
*The Jerusalem
Computer Gemach*

גמ"ח חשב

by
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Preface

You may not realize that you need a computer Gemach until you have a problem. At that time, you'll be glad we're here.

Distribution policy for this book

Although we are currently distributing draft copies of this series of books at no charge, we do expect you to return the favor by commenting on specific issues that you find. You can write to us at the address near the back of the book.

Don't tell us, "This book is great" or "This book is awful." Instead, *specific* comments pointed at a *specific* sentence or paragraph on a specified page that can be traced and corrected would be of immense value.

Your comments will give the book more value to future readers. We will give you credit if your comments are accepted.

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Introduction

This book gives information about the Jerusalem **Computer Gemach**.

A gemach is an abbreviation for *Gemilut Chasadim*: Jewish loving-kindness. There are many forms of *Gemilut Chasadim*.

This book focuses on the concept of doing good things for others without recompense. We will describe a free loan association.

Keywords: [Computers](#), [Gemach](#)
[/computergemach/Start](#)

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Your exercise for this article is as follows:



A service to the community.

What is the Computer Gemach?

The Computer Gemach serves the greater Jerusalem community. It is a service for the community of people who are in need of a computer for a brief period of time.

It offers the option to continue working after a crisis, and it helps people decide whether to go into the hi-tech or computers field.

Is the Computer Gemach for you? Not necessarily. It certainly is not for everybody.

Who borrows these computers?

Computers, software, or peripherals are loaned to people who meet our criteria:

- Those who require specific forms of job retraining
- Offices or home businesses that suffer crises

People who require retraining.

People may search for a different job because they have no prior training, or because their training is not adequate for earning a livelihood. They are frequently urged to study computers as a possible source of income. The **Computer Gemach** is primarily designed for these people.

Those who meet our criteria can borrow a computer for longer than the usual time – up to two full weeks by prior arrangement and appointment, based on availability. During this time, they can take a private tutor and read any literature that they can access. They can use the computer for an unlimited number of hours per day. In this way, they can determine whether they are suited for the computer profession, and whether it would be wise to invest in a serious program of computer study.

The **Computer Gemach** helps them evaluate whether the computer is really their best direction or venue, before they begin their actual studies or investment.

The success of the **Computer Gemach** can be measured by those who *don't* buy a computer or who decide *not* to buy a computer of their own.

Those who choose not to go into the computer profession may benefit in several ways:

- They may save large sums of money
- They may refrain from or avoid going into debt
- They may save several years of unnecessary study

Office or home business that suffer crises.

Businesses may face a brief urgent need for a computer for a brief period of time. When a part breaks, it may take a day or more until it can be serviced. The **Computer Gemach** can help people during this time of need.

The **Computer Gemach** has actually saved businesses in need. They depend on their computer system, and were grateful that they were able to continue their source or livelihood after the computer system was destroyed by a fire or lightning.

They may also need a brief "loaner" computer when a piece of hardware becomes defective.

Some people work during hours or days in which computer stores are closed. When a monitor or another part stops functioning, they can borrow a replacement from the **Computer Gemach**.

How much does the Computer Gemach charge?

Nothing.

The **Computer Gemach** assumes that the people who borrow the computers for a lengthy period of time do not know how to use a computer, and they are borrowing it in order to learn.

We also realize that they can indeed unwittingly or unintentionally damage the machine in the course of investigating the possibilities. We believe that they should not be penalized for their lack of knowledge.

On the other hand, a person who cannot use a computer without damaging it should certainly think twice about going into the field of computers.

In other cases, computers are used by offices. Although we do not charge for damaged equipment, we do expect a form of appreciation. Thus, when a business or professional office

damages a computer part, we do request (but we do not demand) that they replace the part, or that they provide the **Computer Gemach** with an equivalent piece of computer equipment.

Where is the Gemach computers stored?

Computers from the Gemach are rarely placed in storage. They are always being used, in somebody's home or business. When a computer is returned, it is checked to verify that it is in good condition (although it is not given a thorough check for viruses and malware – see below), and then given to the next borrower.

Our supply of computer parts is limited, and that, too, is often loaned out to people. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient computer parts. Storage is not an issue.

Where is the Computer Gemach located?

In Jerusalem, but people from any part of Israel are entitled to borrow computers as long as they can pick them up and return them.

How can I contact the Computer Gemach?

Contact jewishgroups@gmail.com or jewishgroups@yahogroups.com. You can also write to **Computer Gemach**, Box 6925, Jerusalem, Israel. We will provide you with additional information that is needed.

The Computer Gemach

Giving the Gemach hardware and software

Who gives equipment to the Computer Gemach?

Businesses or individuals that upgrade their computers may decide to give the older one to the **Computer Gemach**.

People who buy new computers that are not suitable for their needs may turn them over to the **Computer Gemach**.

People who have benefited from the Computer Gemach may show their appreciation by giving equipment.

Others who no longer require recent equipment may choose to do others a favor, and to get a mitzvah for themselves.

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What does the Computer Gemach need?

We need anything that is related to computers or to computer supplies or equipment. This includes hardware, software, and/or any peripherals of any kind. It could include materials anything from a full computer to a particular new ink cartridge, plus any new legal software is also of assistance. The **Computer Gemach** accepts either full computers or parts of computers. However, we do accept only Pentium-3 class computers or better.

The **Computer Gemach** also accepts any peripherals, including scanners, printers, fax machines, hard drives or other kind of drives, cables of any kind, modems, or any other computer equipment which can be of value to others.

The following categories of equipment are needed most:

Computers

The demand far exceeds the supply. When a computer is temporarily removed from service, the waiting list grows still more. We cannot provide enough of a service.

Modern equipment

The computers in the **Computer Gemach** do not reflect those available in the market today (in plain language: they are old). As a result, potential students cannot always determine whether they should study today's computer skills. In

addition, those who need temporary replacement parts may not find them among this outdated equipment.

Recent equipment of any kind is therefore always welcomed.

Parts, drivers, and peripherals

Don't think about it too much. If you can spare it, we'll be happy to take it.

It must be very expensive to run the Computer Gemach and to track the parts and equipment.

That is correct. For this reason, we always look for people who will be able to supply us with computer equipment or parts. We bear the administrative costs ourselves.

Which single piece of equipment is the most urgent at this time?

Laptops. Most people who borrow the computers do not have a car. Others may not be physically capable of carrying a heavy desktop computer or monitor.

We never have enough laptop computers.

Does the Computer Gemach accept Macintosh (r) computers?

Yes, but only very recent laptops.

Does the Computer Gemach accept other office equipment?

Yes. We've had requests for temporary loans of any imaginable computer peripheral, software, or study texts.

Does the Computer Gemach accept equipment that runs on the American electrical system (110V, 60Hz)?

In general, it is certainly preferred that the equipment operate on the Israeli electrical system. Please discuss any exceptions in advance.

Does the Gemach accept computer-related books and magazines?

Yes, if they are *very* recent. The **Computer Gemach** does have a small computer library.

Are computer manuals needed?

Yes.

Which computer-related publications are in the greatest demand?

Very recent books and magazines in Hebrew or English about computer products, programming, troubleshooting, hardware or software issues, and bilingual computing.

Recent documentation for running, repairing, maintaining, buying, programming, or buying computer equipment.

Is there a tax reduction for those who give equipment to the Computer Gemach?

Discuss this issue with your accountant. This is usually a factor only with new equipment. Used office equipment, especially computers, depreciates very quickly. It is usually not a serious issue.

Does the Gemach have tax-exempt status?

No.

Which item do people "forget" to give the Gemach?

Drivers. Drivers are the CDs or diskettes that come with computer equipment, and they help the equipment run. It is more difficult to provide our service when people neglect to provide these drivers.

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FAQ for borrowers

How do I borrow computer equipment from the Computer Gemach?

The procedure is quite simple. Contact us by email (see the address near the end of this document). Let us know who you are and what you need. We'll do our best to help.

For how long can someone borrow a computer from the Computer Gemach?

For 24-36 hours.

I need the Gemach in order to advance my studies.

In certain rare and extenuating circumstances we can loan out available equipment for as long as two weeks. This service is usually provided to Yeshiva or Kollel students who have to make important decisions about their future.

Who *may not* borrow a computer from the Computer Gemach?

The **Computer Gemach** is designed for people who have serious, short-term needs. Those who want their children to be entertained with games, or who need a computer for a long-term event, should find the necessary funding and buy their own computer.

What is the waiting period for a computer?

That depends. Some parts may be available immediately. In cases of dire need, we have even given people parts from our own personal backup computer.

Complete computers are offered as soon as they are available, and there is always a waiting list. We also have a reserve computer available for very severe emergencies. Otherwise, people may have to wait until a computer becomes available and until it is serviced so that it is in good working condition.

Can I add my own software to a computer that I borrow?

Please don't. There are several reasons:

Legality.

We use only legal software in our Gemach computers. If you have specific needs, please let us know in advance. We'll do our best to install the necessary legal software on your computer before you take it.

Installation problems.

We do not have the manpower to handle the problems that inevitably arise when installing software. We ask you to just use the computer as is, and not to make any changes in the configuration, software, or components.

Viruses.

Yes, we know that you scanned your software with several scanners, and you've already installed it in other machines with no problems, and that you're sure that it has no viruses. We've already been through that many times.

Please do not install that software on a Gemach computer. Thank you.

Do Gemach computers have viruses?

Good question.

Keep in mind that these computers are passed from one person to another.

When the computer is first loaned out, we ascertain that it has no viruses. Furthermore, we do request that our clients refrain from installing their own software.

However, we cannot guarantee that the Gemach computers are free of viruses, and we will not be held responsible for any damage caused by viruses. By borrowing a Gemach computer, or any Gemach equipment, you agree to use it at your own risk.

In other words, assume that it *does* have viruses, spyware, and other malware – and act accordingly.

We also ask that you do your part. Don't copy any Microsoft Word (r) or Excel (r) files to the computer. This will minimize the risk of viruses.

Of course, if you do find a virus on the computer, please let us know right away so that we can handle the problem. Don't handle it yourself. That's the job of the **Computer Gemach**.

Do you take a deposit for loaning out equipment?

Our clientèle has been quite honest. So far, we have *never* had a problem with equipment that was not returned.

However, there are times when the computer is returned in damaged condition. In that case, we ask clients to replace the parts in the future, on their honor, when their circumstances permit it.

Do you have a list of available hardware and software

No. Our supply changes all the time, and nothing is really "available." We're happy to loan out whatever we have to those who meet our criteria.

In general, people make lists of available products and services for publicity purposes. However, this is a Gemach, not a store. We have no reason to encourage people to choose what they want. The Gemach's items are loaned based on need.

Additional issues:

Do you distribute multiple computers?

No.

We'll send you to a computer store for that. It isn't fair to deprive several people of the use of a computer in order to benefit a single person.

Can I borrow a computer for a few days before Pesach so that I can get some work done?

Sorry. That would be depriving needy people of a computer. May we suggest that you get a babysitter to entertain your children for several hours a day.

Can I borrow a computer for the duration of my hospital stay?

While we wish you a Refuah Shleimah and sympathize with your situation, hospital loans are not within the purview of our niche.

Do you need to upgrade your computer?

Go ahead and do it – but the **Computer Gemach** was not designed for that purpose. The **Computer Gemach** does not sell equipment. We loan it to people.

Computer stores will help you upgrade as necessary.

Do you loan out recent, high-power computers?

It's unlikely that we'll be able to help you.

The **Computer Gemach** accepts computers from many people. However, it is unlikely that they will donate a brand new up-to-date computer. Besides, why would you come to a Gemach for a high-powered device? It should not be needed, according to our criteria.

Do you need computer training or consultation?

That's available for pay. It is not part of the Gemach.

The owner of the Gemach earns his livelihood as a computer trainer and consultant. It would be unfair to ask for such services without payment.

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Contact information

Get in touch with the author at
jewishgroups-owner@yahogroups.com

Download the latest version of this book from
GrossmanBooks.GooglePages.com

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Jewish Dating: So this is the best time in my life?

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