



# Bug-Bytes

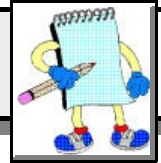
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## NOTEPAD VERSUS WORDPAD

YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM PROVIDES TWO NIFTY WORD PROCESSING PROGRAMS



In the early days of DOS (Microsoft Disk Operating System) the operating system came without any supporting applications. If you wanted a word processor, or any other applications for that matter, you had to buy them in addition to the OS. Today, and for many years past, Windows includes some applications with the OS. Among them are *Notepad* and *Wordpad* (*Paint*, *Windows Media Player*, *Windows Movie Maker*, etcetera).

Notepad is a very basic word processor (65K). It saves files in plain text (ANSI text) with only a couple of formatting options. This is in contrast to WordPad (196K) which is also a lightweight word processor, but which offers some formatting options (fonts, bullets, paragraphs, and tabs).

Think of Word or WordPerfect as full featured word processors. They are designed to fulfill a long list of user needs including outlining, bullets, the use of multiple fonts and attributes, columns, inserting spreadsheet data, controlling the flow of text around boxes and graphics, spelling and grammar checking, doing legal pleadings, and even working in various languages. As a result, the programs are huge—they have to be to provide all the features that users, such as you, have asked for over the years.

I suggest that you open both Notepad

and Wordpad and experiment with them. Some of you may find that they are all that you need. Others will see them as fitting tools for small projects.

Open Notepad and Wordpad from Start, All Programs, and Accessories. Think of Notepad or Wordpad when you only need a very simple word processor. Both programs are easy to use and very quick to load.

Notepad is a lean-mean-note-taking machine. It is an excellent choice for short notes, such as while you troubleshoot a problem. Use Alt-Tab to switch between Notepad and another open program. Create a shortcut to Notepad and drag it to the quick launch area on your taskbar. That way it will always be just a click away, or better yet, assign a shortcut key combination to open the file. (Right click on the Notepad icon, select Properties, Shortcut, Shortcut key. I use control-shift-down arrow, but pick what works best for you.

For example, cut and paste a portion of HTML text from an e-mail message to convert it into plain text, and do some simple editing to see how it will look. Then cut and paste it into a new e-mail message.

### NOTEPAD

Choose one font from the list of fonts in the program, but whatever font you

choose will be used throughout your whole document. The default font is Courier, a monospaced font. It is not very pretty but tabular data lines up properly with it. One of the few options available to you is to turn on wordwrap. (That's a very good idea). If you wish, insert the current time and date by pressing the F5 key.

While Notepad provides for tabs, you cannot change the tab settings from the default eight-character indent for each tab. For simple stuff it won't matter.

### WORDPAD

WordPad gives you some control over the look of your document. You can justify text left, center, or right, and change the font style within the document including using bold, italics, and underline. In both Notepad and WordPad you can use Find and Replace. Replace is an easy way to find and remove a character or word that appears throughout a document and to replace it with something else including the null character (nothing character). An example would be to search for the quote characters ">," "<," and "&quot;" in an e-mail you pasted into Notepad.

Save files in Rich Text Format (RTF) with the extra features of WordPad or in Text Format with many of the features stripped out.

## MONITOR MAGIC

IS YOUR MONITOR DISPLAY LOOKING WASHED OUT OR JITTERY?



If you have owned your monitor for years, your picture may have become discolored and weak. Perhaps your monitor has an annoying flicker or the displayed image is distorted. Fortunately, you can correct most of these symptoms using the simple control buttons that are built into your monitor, and the video card software installed on your computer. Most monitor controls are on the front of your monitor. However, sometimes they are hidden behind a door or are on the back of the monitor.

Typically you use one button to activate a menu and other buttons to select features in the menu and to make adjustments.

The controls vary from manufacturer to manufacturer, but they often include a button to degauss your monitor, a color temperature setting, buttons to change brightness and contrast, the size of your picture, and button combinations to bring up a help menu. Consult the manual that came with your monitor for a description of how your controls work.

**DEGAUSS** (Automatic on some monitors)

The degauss button neutralizes your monitor's magnetic field. Often, pushing that button will correct a discolored monitor picture. Adjusting the brightness and contrast will correct for weak looking pictures.

### SIZE/CENTER

Size and center controls enlarge or shrink your display picture horizontally and vertically, and shifts the picture to center it. There may be a control that returns your monitor to its

factory default settings. If there is a wide black border displayed around your picture, the picture probably needs tweaking to maximize the dimensions of your picture. A little black border all around your picture is just fine. It clearly shows whether the picture is centered or is off to one side or the other.

**CONVERGENCE/GEOMETRY** (pincushion/trapezoid and tilt)

The convergence and geometry controls correct for pictures that bend in or out at the sides rather than being straight up and down, or sides that are tilted one way or the other.

### BRIGHTNESS AND CONTRAST

The brightness control (black level) sets shades of grey from very dim to very dark (black). The contrast (picture) fine tunes the white level for what is called luminance. Misadjustment of the brightness control is one of the most common causes of poor picture reproduction.

The brightness control often uses a small sun as its symbol. The contrast control may use a circle that is half black and half white. See . . . . .

[http://www.astropix.com/HTML/J\\_DIGIT/MON\\_CON.HTM](http://www.astropix.com/HTML/J_DIGIT/MON_CON.HTM)

[http://www.zbone.com/zone/faq\\_contrast.htm](http://www.zbone.com/zone/faq_contrast.htm)

### FLICKER (Refresh rates)

A flicker is the tendency of a monitor display image to visually (or subliminally) flutter or waver. Normally the flicker goes away when the monitor's refresh rate is adjusted in the range of 75 Hertz or 85 Hertz. Some people

notice this effect more than others. If your monitor flickers, the effect will be more noticeable in your peripheral vision rather than by looking straight at your monitor.

**The refresh rate is a function of your graphics display card.** Adjust the refresh rate as follows: Right click on a blank spot on your display screen. Select properties from the drop-down menu, Settings, Advanced, Adapter, List Modes. Your computer will display a list of valid display modes. Pick the resolution you want, the type of color (16bit or 32bit), and the refresh rate. My computer is set for 1024x768, True Color (32 bit), 85 Hertz. Thirty-two bit color is ideal for users who do a lot of photo editing.

If you feel your screen text is too small to read, right click on your screen, select Properties, General, DPI settings. The normal font size is 96. Up it to 120 and see if that works better for you (as in 1024x768 or higher resolution). If it is too big, set it back to 96, or use a custom setting.

See this link for resolution suggestions.

<http://www.learnthenet.com/english/html/06setting.htm>

The higher you set your screen resolution the more pixels are displayed, and more information is displayed on your monitor, and smaller text appears on your display. Experiment with setting your resolution at 800x600 or higher and see how you like it.



## SEND E-MAIL IN TEXT OR HTML FORMAT

BOTH HAVE THEIR ADVANTAGES



It is your choice. Choose to automatically compose and send your e-mail messages in plain text or formatted in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML).

You can insert or attach pictures and graphics in HTML format but not in text format, and in HTML you can send your messages with stationery backgrounds. The downside is that messages with attachments may contain viruses. If you don't have an anti-virus program plain text is a safer

choice. Hopefully none of you are running your computer without anti-virus protection). If you protect yourself with an up to date AV software program, then you and your recipients can enjoy the full benefits of HTML messages (those users who have chosen to receive e-mail in HTML).

To check how your computer handles e-mail messages, open Outlook Express, click on Tools, Options, Send.

Select either HTML or Text and review the options for each of those choices.

As a courtesy to others, you may wish to select the "Reply to sender using the format in which they were sent" option. Click on Tools, Options, Send and select that option. That way when you reply to any message, you will do so in the format that message recipient prefers.

## Q & A - HOW CAN I TELL IF MY ONLINE TRANSACTION ARE SECURE?

MOST WEB SITES ENCRYPT YOUR FINANCIAL AND PERSONAL DATA FOR SAFETY WHEN YOU SHOP ON THEIR SITES



Online vendors generally use 128-bit encryption. The proof that your transaction is protected by such encryption is a small **yellow padlock with a closed hasp**. The padlock is shown on your task bar. If you don't see the closed padlock, consider shopping elsewhere. Note, the padlock symbol usually doesn't show up until you go to the screen to finalize your purchase. If you have a question about their security arrangements, click on the security link on their site for more information.

Click on Help About Internet Explorer to verify whether or not your browser supports 128-bit encryption. The Help dialog will show the version of your browser and the strength of your encryption protection. If your encryption security is less than 128-bit, download an update from Microsoft (for Internet Explorer 5 and 6) for greater protection.

### HOW SAFE ARE ONLINE TRANSACTIONS?

The safety of online transactions is based upon some common sense rules.

#### 1. Deal with reputable vendors

- a. View customer and computer magazine reviews and ratings. They are good guides to customer satisfaction and/or problems that buyers may have had. For example, see [www.pcmag.com](http://www.pcmag.com), [www.cnet.com](http://www.cnet.com),

[www.pcworld.com](http://www.pcworld.com), [www.bizrate.com](http://www.bizrate.com), [www.nextag.com](http://www.nextag.com), [www.pricescan.com](http://www.pricescan.com), or [www.pricegrabber.com](http://www.pricegrabber.com). Amazon.com offers free shipping for orders of \$25 or more and often includes very attractive rebates (their own plus manufacturers rebate).

- b. Know your potential vendor's return policies. Some vendors require a restocking charge.

2. Know exactly what you want to buy by make and model and which is the latest version. Don't buy out of date merchandise unless the price is right and it's what you really want. (Out of date anti-virus software may not include the latest engines needed to detect the newest threats). Go to a manufacturer's web site for complete information about features and specifications.

3. Do comparison price shopping. There are w-i-d-e price variation on the internet for the very same item. The buyer beware!

- a. Include the cost of shipping in your calculations. Some vendors offer free shipping or greatly reduced shipping costs.

4. Check the shipping options and recalculate the total cost. Sometimes you can get faster shipping for much less than you would pay for UPS ground. Be aware that UPS

ground can take eight to ten business days to reach you. Pick a premium shipping option if you want your merchandise the next day or in a few days. Some shippers do not work on Saturday. So don't wait to order on Friday if you are in a big hurry.

5. Buy from vendors that offer secure transactions.
6. Check to see if you qualify for a competitive or other type of rebate.

#### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE SHOPPING?

- ✓ You have excellent sources of information for product specifications, technical information, features, benefits, models, comparison pricing, warranties, and rebates.
- ✓ There are many vendors from whom to pick.
- ✓ You conveniently shop from your own home.

- ✓ Merchandise is delivered right to your door saving wear and tear on your car and your nerves.
- ✓ You have the advantage of better and more complete information from which to make wise purchases and to save you money. This includes customer reviews, product comparisons, lab tests, and magazine editor reviews.
- ✓ If you decide to purchase locally, you can do so armed with the information you need to make an informed purchase.

*I've purchased new computers and camera equipment for years via the Internet and I regularly purchase other merchandise on the Internet as well. The UPS and FedEx people recognize me by sight. It think the Internet is a boon to shopping.*

## FAST SHUTDOWN FOR WINDOWS 2000 OR XP

CREATE AN INSTANT SHUTDOWN BUTTON



If you are a user of Windows 2000 or Windows XP create a shortcut to shutdown your computer with one click. The normal way to shutdown Windows involves three separate clicks. Click on Start, click on Turn off Computer, and then click on Turn Off. You may be one of those users who wonders why you have to click on "Start" to stop your computer.

Here are the steps to create a "Stop" button, or whatever else you want to call it. I call mine "Fast Shutdown."

Create a new shortcut on your desktop. Right click on an empty spot on your display and select Properties, New, Shortcut. Give the shortcut a name such as "Fast Shutdown." Right click on the new icon and click on Properties. In the "Target" field type this phrase exactly as shown.

```
%windir%\System32\shutdown.exe -s -t 0
```

In the "Start in field" type %windir%

Click OK. Try out your new icon. If it works correctly drag the icon to the quick launch area of your task bar, and then drag it left among the displayed icons so it is always ready to go.

If the icon doesn't work, carefully check how you typed the information. You need to include a space after shutdown.exe, and a space after -s. Note that 0 is a numerical zero after the -t not a capital letter O. The -s tells the shutdown.exe program, in your Windows\System32 directory, to shutdown. The -t0 says to shutdown with 0 time delay. You can change the 0 to a 1 or a larger number if you want to build in a specific delay before shutdown. Note how fast this method is compared to the old method.

## ADVANCED USERS CORNER

COMMAND LINE SWITCHES



The Windows operating system uses a graphical user interface (GUI). You point and click on icons and menu choices. The earlier Disk Operating System was command line driven. That is, you had to type in commands using the correct syntax such as C:\Windows\Dir (directory) and then

press enter. The command line might include "switches." These were options that controlled how the commands worked.

Windows still includes commands in the Windows

System32 directory. Click Start, Run, and type in CMD (for command). Press enter. Type a sample command such as Shutdown /?. The slash with a question mark brings up help about that particular command—the Shutdown command. You will see the correct syntax for the command and all of the optional switches that are offered for the command.

Advanced users will recognize many of their old friends in the C:\Windows\System32 directory. Fortunately, we seldom need to use the old commands such as DIR (Directory), CD (Change Directory), or Copy. However, when we do, the built-in help will remind us how to type the commands and what options are available.