



## Warren-Newport Public Library District

224 N. O'Plaine Road, Gurnee, IL 60031

(847) 244-5150 [www.wnpl.info](http://www.wnpl.info)

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### Walking on a Cloud for Free @ Your Library

Cloud computing is becoming the norm for business and personal connectivity. Cloud computing makes resource sharing and multi-point access feasible and easy.

#### What is cloud computing?

Cloud computing is Internet-based, or remote resource based, computing — documents and resources are made available to multiple computers and users via the Internet or a secure server connection. Think of cloud computing providers as a utility provider. For example: The electric company provides you with access to electricity, which means that you do not have to generate electricity yourself — you just need an account with the company and a hookup at your home. Cloud computing works the same way. You create an account, and then have access to the resources provided. Access to information is limited by password and account, so secure computing remains possible.

#### How can cloud computing help me?

The ability to access your work or home files, as well as software, from multiple locations is invaluable — start your presentation at work, finish it at home, and review it on your way to work on the train. Update your work and home calendar from your cell phone. Email product brochures at the library while your kids do their homework. The possibilities and

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applications of cloud computing are endless, and many resources are **free**. All use very little storage space, compared to fully installed software packages.

## Types of Cloud Resources

**Hosting**— Rental of storage space for web pages and web data. Web hosting (or website hosting) of web pages and other online material is a popular cloud function. A person, organization, or company can create a website and then host it on someone else's server. Popular hosting sites include GoDaddy.com and Rack-space.com.

**Data Storage & Sharing Resources** — This is the area where Cloud computing is booming. Companies and organizations can share software, documents, and data across a wide range of computers and devices. Software access can be purchased via a provider, and accounts are created to allow remote access. Some resources are even free — Google Docs is the perfect example. Files can be uploaded from your desktop to Google Docs, then accessed from anywhere. Files are converted to the proprietary Google Docs format, which is basically a rich text format (this enables you to work between a PC and a Mac!). Permissions can be set so files may be shared by multiple people.

**Development Resources** — Web and software development are huge industries. The cloud makes collaboration and compartmentalization on projects possible, because specialist can work on a single area of a project while making their work available to the group, as a whole. Internet, e-commerce and web 2.0 projects can use development resources that are in the cloud, such as development platforms (Paas or Development-as-a-Service), free storage/hosting, and code repositories.

## Free Cloud Resources

- **GoogleDocs ([docs.google.com](https://docs.google.com))** — A great free word processing app that allows you to create, store, and edit documents from most devices. It even allows users to save documents as text files and use them on a Mac, then a PC, and back again. You simply need to create a Google (or Gmail) account.
- **CheckAppointments.com ([www.checkappointments.com](http://www.checkappointments.com))** - This is smart, easy **online appointment scheduling soft-**

**ware**. The free version lets your customers or clients book their own appointments online (24/7). It also provides a simple appointment management system for scheduling, including the possibility for multiple schedules and locations, and sends out automatic email reminders.

- **Nutshellmail.com ([www.nutshellmail.com](http://www.nutshellmail.com))** If you (or your business, organization, etc.) has a social media presence, this is the cloud resource for you. Nutshell Mail delivers a customized summary of all traffic on your social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. You can consolidate your notifications to eliminate inbox clutter, while making sure that you have been briefed on all profile traffic.
- **Flickr ([www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com))** — Flickr is a popular photo sharing site that allows you to share your pictures, order copies, and work with your snapshots.
- **WorldImages ([worldimages.sjsu.edu](http://worldimages.sjsu.edu))** — This site allows free access (for nonprofit, educational uses) to over 80,000 images in the California State University IMAGE project. WorldImages is a global catalog of imagery that covers a wide variety of visual mediums, from paint to sculpture to photography. The only requirement for use is that the artist be given credit for the work depicted.
- **Google Calendar ([google.com/calendar](https://google.com/calendar))** — Google has an abundance of free cloud resources, including a fantastic calendar that allows you to check your schedule from just about anywhere. Update your online calendar, sync your device, and you have take-anywhere access to your schedule. A must for business or personal scheduling.
- **Google Books ([books.google.com](http://books.google.com))** — Search the full text of a variety of books and magazines. Some are free, like classics prior to 1910, Read [Huckleberry Finn](#), [Emma](#), or [Pride and Prejudice](#) from your computer or device. Titles can be shared across devices, too. Perfect for when your teen forgets their copy of [Romeo and Juliet](#) at school.
- **Docs.com ([www.docs.com](http://www.docs.com))** — This is a collaboration of Microsoft and Facebook. Docs.com allows Facebook users to create, edit, share, and store documents online using Microsoft software. A fantastic way to use a scaled-down version of the Office suite for free.