



# Bug-Bytes

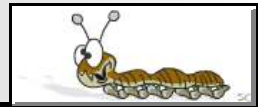
THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTERBUGS*

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## SAVE WEBPAGES IN INTERNET EXPLORER

SAVE COMPUTER TIPS FOR LATER VIEWING



Computer magazines, and computer-related web sites, offer monthly tips on a broad range of subjects of interest to computer users. The articles are created in HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) to display formatted textual and graphic information.

That information often includes hyper-text links to pages in the documents. Click on the highlighted hypertext

links to access the specific information discussed in the earlier text.

Print the individual pages or save them for later viewing.

SAVE ARTICLES: While viewing it in Internet Explorer, to save an article click File, Save As (*Save as Page* in Firefox), give your document a name that is meaningful to you, choose

where to store the file and click Save.

Better yet, if you have not already done so, create a folder for your collections of tips, and save your tip files there. It will make finding them a snap.

In Explorer, double click on a file to automatically open it in your browser.

### GOOD TIP SOURCES

Consult this partial list of major tip sources:

• [www.pcmag.com](http://www.pcmag.com)

• [www.pcworld.com](http://www.pcworld.com)

• [www.maximumpc.com](http://www.maximumpc.com)

• [www.aumha.com](http://www.aumha.com)

• [www.tipsdr.com](http://www.tipsdr.com)

• [www.dougknox.com](http://www.dougknox.com)

[www.theeldergeek.com](http://www.theeldergeek.com)

## GET TROUBLESHOOTING HELP

HELP SOURCES ARE JUST A CLICK AWAY



There are few things in life that are truly unique (being the only one of its kind). This is especially true of computers. Any problem that you have has probably been experienced before by a large group of computer users. Because these experiences are not limited to just

a handful of people, you can usually find information about specific problems on the Internet, from Help in Windows, from an online automated support assistant, or in the particular application that you were using when the problem occurred. You may experience hardware-related problems,

software-related problems, or a combination of both. There are formal step-by-step troubleshooters, FAQs, information in knowledge bases, and bulletin board/list servers. This article explores those sources of help.

### USE WINDOWS BUILT-IN TROUBLESHOOTERS

Windows includes a section in Help with troubleshooting routines that help you identify and fix particular problems. Click on Start, Help, and type "troubleshoot" (without the quotes) in the search box. Become familiar with the list of available troubleshooters, and take a look at one in more depth. Windows XP lists 15 topics, 15 references in the Knowledge Base, and 15 full-text matches. Notice that Microsoft walks you through a series of questions and

answers designed to home in on the problem and to provide you with a solution for a problem. See the screenshot in the next column.

#### USE VENDOR FAQs

Another excellent source of information comes from the vendors of your software. They prepare Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to summarize problems answered by their support staffs. Browse their online FAQs for information related to your current problem, or just for an education in the types of problems that crop up.

FAQs include how-to help tips as well as detailed information about how to fix particular problems.

#### USE AUTOMATED SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

Some vendors use automated routines to spot problems on your computer involving their software. One such vendor is Symantec.

[http://www.symantec.com/techsupp/support\\_options.html](http://www.symantec.com/techsupp/support_options.html)

See the screenshot below.



Microsoft provides *Windows Update* which scans your computer for needed updates (including for Windows Office). The vendors of popular software often include a link from their help menu to help you update their software or to connect to their web site.

#### REFER TO VENDOR KNOWLEDGE BASES

In your favorite browser, type the web address for your vendor and search for their knowledge base. Type a brief description of the topic you are researching.

#### DEMYSTIFY WINDOWS ERROR CODES

Download MSWinErr.exe from the following link (free)

<http://www.gregorybraun.com/MSWinErr.html>. Open the program and insert the error code that is reported by Windows. The program tells you what each error means. See screenshot at the right.



## USE THE COMPUTERBUGS LIST SERVER

First, I encourage you to try to solve your problem using one of the previously mentioned sources in this article. In so doing you will learn from your experiences over time and will become proficient in using the various help sources.

**The message is that you are not alone and that help is just a click or two away.**

However, if you don't find a solution there, by all means pose your question on the Computerbugs list server, or on the online related vendor's support site.

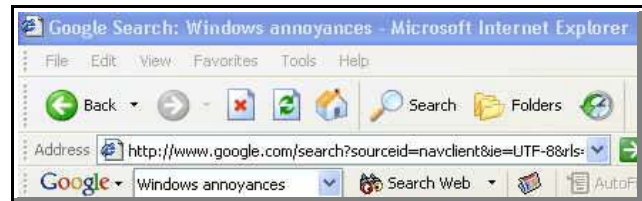
Members, to subscribe to the list server, send a message to [cowboy@computerbugs.cc](mailto:cowboy@computerbugs.cc). The list server is for members only. The list server is the source for quick answers from other club members.

## LET GOOGLE FIND AN ANSWER FOR YOU

Abbreviate a description of your problem, i.e. "Epson C82 page won't print," "Clear Outlook Express cache," "Setting screensaver preferences," "Insert a watermark in MS Word," or "Windows annoyances," etc.

The resulting search will produce a series of related articles contain some or all of your search expression.

Consider downloading and installing the free Google Toolbar. With the toolbar installed, just type your search expression and click on the Search Web button.



## SOFTWARE REVIEW - REG ORGANIZER

### CLEAN UP YOUR REGISTRY

The Windows Registry contains settings for hardware and software that is installed on your PC. Think of the Registry as a machine diary that keeps track of changes made to your computer. The Registry may contain more than a hundred thousand entries. While you can directly edit the Registry, it is usually only done by very advanced or expert users.

**Mangled entries can render your computer unbootable.**

However, commercial registry cleaners safely fix broken links, repair invalid extensions, remove references to non-existent files and invalid DLL (Dynamic Link Library) files, fix broken font references, remove invalid uninstall information, and correct invalid CLID (Class ID) information. The broken and missing links may be left behind when software is uninstalled or when you move files from place to place.

I'll mention two highly recommended products that are designed solely for this purpose and that do a very good job or correcting Registry errors. Thus, they help you optimize your computer's performance.

REG ORGANIZER is a product of Chemtable.com Software, [www.chemtable.com](http://www.chemtable.com). The current version is 2.5. It was a March 2005 PC Magazine pick for registry cleaning. Good software is not restricted to the United States. That is

because we live in a global marketplace. This program was written by a Russian software firm. I've tested it and I really like the way it handles Registry cleaning. It offers both a regular registry mode and an advanced mode with additional cleaning options (including removing zero-length files). Try it free for 30 days or buy it for \$29.95.

REGISTRY FIRST AID is a product of Rose City Software <http://www.rosecitysoftware.com/reg1aid/>. The current version is 3.4. The product was a Microsoft shareware pick one of their online newsletters, and it was developed in the United States. The product has a long list of awards. Download an evaluation copy, or purchase it for \$21. This product does not offer as many options as Reg Organizer, but it does a very good job. I use both of the products.



## ★ PERSONALIZE YOUR DESKTOP WALLPAPER ★

SELECT THE LOOK THAT GREETES YOU WHEN YOUR COMPUTER IS ON

This tip won't make your computer run faster, nor will it make you any more productive. What it will do is give you a distinctive look for your computer that expresses one of your interests. That it, it is just for fun.

Each time your computer starts a background (also called wallpaper) or just a color scheme (if you have your background set to "none") is shown on your desktop. Select from a list of backgrounds provided with your version of Windows, download new ones, or browse for a favorite photo or a graphic and use it as your display background.

To change your wallpaper, right click on a blank area of your display and select Properties, Display Properties. Click on different names in the background list to see previews of how those backgrounds will look.

Select one of the Position options to control how the image you select displays on the screen (center, tile, or stretch). Center puts the image in the middle of your screen, and depending on the size of the image, may leave a large border around the image. Tile places multiple versions of the image on the screen. Stretch fills the whole screen with the selected image.



One of the nifty things you can do is to use one of your favorite photos. I use a photo I took during a trip to Wallowa Lake in Eastern Oregon. You might use a picture of a grandchild, a pet, favorite scenery, a picture showing the change of seasons, etc. Let your imagination be your guide. Note, when you browse to a new image, the old image is replaced. Therefore, note where the name of the previous image so you can restore it if you want it back.

If you do not already have a photo that you want to use, download one of the free photos from [www.webshot.com](http://www.webshot.com), or use Google to find a photo of your liking.

If you are wild about a particular cartoon character you may be able to download a sample cartoon from a cartoon web site. One example is wallpaper from [www.snoopy.com](http://www.snoopy.com). Pick your favorite Peanuts character and a screen resolution that matches that resolution used by your display. Right click on the image you want and select "set as wallpaper." That's it.

### WALLPAPER CHANGER

A wallpaper changer is software that changes the background that you see on your display on a timed interval that you select. For instance, Web Shots provides a wallpaper changer. Use Google to locate wallpaper changers. See [www.pcworld.com/downloads/file\\_description/0,fid,15860,00.asp](http://www.pcworld.com/downloads/file_description/0,fid,15860,00.asp) for wallpaper suggestions.

### DESKTOP SETTINGS

In Display Properties, click on Settings to see your current display resolution. (Right click on an empty spot on your desktop. Select Properties, and Settings). As you push the slider to the right (increase resolution), you display much more on your monitor at one time, but the size of icons and text will decrease so that they may be harder for you to see them. Screen resolution refers to the number of dots (pixels) that cover the entire screen. That is for a resolution of 1024x768 your monitor (if it supports it) will be able to display 1,024 dots on each of 768 lines or about 786,000 dots.

Click on the Appearance tab then the Advanced tab in Display Properties. Using the Item menu, scroll through the various options. For example, it is here that you can fine tune the size of icons and their spacing.