

Miscellaneous Shortcuts & Tips

Keyboard Tips:

Most keyboards today have a windows key. It's on the lower row with the space bar and simply has the windows logo. Hitting this key brings up the Start Menu.

To the right of your spacebar there may be another key with a graphic. I think it looks like a list with an arrow. This key brings up the same menu as a click of the right mouse button.

If you hit either of these, or another unwanted key combination, you may have a menu layered on top of your work area. **To make that menu disappear – simply hit the ESC (Escape) key** in the upper left corner of your keyboard!

Back Ups:

If your program offers you a back up option, it will usually give you warnings if you try to back up to your hard drive. Fair enough – if you lose the hard drive you lose both the active and the back up files.

However, don't forget that if your ultimate destination is a CD, you *must* back up the files to the hard drive and *then* burn those files to the CD for off system storage.

Cleaning your Laptop

Clean your screen of dust and fingerprints with a microfiber cloth – NO glass cleaner, water or chemical cleaners. Clean the keyboard and ports with a mini-vacuum or compressed air. Clean the outside with a soft cloth slightly dampened with water. Use a cover or protective case when the laptop is not in use to help limit scratches, dust and foreign particles.

USB

New USB protocol is coming – USB 3.0. Deemed “SuperSpeed USB”, the new specification delivers speeds up to 10 times faster than USB 2.0 with better power efficiency. USB 3.0 also includes power management features that allow devices to idle, sleep, and suspend. There are more connecting lines so the cables for this will be thicker and the connectors will look a bit different – but still backward-compatible with USB 2.0.

Accidental Touchpad Touches

Ever accidentally relocate the cursor when typing on a laptop because your thumb brushed the touchpad while you were typing? Unfortunately, there's no universal solution for this situation, but here are some suggestions:

1. Plug in a USB mouse, which may automatically disable the touchpad.
2. Change your Mouse Settings:
 - a. Open Control Panel
 - b. Double click MOUSE

Now you need to search around the available options. Look for one of the following:

- Disable Touchpad when USB point device is present (if you're connecting a USB mouse)
- A sensitivity slide bar that lets you make the touchpad more resistant to accidental brushes during typing
- An option to 'Tap off when typing', so that the touchpad doesn't recognize taps when you're typing

Another option – look at the function keys on your laptop and see if there's one to turn the touchpad on/off.

Most Recently Used Office Files

Many people have asked me how to get a deleted document out of their list of Most Recently Used files (MRU). It's never been very easy, but I finally found some instructions for version 2003 and prior:

Use the keyboard shortcut:

Alt + Ctrl + -

where the last key is the hyphen key on the top row of your keyboard.

This will turn your mouse point into a thick horizontal line. Open your File Menu, move to the file you use to delete and click on it!

If you change your mind, press ESCAPE to change the mouse pointer back before deleting anything.

NOTE: this will delete any menu item, not just an MRU listing. If you accidentally delete something from your menu that you need back – use Tools / Customize / Commands to find the removed menu item and drag it back onto the menu again.

Office 2007 - MRU

If you have a document that you use frequently and want it to always show up on your Most Recently Used list (MRU), pin it! Simply click on the icon to the right of the file name to move the pushpin from horizontal to vertical. The file will move up and down within your MRU, but will not disappear.

Digital Photography

A tripod is a great way to reduce camera shake and get a clear, crisp photo. If a tripod isn't readily available, try a lamp with a removable shade – the thread is often the same as a tripod's!

To help even more, use the self-timer option. Setting the timer and removing your hands eliminates one additional risk of shaky hands affecting the photo!

On Screen Keyboard

Both Windows XP and Vista include on-screen keyboards should you find yourself unable to type or with a non-working keyboard.

WinXP – use Start / All Programs, Accessories, Accessibility

Vista – Start / All Programs / Accessories / Ease of Use / On-Screen Keyboard.

Once launched, you can customize it by changing the layout, eliminating the keypad, turning on key clicks, etc. Now, use the mouse to type!

Cell Phone Rescue:

If your cell phone gets wet (I actually ran one through the washing machine), don't panic until you've tried this drying out trick. Remove the battery and any existing memory card then submerge the phone in a bowl of dry rice, cover it, and leave it overnight. Pop in the battery in the morning and it may work – if not, try a new battery before buying a new phone!

Office Version 2007:

Office 2007 brought with it new file formats, making anything created and saved as version 2007 unreadable for older versions of Office programs. If this is occurring for you and you need to be able to open these newer file formats, you need to get the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats – it also requires the latest Service Pack.

Office Options:

If you'd like your primary storage location for any Office files to be something other than MY DOCUMENTS, use Tools/Options and in the SAVE area, designate your preference for the Default File Location.

Laptop Cable Clutter:

If your laptop's USB ports are all on the side of the machine, you may be a victim of 'cable clutter'. They now have available a USB "elbow" connector (under \$10) which routes your cables to the back or front of your machine, getting them out of the way of the work area you may need for a piece of paper.

Shut Down Shortcut

Start/Shut Down can be a clumsy way to turn off your computer – especially if you're in a hurry. Using the command shutdown -s isn't any quicker, but it does lend itself to a desktop shortcut.

Right click the desktop and select NEW, then choose SHORTCUT. In the prompt for the location of the item, type: shutdown -s, then click NEXT. Keep the default name or give it one you prefer, and then click FINISH.

When you double click this shortcut on your desktop, Windows will count off 30 seconds and then shut itself down.

Office Version 2007:

For more screen room – minimize the ribbon from the pull down option at the end of the Quick Access Toolbar. Or – double-click twice on any ribbon tab to minimize the ribbon and maximize your document area.

Even though they are not as obvious because of the lack of drop down menus, Office 2007 does still recognize those shortcut keys you've used since starting with Office software. Holding down the ALT key will reveal the shortcut keys for the current ribbon and ALT+F will open the Office button as it used to open the File Menu.

Printer Tip:

If you're watching your color printing in order to save on ink or toner, why not set up a separate printer on your machine with it defaulting to black and white printing? Simply set up your existing printer, giving it a unique name, and be sure that the default is set to black & white printing. Once established, right click the printer icon and choose 'Set As Default' to have those options as your standard printing and then select the other only for color printing.

TV on the Web:

If you want to watch television programming over the Web, you need to know the bandwidth you get from your ISP. Most streaming video sites call for a minimum connection speed of 800 kbps.

Printer Tip:

If your printer starts printing as soon as you turn it on, you need to clear the printer queue/memory:

- Turn off the printer
- Unplug everything – power, computer
- Turn the printer on
- Wait a minute
- Turn the printer off
- Plug everything back in
- Turn the printer on

Hardware Tip:

If you have many USB peripherals hanging off of one port on your computer through use of a hub, there's a chance that they are not getting the power they need and may therefore be functioning at less than 100%. The board that supports 2 ports in the CPU typically delivers up to 500 milliamps of electricity to attached devices. Check what your devices need –

- Click Start
- Right click My Computer
- Select Manage
- Select Device Manager in the left pane
- Click the + next to Universal Serial Bus Controllers in the right pane
- Double click each USB Root Hub listed
- Select the Power tab
- Check how much power each port or device uses
- Click OK

Office 2007

Users of older versions of Office who want to open files in the new edition's default formats must first update their current version of Windows and Office via update.microsoft.com and then download and install two Microsoft patches for their version of the OS: the File Format Awareness Update, and the Compatibility Pack. These exceed 60MB and the downloads took one author over 30 minutes over a DSL connection.

Keyboard Shortcuts:

Action	Keystroke
Open/Close Start Menu	Ctrl+Esc or Windows
Switch to a running program	Alt+Tab
Open Windows Explorer to My Computer	Windows+E
Rename selected file or folder	F2
Close an open Window	Alt+F4
Delete without going to the Recycle Bin	Shift+Delete
Go to the beginning	Ctrl+Home
Go to the end	Ctrl+End
Open Task Manger	Ctrl+Shift+Esc
Search for file in a new window	Windows+F
Open Current Window's Control Menu	Alt+Spacebar

Networking Your Home:

-
-
- Pick Your Technology—wireless, semi-wireless or wired
 - Plan Your Network—location, phone-lines, power-lines
 - Install the Hardware—Network Interface Cards (NICs)
 - Install the Software—drivers for the network hardware and software onto each machine—selecting a name for each machine
 - Get the Internet—an internet connection is a must-have if you're planning to share it!
 - Share the Internet—install software needed to share your Net connection.
 - Share the Works—share printers, disk drives, and files, too! Install the shared printer on each machine.

Hardware:

Having trouble getting the CD out of the drive? Right click the drive from My Computer and choose EJECT.

Remember not to store floppies or backup tapes near a magnet, telephone, or even your monitor. The magnetic field surrounding these devices can destroy your data.

Office and Hyperlinks:

In most Office programs, if you have multiple files open and want to close them all quickly, hold down the SHIFT key while clicking on the FILE menu. The Close option will now say CLOSE ALL.

If you're inserting Hyperlinks (web sites or e-mail addresses) in your documents, spreadsheets or presentations and don't want them to show up in blue with the underline – remove the formatting! Point at the hyperlink and click the right mouse button, from the pop-up menu, choose Remove Hyperlink and the formatting of blue underlined text will be removed.

Version 2000 of Office:

Turn off the active menu system by using Tools / Customize / Options to clear the box next to 'Menus Show recently Used Commands First'

Although the standard and formatting toolbars install on the same line, you can separate them to be on two lines by placing the mouse over the vertical bar at the left of a toolbar (you'll get the four headed arrow pointer) and then click and drag the toolbar to its new location.

Printing Tips:

If you're using your time to rearrange pages because they come off your printer in the opposite order of what you desire, check your printers Options or Properties, you may be able to check a box that says something like "print last page first", thus forcing your pages into the correct order and saving you time!