

Tips for Computer Lab Helpers

Watch 6 short videos in the **Computer Lab Helper video training series** to learn even more!
<https://hr.wisc.edu/cls/training-for-helping-in-a-computer-lab/>



1. Walk around the room.

- Do you see learners on the wrong screen, looking around, or unengaged?
- Ask everyone how you can help. **“Remember - raise your hand for help.”**
- Help a learner then keep “floating” to help others.



2. Expect success.

- Never assume a person’s computer skills proficiency.
- Give simple instructions, then wait.
- See what learners can do first, then offer support.
- **“Great job moving the mouse. Now, let’s find the menu together.”**



3. Pay attention to volume, speed, and pronunciation.

- Don’t rush - learners don’t hear your message as often as you say it.
- Use a normal volume and a respectful tone.



4. Present information in chunks with pauses in between.

- Pausing is your auditory “white space.”
- Silently count to 7 after giving instructions.
- Repeat. Rephrase.



5. Show and tell. Reinforce with visuals.

- Resist the urge to grab a learner’s mouse or keyboard to do a task for them.
- Use props and gestures to model verbal instructions.
- Write important reminders down on a post-it note.
- Give learners enough time to think and act.



6. Simplify.

- Choose everyday, familiar words.
- Use consistent terms (**click**) instead of several synonyms (**press, tap, toggle**).
- Say short, active sentences.



7. Take ownership of understanding.

- Ask open-ended questions. **“Where do you go first to find the main menu?”**
- Avoid tag and negative questions. **~~“We start at the homepage, don’t we?”~~**
- Use teach-back. **“I want to make sure I gave clear instructions. Can you show me how to find the homepage?”**