

## Computers are sorcery! Kill them with fire!

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It's hard to believe we were ever this dumb.

And watching videos like this, it's hard to believe the '90s ever happened. This wacky decade — when we were all still finding our digital bearings — spawned gems like "Komputer Tutor", a VHS series from "America's Digital Goddess", Kim Komando, that takes simple computer concepts and dumbs them down even further ... and further and further. It's comedy gold.

Via [Gizmodo](#) [1], I've rediscovered this relic from the bygone era of grunge rock, baggy pants, and Titanic. Mix the folksiness of legendary sportscaster John Madden with the maternal care of a kindergarten teacher and you've got Kim Komando.

Komando (yes, that's her real name) sets her sights on some low-hanging fruit — really low-hanging fruit ... the sort who thinks computers are a form of sorcery. The assumed level of technical expertise is approximately equal to a caveman's understanding of Xbox.

To be fair, Kim Komando was a product of her environment. It's easy to forget, but we were all tech virgins at some point — personal computers were still exorbitantly expensive in the '90s and slowly trickling into American homes. The Internet had just been commercialized. Dumbing down your PC instructional videos would seem prudent (and find a highly receptive audience).

But there's dumbing it down, and then there's this gem from "Komputer Kindergarten":

"This is a mouse. It looks like a regular mouse. Put your index finger on the left mouse button, your middle finger on the right mouse button. This is called pointing."

Or this one, which seems to recall a *different* bygone era:

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"That's how simple DOS is. It's like house cleaning."

Or this:

"You may never use a typewriter again after I show you this program."

But Komando's true magnum opus was "[How to Avoid the 29 Biggest Computer Mistakes](#) [2]" (seen below), featuring such tidbits as:

#1 Buying the wrong software:

"Buy clothes and there's a tag that tells you what size it is...like this is a small. I know it'll fit me. Now on our computer software box, there's an area that says 'requirements'. It's like sizes on clothing."

And here's the funny part: You might assume that Kim Komando went extinct (like most relics from the woebegone "[Millennial](#) [3]" decade), but she's still around, dispensing pearls of tech wisdom — [The Kim Komando Show](#) [4] can be heard on over 450 radio stations in the U.S. and two in Canada, and she has a syndicated column that still runs in USA Today. And she hasn't lost her touch.

This is from "[5 tech habits every computer user needs](#) [5]", which ran just last month:

"Behavioral experts say that one of the best ways to drop a bad habit is to replace it with a new good habit ... Don't worry. Giving up bad tech habits is a lot easier than trying to abstain from ice cream!"

Lest you get the wrong impression, [Komando](#) [6] — who holds a B.S. in Information Systems from Arizona State University — is no dummy, but her message is simplistic to the point of patronizing.

Then again, maybe her receptive audience hasn't quite evolved yet. Is it sad that I know people who — two decades later — could still benefit from Kim Komando's folksy wisdom?

People like Homer Simpson:

For another trip back in time, check out Kasey Panetta's [blog post](#) [7] on Walter Cronkite's predictions for 2001 (from 1967).

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### **Links:**

- [1] <http://gizmodo.com/5995358/watch-a-woman-from-the-1990s-explain-what-a-computer-is>
- [2] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xt1b6gz6sYc>
- [3] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennials>
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- [5] <http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/columnist/komando/2013/03/22/common-computer-problems-rip-offs/1997077/>
- [6] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kim\\_Komando](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kim_Komando)
- [7] <http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2013/02/what-walter-cronkite-thought-2001-would-look>