

Midterm exam

Reading Section

Gesture-based technology: the next big thing?

Experts predict that gesture-based technology, which can be used to control any system at any distance from a few centimetres to half the length of a football pitch, is going to be the next major trend in personal technology worldwide. The basic principle is that gestures are used as the main input method, rather than a keyboard, mouse or switch. Orders can be given by touching a screen (either swiping or pressing) or by using physical movement of hands, arms, fingers, the head or even the eyes. The emphasis is on a direct interaction between the self and the device or system, with little or nothing in-between.

Recently we have seen the application of gestures in automation technology in factories, where it is enabling people to control systems without actually touching them. With a mere movement a worker can command the computer to start machinery, and by holding up his hand in a "stop" gesture, halt the machines. Since the gestures could be the same all over the world, no matter what language you speak, this universal body language could reduce the need for companies to write programs in different languages. It would also reduce training costs by eliminating the need for keyboard and language training.

It should also prove useful in areas like hospitals, where it is vital to reduce contamination and the spreading of disease through touching objects. In education too, it is proving itself to be of utmost importance to children with special educational needs as each device can be programmed depending on the needs of each individual child. Eye-gaze gestures, for example, offer new opportunities for students with virtually no independent movement.

What about people like you and me, will we be using gesture-based technology too? Well, it could make our lives easier at home as well as at work. If you don't know where the remote control for your music docking station is, you'll be able to use gestures to find it. Or you'll be able to use gestures to control your music, thus doing away completely

with the need for a remote control! You won't have to get your mobile device dirty while you're reading a recipe on it in the kitchen, as a simple wave of the hand will scroll up, down or take you to a different page. Of course, as well as the practical implications, you might just find this new technology enjoyable to use, using it for example to play a virtual tennis match with a friend on the other side of the world.

Wearable technology with tiny displays, like Google Glass and Apple iWatch, can also be controlled by gesture-based technology, which is good news for those of us with fingers the size of sausages. Connect these to the 'Internet of things' and with a wink of the eye you will be controlling your central heating at home while you are at work and feeding your cat when you are away on holiday.



1. Read the article quickly and choose the correct answer. What is the article about?

- A. a mobile phone you can use as a remote control
- B. a technology you can use to control devices
- C. a type of tablet you can use to control the temperature around you

2. Which five advantages of using gesture-based technology are mentioned in the article?

- A. You can use it to control devices and machines without touching them.
- B. It provides a fun way to learn.
- C. If you work in an environment where you have to keep everything clean, it will help you to do that.
- D. It can eliminate language barriers in some workplaces.

- E. It can help you to locate things you need, like remote controls, when you don't know where they are.
- F. It enables you to read something on your mobile device even if you're not in the same room as the device.
- G. You won't be dependent on using the small screen on your wearable device when you want to control what it does.

Jackie, Australia

Exceptional service and high standards of hygiene and cleanliness. The hotel is on a 4 kilometre-long beach which is just amazing. There were lots of different activities we could do with the kids there, everything from snorkelling to beach volleyball. The kids also loved the disco every night – they got up, had a dance and made friends with some of the other children. Nothing could beat breakfast by the pool - delicious - followed by a day lounging on the beach or walking on the sand. You won't regret choosing the Hotel Tortuga Bay.

Manos, Greece

We had very high expectations for our trip, but unfortunately the hotel failed to meet them. The moment we arrived we encountered screaming children running around the hotel, apparently without anyone there to keep an eye on them. We later learned that the hotel officially has the status of a 'child-friendly' hotel, meaning there is a higher than average number of children staying there. We were looking for a quiet, relaxing holiday spent sitting by the pool, but we didn't get it. The other thing we were particularly dissatisfied with was the amount of food available at the buffet breakfast – it was tasty but there just wasn't enough to go round! Avoid this place if you're looking for a nice, peaceful holiday for two.

Yen, Taiwan

Beautifully decorated, very elegant and I can't praise the staff highly enough. You really feel like you are in paradise. There's not much to see in the area, but the thing that really spoiled it for us was the outdoor disco which took place every evening and which you could hear everywhere in the hotel. We just wanted to have a quiet time relaxing on our balcony or in the pool but all we could hear was the bang bang bang of drums and the DJ shouting until 2 AM. If you prefer a bit of peace and quiet in the evenings and getting an early night, you should think about choosing another hotel.

3. Read the hotel reviews quickly and choose the correct answers.

- Which group of people would most enjoy staying at Hotel Tortuga Bay?
 - A. Couples looking for a quiet, relaxing beach holiday.
 - B. Families who want to do lots of activities and keep their children entertained.
 - C. Solo travellers keen to explore new places and meet new people.
- Which person was the most satisfied with the hotel?
 - A. Jackie
 - B. Manos
 - C. Yen

- Which person was the least satisfied with the hotel?

- A. Jackie
- B. Manos
- C. Yen

4. Read the reviews again. Are these sentences true or false?

- The hotel is kept clean.
- The hotel is right on the coast.
- There is no entertainment at the hotel.
- There are fewer children at this hotel compared to other hotels.
- The food tasted good but the quantity of food was not satisfactory.
- It's very peaceful at the hotel in the evenings.