Getting to grips with…

VTS: the RDN Virtual Training Suite

What is it?
The Virtual Training Suite or VTS [http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk](http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk) is a set of online tutorials designed to help students, lecturers and researchers improve their Internet information literacy and IT skills. Work in your own time at your own pace - no one is monitoring you! There are quizzes and interactive exercises to lighten the learning experience.

Who produces it?
Each RDN Hub is responsible for the VTS tutorials in its subject area. So those relating to the Life Sciences, Health and Medicine are produced and updated by BIOME. The design and software are produced by the Institute for Learning and Research Technology (ILRT) at the University of Bristol.

Subject coverage
Tutorials are available in all subject areas; they are listed on [http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/](http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/).
Those produced by BIOME are:

**Internet for Health and Life Sciences**

- Agriculture, Food and Forestry
- Allied Health
- Bioresearcher
- Medic
- Nature
- Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting
- Pharmacist
- Vet

Other subject groups are:

- Internet for Engineering and Mathematics
- Internet for Humanities
- Internet for Physical Sciences
- Internet for Reference
- Internet for Social Sciences, Business and Law
- Internet for Further Education
- **Coming soon: Internet for Adult Community Learning (April 2005)**

Date coverage
The VTS was launched in 2001 with additional tutorials added in 2002. Each will be regularly updated.
**Language coverage**
Tutorials are in English only and resources quoted will generally be English.

**Size**
Over 60 tutorials are currently available (Nov 2004).

**Special features**
All tutorials share a common design, inviting the student to
- **tour**
  - key Internet sites for agriculture, food and forestry
- **discover**
  - how to search the Internet
- **review**
  - what to trust on the Internet
- **reflect**
  - how to get the most from the Internet for your work

A **Links Basket** allows you to collect URLs of interest as you proceed through the tutorial, add others of your own and export the list for future use.

**Support materials**
The VTS aims to encourage critical and informed use of the Internet. Each RDN Hub follows a detailed set of guidelines and evaluation criteria, which are worth reviewing to supplement the suggestions given in the VTS tutorials. Guidelines can usually be found in the ‘About’ section of each gateway, e.g. for BIOME [http://biome.ac.uk/about/](http://biome.ac.uk/about/).

**Access**
The VTS is a free service, accessible to anyone anywhere on [http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk](http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk). Links are provided on OxLIP.

**Obtaining original material**
The VTS links to external web sites and does not offer delivery services for any publications or products they may list. Consult your librarian for advice whenever needed.

**Related products**
See separate guides in this series for the Resource Discovery Network and the BIOME Life Sciences Gateways.

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