



UNITED GRAND LODGE
OF ENGLAND

MEMBERS' ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT



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INTRODUCTION

The current situation across the globe has significantly changed how we communicate with one another, and has introduced a number of barriers to staying in touch.

This online communications toolkit will help you overcome these issues as best you can while staying safe.

Scary headlines about coronavirus have taken over the world's front pages. Misinformation is spreading at the speed

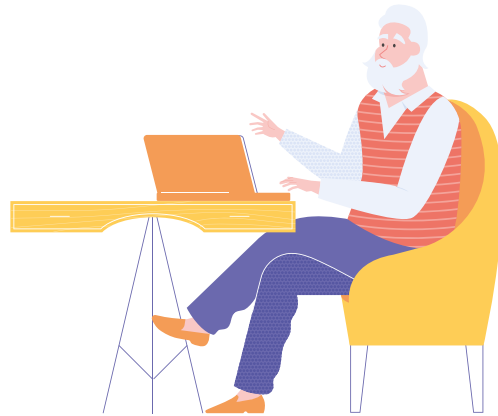
of a click and much about the virus itself remains unknown. It is absolutely vital that you know how to spot fake news and how to maintain your mental health during this difficult time.

We understand that all of our 200,000+ members have varying levels of experience communicating online and that is why we have produced this toolkit to help everyone get the most out of their situation. This guide covers everything you need to know, including how to set up an email account, we hope you find it useful.



TYPES OF DEVICES

LAPTOP – a laptop (sometimes called a ‘notebook’) is a small portable personal computer (PC). Modern-day laptops usually have a screen, attached keyboard, mouse (or trackpad), built-in camera and microphone, and built-in memory. These days, a laptop will last the user a number of years and there are a huge number available on the market in different sizes, colours and capacities. If you are interested in purchasing a laptop, [CLICK HERE](#) to compare different models on Which?



TABLET – another product available on the market is a tablet (for example, an Apple iPad). A tablet is smaller and has better portability but has overall fewer features than a laptop. Tablets have touchscreen display and come in different sizes. Another difference is that a laptop has a physical keyboard as opposed to touch-typing on screen. A laptop will have a trackpad for a mouse, but a laptop has everything on screen. Tablets are generally more affordable, so it really depends on your individual needs. [CLICK HERE](#) to visit Which?, where you can find out more about tablets and compare models.



[CLICK HERE](#) to read about comparing laptops and tablets and their pros and cons.

ACCESSIBILITY



You may find that the standard mouse or keyboard you got with your PC does not quite give you the control you want, especially if you have limited dexterity. If you have arthritic fingers, you may find a trackball mouse, which is ergonomically designed, easier to use.

You can choose from a wide range of different shapes and sizes from a provider like [AbilityNet](#) ([CLICK](#) to find out more). Contact AbilityNet’s advice and information team on freephone **0800 269 545** to find out more about specialist equipment and adaptations (much of it is free or low cost) if you have a disability that makes using a computer difficult.

WHAT YOU NEED TO COMMUNICATE ONLINE

The most important thing you need to communicate online is access to the internet – this is either through a dial-up connection or high-speed access (broadband). If you do not have access and are interested in exploring your options, [CLICK HERE](#) to visit [cable.co.uk](#) where you can find out the best deals on broadband for the

area you live in. There is also a handy guide from [Which.co.uk](#) here.

To get onto the internet, you should have either a smartphone, computer/laptop or tablet. You can use any of the following browsers to access the internet: Google Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer and Safari (if you are using an Apple computer).



STAYING SAFE ONLINE

● **Cybercrime** has become a powerful tool for criminals looking to steal our personal data and extort money. The speed, anonymity and convenience of the internet has enabled criminals to launch highly targeted attacks with very little effort.

● **Installing anti-virus software** will prevent your computer/laptop being taken over by malicious people who may try and steal your personal data or stop your computer from working. It is important to invest in up-to-date antivirus software to keep your computer and information safe. **CLICK HERE** to find out more from [Which? about different antivirus software packages](#).

● **Choosing robust passwords** is very important to protect your information. Always select lengthy passwords with a mix of lower and uppercase letters, numbers and symbols

NEVER CLICK ON LINKS OR ATTACHMENTS FROM EMAILS YOU ARE NOT EXPECTING

(e.g. ?£\$%^&). Do not use easy-to-guess names or dates in your password and use a different one for every site (email, Facebook etc).

● **Beware of fraudulent emails or 'phishing'**. This can happen when you receive an email from what is supposed to be a reputable source, such as your bank or a business, requesting you to click on a link or input your personal information. Some of these emails can appear genuine and can even be addressed to you personally, but you must never click on any links in an email like this just in case. If you want to check with the organisation whether the correspondence was



from them, contact them directly by telephone. The same is true if you receive an attachment in an email from someone you do not recognise. Never download the attachment as it may contain a computer virus.

● **Phishing** continues to be the most common form of cyberattack due to its simplicity, effectiveness and high return on investment. The phishing attacks taking place today are sophisticated, targeted and increasingly difficult to spot.

● **Never give out personal information online**, especially to someone you do not recognise. Identity theft, password loss and theft of funds are just some of the reasons why it is important to stay safe online.

● **Do not download anything you do not recognise** or understand. It could cause harm to your computer.

Some useful tips to avoid online fraud (phishing):

- Be wary of emails from unknown senders, especially if they ask you to confirm information
- Never click on links or attachments from emails you are not expecting
- If a "Someone" asks you to send something to them, confirm on the phone first
- Look out for poor spelling and grammar in emails, as well as those that ask for any kind of personal information
- A phishing attack happens every 20 seconds – be alert.

To find out more about online security from Age UK please **CLICK HERE**.



APPS

You've probably heard people mention 'apps' before. **App** is short for application, which is another name for a computer program. When people talk about apps, they are almost always referring to programs that run on mobile devices, such as smartphones or tablet computers.

- A smartphone is a mobile phone that performs many of the functions of a computer (usually with a touchscreen interface and internet access).

With so many apps to choose from, it is difficult to choose just a few to talk about. There are apps that let your phone stream radio stations over 3G or WiFi, turning your phone into a pocket radio. Another app uses your phone's camera to take pictures of

APPS ARE DOWNLOADED FROM AN ONLINE SHOP RUN BY THE MAKERS OF THE PHONE OR TABLET'S OPERATING SYSTEM.

products' barcodes, and then automatically searches the internet for the best price deals on that item. Yet another uses your phone's GPS to work out your location and then tells you exactly which buses and trains you need to reach a destination you have chosen.

Apps are downloaded from an online shop run by the makers of the phone or tablet's operating system. In the case of the iPhone and iPad, it's simply named the

'App Store'. On Android phones it's the 'Android Market', on Windows phones it's the 'Windows Marketplace', and on Nokia phones it's the 'Ovi Store'. These are all accessed by an icon on the device's home screen.

We will give you some app suggestions later on, but you can [find more information about apps from this handy beginner's guide from LifeWire by **CLICKING HERE.**](#)



EMAIL

You will need an email address if you are going to do almost anything online, as this will be the method by which you receive logins and confirmations that accounts have been set up for you. Email also allows you to keep in touch with friends and family more quickly and easily, especially if they are scattered around the country or even the world. You can use a free email account such as Gmail, Yahoo mail or Hotmail.

[CLICK HERE](#) to set up a Gmail email account.

[CLICK HERE](#) to set up a Yahoo account

[CLICK HERE](#) to set up a Hotmail/Outlook account

- If you are setting up a new email account please ensure your Lodge secretary has your correct details to load into Adelphi so we can keep in touch.

GOOGLE

Google is a search engine that has millions of pages where you can find out exact information or random facts that will make your day.

- From your desktop, click onto the internet and type www.google.com in the address bar and press enter. Type a search term into the text box and click the Google search button, you can then navigate to the web page with the information you seek.
- Some examples of things to search on Google:
 - In how many countries are there Freemasons?
 - When was Freemasons' Hall built?
 - Is the Museum of Freemasonry open over Christmas?



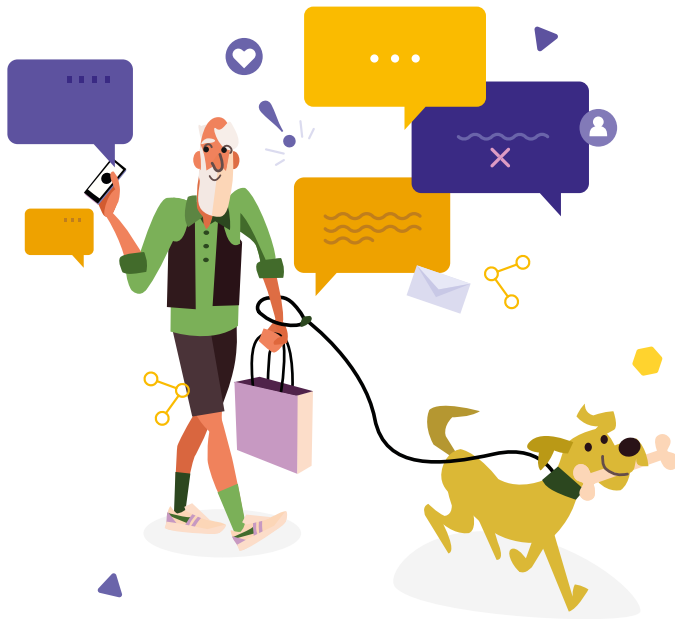
THE FIRST RISING

The First Rising is the newsletter curated by UGLE and distributed to all members of the United Grand Lodge of England. These newsletters include important communications for members from Grand Lodge. This has been particularly useful during the coronavirus outbreak to ensure that members receive vital information about suspension of Lodge meetings, for example.

NEWSLETTER



KEEPING IN TOUCH



There are a number of free messaging services that allow you to keep in touch with friends and family anywhere in the world, instantly. We will outline some of them below. For this, all parties will need to be using the same service and will need a device (laptop, smartphone or tablet) with an internet connection, a microphone (these are built into every device) and a camera (also built in) if you would like to communicate with video.

FACEBOOK MESSENGER

The [Facebook Messenger app](#) (click to find out more) allows you to communicate privately with your friends in real time, whether or not they are on Facebook. It is a separate app that must be installed on your phone or tablet, although it syncs with your Facebook account and contacts. A Facebook account is not required to use Messenger.

You can easily type messages to your contacts and if you are connected to WiFi,

these will be free to send. You can also audio and video call your contacts through the app by clicking on someone's name and then on the phone or video camera icon in the top right-hand corner of the chat.

The first time you use Messenger for a call, you will have to connect your internal microphone and camera and allow access for them to be used. It will work every time after that with no problems. Make sure you are in an area of strong internet connection, such as near the router.

WHATSAPP

[WhatsApp](#) (click to find out more) is one of the most popular social apps in the world, with more than a billion daily users. It is free to download (from your smartphone, as it is linked to your mobile number) and allows you to send messages, call, video and send large files such as photos and videos over a WiFi connection (for free).

To keep your account as secure as possible, WhatsApp uses a secure system of communication called end-to-end encryption, which means


only the users communicating can read the messages.

SKYPE

[Skype](#) (click to find out more) is a convenient, easy-to-use program that lets you connect with your loved ones using the camera on your computer, tablet or smartphone. Skype is especially useful for talking to family members and friends at long distances.

To download Skype, click on one of the following links: [Skype for WINDOWS](#) [Skype for MAC](#)

When you have downloaded Skype, you will need to make an account (username and hard-to-guess but easy-to-remember password). You can then give out your Skype username to your friends who also have Skype and start chatting! You can chat for as long as you want and then when you are done, press the red handset icon to end the conversation.

 **ZOOM**
[Zoom](#) (click to find out more) is a web-based

videoconferencing app that is free to use and allows lots of people to join the same video call together. It is often used for business meetings with lots of attendees. There is a simple guide to using Zoom [here](#).

There are lots of video tutorials on the [Zoom website](#) (click here to visit) if you are stuck on anything. It also has a live chat on its website, via which you can ask questions and get bespoke support. You'll need to make an account (username and hard-to-guess but easy-to-remember password).

A meeting can be set up by any user and a link/meeting number is sent to anyone who wants to join. This is easily input into Zoom on the homepage (follow 'join a meeting') and you will be away!

Zoom can be used from a smartphone, laptop or tablet as long as you have internet connection. Your password and username can be used to log in from anywhere. A limitation is that Zoom is only free for up to 40 minutes at a time – if you would like to talk for longer you will have to pay a fee.

MESSAGING SERVICES

- All smartphones come preloaded with a messaging app that allows you to send and receive texts. These text messages are billed by your provider against your mobile phone plan. Many providers offer varying amounts of texting packages – 150, 250, 500 or unlimited. If you are unsure about your phone plan, give your provider (O2,

Vodafone, EE etc) a call to discuss. You can also upgrade your plan very easily.

- Another way to communicate with people is by using a third-party messaging app that is downloaded from the [Google Play Store](#) or [Apple's App Store](#) (click on each to find out more).

VIDEO CALLING SERVICES



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to websites and applications that are designed to allow people to share content and communicate with each other quickly, efficiently and in real time.

The 'social' part: refers to interacting with other people by sharing information with them and receiving information from them.

The 'media' part: refers to an instrument of communication, like the internet (while TV, radio and newspapers are examples of more traditional forms of media).

So... social media is a web-based communication tool that enables people to interact with each other by sharing and consuming information.

Connecting with others on social media can help combat loneliness, especially in times of isolation. You can keep in touch with friends, family and fellow members.

Once you get the hang of using social media, you will see other benefits such as entertainment. You can watch clips from TV shows and

movies, play games and read interesting articles online. Please beware of fake news, however, and only read news from sites you trust (*The Times, the BBC, the Telegraph etc*). There has been known to be a lot of fearmongering on

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA CAN HELP COMBAT LONELINESS, ESPECIALLY IN TIMES OF ISOLATION

social media, so take everything you read with a pinch of salt.

Using social media can make people feel part of an online community. There are dedicated social media groups for people who have shared

interests such as computer games, animals and even vegetarian food.

You can download a free guide on setting up social media accounts if you **CLICK HERE**.

Commonly used social media websites are **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**. Click on the names to visit the pages. You will need to create an account for any social media site you use. Here are some tips for using social media:

- **Make use of privacy settings.** Read the website's privacy policy to make sure you are in control of your personal information. Facebook, for example allows you to manage how much of your profile others can see. Instagram allows you to have a fully private or public profile.

- **Only connect with people you know in real life.** Criminals have been known to make fake profiles to befriend people and harvest their information. Only accept friend requests from people you know who have photos, so

you can verify their identity.

- **Double-check links.** Just like in emails, never click on links sent to you through social media. Links are often another colour and underlined like this.

- **Use strong passwords.** Have a different password for each social media site and make them long, hard-to-guess but easy-to-remember. Include numbers and special characters to make it more secure.

- **Do not forget that people can see what you have liked and shared.** If someone tags you in something you do not want people to see, you can remove your tag or report the post.

- **Ask for help!** If you don't understand something on this guide, that is okay, but do not let it be the reason to miss out on catching up with friends or family. Consider asking a member of your Lodge for help to you get online.



WATCHING VIDEOS ONLINE

There are a huge number of websites where you can watch TV shows, movies, sports and many more. Some are free and others need a paid subscription – we will outline some here.

BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 all have websites where you can go to watch programmes you've missed on TV or want to watch again. These are free services, but most of the programmes will only be available for a limited time. You can click on the name above to find the website.

There are other streaming websites such as [Netflix](#) or [Amazon Prime](#) (click to find out more) where you pay a monthly amount and unlock access to millions of movies and episodes in all genres.

Netflix is the most popular, with a monthly subscription giving you unlimited films and TV shows and the ability to download things to watch without internet anywhere. Plans start from £5.99 a month and you can watch on your smartphone, laptop and tablet.

Netflix has an extensive library of feature films, documentaries, TV programmes and more. There are no adverts when you are watching, which is another benefit over television. You can also pause and play very easily and pick up from where you left off if you pause while watching.



LISTENING TO THE RADIO OVER THE INTERNET

You can listen to most radio shows online. Most stations will have an option to listen live on their website or have an app that lets you listen from your mobile phone, laptop or tablet. Alternatively, you can download a free app called TuneIn (click to find out more), which gives you access to thousands of international radio channels.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access
BBC Radio online



ADVICE FROM UGLE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DAVID STAPLES

In these testing times, I have already been immensely impressed by the determination shown by a number of Freemasons to maintain their daily advancement in masonic knowledge, and how receptive everyone has been to the challenges we face.

As stated in the joint letter I wrote with the CEO of the Masonic Charitable Foundation (the Freemasons' charity), there is so much that we ought to do to demonstrate the value of who we are and what we do as Freemasons in the community. This also affords a great opportunity for every mason to expand their masonic horizons by taking advantage of the new [Solomon website](#) as well as honing and passing on their ritual skills.

While we will all be required to make adjustments during this period of suspension, I would also ask that members fully acquaint themselves with whether certain adjustments can co-exist with the obligation that we all took when initiated. It is the opinion of the Grand Registrar that it is an "Antient Landmark of the Order" that Lodge meetings and the related ceremonies can only take place with all brethren physically present in a properly tyled Lodge room; however, it is acceptable for members to practise such ceremonies, most particularly those aspects that make up the spoken parts of the ritual, over the internet. The security implications and pitfalls (for example the

ability to record on a number of software platforms) unfortunately do not square with our obligation to assure privacy and confidentiality of proceedings – and we therefore ask members to refrain from any demonstrations of those elements of the ceremonies covered in the obligation, or any attempt to reproduce the 'choreography' online.

We have no doubt that our Directors of Ceremonies will have no difficulty in putting our brethren right on such things when we are happily able to meet again. For these reasons, please do not try

**I HAVE NO DOUBT
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SITUATION**



to hold a genuine Lodge or Lodge of Instruction in a virtual form, but feel free to practise those elements outlined above.

We will, in the days and weeks to come, be providing LOIs with material from Solomon, and our extensive archives to enable learning, discussion and that ever-important Daily Advancement in Masonic Knowledge.

As previously stated, I have no doubt that brethren will continue to adapt to this challenging situation – but I simply ask that thought is given to the implications that these have on our ancient craft.

Dr David Staples FRCP
Grand Secretary



KEY TERMS

Here are some definitions for commonly used online terms:

A

Antivirus

Software that detects and prevents known viruses from attacking your computer.

Apps (applications)

A type of computer program that you can download for your computer, tablet or mobile phone. There are hundreds of different apps available, some for free, which do lots of different things, from playing games and puzzles, to helping you remember to take your medications, or allowing you to access your bank account.

Attachment

Files, such as photos, documents or programs, which are sent along with an email.

B

Browser

The computer software or app you use to access the internet. Examples include Internet Explorer, Google Chrome and Safari.

Hack: An attempt to gain unauthorised access to a computer or account.

M

Malware

Malware is short for 'malicious software'. A general term used to refer to hostile or intrusive software.

O

Operating system

The software that manages different programs on a computer.

P

Phishing

An attempt at identity theft in which criminals direct users to a counterfeit website to trick them into disclosing private information, such as usernames or passwords.

Profile

A description that may include your personal details and is used to identify you on a social networking website. This can be set as public (viewed by everyone) or private (only viewed by certain people).

R

Router

A device that connects your computer to a broadband-enabled telephone line and emits your home internet signal.

S

Smartphone

A mobile phone that, as well as making calls and sending texts, can connect to the internet, send emails and perform a number of other functions like a computer.

Social networking website

An online community where you can connect with friends, family and other people who share your interests. Examples include Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Spam

A commercial email that you did not request, also known as junk mail.

Spyware:

An unwanted program that runs on your computer, which can make it slow and unreliable or even make you a target for online criminals.

T

Tablet

A larger handheld device with a touchscreen, which can connect to the internet and be used as a portable computer.

V

Viruses

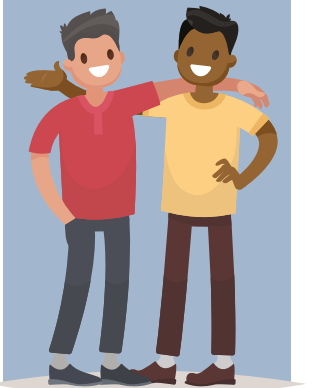
Programs that spread from one computer to another by email or through malicious websites. They can slow your computer down, display unwanted popup messages and even delete files.

W

Wireless network

Also known as WiFi, this is a way for your computer to connect to the internet without using wires or cables.

Consider finding a buddy in your Lodge who can help you get online! This could be someone in your Lodge who is more confident using technology and is willing to give assistance as you start to use the Internet on a more regular basis.





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