge is posted. Please pay at the nearest service desk.
5. Internet stations are equipped with built-in privacy screens. Respect other's privacy by not attempting to observe or comment on what others are viewing.
6. As a courtesy to others, log off completely when you are finished with your session. This also protects the privacy of your search. To do this, press the Ctrl-Alt-Del keys, select Log Off, then Log Off again.
7. Do not gather around search stations when doing so may obstruct others or create noise that distracts others.
8. Whether or not they are in use, Children's computers in all locations are for the exclusive use of children and their accompanying caregivers.
9. Do not use another's identification, bar code or pin number, with or without permission, to sign up or log on to a computer.
10. Do not misuse computer equipment or software. Misuse may result in loss of computer privileges, loss of library privileges and prosecution.

Misuse includes but is not limited to:

- Viewing illegal material
- Hacking into the library computer system or any other computer system
- Mishandling, damaging or attempting to damage computer equipment or software; tampering with computer settings.
- Interfering with system operations, integrity or security
- Attempting to gain or gaining access to another person's files or authorization code
- Harassing others with messages, prints or images
- Telnetting to outside locations on a Library Resource Station
- Violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements
- Failing to pay for printing
- Refusing or ignoring a staff person's request to give up a search station
- Failing to sign up for an Internet Computer (where required); failing to log in using your own library card number or guest pass.
- Any other violation of the Acceptable Use of the Internet and Computer Search Use policy.

[Your Library Guide](#)

[Library Home](#)

Please feel free to send [comments and suggestions](#).

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The address for this site is: <http://www.multcolib.org/about/pol-internet.html>

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