

Google Applied Digital Skills

Short, easy-to-digest video tutorials for educators, children, teens, and adults accessible through applieddigitalskills.withgoogle.com

Overview

Google Applied Digital Skills (GADS) is an off shoot of Google for Education, which provides a handful of tools, applications, tutorials and solutions for educator use in the classroom. GADS provides simple, accessible digital-literacy oriented video lessons for youth and adults.

There are **bundled collections** which contain a handful of lessons with the aim to explore a certain topic or skillset. Examples include: [Job Preparedness and Career Exploration](#), [Google Suite Applications](#), and [College Readiness](#).

There are also **individual lessons** (a total of 107 at present) available for viewing covering everything from [getting your business online](#) to making digital [art in Google Sheets](#)* (*it's pretty simple, but very cool!)

Content Navigation

To browse the collection of resources available, navigate to applieddigitalskills.withgoogle.com

You can either scroll to the very bottom of the page and click the blue button that says, “view all video lessons” OR you can click the lessons tab on the navigation bar at the top.

From this page, you can literally view every lesson and bundle. You're also easily able to browse by audience, digital tool, or topic by using the filters located in the toolbar to the right.

The image shows a sidebar with a search bar at the top containing the text "Search for a lesson". Below the search bar is a "Filter by" section with a "Clear filters" link. Under "Filter by", there are three filter categories: "Audience" with a dropdown arrow, "Digital tool" with a dropdown arrow, and "Topic" with a dropdown arrow. The "Audience" category is expanded, showing four options: "Late Elementary", "Middle School", "High School", and "Adult Learners", each with an unchecked checkbox.

Applied digital skills vs. Lynda

At DML we and our patrons have access to Lynda, which contains a massive library of video tutorials for many topics. Lynda is great, and I utilize it for personal and professional use nearly every day!

With all that said, Google Applied Digital Skills (when applicable for the task at hand) does have some small advantages for personal and patron use.

No account required (sort of)

You can view the content without having a Google Account.

However, in general, you're probably going to need a Google Account to follow along in courses that utilize any of the Google Suite apps.

I've found in my time working with adults that Lynda can pose barriers to individuals who don't feel very comfortable with technology because of the user interface (playlists, courses vs. videos, learning exercise files, and the massive library). Actually navigating to the Lynda homepage and the login process can also be a barrier to access.

The GADS interface, once you get to the spot where you access courses is very clean and minimal. You can also jump between sections of the video tutorials, and the videos will not autoplay and leave the learner behind!

Tutorials are outcome-focused

Oftentimes, I've worked with individuals who are really only interested in learning a digital tool or application to accomplish one specific task. For example, they need to learn how to use Microsoft Word to write a resume or use Excel to make one invoice.

While there are courses through GADS for Google Suite products (Drive, Docs, Sheets and Slides) that are good and comprehensive, there are also courses between 45-90 mins long that cover using that tool to accomplish a specific task (like "[Create a Resume in Google Docs](#)").

The structure of the content encourages learning

...And on the note above, I get quite excited thinking about how the structure of the lessons encourages curiosity and learning just for fun.

Let me give a personal example. I have had "Excel Essential Training" in my Lynda playlist for about 2-3 months. It's over two hours long.

I genuinely intend to sit through it at some point, and get a very comprehensive high-level overview of using and utilizing Microsoft Excel tools and features. I just haven't yet.

But when I saw a short lesson called "[Create a Study Schedule to Meet Your Goals](#)" (w/Google Sheets), I gobbled it up as soon as I got home! And I made a spreadsheet with conditional formatting, data validation, and more in less than an hour. I invested the time, learned valuable skills that are transferrable to other projects, and got instant gratification in the form of a tool I can utilize. 🙌 YEAH TECHNOLOGY!

Certificates of completion are available.

By logging in with your Google Account at the end of a lesson, you can print a certificate of completion.

Courses generally utilize Google Apps and Services

This is something that I think is a great asset to our patrons.

While we have Microsoft Office products on library devices, many desktop and laptop computers

purchased new do not come with these programs for free anymore. Google Suite products are completely free to use and access and can be used on desktop or mobile devices.

The mobile apps also eliminates barriers for patrons who may have access to the internet through their mobile device but who do not have a desktop/laptop computer with an internet connection. Documents composed in Google Docs/Sheets/Slides also are saved automatically (no lost files) and are accessible from any device when the user is logged in. No worries about backing up local files!

Some challenges of utilizing GADS

- Finding this webpage organically is challenging.
If you can't remember the URL, you can simply type in "Google Applied Digital Skills" or a variation of those words.
- The homepage is a black hole.
I think the student/teacher tabs make it harder to view and access content that could be helpful.
- Some content (called "Extensions" at the end of the lesson) is nested inside of other courses and content, which makes it hard to see all of the cool stuff available.
- The lessons are fairly short and basic so if and when someone is ready to level up in difficulty, a different resource is probably called for.

TL;DR:

This resource is pretty cool. I would encourage you to browse it for patron benefit as well as personal benefit. 😊

Extra-Credit:

If you find any of the above content intriguing, edu.google.com contains some cool resources for youth aimed at educators (see the "Teaching Resources" tab).

- I love the "[Be Internet Awesome](#)" initiative which aims to provide resources to teach youth how to browse the internet safely and how to be responsible and kind participants in online spaces.
- I also highly recommend the [Family Guide](#), which is a great resource for families to use when talking about internet usage and safety.