

# Pragmatic Computer User's The $\lambda$ Guide

Version 0.1.0

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>CHAPTER 0. QUICK START</b>                          | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>WELCOME TO THE GUIDE</b> .....                      | <b>6</b>  |
| How difficult is this going to be? .....               | 7         |
| What are you trying to sell me? .....                  | 7         |
| So why are you writing this? .....                     | 7         |
| How the guide chooses software .....                   | 7         |
| <br>   |           |
| <b>CHAPTER 1. INTERNET SOFTWARE</b>                    | <b>9</b>  |
| Browsing the World Wide Web .....                      | 9         |
| Electronic Mail .....                                  | 9         |
| Voice and Video Conferencing .....                     | 10        |
| <br>   |           |
| <b>MOZILLA FIREFOX – WORLD WIDE WEB BROWSER</b> .....  | <b>10</b> |
| Alternative Browsers .....                             | 10        |
| Before You Install Mozilla Firefox .....               | 11        |
| Installing the Program .....                           | 11        |
| Using the Program for the First Time .....             | 14        |
| Automatic Upgrades .....                               | 15        |
| Next Steps .....                                       | 15        |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                         | 16        |
| <br>   |           |
| <b>MOZILLA THUNDERBIRD – E-MAIL CLIENT</b> .....       | <b>19</b> |
| Alternative E-Mail Clients .....                       | 19        |
| Before You Install Mozilla Thunderbird .....           | 19        |
| Installing the Program .....                           | 20        |
| Using the Program for the First Time .....             | 22        |
| Automatic Upgrades .....                               | 23        |
| Next Steps .....                                       | 23        |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                         | 23        |
| <br>   |           |
| <b>WENGOPHONE – VOICE AND VIDEO CONFERENCING</b> ..... | <b>26</b> |
| Alternative Voice and Video Conferencing Clients ..... | 26        |
| Installing the Program .....                           | 26        |
| Using the Program for the First Time .....             | 29        |
| Next Steps .....                                       | 35        |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                         | 36        |
| <br>   |           |
| <b>CHAPTER 2. OFFICE SOFTWARE</b>                      | <b>38</b> |
| The Office Suite .....                                 | 38        |
| Mind Maps .....  | 38        |

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Image Processing .....                                | 39            |
| <b>OPENOFFICE.ORG – OFFICE SUITE .....</b>            | <b>39</b>     |
| Moving to OpenOffice.org .....                        | 40            |
| Alternative Office Suites .....                       | 40            |
| Before You Install OpenOffice.org .....               | 41            |
| Installing the Program .....                          | 41            |
| Using the Program for the First Time .....            | 46            |
| Update Notification .....                             | 50            |
| Next Steps .....                                      | 51            |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                        | 51            |
| <b>FREEMIND – MIND MAPPING .....</b>                  | <b>52</b>     |
| Alternative Mind Mapping Software .....               | 53            |
| Before You Install FreeMind .....                     | 53            |
| Installing the Program .....                          | 53            |
| Next Steps .....                                      | 59            |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                        | 59            |
| <b>THE GIMP – IMAGE PROCESSING .....</b>              | <b>61</b>     |
| Alternative Image Processing Software .....           | 61            |
| Installing the Program .....                          | 61            |
| Using the Program for the First Time .....            | 72            |
| Next Steps .....                                      | 77            |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                        | 77            |
| <br><b>CHAPTER 3. UTILITY SOFTWARE .....</b>          | <br><b>80</b> |
| Utility Programs .....                                | 80            |
| Supplementary Software .....                          | 80            |
| <b>7-ZIP – FILE COMPRESSION AND ARCHIVING .....</b>   | <b>81</b>     |
| Alternative Compression and Archiving Utilities ..... | 81            |
| Installing the Program .....                          | 81            |
| Useful Program Options .....                          | 83            |
| Next Steps .....                                      | 88            |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                        | 88            |
| <b>JAVA - RUNTIME ENVIRONMENT .....</b>               | <b>91</b>     |
| Installing the Program .....                          | 91            |
| Uninstalling the Program .....                        | 93            |
| <br><b>CHAPTER 4. THE TUTORIALS .....</b>             | <br><b>95</b> |
| Internet Software .....                               | 95            |
| Office Software .....                                 | 95            |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Utility Software .....                                     | 96         |
| <b>USING MOZILLA FIREFOX .....</b>                         | <b>96</b>  |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 96         |
| <b>USING MOZILLA THUNDERBIRD .....</b>                     | <b>96</b>  |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 97         |
| <b>USING WENGOPHONE .....</b>                              | <b>97</b>  |
| <b>USING OPENOFFICE.ORG .....</b>                          | <b>97</b>  |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 98         |
| <b>USING OPENOFFICE.ORG WRITER .....</b>                   | <b>98</b>  |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 98         |
| <b>USING OPENOFFICE.ORG CALC .....</b>                     | <b>98</b>  |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 98         |
| <b>USING FREEMIND .....</b>                                | <b>99</b>  |
| Creating a New Mind Map .....                              | 99         |
| Opening an Existing Mind Map .....                         | 101        |
| Editing Nodes .....  | 101        |
| Editing Styles .....                                       | 102        |
| Rich Text, Hyperlinks and Clouds .....                     | 103        |
| Printing the Mind Map .....                                | 105        |
| Conclusions .....  | 106        |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 106        |
| <b>USING THE GIMP .....</b>                                | <b>107</b> |
| Rotating, Cropping and Scaling an Image .....              | 107        |
| Reducing an image's file size. ....                        | 111        |
| Creating a transparent background .....                    | 114        |
| Conclusions .....  | 117        |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 117        |
| <b>USING 7-ZIP .....</b>                                   | <b>118</b> |
| Creating a Compressed Archive File .....                   | 118        |
| Extracting the Contents of a Compressed Archive File ..... | 121        |
| Conclusions .....  | 125        |
| Further Reading .....                                      | 125        |
| <b>APPENDIX A. THE AUTHORS .....</b>                       | <b>126</b> |
| <b>JOHN LEACH .....</b>                                    | <b>126</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX B. DOWNLOADS .....</b>                         | <b>127</b> |
| Internet Software .....                                    | 127        |

Office Software ..... 128  
Utility Software ..... 128

by [John Leach](#)

Thank you for purchasing the Pragmatic Computer User's Guide, or just 'the guide' for short. This book version of the guide is the complete collection of articles taken from the web site. But please don't print this book – you'll need a lot of paper, and it is more practical to read straight from your computer. Consider it as a reference, similar to a dictionary, rather than something to be read from cover to cover.

For convenience, you might also want to copy the entire contents of the CD-ROM to your computer's hard disk – that way it will always be available to you. The guide is not concerned about you making as many copies as you like, as long as you only use one of them at a time, for your own personal use.

With this brief introduction out of the way, we can move on to the heart of the matter.

## Welcome to the Guide

by [John Leach](#)

Source BigFoto.com

The Pragmatic Computer User's Guide is dedicated to simplifying your computer work. It will show you how to be master of your computer, use the Internet efficiently, and write great looking text and spreadsheet documents. You're a busy person, and you want to keep the amount of time you spend with the computer to a minimum, or perhaps you use the computer a lot, and you want to become more proficient. Either way, this guide can help you – quickly, and pragmatically.

Everything in the guide is divided into sections:

- [Internet Software](#), on page 9 - software to make your Internet usage more productive.
- [Office Software](#), on page 38 - sophisticated software for text and spreadsheet documents, and other useful office utilities.
- [Utility Software](#), on page 80 – a short list of programs designed to increase your productivity.
- [The Tutorials](#), on page 95 – pragmatic tutorials on using the software suggested by the guide.

The guide is designed for the discerning computer user. You've probably got a Personal Computer with Windows™, but even if you are using a different operating system don't worry, most of the guide talks about software built to run on Linux™ and the Macintosh™ too. The guide will let you know when an article is [Microsoft Windows](#)™ specific.

## How difficult is this going to be?

---

It would be very difficult for any guide to cater for all levels of computer user. If you are a complete beginner you'll probably find this guide a little hard going on the other hand, if you've been using a computer for years, then you might find this guide a little tame.

The guide tries to cater for the majority of those who sit somewhere in the middle. It avoids using too many technical terms, and also keeps to simple English, for those of you who are not native speakers.

## What are you trying to sell me?

---

As such, nothing - unless you choose differently. True, the guide generates money through advertising and its CD-ROM (see below), but almost all of the software that the guide describes is free of charge, usually multiplatform, and possibly available as source code. On rare occasions the guide suggests commercial software, but this usually has a modest price for the functionality provided.

## So why are you writing this?

---

We all know that nothing in life is really for free, so what's the motive for the guide? Does it get commissions from the software manufacturers, or are the authors paid by these companies?

The truth is that the guide is designed to make money, no question about that. The authors don't receive any payments, either cash or gifts, from any of the software manufacturers, but *only* through money generated by the guide itself, and it generates money by advertising on its web pages, donations, and via sales of the advert-free full guide (which you're now reading, thank you), available on CD-ROM. No more, no less.

## How the guide chooses software

---

The guide looks for mature, organised software that is well respected in its field. Whenever possible, the guide prefers open source software which runs on multiple operating systems. The motivation is simple – if you decide to change your operating system, even at some time in the future, you will want to be able to take your knowledge of your applications with you. Secondly, open source software is less expensive (not really free, because you will have to invest some time in learning how to use it), and can be freely distributed – you don't have to worry about licenses, and you can even install it on other people's computers for them.



Source BigFoto.com

There may be circumstances where there is no outstanding open source program available. In these cases the guide attempts to select a well respected freeware program, or eventually will choose a solid commercial program that has a reasonable price tag.

The world is full of software. The guide will briefly explain the reasoning behind the specific choice of each program described. Additionally, it will provide you with

pointers to alternatives, but since there are only so many hours in a day, it will limit itself to discussing only those programs that it has chosen.

Finally, the guide is in constant evolution. New programs appear on the horizon every day, so the guide attempts to constantly revue its decisions on the programs chosen. If, and when, new programs appear which seem to have notable improvements over the current choice, the guide will add that program to the list. It will never remove a program, unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as the program being removed from the market, so that over time you should find an increasing choice available to you.