




# Tips, Tricks and Shortcuts for Windows Users


## The Basics


 **Make friends with the right mouse button.** Don't be afraid to right-click. The shortcut menu offers immediate access to some handy options such as Open, Explore and Properties. Better still; use the right mouse button to drag and drop files in for an easy Move, Copy or to create a Shortcut.






 **Single-click to Open.** Give your clicking finger a rest, using single-click desktop icons. In Windows 98 and 2000, you can change your desktop to operate in single-click mode, which allows you to open applications, windows, and folders the same way you do in your Web browser. To change from double-click mode to single-click mode, Double-click (for the last time!) My Computer. On the **View** menu, click **Folder Options**. Click the **General** tab and click **Custom**, based on settings you choose. Click Settings and select Single-click to open an item.

 **Open menus and select commands from the keyboard.** Press [Alt] the underlined letter to open a menu such as **File**, **Edit**, **View**, and so on. Once a menu is open, you don't need to press [Alt] to select a command; just press the underlined letter of the command you want to select. Here are some common examples: Close the active file with [Alt], [F], [C]. Close the active program with [Alt], [F], [X].


 **What's the date today?** On the right side of the Taskbar is the clock. Move your mouse cursor over the time and today's day and date will appear in a tool tip just above the time.



 **Take control of a window.** You may be familiar with the Maximize button in the title bar, but did you know you can also double-click the title bar of any window to maximize or restore the window? The same options can also be found in the Control menu (it's the icon on the left side of the title bar. Click the Control menu or press [Alt] [Spacebar] to maximize/restore, minimize or close a window. Double-clicking the Control menu will close the window.


 **Use shortcuts.**  Shortcuts are not copies of programs or files. Instead it is a roadmap to the location of the item. Create shortcuts on your desktop to frequently used programs or files. Since these are not copies, when you use a shortcut to open a file and make changes, the changes are being made to the original file. Shortcuts can be easier than navigating a large network with a number of folders and files. To create a shortcut, open My Computer and navigate to the file or program. Right drag-and-drop the icon to your desktop. When you release the right mouse button, you'll get a shortcut menu. Select **Create Shortcut**. To add a shortcut on your **Start** menu, just drag and drop the icon to the **Start** menu instead of your desktop.


 **Change the Icon for Any Shortcut.** You can change the icon for any shortcut icon. Right-click the icon and choose **Properties** (or when the icon is selected, press [Alt] [Enter]). Select the **Shortcut** tab. Choose the **Change Icon...** button. Use the path c:\windows\system\shell32.dll or c:\windows\progman.exe for several choices of new icons.





 **Open the most recently used files.** On the **Start** menu, you'll find **Documents**. This is a list of the most recently used files you've had open (it holds up to 15). These are shortcuts to the files, so when you use this menu to open the file, it is the original file from its original location. To clear this list at anytime, go to the **Start** menu, select **Settings** and then **Taskbar & Start Menu**. On the **Advanced** tab, select the **Clear** button to clear the Documents list.

 **Do more than one thing at a time.** Windows allows for multitasking. This means you can format a floppy diskette, run a search and save a file all at the same time. Look for the mouse cursor called Working in Background (its an  arrow with an hour-glass). If you have this mouse cursor, you can continue to work while Windows finishes the task it's working on.


 **Jump between programs.** You don't have to close one program before you open another. Open as many at a time as you want to. Use the Taskbar to move quickly between open programs, or use [Alt] [Tab] and you don't have to move your hands off the keyboard.


 **View several programs or files at once.** The Taskbar will contain icons for all the open programs. You can cascade or tile your programs. First, restore or maximize the programs you'd like to be affected. Next, right-click and open area of the Taskbar. You'll have choices to **Cascade**, **Tile Horizontally** or **Tile Vertically**. Tiling works well when you are copying or moving text from one file to another.


 **I'm missing part of a line of text.** When using your programs, you may notice that at times it appears as if the top or bottom half of a line of text is missing. If this ever happens, don't panic. Your file will print fine, but Windows had trouble redrawing your screen to show you your changes. Just minimize the program and then restore it. This gives Windows a chance to redraw the screen so all your information can be viewed.

 **Use the Recycle Bin.** *First you need to know that the following will work only for files saved on the hard drive (C:). Files saved on a floppy or network drive will be deleted and cannot be restored.* Selecting a file and pressing [Delete] will move that file to the Recycle Bin. You can also drag-and-drop a file to the Recycle Bin. But do you know how to recover those deleted files in case you change your mind later? Open the **Recycle Bin**, select the file to restore and go to the **File** menu and choose **Restore**. It will restore the file to its original location. If you want to empty the Recycle Bin without opening it, just right-click the Recycle Bin and select **Empty Recycle Bin**. Once you choose this option, however, it cannot be undone. To delete an item from your computer without saving it in the Recycle Bin, hold down [Shift] when you drag-and-drop the file to the Recycle Bin.





 **Find a file.** Have you ever saved a file, only to forget what you named it or where you saved it the next day? If so, this feature is for you. Open the **Start** menu and select **Find** and then **Files or Folders**. (In Windows 2000, its called **Search** and then **For Files or Folders**.) You can search files based on the name, location, date created, file type, size or text the file contains. Use wildcards such as the asterisk (\*) when you don't remember the full name. (i.e. you remember you named your file with something that started with an M. Type in the name field M\*. Windows will use the asterisk to fill in the spaces behind the M.)


 **Save a Search.** Okay, so now you have the Find/Search feature down, but now you find yourself always keying in the same criteria to search for. Save time by saving your search. When the Find (or Search) dialog box is open, enter the search criteria and open the **File** menu and select **Save Search**. Windows will save the search criteria, not the results, so all you have to do open the Search icon created on your desktop and run the search each time you need it.

 **Cut, Copy and Paste from the Keyboard.** There may be times when you want to cut or copy something and paste it into an area where you don't have access to the Menu bar. For these instances, you must know the keyboard equivalent. Trust me, learn these shortcuts and you'll be glad you did. To Cut, press [Ctrl] [X] (the "X" looks like an open pair of scissors). To Copy, press [Ctrl] [C] ("C" for Copy makes it easy to remember). To Paste, press [Ctrl] [V] (yes, that's V as in Victor – if you look at the order of Cut, Copy and Paste on your Toolbars and then the order of "X" "C" and "V" on your keyboard, you'll see the only reason Paste is [Ctrl] [V] is to keep the shortcuts in the same order on the keyboard as you see them on your Toolbar on screen.) I bet you always wanted to know the secret to that one!

## Advanced Tips

 **Refreshing.** If you keep a folder open on your desktop and make a lot of changes to the files in the folder, you may notice the changes don't immediately show in the open window. To refresh the view of a window, go to the **View** menu and select **Refresh**. The shortcut is press [F5].


 **Organize the Start menu.** Simply drag and drop icons to reorganize your Start menu. Click-and-drag the item you want to move to its new location. You can even move items up from submenu locations to higher levels for faster access. If you're a neat freak and don't want to take the time to reorganize the icons in the cascading menus in alphabetic order, right-click the menus and select **Sort by Name**. Be careful, **Delete** is an option in this shortcut menu and if you select it, you'll delete the selected icon.

 **Accessibility Options.** A little known feature about Windows is its Accessibility Options in the Control Panel. All of these features can be set to automatically turn off after your computer has sat idle for a period of time. You can ask Windows to give a visual or sound warning when turning off these features. Some helpful features included are:

- StickyKeys – Use if you want to use [Shift], [Ctrl], or [Alt] key by pressing one key at a time. Helpful for someone who can't hold down one key while pressing another at the same time.



- FilterKeys – Use if you want Windows to ignore brief or repeated keystrokes, or slow the repeat rate. Helpful for someone with slow hand coordination.
- ToggleKeys – Use if you want to hear tones when pressing [Caps Lock], [Num Lock], and [Scroll Lock]. Helpful for any keyboard oriented person to notify you if you accidentally press one of these keys.
- SoundSentry – Use if you want Windows to generate visual warnings when your system makes a sound. Helpful for the hard-of-hearing.
- ShowSounds – Use to tell your programs to display captions for the speech and sounds they make. Helpful for the hard-of-hearing.
- High Contrast – Use this option if you want Windows to use colors and fonts designed for easy reading for the visually impaired.
- MouseKeys – Use if you want to control the pointer with the numeric keypad on your keyboard. Helpful for someone without the hand coordination to operate a mouse.

 **Discover new hard-disk space with Disk Cleanup.** Temporary files, Internet file caches, empty folders, and defunct shortcuts can quickly add up to a large amount of hard-disk space that's useless and wasted. But it can be scary to start deleting files willy-nilly. So, Windows has made it easy for you. The Disk Cleanup system tool will help you locate and delete all unnecessary files. To use the Disk Cleanup tool, click **Start**, highlight **Programs**, then **Accessories**, then **System Tools**, and click **Disk Cleanup**. *NOTE:* You can use Maintenance Wizard to schedule this function to happen automatically on a regular schedule when you are not using your computer.