Lesson 4 — Computer Skills for Study: First Steps

Files, folders and the backup habit

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This lesson, drawn from Computing for Study and Research in the Library, teaches the habits that protect a student's work: naming, folders and backup.

Name files so a stranger could file them: course, topic, date, version — Statistics-Notes-2026-03-04-v2. Versions get numbers; only one file is ever the current one; and 'final-final' is a warning sign, not a name.

Keep one folder per course, with a few kinds inside — Notes, Assignments, Readings, Data. Deep trees hide things; wide trees confuse. Four levels are plenty for a degree.

Back up by the 3-2-1 rule: three copies of important work, on two different media, with one copy elsewhere — cloud storage or a drive kept in another house. Laptops die in submission week so regularly that it should be treated as scheduled.

In the companion Foundations book you will meet the machine itself: input, processing, storage and output; bits and binary; algorithms; and the security pause that defeats phishing — stop, and reach the service by its own address, never by a message's link.

Practise

1. Rename three of your own files by this lesson's scheme.
2. Draw the folder tree for your courses this year.
3. Write your 3-2-1 backup plan, naming both media and the elsewhere copy.

Next steps

Continue in the Library: download the book named in this lesson and read its first chapter. Then leave your name at the enrollment door on the Online School page — classes are taught online by Nji Griphan, and a class holds at most 30 learners.