

BUG-BYTES

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTERBUGS*

VOL. 5, ISSUE 06

JUNE 2006

ORGANIZE YOUR DIGITAL PHOTOS

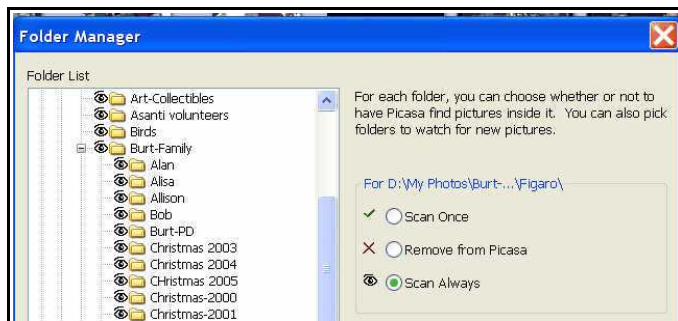
EXPLORE THE CONCEPT WITH PICASA

When you have just a handful of photos, they are so easy to find. However, as your photo collection grows, you need a new method to manage your photos.

Fortunately, modern computer science has come to the rescue. Products such as Google's Picasa, Adobe Photoshop Elements, JASC Photo Album, and Microsoft Digital Images Pro include modules that make managing your photos truly easy.

Google's *Picasa* is free and it is amazingly easy to use. Picasa is a good place to start. To try a copy, type <http://picasa.google.com/> in your browser's address field. Follow the instructions to download Picasa and install it on your computer.

Open Picasa and click on File, Add Folders to Picasa. Select the folders that you want Picasa to include in its automatic scan. Select the **Scan Always** option if you want Picasa to automatically include new pictures after you put them in the selected folders. Add or remove folders at will.



Picasa will quickly scan your photos and display them as thumbnails, in a slide show, or by time line. In the time line view, move the slider to the left or right to include only the pictures taken at a particular time, such as March 2002.

However, the real power and convenience of Picasa are seen as you use the **search tool** at the top right of your screen. Search works best if you give all of your pictures descriptive names. Type in the title (or part of the title) that you used as a filename for your photo and all of those pictures popup on the screen. An example might be

“Computerbugs class,” “Alaska trip,” etc. It works like magic. If you prefer to use the numbers applied to your photos by your digital camera, use the time line or normal view.

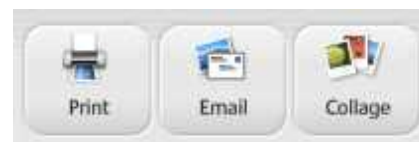
If you setup Picasa using the Always Scan option, and copy photos to folders on your computer, Picasa will automatically add the photos to the organizer page the next time you open it. Sometimes it takes a little computer inactivity on your part for the files to be processed. You will see the file names being added in a box at the bottom right of your screen.

In the picture below, our club's ladybug mascot is seen visiting a daisy in Bear Valley, California.



Select a folder of photos and switch to the slide show view. View those photos full-screen-size one-photo-at-a-time. Press the spacebar, or use the right or left arrows to cycle back and forth between your “slides.”

Share your photos with your family and friends via e-mail. Select the photo, then click on the e-mail button in Picasa. Picasa resizes the photo so it is suitable for e-mail use. You provide the e-mail address, subject, and text.



HOW TO CREATE SHORTCUTS



THEY'RE YOUR PASSPORTS TO PLACES AND FILES

The small icons that appear on your desktop from time to time on are called shortcuts. Usually, you click on them to open a program installed on your computer. That is, one or more of them may have appeared (unwanted) on your desktop after you installed new software.

You can create the following types of shortcuts to make navigating around your computer easier for you:

- Link to a favorite program so it opens when you click on the icon. For example, you might link to a game
- Link to a folder such as your picture or data folder
- A link to an internet address such as www.computerbugs.cc
- Link to a document file containing just your name and address. Cut and paste the text into other documents

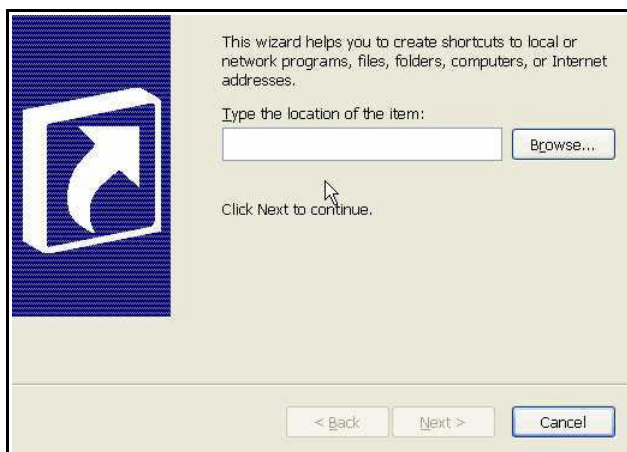
How create a shortcut

Right-click on an empty space on your desktop. Select New from the drop down menu then either *shortcut* or *folder*. For shortcut, browse to the location that you want linked to the shortcut icon. The location can be a folder (such as photos), a particular file, or an e-mail address. Here are some sample addresses:

"C:\Documents and Settings\your name\My Documents\My Pictures" (without the quotation marks)

www.computerbugs.cc/news.htm can be entered in the Create Shortcut dialog **location** field. When you click on it, it will open Internet Explorer and go right to our newsletter. That's short and sweet.

The dialog looks like this in XP.



Experiment with creating a shortcut. When you delete a shortcut, it has no effect on the program to which it is linked. Thus, you safely remove any icons for which you have no use. Examples of those are links to various ISP web sites.

CUSTOMIZE THE ICON PICTURE

Don't settle for the generic icon that Windows assigns to your icon. Right-click on the icon, Properties, Change Icon. Pick an icon from those offered for your shortcut.

To change folder shortcut icons, right-click on the icon, Customize, Change Icon. Select the icon you want and click on OK. You will note that more icons are available for folders than for standard shortcuts.



Some icons are stored with the executable file for a program.

For example, let's say you want to create a shortcut to Notepad or WordPad. You will find those programs via Start, All Programs, Accessories, Notepad or WordPad.

To see how the process works, right-click on WordPad, or another program of your choice. **Select Send To from the drop down menu then Desktop (create shortcut)**. Right-click on the WordPad icon and select an icon from the four that are shown. The process is similar for other executable files. Create a folder shortcut and combine similar shortcut icons in the folder. For instance, a photo program folder.

USE YOUR COMPUTER LIBRARY

LET YOUR FINGERS DO THE BROWSING



Your computer is an excellent source for an incredible amount of interesting data. You don't need a library card nor do you have to drive miles and miles to find information about almost any subject. You can find answers at any time of the day or night.

All you need is a good browser, access to the Internet, which you have, a good search engine, and a little patience as you learn how to phrase your questions for the best results.

In other words, you have the means to tap into a literal world of data. You will be amazed at what you can discover in the span of just a few minutes . . . all from the comfort of your computer chair.

These are just some of the many avenues that you can explore. Enter your search phrase or search word in your browser's search field and away you go. You can use general or specific search terms

- Online dictionaries
- How to refine search engine terms
- How to prune (you name the tree or shrub)
- When to plant tulip bulbs (or the plant of your choice)
- Comparative shopping sites
- Vendor (name) to find their web site
- Software or hardware review of (name of product)
- Price comparisons for (name of product)
- A phrase from a chain or hoax letter
- Maps of a particular location including satellite views (www.maps.google.com)
- Pictures of people, places, and events
- Find graphics to fit your needs
- Statistics on (subject of your choice)
- Recall information for (brand) appliances, cars, tires, etc.
- Movie reviews and facts (www.imdb.com)
- How to buy (you name it)
- How to convert Celsius to Fahrenheit, acres to feet, etc.
- How to build (you name it)

- Who was (name the person)
- What is the recipe for (name the dish)
- Road cams in Oregon
<http://www.oregon.com/roadcams/index.cfm>
- Road conditions in Crater Lake
<http://www.nps.gov/crla/crlaci.htm>
- Your computer has the ability to connect you with data that is stored all over the world. It is like being linked to a series of world famous libraries.
- Try different search engines to find the one or ones that work best for you. Google is perhaps the best-known engine. <http://searchenginewatch.com/reports/article.php/2156451>
- And, by the way, you can shout *Eureka* when you find your answer at home, and you won't bother anyone around you.
- While searches are generally free, some sites are by subscription only. For instance, you have to subscribe to access the proprietary information provided by Consumer Reports www.consumerreports.org or the utilities download section of PC Magazine www.pcmag.com
- If you still need the help of a friendly research librarian, you will be able to refine your questions to get better information about your subjects.
- What have you learned, today?



PERSONALIZE YOUR HOME PAGE

VIEW YOUR PAGE YOUR WAY

Your home page refers to the view that comes up every time you open your browser. You may not have changed what was installed on your computer since you bought it. Your home page may be by Yahoo, Excite, MSN, or perhaps it is linked to your ISP. Look for a means to personalize that page. In *Yahoo*, you click on one of the three items shown on this bar just below the search box.

[Add Content](#) [Change Layout](#) [Change Colors](#)

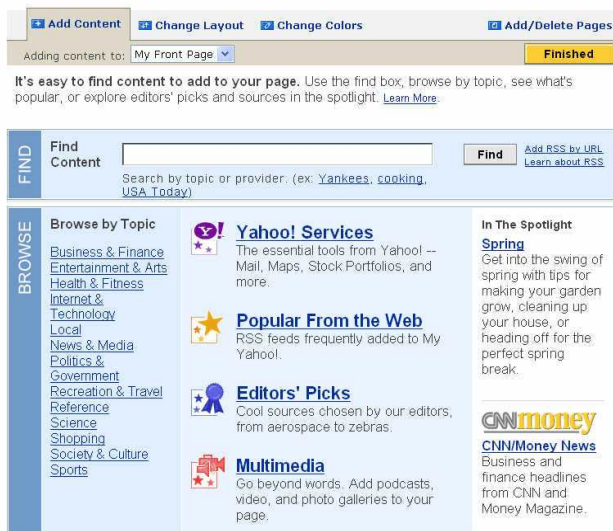
The first task is to pick only those items that you want to see each time you open your browser and in the order you want to see them. CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

In the case of Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) your choices include picking the content you see, how it is arranged on the page, and choosing a color scheme that makes viewing the content enjoyable for you.

ADD CONTENT

Select only those topics that interest you. Click on the appropriate Add button, or remove a topic by clicking on the Remove button. It is that simple.

The screen shot below shows you what the Add Content dialog looks like.



When you finish adding or removing content, click on the Finished button.

Click the home button to see how your page looks with your new choices. The home button looks like a home with a yellow roof, as in the example above.



CHANGE LAYOUT

Choose to display your data in two-column or three-column mode, and arrange your topics to suit your needs and preferences. One way of doing this is to arrange the topics you view most often at the top of the columns. For example, see the screen shot below of the narrow column in a two-column format.



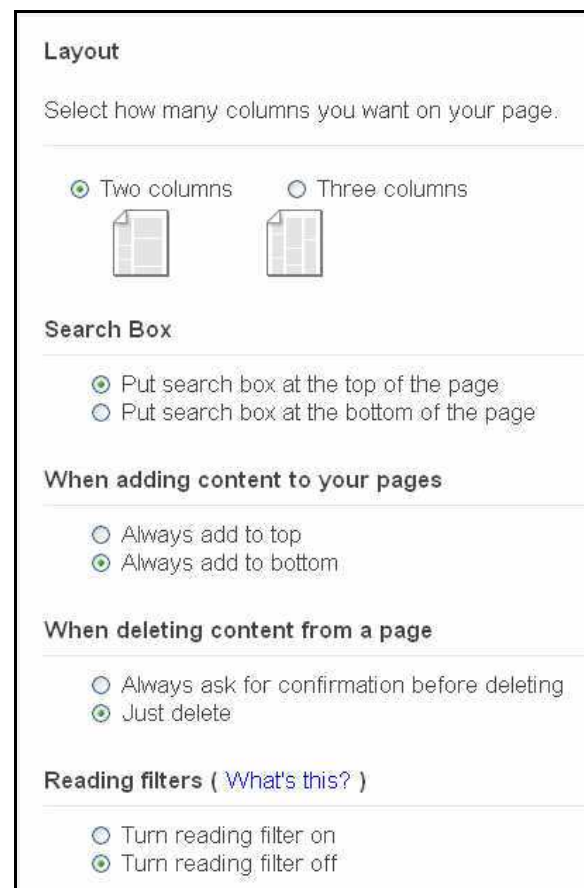
Use the arrows at the side to move a selected item up or down in the displayed list.

Repeat the process for the second column.



Reorder your news and other choices the way you like them. Use the button at the bottom of the dialog (in Yahoo) to flip the sides occupied by the large and narrow columns in two-column mode.

Yahoo also offers these additional layout choices as seen in the following menu.



Click Finished when you have completed your layout choices. You can change or redo your choices at any time.

CHANGE COLORS OR THEMES

If you are a big fan of Windows themes, you can change the look of your home page until the cows come home. Experiment with the offerings from the Yahoo Change Colors menu. To get back to your starting point, pick Yahoo classic. Choose from twelve different categories. **Have fun!**