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*For beginners, experts
and every nerd
in between.*

by Bob Flisser and Wendy Richardson

Illustrated by Al Kratzer

“Tells the insider’s tricks to making popular Microsoft productivity programs workable and even entertaining!”

—St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Just the tips, man™ for Microsoft Windows® XP



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Meet the Authors



Wendy
Richardson

Wendy Richardson is the creator of the Nerdy Books series of software tip books and the voice of the nerdy guides. Her sarcasm and sense of humor along with her love of software have given her a unique ability to present software in a fun, easy-to-remember way. A graduate of Georgia Tech, Wendy founded Software School in 1994, a software training and development company. She resides in New Jersey with her husband and two young children.



Bob Flisser

Bob Flisser collects and writes the tips and is a self-proclaimed computer geek. (He's actually the inspiration behind Professor Lester.) Bob has worked in the computer field for more than twenty years. As training director of Software School, Inc., he has written dozens of software manuals and magazine articles and has trained thousands of students and instructors. A graduate of The George Washington University, Bob lives in New Jersey with his cat, Catalina.

How to Use this Book

Due to the small format of our books, we sometimes must sacrifice a little clarity for space. So, before you dive into the tips, take a quick look at the table below and then check out the nerdy guides on the next page. That's all you need to know to get started.

Using the Mouse

Double-click	Press the left mouse button two times quickly.
Right-click	Press the right mouse button once.
Shift + click	Press and hold Shift while pressing the left mouse button once.
Ctrl + Shift + click	Press and hold both Ctrl and Shift while pressing the left mouse button once.
Ctrl + drag	Press and hold Ctrl while you clicking and dragging the mouse.

Using the Keyboard

Select File/Properties	Click the File menu, then click Properties .
Select File/New/Folder	Click the File menu, click New , then click Folder .
Select Tools/Options/Edit	Click the Tools menu, click Options , then click the Edit tab in the Options dialog box.

Working with Menus

Select File/Properties	Click the File menu, then click Properties .
Select File/New/Folder	Click the File menu, click New , then click Folder .
Select Tools/Options/Edit	Click the Tools menu, click Options , then click the Edit tab in the Options dialog box.

2000
COMPATIBLE

Windows 2000 Tips

This icon marks tips that work identically in Windows 2000. Many tips without this icon will also work in Windows 2000, but with slight variations.



We're not just pretty faces. We're your guides!

Who says learning software has to be boring? We use these six nerdy characters to help you find the tips that match your level of experience. They make the tips easy to remember, interesting and fun to use.

Really Easy Tips



Kenneth

Kenneth will show you the tips that are easy to use and easy to remember. Even if you're an advanced Word user, give these tips a try. There are quite possibly a few you don't know.

Fairly Easy Tips



Shagg

Shagg turns up on tips that are easy to do, but not always easy to remember. He'll do his best to help you remember them, man.

Fun Tips



Shelli

Shelli appears on tips that aren't necessarily necessary. They're little tidbits of information that are just fun to know.

Cool Tips



Guy Martini

Look for Guy Martini if you want the coolest, most likely to save you time, tips! (Unfortunately, you'll have to put up with him to learn these tricks!)

Long Tips



Mr. Nester

Some tips are long. Some are annoying. And some don't always work. Mr. Nester will let you know which tips require a bit of time and a lot of patience!

Hard Tips



Professor Lester

If you're new to Word, you might want to try Professor Lester's tips after you have a little more experience. He appears on the more difficult, confusing or rarely-used tips.

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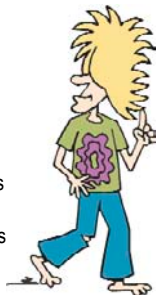
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Taskbar & Start menu

What? A bar you can move and size? If I had a bar I could move and size, I'd move it next door and make it the size of Texas!



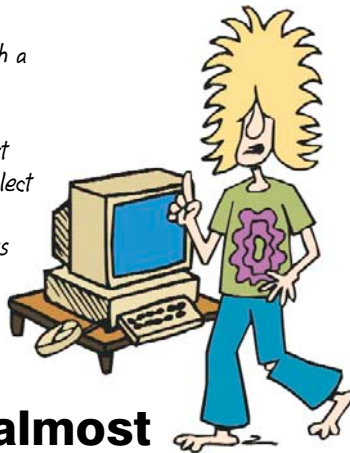
If you don't have a Windows key  on your keyboard, just press **Ctrl + Esc** or get another keyboard.



#1 Here's a quick way to display the Start menu.

Press 

*I renamed the programs I use with a number at the beginning (1 Adobe Photoshop, 2 Word, 3 Excel), then pinned them to the top of the Start menu. (Right-click the program, select **Pin to Start menu**.) Now, to open a program, I just press **⌘**, then press 1 or 2 or 3.*

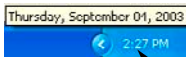


#2 You can start almost any Windows program with just the keyboard.

Press **⌘** (or **Ctrl + Esc**), press **P** until **All Programs** highlights, press **Enter**, then press the first letter of the program name until it highlights. Press **Enter**.



Changing the time and date is so easy, in fact, that I often change the time before saving a file. That way, when I give the file to someone else, it appears that I was working when I was actually playing golf. Before changing it back, I visit www.time.org to set the time precisely.



Rest your pointer on the time to see the date.

3

Changing the date and time is easy.

Double-click the taskbar clock

You can even make the Taskbar bigger or smaller. Just click and drag the top edge of the taskbar until it's as big as you want it or until it disappears. I wish I could make me bigger.




#4 Want to move the taskbar? Unlock it, then start dragging.

Right-click the taskbar, deselect **Lock the Taskbar**, then click and drag a blank area of the taskbar to one of the other three edges of the screen.

Drag the top edge to size the taskbar.



Now the Taskbar only appears when I move my mouse to the bottom of the screen. Because I press **Alt + Tab + Tab** to switch between programs and  (or **Ctrl + Esc**) to display the **Start** menu, I rarely use the silly Taskbar.



#5 The Taskbar: Use it; Don't use it. Use it; Don't use it.

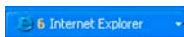
Right-click a blank area of the Taskbar, select **Properties**, then select **Auto-hide...** Click **OK**.

I turned that grouping thing off and so can you. Right-click a blank area of the Taskbar, select **Properties**, then deselect **Group similar taskbar buttons**. At least now I know how many programs and documents I have open, and I don't have to click and read a list to access one.



#6 Crowded Taskbar? The Taskbar starts grouping.

Documents open in the same program may be grouped under a single button. Click the button, then click a document to access it. Right-click the button, then select **Close Group** to close all open documents.



Down arrow indicates multiple documents



The Quick Launch toolbar is invaluable. You can drag programs onto it from the Start menu or files and folders from Windows Explorer (⊞ + E). Hey Microsoft. When it's hidden by default, you can't do any of the above.

#7 What happened to the ol' Quick Launch toolbar?

It's now hidden by default. To unhide it, right-click a blank area of the **Taskbar**, then select **Toolbars/Quick Launch**. Click any item on the toolbar to open it.

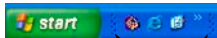




Does anyone actually “float” the Quick Launch toolbar? You can only *float* it if you can see the Desktop (⌘ + D), and you can only *use* it if you can see the Desktop. I thought the point of the Quick Launch toolbar is to have quick, one-click access to documents and programs you use frequently.

#8 What else can you do with the Quick Launch toolbar?

To	Do this
Hide/show the toolbar	Right-click a blank area of the Taskbar, then select Toolbars/Quick Launch .
Reorder buttons	Click and drag the buttons along the toolbar.
Resize the toolbar	Click and drag the dotted lines to the right of the toolbar. No dotted lines? Unlock the Taskbar. Right-click the Taskbar , then deselect Lock the Taskbar .
Float the toolbar	Click and drag the toolbar by the dotted lines to the left of the toolbar onto the Desktop.
Re-attach the toolbar	Click and drag the toolbar onto the Taskbar.




Drag the dotted lines to resize

#9 Want to see a list of all items on your Desktop? Add a folder to the taskbar.

Right-click a blank area of the taskbar, then select **Toolbars/Desktop**.




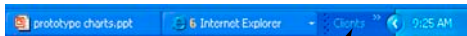
If you do this, the word "Desktop" will show up on the right end of the Taskbar. When you wanna see a list of the stuff on your Desktop, click the  next to Desktop. If you just click the word Desktop, you'll look like a doofus.



Desktop folder
on taskbar

#10 Add folders and Web addresses to the taskbar.

- [1] Right-click a blank area of the taskbar, then select **Toolbars/New Toolbar**. Select the folder you want, or type a Web address with **http://** at the beginning (**http://www.nerdybooks.com**). Click **OK**.
- [2] Drag the left edge of the toolbar to resize the folder.
- [3] Click the  or double-click the folder name to display the folder contents.



Folder on taskbar

Right-click a blank area of the Taskbar, then select **Toolbars**. See your new toolbar with a check next to it? You might think, hmmm, I guess I'll deselect it since I don't need it today, then select it again when I need it. Guess again. Once you've deselected it, it's gone from the list and you have to add it again.



#11

Hide those annoying, little icons on the right end of the taskbar.

- [1] Right-click a blank area of the taskbar, then select **Properties**.
- [2] Select **Hide inactive icons**, then click the **Customize** button.
- [3] Select an item on the left, then select a behavior on the right. Click **OK** twice.

Click this arrow to show or hide the icons

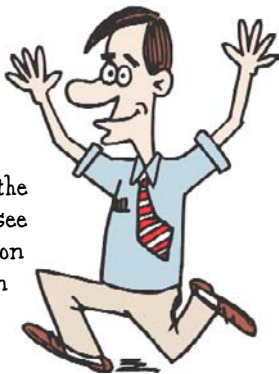


Notification area with all icons hidden



Notification area with all icons displayed

Finally, I can get all that junk out of the way! On the rare occasion I want to see the icons, I click the round arrow button to the left of the clock. The Notification area expands to show them.






The Desktop, Beyond Wallpaper



*There's more
to the Desktop
than changing
the wallpaper?
Cool!*














You can also click the **Show Desktop** icon  on the Quick Launch toolbar. To go back to the document you were working on, press  + **D** or click the  again.


#12 Got a key? Minimize everything and show the Desktop.

Press  + **D**

#13 While we're at it, what are all the shortcuts?

To	Press
Display the Start menu	
Display System Properties	 + Break
Display the Desktop	 + D
Open Windows Explorer	 + E
Search for Files and Folders	 + F
Search for Computers	 + Ctrl + F
Open Help and Support	 + F1
Login as a different user (XP only)	 + L
Minimize all Windows	 + M
Undo Minimize All	 + Shift + M
Open the Run dialog box	 + R



Most keyboards have another weird key, the **Application** key . Use it instead of right-clicking something to display the shortcut menu. It doesn't always work, though.



*Creating shortcuts to files is way too easy... now my Desktop is covered with icons. To use an icon, I press **⌘ + D** to show the Desktop, press the first letter of the icon's name until it highlights, then press **Enter**. To delete an icon (not the actual file), I press **Delete**. I guess I should press Delete more often...*

#14 Want quick access to a file or folder? Add an icon to your Desktop.

Shortcut icons have a small arrow



In Windows Explorer (**⌘ + E**) or any program's Save or Open dialog box, right-click the file or folder, then select **Send To/Desktop (create shortcut)**.

Desktop Cleanup doesn't actually get rid of icons, it puts them in a folder on your Desktop called **Unused Desktop Shortcuts**. If only Windows had a Dirty Clothes Cleanup button or a Dirty Dishes Cleanup button or a...



#15 Too many icons on your Desktop? Run Desktop Cleanup.

Right-click the Desktop, then select **Properties**. Click the **Desktop** tab, then click **Customize Desktop**. Click **Clean Desktop Now**, then follow the wizard.

#16

Want to start Internet Explorer by pressing **Ctrl + Alt + I**? Assign a shortcut key.

- [1] Right-click the **Internet Explorer** icon on the Start menu, the Quick Launch toolbar (to the right of the Start button) or the Desktop, then select **Properties**.
- [2] In the **Shortcut key** box, type **i**. Windows will append **Ctrl + Alt**. Click **OK**.

Of course, Internet Explorer is not the only program that can have a shortcut. I start **Act** with **Ctrl + Alt + A**, Outlook with **Ctrl + Alt + O**, and QuickBooks with **Ctrl + Alt + Q**. I figure this saves me at least 8.5 seconds!



#17

If you want to add back the traditional Desktop icons...

standard
icons



[1] Right-click the **Desktop**, then select **Properties**.



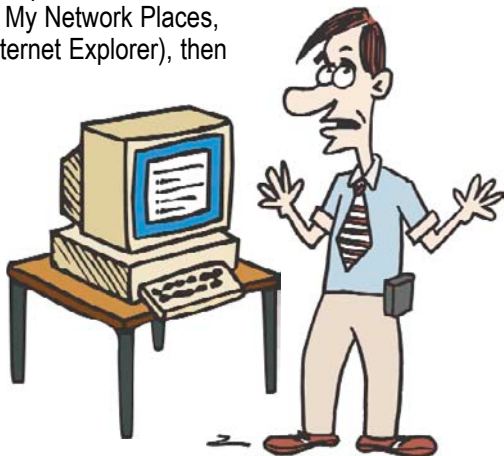
[2] Click the **Desktop** tab, then click **Customize Desktop**.



[3] Select any of the top 4 check boxes (My Documents, My Network Places, My Computer, Internet Explorer), then click **OK** twice.



In previous versions of Windows, if you didn't want the icons you couldn't delete them. Now, if you want them you can't find them!



The Desktop, Beyond Wallpaper

See tip: #12

#18 Use the same text over and over again? Create text scraps.

I use text scraps when I need to type my 6 line address, my 3 cell phone numbers, my 4 email addresses, and my fan club Web address. That way I can quickly paste this crucial information everywhere.



- [1] Make a folder on your Desktop: right-click the Desktop, select **New/Folder**, type a name (**Scraps**), then press **Enter**.
- [2] In Word, Wordpad or any program that supports scraps, select your text, then copy (**Ctrl + C**). If your program doesn't support scraps, paste your text into Word or Wordpad first, then select the text again and copy.
- [3] Show the Desktop (**Win + D**), double-click the folder, then paste (**Ctrl + V**).
- [4] To use a scrap, open the **Scraps** folder on the Desktop, select the scrap, then copy (**Ctrl + C**). Open any program that supports scraps and paste (**Ctrl + V**).



To use a graphic scrap, select the scrap in your Desktop folder, copy, then paste it into any program that supports scraps. I have scraps for my award logos, signatures, etc.

#19 Use the same graphics over and over again? Create graphic scraps.

- [1] Make a folder on your Desktop: right-click the Desktop, select **New/Folder**, type a name (**Scraps**), then press **Enter**.
- [2] In any Windows program, select the graphic, then copy (**Ctrl + C**).
- [3] In Word or WordPad, create a new document, then paste the graphic (**Ctrl + V**).
- [4] Select all (**Ctrl + A**), then copy the graphic again (**Ctrl + C**).
- [5] Show the Desktop (**Win + D**), double-click the folder, then paste (**Ctrl + V**).

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