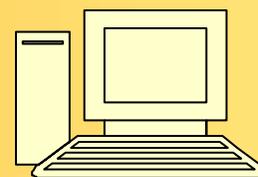


BAY BYTES

Greater Tampa Bay Personal Computer User Group, Inc.



Newsletter

Issue 4

April 2013

27th Year of People Helping People!



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Don't forget to visit our club's site at: http://gtbpcug.org	
As well Don Miller's and Darrell Manns' : http://www.dmanns.org/dmiller/	

5 things every Computer User needs to know how to do

<http://komando.com>

A good number of computer users think the answer to their tech problems they encounter is to ignore the symptoms, upgrade to fancier software or buy a new computer.

Let me help. Here are five things that won't turn you into a tech guru overnight, but they'll keep your computer running fast, make you more productive and save you tons of frustration. Best of all, they won't cost you a cent.

If you're the tech support person for your family and friends, be sure to share this with them. You'll get more work done if your mailbox doesn't fill up with subject lines like "Do I have a virus?" or "Help! Having Wi-Fi problems!"

1. Work faster using keyboard shortcuts

The great thing about computers is that they can work much faster than you can. But telling them what to do is often a slow process. Well, there's a fix for that.

Say you're ready to print a document. Instead of using the mouse to move a cursor around the screen and selecting "Print" from a drop-down menu, just hit Control+P on your keyboard.

There are dozens of keyboard shortcuts like this, from pressing Ctrl+S to instantly save the file you're working on, to pressing Ctrl+Z to undo a boo-boo.

It takes a little getting used to at first, but after you try keyboard shortcuts for a while, I guarantee that your mouse will start gathering dust.

Click here to learn my 5 essential keyboard shortcuts. I also sell several comprehensive shortcut guides in my store. These cover all the time-saving shortcuts for Windows, OS X, Google services, the major Web browsers and iTunes.

2. Protect yourself from viruses and spyware

It's critical that you keep your security software current. New viruses are unleashed daily. If your software is out-of-date, you aren't protected. Malware can destabilize your computer, destroy files and steal personal information. Every computer you own should have an antivirus program, a firewall and an antispyware program. If you're missing one or more of these, head over to my Security Center to download excellent free security programs.

Continued on the next Page

Another huge threat right now is security holes in Java, a programming language used by Web browsers to run interactive content.

When a vulnerable version of Java is active in a Web browser, visiting a compromised website is all it takes for crooks to sneak malware on to your computer. In most cases, you won't even know the site is compromised until it's too late.

To stay safe, stop using Java - or stay on top of the upgrades and use Java a lot more guardedly. [Click here](#) to learn how to do it.

3. Share large files the easy way

The Internet was designed to make sharing information easy. But we've all run into roadblocks trying to share larger files by email.

Sending large files through email is slow, can hit attachment size limits or fill up recipient inboxes.

Fortunately, there are easier ways to share large files. These three popular sites will get the job done for you: Dropbox, WikiSend and Senduit

4. Fix Wi-Fi problems

Nothing's worse than a spotty and sluggish wireless network. Movies stop to buffer, online games lag and video calls drop.

First, double-check that the Internet speed you're getting is as fast as what you are paying for. This great service will give your Internet connection a quick speed test.

Make sure your wireless network is encrypted. A sudden drop-off in wireless network speed could be a sign that your neighbors are using your open connection to surf and download files. [Click here](#) for detailed instructions on encrypting your network.

If parts of your home are Wi-Fi dead spots or get very weak signals, try placing the router in an open, central location - away from walls and obstructions, such as metal filing cabinets.

You could also try the trusty beer-can hack. This involves cutting a beer or soda can open with a utility knife to make a parabolic antenna out of it. This offbeat trick can boost your network by two bars or more. It's easy, and I made a fun video to show you exactly how to do it. [Watch it now](#).

Want to know more? [Click here](#) for a handy rundown of everything you need to know about Wi-Fi.

5. Perform regular maintenance and make backups

Keep your software up to date. Updates fix bugs and improve the stability of your operating system and programs.

If you spend more than 2 minutes a day looking for files on your hard drive, it's time to organize your files and clear out old stuff. These handy freebies will help you. Keeping a block of free space on your hard drive will also give a speed boost to your operating system.

Of course, the most important maintenance tip I can give is to back up your data with a cloud-based solution. This way, your backup is safe from fire, theft and flood. There are many services available. The service I recommend is Carbonite. Yes, it is an advertiser of my national radio, but I've used its services for years even before they were an advertiser. It's the best company to trust for your data.

Create a Keyboard Shortcut for a Folder

<http://pcwpworld.com>

You can't pin a folder to the taskbar, but here is a handy alternative.

A reader wants to know if there's a way to pin an oft-used documents folder to the taskbar for quick and easy access.

Alas, while Windows 7 lets you pin programs and individual files to the taskbar, it doesn't allow you to pin folders. But you can use another lightning-fast way to access a favorite folder, by setting up a keyboard shortcut. Here's how:

1. Open Windows Explorer and navigate to the folder (let's call it 'Client Files').
2. Right-click the folder and choose Send to-Desktop (create shortcut).
3. Minimize all open windows and find the newly created shortcut icon on your desktop.

The icon will have the label: 'Client Files - Shortcut'.

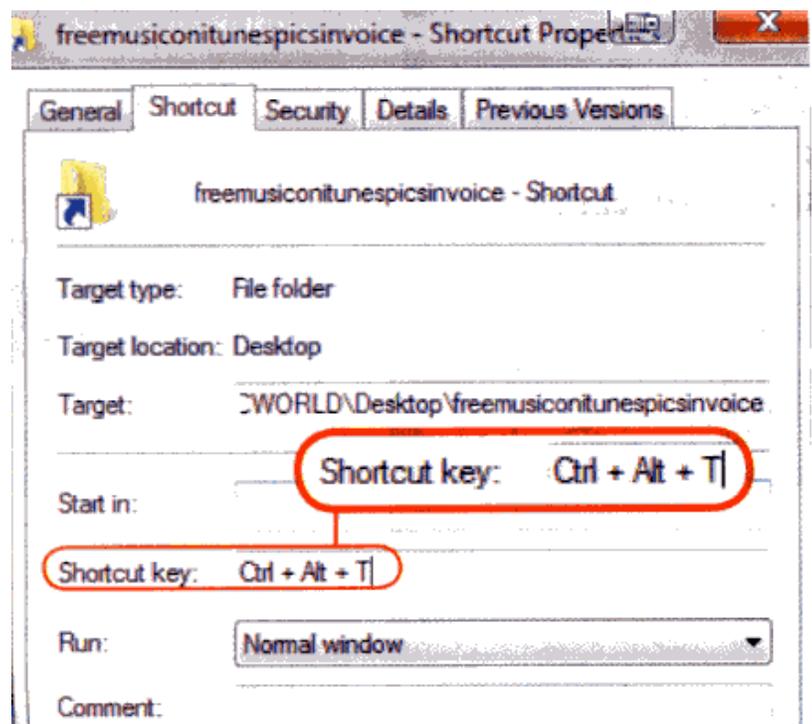
4. Right-click that shortcut icon and, in the resulting menu, choose Properties.
5. In the Shortcut tab, click inside the 'Shortcut key' field (it may have the word 'None').
6. Now you have to decide what keyboard shortcut you want. Just by way of giving an example here, let's go with <Ctrl>-<Shift>-F.

With your cursor in the 'Shortcut key' field, press that combination, and you'll see it appear there.

7. Finally, click OK to complete these steps.

Now, whenever you press <Ctrl><Shift>-F, even when you are using another program, your folder will magically appear. You can use this method to quick-launch favorite apps as well by right click a desktop shortcut and repeat the process.

The final step in creating a folder shortcut is to select a combination of keyboard keys that will be your shortcut.



Decrypt Links

<http://worldstart.com>

All it takes to get an infestation of malware on your computer these days is to click a bad link. And with the amount of shortened links out there, it is easier than ever to click a bad link.

Well no more! You can now check short links with DecryptLinks!

How does it work? Simple! You copy and paste the short link into the blank text field on the DecryptLinks page and click the green Decrypt button.

For example, using Google's link shortener (goo.gl) I created this short link to Google.

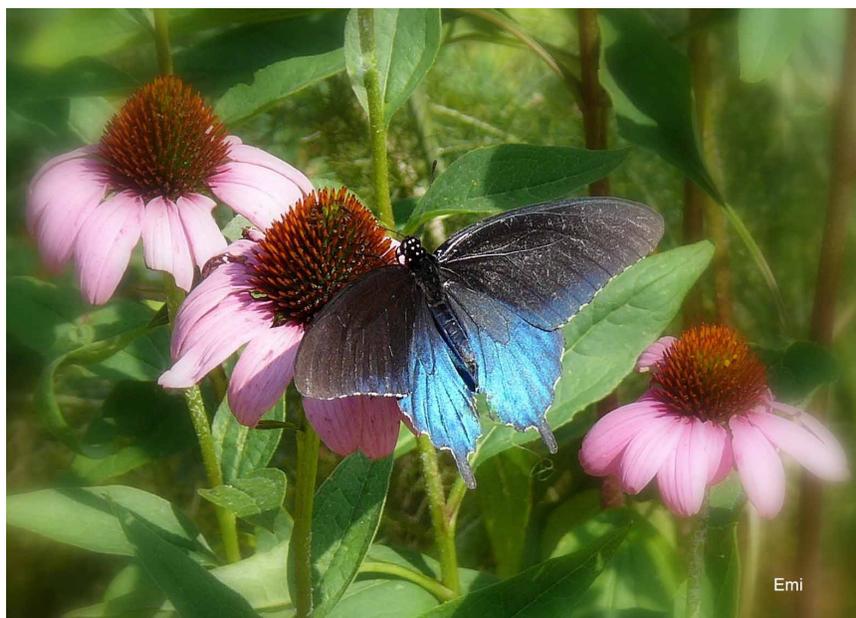
<http://goo.gl/UDF52>

You can copy and paste that into the link text field for decryption, and it will show you where the link goes. It will also tell you if based on their database if that link is safe to visit. Then it offers you the choice of traveling to the site with the green Click to Proceed to the URL button.

This is a great way to check out shortened links that you might come across on Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, or any of your other favorite social networking sites. It only takes a few extra seconds to be safe and check the link out, so why not?

<http://www.decryptlinks.com>

Amanda



Mixing Hard Drives

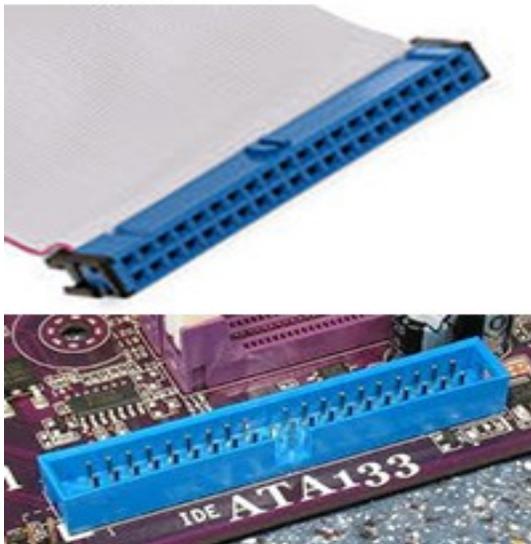
<http://worldstart.com>

Can you mix hard drives (SATA and IDE) one for the OS and the other for your backup if you have the proper connections? Or is it better to have two of the same kind in your desktop computer?

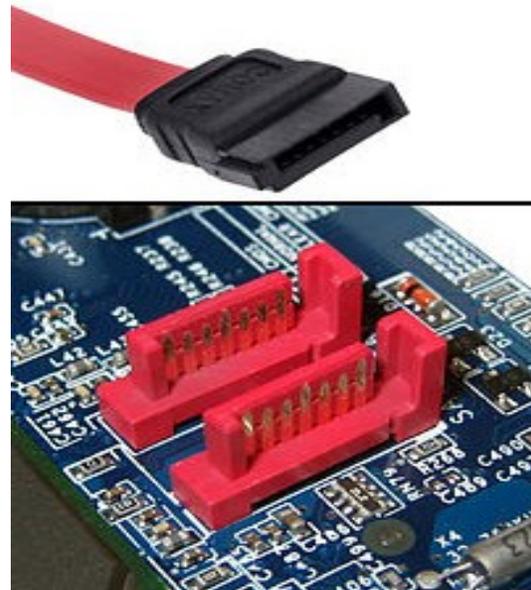
Answer:

For many years the standard for hard drives was IDE, which uses a P-ATA connector and ribbon cable to connect the hard drive. In 2003, the SATA standard was created, and by 2008 a vast majority of computer drives were connected by SATA instead of IDE. The SATA interface offers faster hard drive support, thinner easier-to-route cables and native hot-plug support.

**IDE Cable
&
Motherboard Port**



**SATA Cable End
&
Motherboard Port**



Your question on mixing and matching these styles of drives is a complex one. The simple answer is, yes you can. Both styles of drives can be used in a system at the same time. However, you don't want to do that unless you absolutely have to. Keep in mind that the older the drive, the more likely it is to fail. Using an old drive as your primary backup may seem like a cost-saving measure, but it can turn around and bite you if the drive fails.

It is a good idea to plug the device into the highest-speed available SATA ports it supports. Priority should be given to your primary hard drive or solid-state drive if you have one. Consult your motherboard reference manual to find out if you have SATA1, 2 and/or 3 ports. My motherboard contains both SATA 3 ports, which can transmit and receive up to 6 gigabits per second of data, and SATA 2 ports capable of 3 gigabits per second of data. Using a SSD drive on a SATA 2 port limits the drive to a theoretical 375 MB/second of transfer. The same drive plugged into a SATA 3 port can run up to 750 MB/second.

Tim

Opening a file with a program other than it's Default Program

By Terry Stockdale

New subscriber Debi wrote with a question that was specific to a particular type of file and two applications (programs) that could open it. However, it could easily have been any other file type that is recognized by multiple programs, so this becomes an important concept:

*Hi Terry, I'm wondering how I can use either plain PDF sometimes rather than PDF Converter Professional. Is there a way to choose. Thanks!
Debi*

I wrote back to Debi to say that, yes, it could easily be done, and that I assume she mean that she would like to use Adobe Reader occasionally to read PDF files instead of PDF Converter Professional.

First, you have to make sure that you have Adobe Reader installed. If not, you can download it from www.adobe.com . Pay attention – you don't need to install any of the other software that is offered for automatic download or install.

Tech Tip:

I don't use Adobe's main download link. I like to use their option to see the versions for other operating systems, too. Then, I pick the one for Windows 7 64-bit. One advantage of this approach has been that the Windows versions downloaded from that list have not tried to get me to download or install other programs.

If both Adobe Reader and PDF Converter Professional are installed, the tricks are to use either Adobe Reader's Open command or Windows Explorer right-click Context Menu.

If you already have the file downloaded to your computer, you can open Adobe Reader, File > Open, browser to locate the file, select it, and then click the Open button.

Or, open Windows Explorer, navigate to the file's location, then Right-click on the filename. This will give you the Context Menu (which gives you only the options available at that time) and then select Open with...

In my case, the three options are Adobe Reader X, PDF Converter Professional, and Choose Default Program...

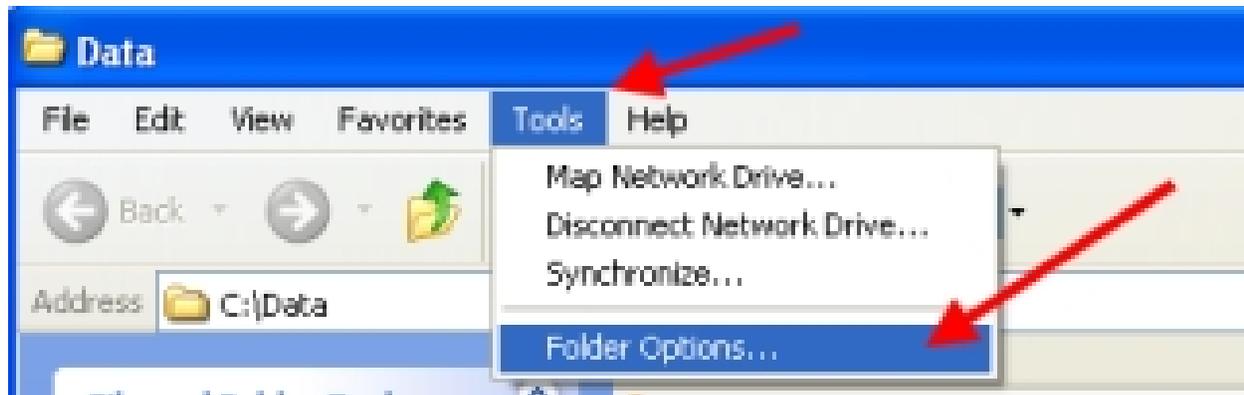
If I pick Choose Default Program, Windows identifies the options Adobe Reader X, PDF Converter Professional. It also gives me the option to browse to find a different program (installed on my computer) to open the file.

Notice that there's a checkbox in this dialog box: "Always use the selected program to open this kind of file". That's an easy way to change the default program for opening files.

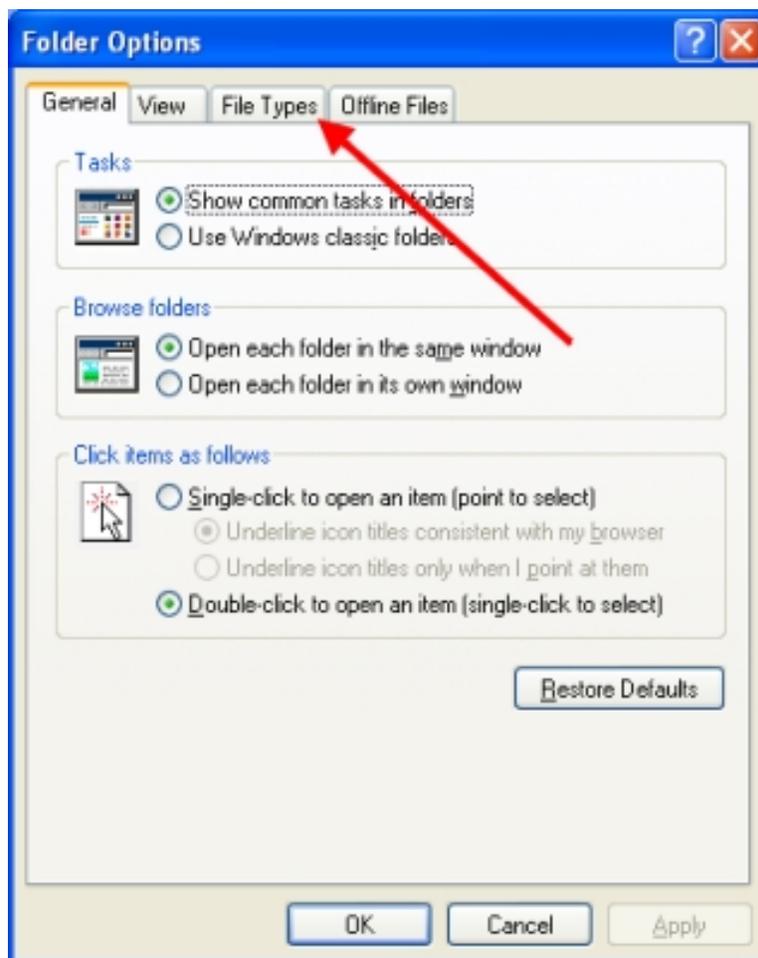
Changing Default File Type / Program Associations

By [Terry Stockdale](#)

If you need to identify which program opens a particular file type, you can do that, and a lot more, using the Folder Options functions in Windows Explorer. To find Folder Options, open Windows Explorer (right-click on Start, select Explore). Then, on its menu bar, select Tools and then Folder Options...



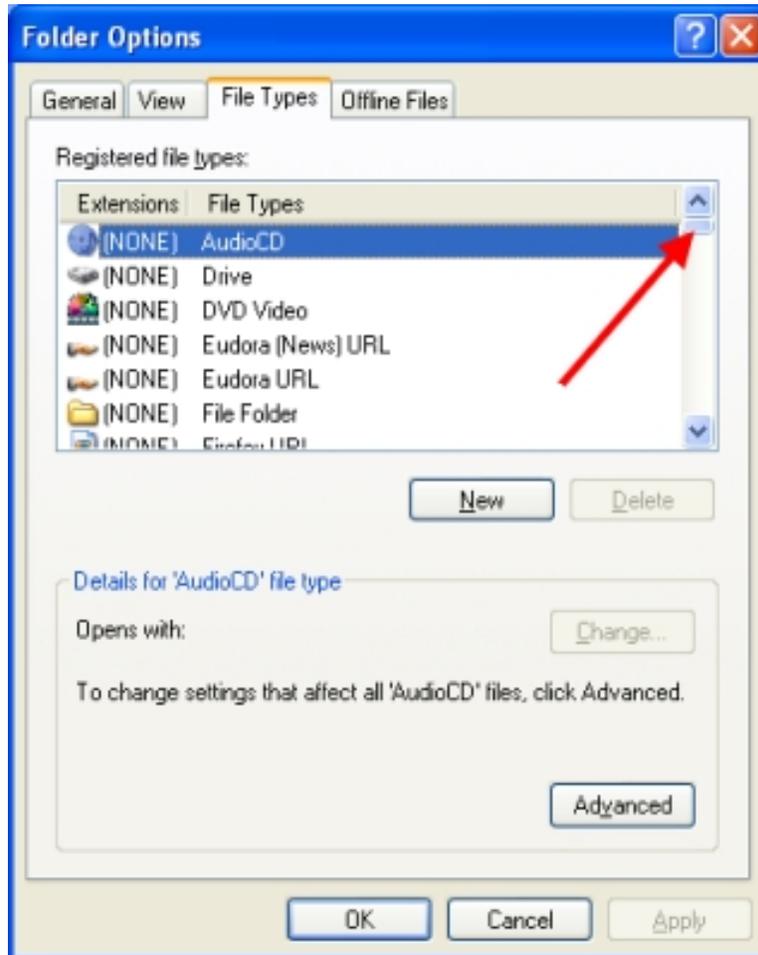
At this point, we need to select the File Types tab



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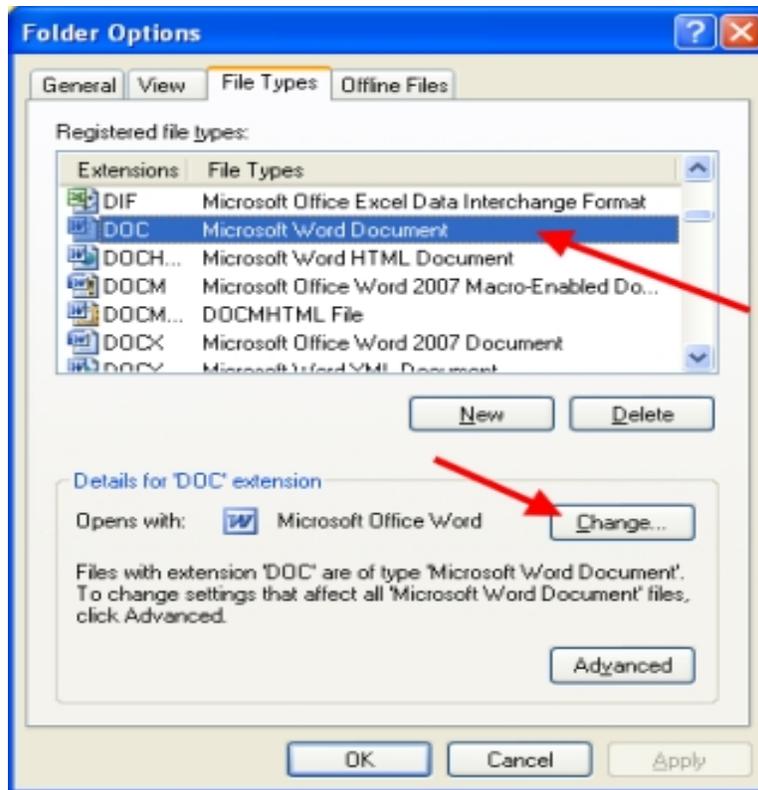
On the File Types tab, we see a large, scrollable box that lists file types. As we scroll down the list, we see various file extensions (such as JPG and DOC) along with a text description of the file type.

Typically, the default program has defined the "File Type" description to be shown, so you'll see that DOC has a file type "Microsoft Word Document". Of course, if the program doesn't set that description, Windows will put something there...

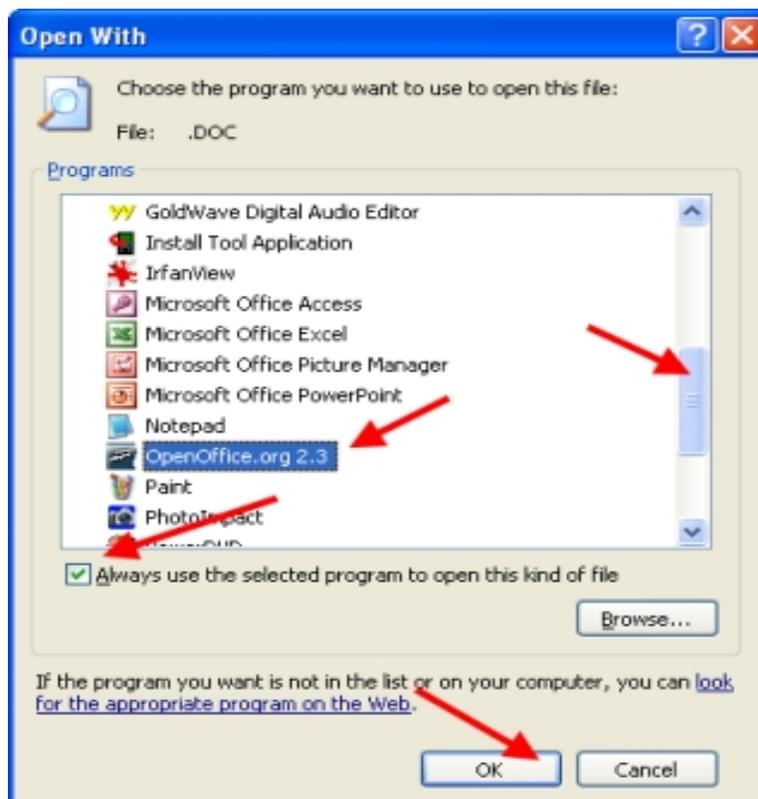


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Click on a file type or extension and you'll see an initial display for that file extension.



You can open the Open With dialog box by clicking on the Change... button. This lets you change the default program that opens this file extension. So, if I wanted all .DOC files to open in Open Office by default, instead of Microsoft Word as my computer currently is set, I'd change it here.



Is Your Internet Security up to Date?

Antivirus up to date?

Firewall?

Windows up to date?

Spy Ware?

See how to protect your computer at:

<http://gtbpcug.org/protect/>



More about Internet Threats...

and Spam, Malware and Users beware

5 latest Tax Scams to look out for

<http://komando.com>

Benjamin Franklin famously said that the only certainties in life are death and taxes. With all respect to Mr. Franklin, I'd like to add "online scams" to that list.

Tax season is here and hackers have started sending out tax-related scams. After all, hackers know we all like to save money on our taxes.

They are sneaky. They send you documents that look like your real wage statements. They might claim they are holding your refund check. They may even offer you deductions.

This year, the hackers are smarter than ever! They have sinister new ways to go undetected. They have innovative strategies to steal from you.

You need to know about these now, before it is too late. So do your friends and family; be sure to forward them this email.

[Click here for the top 5 latest tax scams and how to avoid them.](#)

8 Reasons to consider Windows 8

From the Internet

BY NOW YOU'VE likely heard about Microsoft's brand-new operating system, Windows 8.

It represents the most significant update since Windows 95 debuted 17years ago.

After spending some hands-on time with Windows 8-on traditional PCs as well as touch-screen tablets-I'm certain you'll love the changes, though it might take a little getting used to (you can revert back to the "classic" look at any time). Here are eight reasons to upgrade to Windows 8.

1. Like Windows Phone devices, Windows 8 has replaced small, static icons with big, beautiful tiles. All the information and apps (programs) you care about are in one place on the Start screen-simply click (or tap) a tile to launch it. Info and photos are updated in real time, so you can see how many new emails are waiting for you, the latest photos uploaded to Facebook, weather, sports scores and more. And you get to decide where everything goes by simply dragging and dropping the tiles wherever you like.
2. Consistency is king. Whether you're on a Windows 8 computer, tablet or smartphone, you'll notice a consistent look and feel across all of these devices, beginning with the Start screen and the colorful, dynamic tiles. Plus, when you sign into any of your devices running Windows 8, all your personalized settings and apps are right there as they're automatically synchronized between PCs, tablets and phones. This includes cloud services such as SkyDrive, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr.
3. App it Up. Long gone are the days of cumbersome software installation. Windows 8s direct access to the Windows Store means it's a breeze to find, download and run apps on your device. Whether it's a productivity tool, the latest game or an e-book, it's never been easier to browse and buy apps to truly personalize your experience in a myriad of ways. And, as noted, your apps are synchronized between Windows 8 devices.
4. Take control. Rather than making you choose how to interface with your content, Windows 8 supports multiple input devices, including keyboard and mouse, touch and stylus pen. The operating system was designed from the ground up to work the way you want to-as long as the hard-ware supports it, of course (currently, not many desktop or laptop PCs have a touch screen, for example). Windows 8 tablets support external keyboards or you can pull up one of two virtual key-boards to type on, along with support for flicking, pinching to zoom and other intuitive gestures.
5. Perfect for people. The People app brings up your contacts, and it shows not only phone numbers and email and street addresses, but also social networking info, including tweets, Facebook posts, photos and more. In other words, each of your contacts get his or her own page, with all relevant info-messages, status updates and photos-in one place. Compare this to most other platforms, where you must close one app (say, Facebook) to open another (Contacts).
6. Safety first. Along with integrated security software. Windows 8 has an optional app called Microsoft Family Safety, which lets you set up accounts for your children. The software monitors your children's online activities and lets you know what they're doing, where they're going and who they're communicating with. Family Safety also lets you set up Web filtering, time limits, app restrictions and more options.
7. The Web, super-sized. Built into Windows 8 is Internet Explorer 10, the first browser to feature a "Do Not Track" privacy option turned on by default, plus it can warn you against malware (malicious software) and phishing attempts. The browser dedicates your entire screen to your web-sites for an edge-to-edge view, and browser tabs and navigation controls appear only when you want them (and then disappear when you don't).
8. Easy Upgrade. Going from Windows 7 to Windows 8 offers a seamless upgrade, as your set-tings, personal files and apps are preserved during the transition. From Windows Vista, settings and personal files are intact; from Windows XP, personal files make the jump to Windows 8 (though apps can be reinstalled after the upgrade is complete).

Dear Computer Lady,

<http://www.asktcl.com>

I have just acquired a new computer which has Windows 8.

Can you help me get started? I don't have the faintest idea on how to make it work!

Thanks, Paul

Dear Paul,

Here are a couple of tips to get you started.

1. Use the windows logo key on your keyboard. If you want to use a program, I will use Word for an example, tap the windows logo key, and type "Word" (without the quotes)

This will search through your programs for the "Word" Program. You can then click on the search results, or press the enter key to open the program.

This also works for the Control Panel (try typing "Power Settings") and for data like your contacts, emails and documents.

2. Shutting down your new Windows 8 computer can be a puzzle as well. Some manufactures put a shutdown shortcut on the taskbar, but if they don't it can be hard to find. You can search for it using tip #1 or you can use this method:

Point your cursor to the upper-right corner of your screen. A menu will appear down the right side.

Click "Settings" in that menu.

Click "Power".

Click "Shut Down".

Elizabeth

Cloud storage and sharing, is it secure?

Dear CNET members,

Happy Friday! If you visited CNET earlier, you probably ran into some issues accessing our site and I do apologize for the inconvenience -- the gremlins were at it again. Now that we are back online, welcome back! This week's topic is from member Frances, who asks whether cloud storage and sharing is secure. So, is it?

As most members, put it, unfortunately the answer is no. Is e-mail secure? No. Simply put: if that data is sitting on a server, it could be hacked and be exposed. Now how likely is it that the cloud data would be compromised? I don't know, but should you take that risk? I guess that really depends on what's being stored.

While cloud storage is great for storing and sharing data, storing sensitive data is another thing. And if you read through our members' answers, you'll find advice ranging from using safer alternative methods to sharing sensitive data and also ways that you can use cloud storage to share sensitive data, but encrypting those files before storing them on cloud-type services. So read up on the suggestions, and if you currently use the cloud to share sensitive data with others, we'd like to hear it. Thanks to all who contributed their knowledge. Have a safe and happy weekend!

[Click here to read more about it in the forum](#)

The lighter side...

Stop Gmail From Downloading Too Many Messages

By Rick Broida

Recently I helped a family member install Windows Live Mail 2011 and configure it for use with her Gmail account. But she has some 75,000 messages there, and Live Mail insisted on downloading them all. (Live Mail can't limit the number of messages it downloads.)

Fortunately, Gmail itself offers a way to close the spigot, via these five steps:

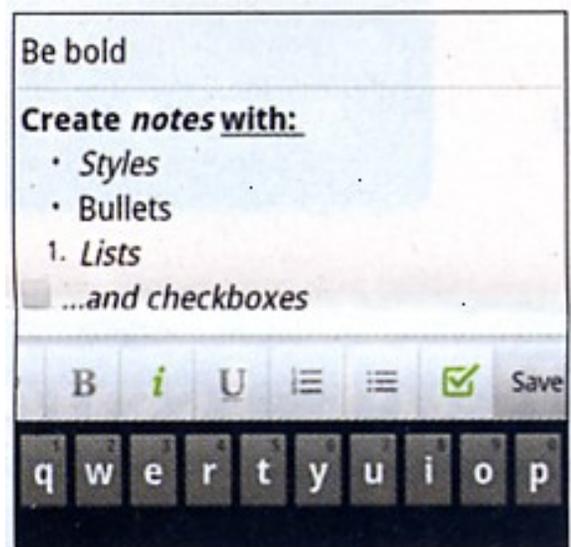
1. Open your browser and connect to your Gmail account.
2. Click the little gear icon in the top-right corner, and then click Mail settings.
3. Select the Forwarding and POP/IMAP tab, and scroll down to Folder Size Limits.
4. Enable this setting: Limit IMAP folders to contain no more than this many messages.
5. Choose a number of messages: 1000,2000,5000, or 10,000. (You can change it later.)

Make Quick Checklists in Evernote

By Robert Strohmeier

ARE YOU ADDICTED to checklists? Do you use Evernote (evernote.com)? Yeah, me too. But did you know that Evernote has its own checklist feature built right in? It can be a powerful tool for daily productivity. When you create or edit a note in an Evernote app (for Android, Web, or Desktop), place your cursor, then click the checkbox icon. Look for a little checkbox icon in the menu bar. Clicking it will put a checkbox wherever your cursor happens to be within a given note. This step can help you create packing checklists for trips, simple to-do lists, trackable talking points for a presentation, and so on. The checkbox feature is pretty limited—it just places a checkbox next to some text.

It doesn't make a full-fledged task manager out of your notes. But for little lists that you'd rather not allow to clutter up your actual task-list app, it's great.



Some of the material appearing in this Issue was sent to the editor by other members of the GTBPCUG. Thank you.

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