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Using sub menus on the Ubuntu desktop

All the programs on your computer are contained in the 3 menus on the 'control panel' at the top.
You can see that they're headed 'Applications', 'Places' and 'System'.

You can open menus and the programs they contain by clicking on the words with the left button on the mouse; this is known as “left clicking”

Now let’s take a closer look at the sub menus under “Applications”.
The first sub menu is 'Accessories'.

It includes; a calculator, CD/DVD Creator, passwords, etc.
One that you might want to use as you get more confident is the 'Terminal' but I'd suggest you leave it for now.

'BBC iPlayer Desktop', a program I’ve added is also on this list.
It's not where I would have expected it so get used to looking around.

If you are a new Knowle West Web user ask about creating quick links to your favourites at one of your free training sessions with KW online.
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The next sub menu is 'Education'
At the moment there isn't much here but the Ubuntu group offer a wide range of these programs.
We'll talk about installing programs in a later video.
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Next in the list is 'Games'.
OK I'll admit that I can spend hours relaxing with simple games.
In Ubuntu there a fair few to get started with and just like 'Education' it's easy to add more. Ask for more information at a training session.
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Under 'Graphics' you'll find some basic programs for working with images or photos from your digital camera.
I've added 'Picasa' from Google. I think it's the best program for working with photos and it's free.
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In the 'Internet' sub menu you'll find links to “Firefox” this is a 'web browser', the general name for programs used to look at The Internet, it's probably the program you'll use the most often.

There's also “Pidgin Internet Messenger” you can use this to access most instant messaging services like 'Hotmail', 'Google Chat' etc. Ask at KW online for more information.

Later you might like to look at the 'Remote Desktop Viewer'; you can use this to allow friends to help you by accessing your computer over the internet. You will have to agree each time to let them look at your computer if you are worried about security.
Ask at KWW Computers Ltd. for details of a service they may be providing.

You can also see “Dropbox” & “Skype”.

These are two programs that I've added.
“Dropbox” is a great way to store important photos etc. - for example the images and text for this video were all stored in my 'Dropbox'.
There will be a video on www.kwonline.co.uk to show you how to installing it.

“Skype” is a well known program for talking to friends over the internet.
Unfortunately it's not yet as easy run in Ubuntu as it is in Windows, but it should be sorted out quite soon. Ask at KW online training sessions for instructions.
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Below ‘Internet’ you'll find 'Office'.
The sub menu here opens to show links to several “OpenOffice” programs.

The 'Word Processor' is used to write letters or coursework.
One of the free sessions available to Knowle West Web users covers this program in more detail.

'Spreadsheets' are used to work with numbers or money. The 'Presentation' program produces the displays used by students at many schools.
Ask KW online for more details.
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If the computer isn't quite sure where to store a new program it uses the "Other" sub menu.

You can see mine just has the one entry – Adobe Air.
It's a good place to look if you've added a new program and can't find the link.
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'Sound & Video' contains a number of programs for dealing with, surprise surprise, sound, music and video.
There are programs for watching videos & DVDs, listening to music as well as making, or "burning", your own CDs.

Please note: To create your own CDs/DVDs you will need a drive with "R/W" on it – (this stands for Read and Write).
Talk to KWW Computers Ltd. if you want to upgrade your computer.
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I've not bothered with 'System Tools' for now as there's nothing much in it when you start.

So, the next on my list is 'Wine'.

You won't have this option at the beginning but I suggest you install 'Wine' quite soon.
It's a program that lets you run a number of Windows programs.
Ask for more information at a training session with KW online.
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Finally in the Applications menu you'll find 'Add/Remove...'

This is one way to add new programs to your computer.
They are all free – for example it's a good way to find new games.
We'll look at this in more detail in a later video.
Ask for more information at a training session with KW online.
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Under the next main menu 'Paces' you can see the main areas of your computer. It's a quick way to jump to pictures or music etc.

The only sub menu here is 'Recent Documents'; this is really quite useful as it gives quick links to the files you've been working with recently.
If you can see the one you're looking for just click to open it.
Here you can see the "screenshots", or images of the computer screen that I've used to make this video
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Under the heading 'System' there are 2 important sub menus. The first is 'Preferences'.

Here you can control the appearance or style of the screen, set the default printer, alter the screensaver, sound and the programs that are included when Ubuntu starts up.
A word of warning: It's a good idea to make a copy of the existing settings by writing them down before you change anything.
It's very easy to get confused later and generally there are no "default settings" buttons to get you out of trouble.

There are a number of things you can do to make the mouse and keyboard easier to use – ask at a session with KW online for more details.
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The other useful sub menu is 'Administration'. Here you can add a new printer under "Printing", set the "Time and Date", run the "Update Manager" as well as looking for programs, or "software", in the "Synaptic Package Manager".

The "Update Manager" is important.
It checks the internet to see if there are new versions, or security updates for your computer.
It helps to keep your PC secure and up to date with the latest versions.

For example, I was trying to install something for ages on a new computer without success until I remembered that I hadn't run the 'Update Manager'. After this the program installed perfectly.

The 'Synaptic Package Manager' is a bit of a mouthful but a great way to find new programs for the computer.

A tip before you start: There are a large number of programs available and the explanations may seem confusing to begin with.
So it's a good idea to get advice about exactly what to look for or at least make a list of the programs you add this way they can be removed later if they're not want you want.
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Under 'System' you'll also find 'Help and Support'.
If you're stuck try 'Help and Support' for a list of topics.
Either pick from a list of subjects or try searching for answers.
Think of it as the instructions booklet for Ubuntu.
It starts at "New to Ubuntu" and moves on.
However, bear in mind when you search for answers you'll have to use the correct terms so don't give up too quickly if you don't find what you're looking for.
Ask at a KW online training session for the best approach