QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE -- America Online Version 3.0

Welcome to America Online!

Thank you for choosing to become a member of our growing online community!

About This Guide

If you're a new member, this Quick Reference Guide will help you get started using America Online.   If you're already a member of the service, this Guide will show you what's new and hot in Version 3.0.

Note: To print a copy of this Guide, click the "Print" button below.   You can also find another copy of this document within the AOL Help Menu after you have installed and opened the software.   If you do nothing else with this Guide, please print and use the first two pages, which list helpful keywords for your future reference.

Online Areas You'll Want to Visit

Discover AOL (Keywords: DISCOVER, DISCOVER AOL)
An introduction to America Online.   Includes a tour and step-by-step lessons (Keyword: LEARN AOL).

Member Services (Keywords: MEMBER SERVICES, HELP)
An unlimited use area that contains technical support for America Online.   To get there, click the red question mark on the toolbar.   You'll know when you cross to/from the unlimited use area, because you'll see a window asking you to confirm your actions. Please note: any telephone surcharges will continue to apply when you are in this area.

Important Keywords

We recommend that you visit each of these areas and become familiar with them.   (Keywords help you move around the service quickly.   For information on how to use keywords, see below.)

1.
Keyword: KEYWORD
Go here to find out everything about keywords, including the Keyword of the Day.

2.
Keyword: BILLING
Keep track of the status of your trial offer, your monthly bill, your children's use of the service, and new pricing offers from AOL.

3.
Keyword: ACCESS

Contains up-to-date information about high-speed access numbers in your local area.   This is also where you can go to report any problems with your local access number.

4.
Keyword: PARENTAL CONTROLS

Customize what your children seen and do online.

5.
Keyword: MEMBER DIRECTORY

Search for others who share your interests and create your Member Profile. You must create at least a basic profile for others to find you online.

6.
Keyword: MY AOL

Customize and personalize AOL to meet your needs.

7.
Keyword: TOP TIPS

Learn more about AOL.   Top Tips will send you e-mail tips regularly.

8.
Keyword: RANDOM

Think of it as a sort of Keyword Roulette -- for when you're looking for something totally different.

9.
Keyword: MAIL CONTROLS

Cut down on unwanted e-mail and set other mail preferences.

10.
Keyword: GUIDEPAGER

Used to summon assistance when you witness vulgarity or harassment in a chat room.

System Requirements for Optimum Performance

To ensure the best online experience possible, please check your system to make sure it meets the necessary system requirements.   If it does not, you may still be able to run AOL, but you will experience slower performance.   For details, check the AOL Help Menu, under "Search for Help on"

Macintosh
68030 CPU (68040 or better recommended)
256 color monitor, 640x480 resolution

System 7.1.0 (System 7.5.3 Revision 2 or later recommended)
8MB Physical RAM
15 MB Free Space on your Hard Drive
9600 bps modem (14.4 or 28.8 kbps recommended for optimal performance)
A phone line (Direct TCP/IP is supported)

Installing Version 3.0

New Members
To begin, simply follow the instructions printed on the disk package (or available on the AOL home page).   Once you've installed AOL, you're ready to begin registration.

Existing Members
If you're an existing member upgrading your software, AOL automatically will transfer your screen names, local access numbers, and preferences from your previous version.

Note: Any files contained in your AOL Download directory will NOT be transferred at this time. For instructions on copying these files, check your Macintosh documentation.

Connecting to AOL

Dialing Into AOL for the First Time
Before beginning registration, the AOL software will dial into a free 800-number and you will be asked to select two local access numbers from a list of telephone numbers in your area. These are the numbers your modem will "call" to connect your computer to AOL for subsequent visits. (The second number only will be used if the first number rings busy or fails to connect for some reason.)

Once you have made your selections, the AOL software will "hang up" and re-dial into the service using these numbers. As a new member, this is when you may register for your initial trial of the service.

Selecting the Best Access Numbers
Local access numbers are available in a variety of speeds, but generally you should try to connect to AOL at the highest speed your modem can support.   (If you do not know your modem speed, check through the materials that accompanied your computer.)   For example, If you have a 28.8 kbps modem, you should look for a listing that looks like this:

City Name

State

28800
(999) 555-1212

Please note: you may need to check with your local telephone company to confirm that the numbers you have selected are indeed billed as local calls.

High-Speed, Surcharged Access
You can always access AOL at up to 28.8 kbps from anywhere within the US by dialing 1-800-716-0023 (in Canada, 1-800-318-0023).   Please note, however, that this number always carries a per-minute surcharge, even during your initial trial period. This surcharge is subject to change. For more information, go to Keyword: ACCESS (more on keywords below)

Registration

After selecting your access numbers, you will begin the registration process.   Please follow the instructions on your screen.   Once you have completed registration, you will be online.   If you have questions or experience problems connecting, or at any time during registration, please call Member Services at 1-800-827-3338.

The Basics

Your Screen Name and Password
During registration, you will be asked to choose a screen name and password.   When you're online, you'll be known by your screen name, so give some serious thought to the one you choose.   Your screen name is unique to you and only you online. If the name you choose is already in use by another account, you will be prompted to select another name.

Your password is the key to your AOL account, so never give out your password to anyone. Guard it as carefully as you do the PIN for your ATM card.   You should change your password at least once a month; anyone who knows your password has full access to your account, including your e-mail.   Also note that America Online employees will NEVER ask you for your password online.

The Menu Bar and the Toolbar
Throughout this Guide you will see references to the Menu Bar and the Toolbar.   The Menu Bar is the text at the very top of your screen.   Clicking on a word will cause a menu of related options to drop down.   The Toolbar is the row of icons below the menu bar.   These icons provide shortcuts to important areas and features online.

The Welcome Screen
The first thing you see every time you sign on to America Online is the Welcome Screen. It's arranged to provide direct access to AOL's most popular areas.   With one click, you can check your e-mail, go to a chat room, surf the Internet, browse AOL's Channels Screen (more on this later), or check out what's new on the service.   Also, notice that the upper edge of the Welcome Screen displays your AOL screen name and the time and date of your most recent visit.

The Helping Hand
If you're looking at a screen and you're not sure where to "click," just move your mouse across the window and watch for the Helping Hand.   When you place your cursor over a "clickable" area, the arrow will change to a hand. That's an indication that you can click and go directly to that area.   Try it out with the AOL toolbar.   When you run the cursor over each icon you'll see that not only do you get a hand, you get information on its function too.

The Channels Screen
Designed to help you find areas of interest, the Channels Screen is where you'll find all of AOL's content areas, organized into 21 categories that you can click on to explore further.   Two other important buttons are Find (more on this below) and Presenting (brings up new channels debuting on AOL).

Using E-mail
You can send messages to anyone who is a member of AOL, who has an account with another online service, or anyone who has access to the Internet. You have an e-mail address already. The screen name you created during registration is your e-mail address for other AOL members. For Internet mail, you address is your screen name followed by @aol.com.   For example, if your screen name is LoveAOL, your Internet e-mail address is be LoveAOL@aol.com.

To compose an e-mail to someone on AOL or the Internet, click "Mail" on the menu bar and select "Compose."   For step-by-step instructions on how to compose, send, read, store and attach files to AOL e-mail, go to Keyword: LEARN E-MAIL.   (More on how to use keywords below.)

Setting Parental Controls
AOL provides special controls which allow parents to decide where their children can and cannot go online. These are available at Keyword: PARENTAL CONTROLS.   You can choose from the "Block All But Kids Only" setting (for younger children), the Teen Access setting (for older children), or "Custom Controls" to customize a child's access to chat rooms, downloading and/or Internet newsgroups. Parental Controls can only be set by the master screen name (the screen name you created when you first signed-on to America Online).

Getting Around

Keywords Get You There Fast
AOL provides a variety of navigational tools to help you get around online, but the first tool you'll want to learn to use is the Keyword.   Keywords make it possible for you to jump around quickly on the service.

As you explore AOL, notice the keywords (usually found in the lower right corner of the window) associated with the places you find interesting.   When you want to return to the area, click the "Keyword" button on the far right of the toolbar.   When the Keyword window appears, type in the keyword and click "Go."

Save Your Favorite Places
Favorite Places is a customized list of online areas or Web sites that you like to visit.   To save a Favorite Place, simply click the heart in the top-right corner of that area's window and the area will be added to your "Favorite Places" list.   To return to a Favorite Place, click the Favorite Places icon on your toolbar.   It's the one that looks like an open folder with a heart on it (to the left of the red question mark).   Once your Favorite Places list is open, double-click on one of the areas you have saved, and you'll be whisked right to that spot!

Finding Areas of Interest
You can search an entire database of information about AOL's content areas and forums.   To search this database, click the "Find" button on the toolbar.   Type the subject of interest in the box where you see the blinking cursor, and click the "Search" button. A list will appear of areas

on AOL that match the subject you entered, and you can double-click on the name of an area for a description. If it looks interesting, click the "Go There" button at the bottom of the description and you'll be taken there instantly.

You can also search the Internet by going to Keyword: WEB CRAWLER or EXCITE.   These are two of AOL's tools for searching the Internet.   Just enter your topic in the empty box, and click the Search button. For more information on finding online areas of interest, go to Keyword: LEARN FIND.

Accessing the Internet from AOL
To begin exploring the Web, go to Keyword: WWW, or click the globe icon on the toolbar at the top of your screen. This will take you to America Online's Web site, where you can begin your Internet journey.   Other related or interesting web sites are indicated by blue, underlined text. This is called a hyperlink.   Just click on the hyperlink and you'll go to that site.   You can always go back by clicking the "Back" button on the top of the web browser window.

To go to a specific Web site, you can use the Keyword window.   Simply click the "Keyword" icon on the toolbar. When the Keyword dialog box opens, enter the web address (also known as an URL, it will start with http://) in the box, and click "Go".   It will launch your Web browser and take you straight to the Web site.

For more Internet Resources, go to the Internet Connection (Keyword: INTERNET).   Here, AOL gives you access to all the most important parts of the Internet: the World Wide Web, Gopher, FTP, and Newsgroups.   Even more importantly, The Internet Connection is the place to ask questions, read up on the Net, and find out what's.   Also try Keywords: NET HELP and NET HIGHLIGHTS.

Look for friends in the Member Directory
You can find out if someone you know is a member of America Online -- even if they're online right this instant -- by searching the Member Directory.

Just click "Members" on the menu bar and select "Member Directory."   When the Member Directory opens, type the name and location of the person you want to find in the box at the bottom of the form, being as specific as possible.   When the database finds members who match this description, it will list them for you - just double-click on each name to view their profile. The database can be searched by name, location, interests -- anything that's included in a profile.

Create Your Member Profile
If you want other people to be able to find you, you will have to create at least a basic profile for yourself. To create or change your profile, go to Keyword: MEMBER PROFILE.   Just click "My Profile", fill in the categories you like (you can leave any of them blank), and click "Update." Other members can then view your profile by clicking "Members" on the menu bar and selecting "Get A Member's Profile."

Communicating With Others

Chat
Chat rooms are AOL's meeting places.   There you can talk, real-time, with people next door or around the world.   To access chat, click the icon on the tool bar that looks like two faces.   This

will take you to a lobby.   Click the "List rooms" button if you would like to browse all the other chat rooms on AOL. To learn more about chat rooms and how to use them, go to Keyword: LEARN CHAT.

Instant Messages (Only on AOL)
Instant Messages give you the ability to have a one-on-one conversation with another member, in real-time.   To send an Instant Message (or "IM" for short), click "Members" on the menu bar and select "Send Instant Message." To see if the AOL member is online, type their screen name in the To: field and click the "Available?" button.   A message will return stating whether the member is online. If they are, type your message and click the "Send" button. They will receive it immediately and be able to reply directly to you.

If you receive an Instant Message, you can answer by clicking on the "Respond" button, typing in the box that opens, and clicking the "Send" button.

Buddy Lists (Only on AOL)
Buddy Lists let you know when your AOL friends and family members are online.   When your buddies sign-on to AOL, their names appear in the Buddy List window to let you know they are online at the same time as you.   You can use your Buddy List to send and Instant Message or send a Group Invitation asking several friends to meet you in a private chat room.

To create a Buddy List, go to Keyword: BUDDY or select "Buddy Lists" from the "Members" menu. Click the "Create" button, enter the screen names of your buddies, and then click "Save." To display your Buddy List, click the button labeled "View".

Please note: AOL gives you the ability to block your name from someone else's Buddy List, if you wish. Click the "Preferences" box at Keyword: BUDDY to indicate who, if anyone at all, can add you to their Buddy Lists.   AOL also allows you to restrict your child's access to Chat and Instant Messages by using Parental Controls.

Other Helpful Tools and Information

Your Personal Filing Cabinet
AOL helps you organize your e-mail, downloaded files and Favorite Places with the Personal Filing Cabinet. You can even set AOL to automatically download and save your mail in your Personal Filing Cabinet so you can read it offline. To access your Personal Filing Cabinet, just click the file cabinet button on the toolbar.   Its right next to the Favorite Places button.   For more information on The Personal Filing Cabinet, go to Keyword: LEARN FILING CABINET

Personalizing/Customizing AOL
My AOL is a one-stop shop that allows you to customize and personalize your online experience to suit your tastes.   You can do so by using My AOL to set preferences that control sounds, storage, and more; set up your member profile; create additional screen names for your account, set passwords, and everything else you need to make it your AOL.

You can also personalize features that make America Online work directly for you: set up a stock portfolio, create your own personal web page, set parental controls, and create a News Profile.   To access My AOL, just click the blue triangle icon on the toolbar (next to the clock), or go to Keyword: MY AOL.

Downloading Software
Downloading is the process through which a file stored on AOL's computers is transferred to the disk in your computer.   When you see icon that looks like one or more computer disks, that means there are files available for download.   Double-click the icon and you'll see a list of the files being offered for downloading. Double-click the name of any file, and you'll see a description of its contents.

To download the file, click the description window's "Download Now" button.   You'll be asked where you want the file to be saved to begin the download.   As your file downloads, you'll see a progress bar.   You can stop and resume the download at any time.   For more information on downloading and how to do it, go to Keyword: LEARN DOWNLOAD.

Version 3.0 Highlights

Styled Text and Hyperlinks in E-Mail and Instant Messages
With new styled-text features, you can change the color of text or its background; enlarge or reduce the size of text; use bold, italic, or underlining; and change text alignment.   Drag and drop Favorite Places into e-mail and instant messages. When you send them to your friends, they can jump to the site with a single click.

AOL's SmartArt Let's You Explore Without Waiting
No More Waiting for Art: AOL 3.0 displays images using a technique called progressive rendering, which lets you move quickly from one area to another even though a graphic hasn't finished being displayed (No more dreaded blue bar, "Please wait while we add new art to AOL").   And you can choose areas of interest and receive a collection of related art in one free download.

Automatically Updating Graphics: Set the maximum size of your art database to ensure that the AOL application doesn't take up too much space on your hard drive. When art reaches the maximum size, we automatically update art based on the date it was last used, replacing least-used art.

AOL Applets
Automatic Updates of New Features: With 3.0, AOL can update any portion of the service software, and add new features on the fly, through the modem connection. From now on, you'll rarely have to
think about updating your AOL software

A Dramatically-Improved Internet Browsing Experience
Faster Web Browsing: AOL 3.0's Web browser and servers guarantee speedy performance -- on average, up to 35% faster than our previous browsers. What's more, with our graphics compression, images download quickly.

Support for HTML 3.2 and Netscape Extensions: See Web pages as they are meant to be seen with tables, frames, centering, backgrounds, alignment, text wrapping around images (paragraph attributes), font styles, and client-side image maps.

Security Features Ensure Privacy: Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol provides security, so confidential information, such as credit card numbers, can be safely transmitted over the Internet.

Use Popular Internet Applications:
The "AOL Link" feature is automatically added to your MacTCP or TCP/IP Communications Control Panel during installation.   It provides a "tunnel" for other Internet applications to access the Internet, and no additional setup is required.   To run Netscape or any other Internet application, simply log on to America Online, switch to the Finder, and launch the Internet application of your choice.   As long as you are connected to AOL, you can continue to use the Internet application.   Normal AOL billing rates will apply, but there is no additional charge for running the second application.