



# BUG-BYTES

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTER BUGS*

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## URL TIPS AND TRICKS

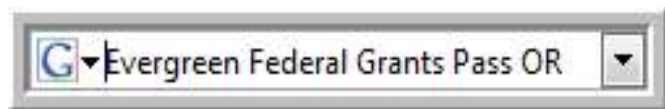
FIND ANSWERS TO YOUR URL QUESTIONS



URL stands for Universal Resource Locator. A URL is a precise internet address that usually starts with [HTTP://www.something.com](http://www.something.com), or dot cc, dot org, dot biz, or one of the many other variations in the last three letters following a period. For example, the URL for Computerbugs is [www.computerbugs.cc](http://www.computerbugs.cc). That address consists of the domain name [www.computerbugs.cc](http://www.computerbugs.cc) and can include a path to a specific file following the domain name such as [www.computerbugs.cc/news.htm](http://www.computerbugs.cc/news.htm). In that example, the news.htm portion of the address takes you right to our newsletter, Bug-Bytes, without having to click on the *Newsletter* button in the top menu

How do you find the correct internet address for a business? Many businesses simply use their business name followed by dot com. That is, by their name, a period called a dot) and a three-letter extension such as com. [Www.ibm.com](http://www.ibm.com) is a good example. However, that simple formula often doesn't work. When that happens, use your favorite search engine to search for the business address.

For example, let's say you want to know the internet address for Evergreen Federal in Grants Pass. Type Evergreen Federal Grants Pass OR in the search field of your search engine. For example, I used Google for the following examples. This is what you would see. The first screen shot shows the search term. The second shows some of the result as shown on my screen. Note that Evergreen Federal's address is [www.evergreenbanking.com](http://www.evergreenbanking.com).



You can bookmark your favorite URLs to make it easy to find them again. However, over time, the address may change. If that happens, you can try simplifying the address back to the domain name and then look for the current link.

In the case of our newsletter, which you can directly reach by typing [www.computerbugs.cc/news.htm](http://www.computerbugs.cc/news.htm) you would simplify it back to [www.computerbugs.cc](http://www.computerbugs.cc) if the full address stopped working. The same trick works for other internet addresses that have stopped working.

For example, addresses that quickly become outdated are those that reference current magazine articles. Such as magazine articles from PC World, PC Magazine, etc. However, business addresses can also become outdated. Sometimes that is because they have slightly changed their address, or even because they have gone out of business. World wide businesses often use a country designator following their domain name. For example, if you go to [www.ibm.com](http://www.ibm.com) you will note that when the web page opens it shows [www.ibm.com/us](http://www.ibm.com/us) as the correct address. The abbreviation 'us' stands for the United States.

## NATIONAL DO NOT CALL REGISTRY

HOW TO STOP THOSE ANNOYING PHONE CALLS

Are you one of those people who detests phone solicitations? While you cannot prevent all calls, you can eliminate the bulk of them. Sign up to block calls. Go to [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov). Fill out the form shown below.

Area Code:  Phone:

Step One

Email Address:

Confirm Email Address:

Your email address MUST be correct to process your registration. Learn why your [email address](#) is required.

Enter phone numbers with or without a dash. Do not use spaces or periods.

If you think that you did this in the past but you're not sure if that is the case, click on Verify A Registration. Enter the phone number that you want to block. The status of that number will come back to you. If you didn't register, you can do so now.

Once you have registered, an e-mail will be sent to the e-

## National Do Not Call Registry

REGISTRY HOME

REGISTER A PHONE NUMBER

VERIFY A REGISTRATION

MORE INFORMATION

EN ESPAÑOL

FILE A COMPLAINT

PRIVACY AND SECURITY

mail address you showed during registration acknowledging that the numbers you entered have been blocked. You can block both your land line and your mobile cell phone number.

Note. It takes up to 31 days for the registration process to take effect.

Do you have other questions? Click on the More Information tab of the National Do Not Call web site, or use the following address.

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt107.shtm>.

## LITTLE WINDOWS TRICKS

TRICKS YOU FORGOT OR DID NOT KNOW

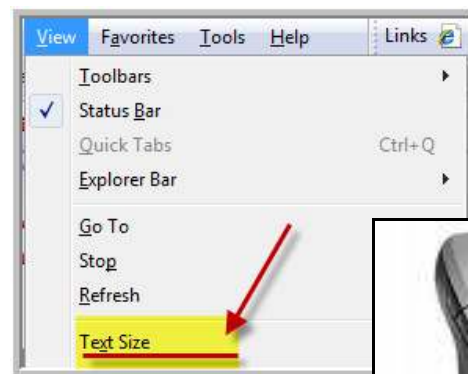
Is it hard for you to read your screen's icon text? There are two easy ways to fix that.

THE MANUAL WAY

Right-click on an empty space on your screen's desktop. In XP, select Properties, Display Properties, Appearance, Font size, and pick from the three choices from the drop-down menu. If you want to fine tune the font settings, click on the Advanced button in the Appearance dialog box.

In Vista, right-click on the desktop, select Personalize, and under Tasks on the left side of the dialog, select Adjust Font Size. There are two choices.

You can also manually adjust the font size in Internet Explorer. Click on View, Font Size, and select the font size you want. Experiment with what looks best to you.



DO IT THE EASY WAY WITH A SCROLL WHEEL MOUSE

If you have a mouse with a scroll wheel, left click on a spot on the desktop. Then hold down the ctrl-key while you dynamically roll the scroll wheel forward (for larger) or backward (for smaller) to adjust the font size. It is as easy as that.

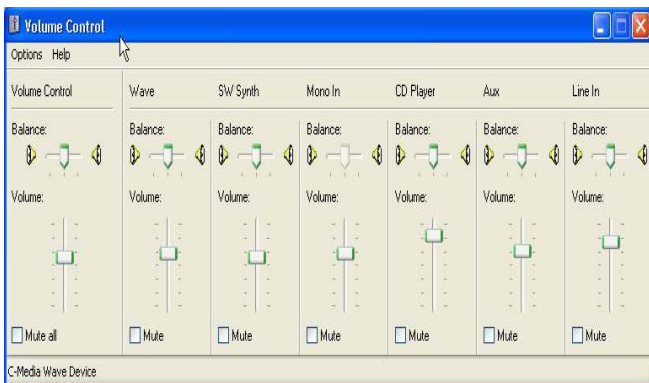
That trick also works to reset the font size in Internet Explorer for your browser. **You can dynamically change the font size anytime it is convenient for you.**

You don't have a mouse with a scroll wheel? Give yourself a Christmas gift. You will be glad you did. Do away with that annoying mouse cord and gain the use of the scroll wheel.

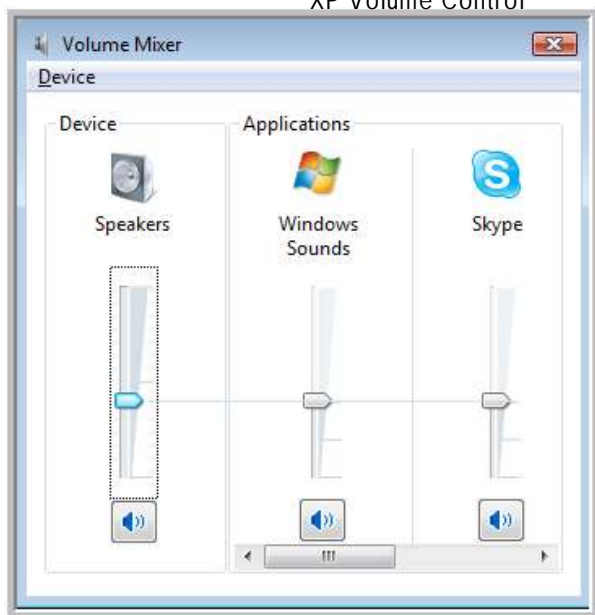
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ADJUST YOUR SOUND VOLUME

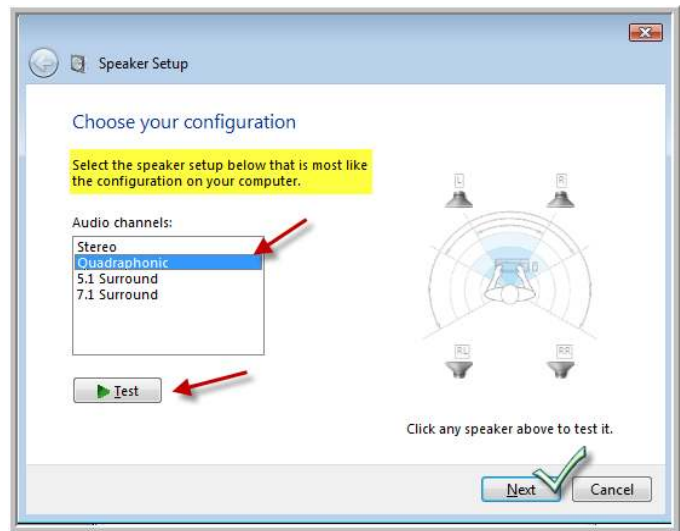
In XP or Vista, double-click on the speaker icon in the lower right corner of your screen. If you don't see the icon, click on the Start/Vista icon, Control Panel, Sound. In XP it says Sounds and Audio Devices. Select Place volume icon in the taskbar. The icon looks like a speaker in both XP and Vista. See the XP and Vista examples below.



XP Volume Control



Vista Volume Mixer



USE AN INTERNET KEYBOARD

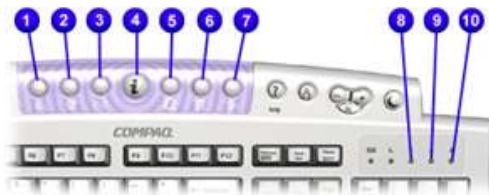
Do you want easy-to-use functions that are not on your standard keyboard? Consider buying an Internet Keyboard. Such keyboards are relatively inexpensive, and they add additional keys to make using the Internet and playing DVDs and music CDs much easier. See the additional functions on the top of the sample keyboard shown in the next two screen shots from a Compaq keyboard.

Figura 1: CD/DVD Control Button Suite



- 1 - CD/ DVD Play/ Pause
- 2 - CD/ DVD Previous Track
- 3 - CD/ DVD Next Track
- 4 - CD/ DVD Stop
- 5 - CD/ DVD Load/ Eject
- 6 - Volume Down Button
- 7 - Mute Button
- 8 - Volume Up Button
- 9 - Sleep Button

Figura 2: Internet Button Suite



- 1 - Instant Search
- 2 - Communication
- 3 - Instant E-mail
- 4 - Instant Internet
- 5 - My Presario
- 6 - Compaq Online Shopping
- 7 - Entertainment
- 8 - Num Lock
- 9 - Caps Lock
- 10 - Programmable

## FIND YOUR PHOTOS FAST

Tagging your photos will help



If you are like most computer users who store photos on their computers, you carefully name your photos. Then, you store them in their own folders. Usually, the names of the folders reflect the dominant theme for each set of photos.

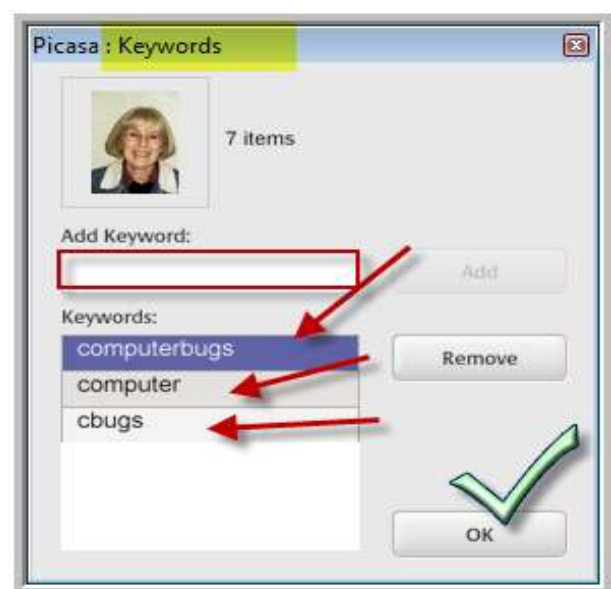
For instance, you might have separate folders for each of your children, separate folders for different pets, and separate folders for particular trips you've taken. You probably have a folder for pictures of your home, and additional folders for pictures of your neighbors and friends. However, what if you want to find **all** of the photos for your family at one time, or **all** of your travel

photos, to use just two examples? The answer is to *tag your photos*.

Tagging is a capability built into photo editing and organizing programs such as Google's Picasa 2 or Adobe Photoshop Elements. **Tagging is the process of associating keywords with your photos.** Thus, you can use broad keywords to pull together photos that are in some way related. For instance you might apply the keyword/tag "family" to all pictures that relate to your family. Once you have tagged your photos, then it is a snap to look at all of the related photos at once. Insert the keyword you want to use instead of a more specific word used in your photo's filenames. For instance, insert "Family" to see all of your family's photos (if you have applied tags).

Let me use Picasa as an example. First, it is free and so available to everyone, and second it is extremely easy to use.

Open Picasa. Pick a folder for a member of your family. You probably have a separate folder for each of the family members. Select all of the photos in the folder to which you want to apply a tag. Hold down the Ctrl-key while you click on each photo that will receive the same keyword or keywords. Or, if you have many photos all in a row, hold down the shift-key and select the first and the last of the simultaneous photos. Press Ctrl-K to enter the keyword or keywords that you will apply to those photos. See the screens shot. In this example the keywords computerbugs, computer, and cbugs will all find Computerbug tagged photos. It is easy to tag photos, and easier to find them.



## WHAT ARE YOUR STORAGE CHOICES?

Today, you have a wide range of choices from which to pick to store your data. You are no longer restricted to floppy disks, CDs and DVDs, ZIP drives, Tape, and hard drives. Now you can use thumb drives and even digital film chips to store your data. The cost of storage per megabyte has come down significantly. Even within types of storage devices, you will find many more and higher quality choices than were available just a few years ago.

First, consider how much data you currently store on your hard drives or hard drive. That will give you an idea of what storage capacity you need to backup your data. Right-click on the drive or folders that contain your data and select properties. Write down how much space those files consume. For me, I use about 60 gigabytes of storage. Then again, I lots of photos, graphics, and data files.

Let's look at what is available to you to backup and to store your data:

For completeness, I include floppy disks, but they can't compete with other choices—choices that offer greater capacities and faster read and write performance. If you have a lot of data, it would take a huge stack of floppies to backup your data, and it would be painfully slow. Put in a floppy, fill it, remove it, put in another floppy, and so on until you finished the task. A 3.5 inch floppy holds 1.44 megabytes.

CDs and DVDs are another option: A CD holds up to 800 megabytes (0.8 gigabytes) of data and a DVD up to 4.7 Gigabytes of data. CDs and DVDs come in write-once and rewriteable disks. For instance a CD-R or CD+R disk is write-once. A CD-RW or CD+RW disk is rewriteable.



Floppy, CD, DVD, ZIP, Travan tape, Thumb/Pen drive, Mobile hard drive, External drive, Internal drive

ZIP Drives are now seldom used given that much cheaper, faster, and more capacious means of storage are available. Early ZIP media held 100 megabytes.

Tape drives are expensive as are the tapes. They too are pretty much a thing of the past, at least for home owners.

Thumb drives are currently a convenient means of backing up a modest amount of data. For example, an 8GB Kingston USB 2.0 thumb drive from [www.cyberguys.com](http://www.cyberguys.com) is \$30. Unlike a CD-R (write once CD), you can replace old data on a thumb drive with new data. Thumb drives come in different capacity models up to 32GB. However, I suggest that if you buy one you buy a model that has more capacity than you currently need.

Imagine a 2.5 inch 5400 RPM external hard drive that holds 120GB of data for \$65 also from Cyberguys. The mobile drive is about the size of a stack of 3x5 index cards and fits in a shirt pocket. It works with any USB 2.0 capable computer via a special cable.

Internal or External 2.5 or 3.5 inch hard drives now hold much more data than their siblings of just a few years ago. They may also read and write much faster, and they cost a small fraction of what older drives cost when they were new. All things being equal, drives with a higher RPM figure are faster than drives that turn at a slower speed. That is a 7200 RPM drive is much faster than a 5400 RPM drive. A 10000 RPM drive is even faster yet, such as the Western Digital VelociRaptor drives.

Solid State hard drives are just now showing up on the market in some laptop computers. Since they have no moving parts, run cool, they are very quiet.

Adding additional storage to your computer is easy. Use an external drive, an internal drive, or use lower capacity media such as a CD or DVD.

For instance, to backup a lot of data with extra safety, purchase a thumb drive or an extra hard drive that meets your needs. An external hard drive has the advantage that you don't need to open your computer's case to install it. Just plug in the USB cable and start backing up your data. Some external hard drives come in one-button models. You just push a button to backup all of your data. What could be any easier than that?

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!