

The Essential Digital Skills Framework

Across 5 skills areas in the Essential Digital Skills Framework, 20 tasks are considered essential for a modern workplace. Explore the full framework at www.futuredotnow.uk/framework.



Handling information and content

1. Follow my organisation's IT policies when sharing information internally and externally (e.g. classifying emails/documents, encrypting sensitive information, sharing appropriate information on social media)
2. Securely access, synchronise and share information at work across different devices (e.g. manage email, calendar or appointment system via different devices)

Communicating

3. Communicate in the workplace digitally using messaging applications (e.g. Email, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Slack, internal intranet, WhatsApp)
4. Use workplace digital tools to create, share and collaborate with colleagues (e.g. Microsoft Teams, OneDrive, G-Suite, Office 365, WeTransfer, DropBox, WebEx, Slack)
5. Set up and manage an account on a professional online network/ community/job site (e.g. LinkedIn, Total Jobs, Indeed)

Transacting

6. Complete digital records on behalf of, or within my organisation (e.g. absence management, holidays, timesheets, expenses, tax returns)
7. Access salary and tax information digitally (e.g. password protected payslips, P60, P45)

Problem solving

8. Find information online that helps me solve work related problems (e.g. search engines, IT helpdesk, software providers, peer networks)
9. Improve my skills and ability to do new things at work using online tutorials, learning platforms and how-to guides (e.g. LinkedIn Learning, YouTube, iDEA, Skillssoft, internal learning platforms)
10. Use appropriate software that is required of my day-to-day job (e.g. spreadsheets, online booking systems, HR management, workflow or sales management)

Being safe and legal online

12. Act with caution online and understand that there are risks and threats involved in carrying out activities online (e.g. use anti-virus software, classify and share information securely or avoid certain types of websites such as piracy websites)
13. Follow data protection guidelines online (e.g. following data storage and retention guidelines, not sharing or using other people's data or media such as movies or music without their consent)
14. Recognise suspicious links and know that clicking on these links or downloading unfamiliar attachments is a risk (e.g. spam/ phishing emails, texts, pop ups)
15. Be careful with what I share online as I know that online activity produces a permanent record that can be accessed by others (e.g. publicly shared photos, forums, personal information or opinions)
16. Respond to requests for authentication for online accounts (e.g. resetting my password when I've forgotten it, two factor authentication, using a remote access key or an authenticator app)
17. Identify secure websites (e.g. by looking for the padlock and https in the address bar)
18. Identify secure Wi-Fi networks to connect to (e.g. Wi-Fi networks where a unique password is required, trusted source or padlock next to Wi-Fi network)
19. Update my device software/operating systems when necessary to prevent viruses and other risks (e.g. enabling automatic updates, or installing when prompted to do so)
20. Set privacy and marketing settings for websites and my accounts (e.g. managing social media privacy settings, managing cookie settings, updating contact preferences)

AI-embedded Skills for Work

5 additional tasks alongside AI updates to the original 20 tasks

Skills for Work

20 tasks in five skill areas

Skills for Life

26 tasks in five skill areas

Foundation Level

8 fundamental tasks to set up an individual for success online

AI-Embedded Essential Digital Skills Framework

FutureDotNow worked with expert partners to examine the Essential Digital Skills Framework, making recommendations for updates in the light of an AI-enabled world of work.

There are five recommended additional tasks.

Transacting

1. You can complete online financial transactions while understanding how AI systems support these processes, and can identify potential risks such as AI-generated scams or deceptive interfaces designed to manipulate your purchasing decisions.

Problem solving

2. You can develop effective prompts for AI systems to solve specific workplace problems while understanding AI's role as a complementary resource rather than a replacement for human judgement.

Being safe and legal online

3. You can understand the basic principles of AI, including how it works, its limitations, and when it is appropriate to use (e.g. understanding AI training, data requirements, and evaluating when AI tools are suitable for specific tasks).
4. 24. You can recognise the ethical implications of AI use and its societal impact (e.g. understanding AI biases, human oversight requirements, environmental impact and potential effects on privacy, fairness, and human rights).
5. 25. You can understand and manage AI risks in your job (e.g. keeping up with new AI technology, understanding how it affects data privacy, and following AI guidelines for your industry).

Our recommendations also include updates to several existing tasks to better reflect the widespread use of AI.

Explore our evidence-based recommendations at www.futuredotnow.uk/ai-framework.