Disabilities
Opportunities
Internetworking
Technology

Pals
Who can be a DO-IT Pal?
Are you a teenager with a disability?

Do you want to attend college?

Are you interested in pursuing a challenging career?

Would you like to meet other teens with disabilities who have similar goals? Get tips for success from college students and other adults with disabilities?

Do you want to learn about scholarships, internships, and other opportunities?

Can you get access to a computer and the Internet?

If you’ve answered yes to these questions, YOU would make a great DO-IT Pal!
What do DO-IT Pals do?

Frequent email and personal contacts with MENTORS support DO-IT Pals’ academic, career, and personal goals. Mentors are college students, faculty, and practicing engineers, scientists, and other professionals. Many DO-IT Mentors have disabilities themselves. Experienced DO-IT Pals also develop and practice communication and leadership skills by acting as peer mentors for incoming DO-IT Pals. They make friends and motivate each other to achieve their goals.
**DO-IT Pals do?**

*DO-IT Pals* use the *INTERNET* to explore academic and career interests. It is their door to the information and resources they need for success.

Some *DO-IT Pals* apply their skills and knowledge in *PROJECTS* based on their interests. *DO-IT Mentors* and staff act as resources and provide assistance. Examples of possible projects include: complete an exhibit or a paper about assistive technology for people with disabilities for a school assignment; be a “mentor” to younger students with disabilities in the community—become their friend, encourage their interests in school, show them how to use a computer and the Internet; or give a presentation to recruit *DO-IT Pals*. 

**Internetworking**

**Projects**
What’s expected of *DO-IT Pals*?

*DO-IT Pals* come from all over the world. Most activities take place online. *DO-IT Pals*:

**Log on** to the Internet at least once per week.

Regularly **communicate** with *DO-IT Pals* and Mentors.

**Send** an email message to the doitpals or doitchat list at least once every two weeks.

**Send** greetings to new *DO-IT Pals*, and other new participants when they are introduced online.

**Use** online resources in classes at school (for example, to obtain information to use in class papers, projects, or discussions).

**Attend** *DO-IT* events when possible.

What happens when *DO-IT Pals* graduate from high school?

A *DO-IT Pal* who graduates from high school can become a *DO-IT Mentor*. A *DO-IT Mentor* helps with program activities, participates in electronic communications, and mentors younger *DO-IT* participants. An application can be found at [http://www.uw.edu/doit/Stem/mentor_app.html](http://www.uw.edu/doit/Stem/mentor_app.html).
What’s a *DO-IT Mentor*?

*DO-IT Mentors* are valuable resources for *DO-IT Pals*. As guides, counselors, teachers, and friends, they inspire and facilitate academic, career, and personal achievements. Relationships developed with *Mentors* become channels for the passage of information, advice, opportunities, challenges, and support with the ultimate goals of achievement and fun. *DO-IT Mentors* offer:

**Role Modeling**—Mentors are successful individuals who have collectively accomplished many of the things that *DO-IT Pals* strive for.

**Information**—Mentors share their knowledge, experiences, and wisdom.

**Challenges**—Mentors stimulate curiosity and build confidence by presenting new ideas and opportunities.

**Goal Setting**—Mentors help *DO-IT Pals* discover interests, define goals, and outline strategies for success.

**Support**—Mentors encourage achievement by offering support to *DO-IT Pals* who are growing in new areas.

**Contacts**—Mentors provide valuable opportunities by connecting *DO-IT Pals* with academic, career, and personal contacts.

To get to know Mentors, *DO-IT Pals*:

- Introduce themselves. They share their personal, academic, and career interests. They describe their future plans.

- Ask Mentors specific questions about disability-related issues, college, careers, and/or transition to adulthood. Ask Mentors about their personal interests, their academic background, and their career experiences.
How do *DO-IT Pals* access technology and electronic resources?

To become part of *DO-IT Pals*, you’ll need to have access to the Internet, probably from your home, library, or school. You’ll also need an email account.

DO-IT does not provide funding for computers, assistive technology, or Internet access for *DO-IT Pals*; however technical assistance for selecting equipment or an Internet service provider is provided by DO-IT staff.

To contact staff, request publications, ask technical questions, or find out more about the program, email:

*doit@uw.edu*

*DO-IT Pals* automatically become members of an electronic discussion list, *doitpals*. To communicate with other *Pals*, email:

*doitpals@uw.edu*

As a *DO-IT Pal* you can reach the entire group of *Pals*, *Mentors*, and other DO-IT program participants by using the following address:

*doitchat@uw.edu*

To discuss issues pertaining to individuals with disabilities and their pursuit of science, engineering, and mathematics (sem) and other challenging academic programs and careers, *DO-IT Pals* are automatically subscribed to the larger *doitsem* discussion list. To send a message to the group, use the following address:

*doitsem@uw.edu*

Parents and others can join this list by sending an email request to:

*doit@uw.edu*
What is *DO-IT Pal “Netiquette”*?
Email guidelines for *DO-IT Pals* include:

- Be brief. Keep paragraphs short and use blank spaces between paragraphs.
- Avoid covering several topics in one message. Instead, send several messages so the receiver can respond to each topic separately.
- Use mixed upper and lower case letters. Avoid using control characters or special keys.
- Begin text with the real name of the person addressed and end the text of the message with the author’s real name.
- Include all or parts of an email message that is being replied to.
- Do not use words others might find offensive and avoid personal attacks or name-calling.
- Do not participate in conversations that would not be acceptable to parents and/or DO-IT staff.
- Do not engage in conversations that seem inappropriate. Immediately report offensive or troubling email received to the DO-IT Director.
- Remember that an email is easy for recipients to forward to others and, therefore, is not appropriate for very personal messages—it’s more like a post card than a sealed letter.
- Take advantage of the spelling check feature.
- Review what’s written before sending it.
**How do I apply to be a DO-IT Pal?**

Teens with disabilities who want to go to college and who have an email address are encouraged to apply to become a DO-IT Pal. An application can be found at http://www.uw.edu/doit/Brochures/Programs/pals.application.html or by requesting the form via email:

\[\textit{doit@uw.edu}\]

Complete and return the application via email. Applicants are informed of their acceptance within two weeks of receipt of their application.

Parents of DO-IT Pals can join an online community of parents of DO-IT Pals and other participants by sending a request to join the DO-IT Parent List to:

\[\textit{doit@uw.edu}\]

**How can I contact DO-IT:**

DO-IT
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Box 354842
Seattle, WA 98195-4842
\[\textit{doit@uw.edu}\]
http://www.uw.edu/doit/
206-221-4171 (FAX)
206-685-DOIT (3648) (voice / TTY)
888-972-DOIT (3648) (voice / TTY) WA, outside Seattle
509-328-9331 (voice / TTY) Spokane
Founder and Director: Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D.

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What is DO-IT?
The University of Washington helps individuals with disabilities transition to colleges, universities, and careers through DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology). Computers and Internet technologies are used as empowering tools. Primary funding for DO-IT is provided by the National Science Foundation, the State of Washington, and the U.S. Department of Education.

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