Windows

Hints, Tips and Tricks

Windows has a lot of things that can help make your use of the computer more pleasant and productive. I would like to say that the following list is an all-inclusive list of these, but the fact of the matter is that I know this list is incomplete. If you know of something that I've left off or if you have a question about how to accomplish something in Windows, please take a few minutes to write me at hughes@hugheshelpdesk.com and let me know.

❑ **Customize the Start menu**

Newcomers to Windows accept the **Start** menu as a fixed, unchangeable list of programs. This simply is not the case. Of course you can add new programs to the **Start** menu when you install them, but you may also want to modify the **Start** menu to suit your taste.

You can right click on any item in the **Start** menu and move it, copy it, delete it, change its properties etc.

To move or copy an item from your desktop to the **Start** menu, just drag it over the **Start** icon, and the **Start** menu will open up. Drop it wherever you want it in the **Start** menu.

❑ **Add programs to the "Send To" menu in Explorer**

This is an item that you may not need very often as Windows does a pretty good job of keeping your **Send To** menu up to date, but you may find that you'd like to have something in the **Send To** menu that Windows has not placed there for you.

To add Notepad to the menu:

1. Open Explorer and Go to **C:\WINDOWS\SENDTO** folder.
2. Click **File**, **New**, **Shortcut** and Click on the **Browse** button.
3. Find **Notepad.exe** in your Windows directory.
4. Click **Open**, **Next**, **Finish**.

You'll have Notepad in your **Send To** Menu.

Similarly you can add other programs to the **Send To** menu.

❑ **Reach the Windows Explorer quickly**

The **Windows Explorer** is a very powerful tool for looking at what is on your computer. The primary reason some people don't use it more is that it's awkward to have to click on the **Start** button, point to **Programs** and find the **Windows Explorer** there and click on it. Here are a couple of ways to get to it quickly.

Right-click on the **Start** Button and click on **Explore**.

Or Press **<Window>E**.

❑ **Tired of deleting files and then removing them from the Recycle Bin**

First select the file you want to delete. Now hold down the **<Shift>** key and press the **<Delete>** key.

OR

Right-click on the file to get the context sensitive menu. While holding down the **<Shift>** key, press **D**.

The file will be permanently deleted.

❑ **See the properties of an icon on the desktop**

Select the icon on your desktop and press **<Alt><Enter>** to open properties.

❑ **Use Windows Disk Cleanup facility**

Windows has a built-in utility called **Disk Cleanup**.

You can run it from either the **Start/Programs/Accessories/System Tools/Disk Cleanup**.

or directly **RUN CLEANMGR.EXE**.

Select the drive you want to clean. From here you can delete:

- Temporary Internet Files
- Downloaded Program Files
- The Recycle Bin
- Temporary Files
- Non-Critical Files

You can also view the files before they are deleted.

❑ **Minimize all open windows at the same time**

Select the **Start** button and press **<Alt>M** to minimize all windows! You can also press **<Window>M**.

❑ **Stop the "Startup" programs from being loaded when starting the machine**

Hold down the left shift key till windows loads. The startup programs will not get loaded

❑ **Prevent my CD from auto-playing whenever I insert it into the drive**

To prevent the CD from playing automatically when you insert it, press the left shift key while inserting the CD.

❑ **Reach the Desktop folder quickly**

Click on **Start** then **Run** and in the Open dialog box, enter "**.**" and press **<Enter>**. You will get the desktop folder.

❑ **Copy a file from one floppy to another**

1. Insert your floppy.
2. Go to **Windows Explorer**.
3. Right click on **3½ Floppy (A:)**.
4. Click on **Copy Disk**.
5. Click on **Start**.

The process begins and it will ask for "insert the disk you want to copy to (destination disk)" and then click **OK**.

❑ **Format a floppy**

1. Click on **Start**.
2. Point to **Programs**.
3. Click on **Windows Explorer**.
4. Right-click on **3½ Floppy (A:)**.
5. Click on **Format**.
6. Type the name you want for the label.
7. Click on **Start**.

❑ **Create a web style to the Desktop screen in Windows**

The advantage of having your Desktop work in web style is that you can activate something on your Desktop by single clicking on it instead of having to double-click.

1. Click on **Start**.
2. Point to **Settings**.

3. Click on **Folder Options**.

4. Click on **Web Style**.

5. Click on **Apply** and **Ok**.

❑ **Clean up the Desktop**

1. Right-click on the Desktop screen.

2. Pause on **Arrange Icons**.

3. Click on **Auto Arrange**.

The icons on your Desktop will now be arrange in a predefined style until you go back in and turn the **Auto Arrange** off.

❑ **Hide the icons on the Desktop screen when using Webstyle**

1. Right-click on Desktop screen.

2. Click on **Properties**.

3. Select **Effects** Tab.

4. Select the option **Hide** Icons when the desktop is viewed as a web page.

5. Click on **Apply** and **OK**.

❑ **Use your favorite picture to customize your Desktop**

1. Right-click on the Desktop screen.

2. Click on **Properties**.

3. Select **Background** tab.

4. Click on **Browse**.

5. Browse for your picture.

6. Click on **Apply** and then click on **OK**.

❑ **Get the Volume Controller back on my Taskbar**

1. Click on **Start**.

2. Point to **Settings**.

3. Click on **Control Panel**.

4. Double-click on **Multimedia**.

5. Select **Audio** tab.

❑ **Get back the missing Office tool bar on the Desktop screen**

1. Right-click on **Start**.
2. Click on **Explorer**.
3. Double-click on **Program Files**.
4. Double click on **Microsoft Office**.
5. If it is "Office 97" double-click on **Microsoft Office Toolbar**.
6. If it is "Office 2000" look for shortcut bar folder.
7. Copy the folder by pressing **<Ctrl>C**.
8. Close **Explorer**.
9. Paste on the Desktop screen by pressing **<Ctrl>V**.
10. Drag the folder to the corner of the Monitor.

❑ **Clear the Document folder on the Start menu**

1. Click on **Start**.
2. Point to **Settings**.
3. Click on **Taskbar & Start Menu…**.
4. Click on **Start Menu Programs** tab.
5. Click on **Clear**.

❑ **Expand all the folders and subfolders throughout Windows Explorer**

1. Right-click on **Start**.
2. Click on **Explorer**.
3. Select the folder to be expanded.
4. Press asterisk key (*) from the numeric keypad.

❑ **Add a program to the Start or Programs menu**

1. Click **Start**, point to **Settings**, and then click **Taskbar & Start Menu…**.
2. Click the **Start Menu Programs** tab.
3. Click **Add**, and then click **Browse**.
4. Locate the program you want to add, and then click it.
5. Click **Next**, and then double-click the menu on which you want the program to appear.
6. Type the name that you want to see on the menu, and then click **Finish**.

❑ **Quickly switch between windows**

Press **<Alt><Tab>**.

❑ **Bring up the Start menu**

Press **<Ctrl><Esc>** or press the **<Windows>** key.

❑ **Find files without the help of the mouse**

Press **<F3>** Button from the keyboard.

❑ **Close an application or exit from Windows**

Press **<Alt><F4>**.

❑ **Restart the computer without going through the entire Boot process**

1. Click on **Start** and **Shutdown**.

2. Select **Restart** radio button.

3. Hold down the **<Shift>** key and press **OK**.

❑ **Position the Windows Taskbar vertically on the right side of the screen**

Click on a blank area of the Taskbar and drag it until the Taskbar is vertically positioned on the screen. Then adjust the width of the Taskbar as desired.

❑ **See the desktop using the keyboard when many applications are open**

Press **<Windows>D**.

❑ **Remove Screen Savers**

Go to your **C:\Windows\System** folder.

Search for ***.scr** files. Delete the Screen Saver or move them from the directory and they will no longer appear in the **Display** applet.

❑ **Add subfolders in Outlook Express**

To quickly add a new subfolder to your standard set of mail folders, right-click the folder you want to use as the parent, then select **New Folder**. Enter the new folder's name and click **OK**.

❑ **Create Icons with No Name on the desktop**

1. Make sure **NumLock** is on.

2. Highlight the Icon you want to change.

3. Right-click and select **Rename**.
4. Type **<Alt>0160**.

Now the icon will have no name below it.

❑ **View hidden files in MS-DOS prompt?**

Type **dir /a** at command prompt.

❑ **Print a document quickly**

Create a printer shortcut on your desktop.

To do this, click **Start**/**Settings**/**Control Panel**/**Printers**, and drag a printer icon to the desktop.

You can now print any document instantly by dragging it to the printer icon.

❑ **Does your CD-ROM drive scan every second for a newly inserted CD?**

1. Right-click **My Computer**.
2. Click **Properties**.
3. Click the **Device Manager** tab.
4. Click **CD-ROM**.
5. Double-click your specific CD-ROM.
6. Click the **Settings** tab.
7. Uncheck **Auto Insert Notification**.
8. Click **OK**.
9. You must restart your computer before the new settings will take effect. Do you want to restart your computer now?
10. Click **Yes**.

❑ **Search a file in MS-DOS**

Type **dir /s (filename)**.

❑ **Rename a file or a folder with a single keystroke**

Press **<F2>** after selecting the file or the folder.

❑ **Is there a keyboard function that acts like a right-mouse click?**

Absolutely. Highlight the item whose context menu you'd like to display, and then press **<Shift><F10>**.

❑ **View a movie on the computer in full screen**

Press **<Alt><Enter>**.

❑ **Change the amount of space allocated to the Recycle Bin**

By default the Recycle Bin reserves 10% of your hard drive space for deleted files. On the newer, large hard drives that can result in a tremendous amount of disk space reserved for files that you no longer want. To adjust this:

1. Right-click on the **Recycle Bin** icon and select **P**roperties from the drop down menu.

2. Ensure that the **Global** tab is selected.

3. Ensure that the **Use one setting for all drives** option is selected.

4. Drag the slider bar to lower the reserve space percentage (3 or 4% should be sufficient).

❑ **Taking advantage of the Eject command**

If you have your computer positioned in a location that makes it difficult to easily access your CD-ROM drive's eject button, you can use the Eject command. To do so, open **My Computer**, right-click on the CD-ROM drive icon, and select the **Eject** command from the context sensitive menu.

❑ **Using Microsoft's Windows 2000 Readiness Analyzer**

You've examined the Hardware Compatibility List (HCL), and you've quizzed your software vendors and combed through their Web sites to help you figure out whether your hardware and your applications are compatible with Windows 2000. If you're still not sure whether all your applications, drivers, and devices will live happily with Windows 2000, or if you'd like an easy way to start down the upgrade path, Microsoft has a handy tool for you: Windows 2000 Readiness Analyzer.

Point your browser to Microsoft's Web site and search for "readiness analyzer." When you find the tool, download it to your local hard drive. From there you can copy it to any machine that you're considering upgrading to Windows 2000 Professional or Windows 2000 Server. The Windows 2000 Readiness Analyzer can run on the Windows 9x, Windows NT 3.51, and Windows NT 4.0 platforms. Just put the **Chkupgrd.exe** file on the system you want to analyze, and double-click on the file to run it. The Readiness Analyzer will issue a report, which you can save and print, detailing known conflicts and suggesting possible solutions based on tests conducted by Microsoft and independent software vendors and hardware manufacturers.

Although the Windows 2000 Readiness Analyzer is a handy tool, you should still contact your hardware and software vendors directly to determine compatibility before you begin upgrading or migrating to Windows 2000. In addition, the Windows 2000 Readiness Analyzer will run automatically during Windows 2000 Setup, but the free download from Microsoft's Web site will allow you to begin determining compatibility before you even purchase the Windows 2000 operating system.

❑ **Interesting characters**

If you'd like to spice up your documents with interesting characters, don't forget about Windows Marlett, Symbol, and Wingdings fonts. You can view the characters in these fonts by using **Character Map**, which you can find by clicking **Start**, choosing **Programs**, and then choosing **Accessories**. If you don't find **Character Map** on your **Accessories** menu, you can add it easily using the **Add/Remove Programs** utility in the **Control Panel**.

Windows Hotkeys

Shortcut	Function
\<Ctrl\>drag a file	Copy a file
\<F2\>	Rename an item
\<F4\>	Displays the Combo Box
\<F5\>	Refreshes the display
\<Ctrl\>G	Goes to a specific directory
\<Backspace\>	Takes you up a directory higher
\<Ctrl\>\<Esc\>	Display the Start menu
\<Alt\>\<Tab\>	Switch to the last-used window
\<Alt\>\<F4\>	Close current window or close program
\<Alt\>\<Tab\>	Display Task Manager so you can switch between open applications
\<Ctrl\>Z	Undo
\<Shift\>\<F10\>	Display context menu of selected item (same as right-clicking)
Right-click	Display context menu of selected item
\<Alt\>\<Enter\>	Display properties for selected item
\<Ctrl\>\<Esc\>	Display Windows Startup menu
\<Window\>	Display Start menu
\<Window\>D	Minimize/maximize all windows
\<Window\>M	Minimize all windows
\<Shift\>\<Window\>M	Maximize all windows
\<Window\>E	Launch Windows Explorer
\<Window\>R	Open Run dialog box
\<Window\>F	Open Find all files dialog box
\<F3\> (on desktop)	Open Find all files dialog box
\<F3\> (at DOS command prompt)	Repeat last command entered

<Ctrl><Window>F	Open Find: Computer dialog box
<Window><Pause>/<Break>	Display System Properties
<Window><Tab>	Cycle through Taskbar buttons
<F1>	Display Help