

Tips for WinXP Power Users

Notes of Caution:

- Before making **any major changes** on your computer, it is recommended that you establish a **System Restore Point**.
 - (The author of this guide does not take any responsibility for problems that might occur!)
1. Create a **System Restore Point** before making any major change to your computer. To do this: Start → All Programs → Accessories → System Tools → System Restore → Create restore point → Next → type in a description, such as “Before making changes – Power User info” → Create → Close.
 2. **Locate shortcut icons** based on frequency of use: **Quick Launch toolbar** for *most often used* programs, **Start Menu** for *2nd level* usage icons, and **Desktop** for *3rd level* (optional). Usually Start → All Programs contains shortcuts to ALL programs. (See Items 3, 4, and 5 below for details.)
 3. The **Quick Launch toolbar** is the row of small icons that sits directly to the right of the Start button; it is always visible.
 - A) To enable the QL toolbar, right-click the taskbar and select Toolbars → Quick Launch.
 - B) To add icons to the QL toolbar, drag shortcuts from desktop (a duplicate will be created in OL toolbar)
 - C) Delete items from QL toolbar by right-clicking each item and selecting Delete. (This just deletes the shortcut, not the program.)
 - D) To gain further control over QL toolbar, right-click the Taskbar and click Lock the Taskbar to remove the check mark (the default setting). Perforated vertical dividers become visible – and these can be moved to adjust the size of the section. The arrangement order of the shortcut icons can also be adjusted. When finished, be sure to again Lock the Taskbar.
 4. The **Start Menu** contains two sections – the **left side** displays shortcuts to programs; the **right side** displays shortcuts to places on your computer. The Start Menu can be customized to make it more useful for your needs by doing the following:
 - A) Right-click Start button → Properties → Start Menu tab → select “Start menu” (the 2-column style) → Customize button (then have several choices)
 - B) **Icon size** (Small size makes a more compact Start Menu)
 - C) Number of shortcuts to **programs used most often** – these are displayed in lower left section of Start Menu. (If a program is already listed on the upper portion of the left side of the Start Menu, it will not be repeated in lower section.)
 - D) Whether or not to display your **internet browser** and/or **e-mail program** (at the top of the left column).
 - E) Then click **Advanced tab** for more decisions:
 - 1) “Open submenus when I pause . . .” means don’t need to click on an item to display the submenu – is faster.
 - 2) “Enable drag and drop” – leave checked so Start Menu items and programs may be rearranged
 - 3) Favorites menu – is useful if Internet Explorer is the browser you use.
 - 4) Control Panel – how to display (If displayed as a Menu, the list of individual items is available more quickly.)
 - 5) My Computer, My Documents, & My Pictures – best to display as links (also My Music, if used)
 - 6) Probably remove check from “Manufacturer Link” and “Scroll Programs”
 - 7) Whether or not to list Most Recently Opened Documents
 - F) When finished, click OK twice.
 - G) To change the programs listed in middle portion of the left section of Start Menu (called **Pinned Section**):
 - 1) To add a program to this list, locate any shortcut to the program (on desktop or in All Programs list) -- right-click on it – and choose Pin to Start Menu.
 - 2) Programs may be renamed or deleted by right-clicking – and choose Rename or Delete.
 - 3) The order of these programs may also be changed by dragging (hang onto the name until a heavy dark line appears in the desired new location).
 5. **Arrange** program shortcut icons in **All Programs** in alphabetical order: Start → All Programs → right-click on any folder or icon (not in blank space at the bottom of the list) → Sort by Name.
 6. More efficiency is achieved by using **Windows Keyboard Shortcuts** . . .
 - A) For a list, go to Start → Help and Support → Windows Basics → Windows Keyboard Shortcuts Overview. Then look at three separate sections: General Keyboard Shortcuts, Dialog Box Shortcuts, and Windows Explorer Shortcuts. (Information summarized on pages 4 & 5 of this handout)

- B) One that is not really visible by default is **Underlined Letters** in menus and buttons. To turn this command on: Right-click the Desktop → Properties → Appearance tab → Effects button → deselect the box next to “Hide underlined letters for keyboard navigation”. Now, by using the **Alt key + the underlined letter** in a menu name, the menu is displayed. Then in the opened menu, by using the underlined letter in a command name, the command will be carried out.
7. To make **locating the pointer arrow** easier: Start → Control Panel → Mouse → Pointer Options tab → check “Show location of pointer when I press the Ctrl key.” → OK. (Now when you hit the Control key, animated circles will indicate the location of your pointer.)
8. To make a program **always open in Maximized** (or Minimized) **window**, right-click the program's icon → Properties → Shortcut tab → in Run field, click the down arrow → Minimized or Maximized (whichever you prefer) → OK.
9. To make **multiple programs visible** as the same time . . .
- Have the desired programs open – and in either **maximized** or **restored** state. (Any other open programs must be minimized.)
 - Right-click an empty area of Taskbar, then **Tile** or **Cascade**.
 - To switch between open windows, click on any area of the desired window (or click the window in Taskbar)
10. To **customize the Notification Area** (formerly called the System Tray):
- Right-click the Taskbar → Properties → Taskbar tab → Notification area
 - Here one can select to show/hide the clock, and show/hide inactive icons.
 - To make more changes, click Customize button. When finished, click OK → OK.
 - Notification behavior for each icon can be changed; **all** of them can **safely be changed** to “Hide when inactive”.
 - Do NOT remove the following icons:
 - Volume control
 - Network Connection (if you are using a network)
 - Anti-virus tool
 - Power meter (if you have a laptop)
11. To **rearrange toolbar layout** in Windows Explorer, My Computer, and My Documents:
- Open any one of the above three windows. (*Note: Any changes made to one will affect all three.*)
 - Default setting is three toolbars stacked on top of each other – but this arrangement wastes space.
 - Unlock the toolbars by right-clicking any one of them – and deselect Lock the Toolbars. (Handles will appear on the left edges of each toolbar.)
 - To conserve space in Standard Buttons toolbar, right-click the toolbar → Customize → select Small Icons and/or No Text Labels → Close.
 - Click the Address toolbar's handle – and drag it to the right of the Standard Buttons toolbar.
 - To conserve a bit more space, right-click the Go button – and deselect the Go Button option to disable it.
 - To complete the operation, right-click any of the toolbars and select Lock The Toolbars.
12. To **change** which program **opens** a file type:
- When some programs are installed they like to “steal” files. (Example: While installing a photo editing program you may have inadvertently agreed to have all JPG files open in this photo editing program.)
 - To change this, locate one of the problem files in Windows Explorer – and right-click it. Choose “Opens With” – and then click the “Choose Program” icon. Select the program you would like to use to open the file. (May need to click the Browse button and locate the program on the hard drive.) Then click the “Always Use the Selected Program” checkbox – and click OK.
 - Hint: For **viewing photos** (not editing) the suggested program to use is the built-in **Windows Picture and Fax Viewer**. (It opens much faster than photo editing programs.)
13. To automatically **re-size pictures for e-mailing**:
- Method #1**: Using the built-in Windows XP capability “Send Pictures via E-mail Wizard”:
 - Start → My Pictures → open the folder that contains the photo or photos you want to e-mail.
 - Select the photos to be sent. (To select more than one photo, hold down the Ctrl key while making your selection.)
 - Right-click -> Send to -> Mail Recipient

- 4) In the Send Picture via E-mail wizard, you have two options:
 - a) If the pictures are to be viewed on screen only or printed up to about 5x7 inches, choose "Make all my pictures smaller", and then click "Show more options" and choose an appropriate pixel count (dimensions). Your original photos are not affected.
 - b) If you want to send the full resolution version of the selected photos, and you know they won't be rejected by the recipient's e-mail service, choose "Keep the original sizes".
 - 5) Click OK. An outgoing e-mail message opens with the resized photos attached. Confirm that the correct photos have been attached, then prepare and send the message as usual.
 - B) **Method #2:** Install and use a Microsoft Add-in program – Image Resizer, a part of Microsoft PowerToys for Windows XP (521 KB) – available at:
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.msp>
 - 1) Locate the photo to be resized.
 - 2) Right-click -> Resize pictures
 - 3) Select the desired size – either Small or Medium for e-mailing ("Small" will produce a smaller file size) -> OK
 - 4) The newly created photo will be located in the same folder as the original – but given a new name – OriginalName (Small).jpg – and will have a much smaller file size.
 - 5) Then can attach this smaller sized photo to an e-mail message.
14. To **rename a group of photos** all at once . . .
- A) Using Windows Explorer, open the folder containing the files to be renamed.
 - B) Edit → Select All (or click the first in a list, hold down SHIFT and click the last in the list).
 - C) Right-click the FIRST file in the list and select Rename → type a suitable name followed by (1) and the file extension originally used [for example, Grand Canyon (1).jpg] → Enter. (Now all the files you selected will have this filename, with successive numbers in parentheses.)
15. To gain control over **Windows Update**:
- A) Control Panel → double-click System (or Performance & Maintenance, if using Category View) → Automatic Update tab → remove check mark from "Keep my computer up to date."
 - B) Now YOU must REMEMBER to check for updates every week or so.
16. For **quicker startup**, remove unnecessary programs from Startup folder by using the Microsoft System Configuration Utility (MSCONFIG). Follow these steps:
- A) Start → Run → type "msconfig" (without the quotes) → OK.
 - B) In MSCONFIG, go to the Startup tab.
 - C) Uncheck any programs that you are familiar with and do not want to start. If you're not sure, leave it checked! Otherwise, you may inadvertently turn something off that you need to compute normally. (To learn what a program does, go to <http://sysinfo.org/startuplist.php>)
 - D) When you are finished selecting programs, click OK.
 - E) Restart your computer. When the System Configuration Utility pop ups, check "Don't show message . . ." → OK.
17. When **turning off your computer** for a short while, consider using **Hibernation** or **Standby**, rather than Shut Down. (*Start up times following these three types of "turn off": Standby is fastest, Hibernation is middle, full Shut Down is slowest.*)
- A) Definition of terms:
 - 1) Hibernation mode puts your PC into a deep sleep, shutting down the system after saving everything currently in memory to the hard drive. When you reboot, this saved state should be restored to wherever you left off working.
 - 2) Standby shuts down the system – but keeps the memory alive. (However, if power is cut, the memory is lost if not saved.)
 - B) To put your PC into Hibernation, rather than Standby mode:
 - 1) Start → Turn Off Computer → in Turn Off Computer dialog box, press SHIFT key to change Stand By button to Hibernate button → click Hibernate.
 - C) Tip: Many PCs are set up with the hibernation mode disabled. So, if the SHIFT key trick doesn't work with your Turn Off Computer dialog box, you need to enable hibernation. (Control Panel → double-click Power Options → Hibernate tab → click box next to Enable Hibernation → Apply → OK.)

Windows General Keyboard Shortcuts

| Press | To |
|---|--|
| Ctrl + C | Copy |
| Ctrl + X | Cut |
| Ctrl + V | Paste |
| Ctrl + Z | Undo |
| Ctrl + A | Select all |
| Ctrl + Right arrow | Move the insertion point to the beginning of the next word |
| Ctrl + Left arrow | Move the insertion point to the beginning of the previous word |
| Ctrl + Down arrow | Move the insertion point to the beginning of the next paragraph |
| Ctrl + Up arrow | Move the insertion point to the beginning of the previous paragraph |
| Shift + any arrow key | Select a group of items in a window or a block of text within a document |
| Ctrl + Shift with any of the arrow keys | Highlight a block of text. |
| Ctrl + Esc | Open the Start menu |
| Windows Key | Open the Start menu |
| Windows Key + E | Open Windows Explorer |
| Windows Key + D | Minimize all windows (to see Desktop) – use same shortcut to restore |
| Windows Key + F | Find/Search |
| Windows Key + Break | View System Properties |
| F2 | Rename selected item |
| F3 | Search for a file or folder |
| F4 | Display the Address bar list in My Computer or Windows Explorer. |
| F5 | Refresh the active window. |
| F6 | Cycle through screen elements in a window or on the desktop. |
| F10 | Activate the menu bar in the active program. |
| Ctrl + F4 | Close the active document in programs that allow you to have multiple documents open simultaneously |
| Alt + F4 | Close the active item or the active program |
| Shift + Delete | Delete selected item permanently without placing the item in the Recycle Bin |
| Alt + Enter | View properties for the selected item |
| Alt + Tab | Cycle through open windows. |
| Alt + Esc | Cycle through open windows, in the order they were opened. |
| Alt + Spacebar | Opens the shortcut menu for the active window. |
| Shift+F10 | Display the shortcut menu for the selected item. |
| Ctrl while dragging an item | Copy selected item |
| Alt + Underlined letter in a menu name | Display the corresponding menu. |
| Underlined letter in a command name on an open menu | Carry out the corresponding command. |
| Alt | Selects File in Menu Bar – then open menu below by using down arrow key – or move Right with right arrow key |
| Ctrl + Shift while dragging an item | Create shortcut to selected item. |
| Right arrow | Open the next menu to the right, or open a submenu. |
| Left arrow | Open the next menu to the left, or close a submenu. |
| Backspace | View the folder one level up in My Computer or Windows Explorer. |
| Esc | Cancel the current task. |
| SHIFT when you insert a CD into the CD-ROM drive | Prevent the CD from automatically playing. |

Shortcuts to various types of **Turn Off Computer**:

| | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Hibernate | Window Key → U → H |
| Stand By | Window Key → U → S |
| Shut Down | Window Key → U → U |
| Restart | Window Key → U → R |

Note:

TAP each key –
do NOT hold.

Dialog Box Keyboard Shortcuts

| Press | To |
|----------------|---|
| CTRL+TAB | Move forward through tabs. |
| CTRL+SHIFT+TAB | Move backward through tabs. |
| TAB | Move forward through options. |
| SHIFT+TAB | Move backward through options. |
| ENTER | Carry out the command for the active option or button. |
| SPACEBAR | Select or clear the check box if the active option is a check box. |
| Arrow keys | Select a button if the active option is a group of option buttons. |
| F1 | Display Help. |
| F4 | Display the items in the active list. |
| BACKSPACE | Open a folder one level up if a folder is selected in the Save As or Open dialog box. |

Windows Explorer Shortcuts

| Press | To |
|---|---|
| END | Display the bottom of the active window. |
| HOME | Display the top of the active window. |
| NUM LOCK+ASTERISK on numeric keypad (*) | Display all subfolders under the selected folder. |
| NUM LOCK+PLUS SIGN on numeric keypad (+) | Display the contents of the selected folder. |
| NUM LOCK+MINUS SIGN on numeric keypad (-) | Collapse the selected folder. |
| LEFT ARROW | Collapse current selection if it's expanded, or select parent folder. |
| RIGHT ARROW | Display current selection if it's collapsed, or select first subfolder. |

Keyboard Shortcuts for Symbols

To use the following, usually "Num Lock" must be turned on -- and the KEYPAD numbers are then used. On a notebook computer, the Fn key must be held down to activate the Keypad. (Thus to use the following shortcuts, hold down Fn key AND Alt key while tapping number sequence on Keypad.)

| | | | |
|----|----------|---|----------|
| • | ALT-0149 | ¼ | ALT-0188 |
| ¢ | ALT-0162 | ½ | ALT-0189 |
| ™ | ALT-0153 | ¾ | ALT-0190 |
| © | ALT-0169 | × | ALT-0215 |
| << | ALT-0171 | ∅ | ALT-0216 |
| ◦ | ALT-0176 | ÷ | ALT-0247 |
| ¶ | ALT-0182 | ø | ALT-0248 |
| >> | ALT-0187 | | |

Excellent references for keyboard shortcuts:

www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/home/using/tips/personalize/keyboardsc.asp
www.pcdon.com/page3.html