

TECHNICAL GEEKERY TIPS

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Microsoft Word

The tip for this week is tested on only Office 97-2003, but Office 2007 may have a similar procedure.

Do you have only a couple of commands that you usually use in Word but are annoyed because they are buried? How about creating your own custom toolbar?



Although it seems like this would be difficult, you can complete it in about five minutes, most of which will be spent looking for commands to put on the bar. To begin, choose Tools > Customize. Don't forget that while you are working you MUST leave this window open or you cannot modify your toolbar. Once you have reached this window, choose the Toolbars tab if it isn't selected, click New, and then type a name for your toolbar. After clicking OK, a teeny window with a blue title bar will appear.

Now go to the Commands tab. On the left, choose a category, many of which will be familiar as the menus at the top of your screen. Then find a command that you want on the right. Drag it to your toolbar and keep looking for more commands. You can customize the appearance of each command later. You will probably see many commands that you didn't know existed or you didn't know could be placed on a toolbar, such as the Small Caps button on mine.

Once you have all the commands you want, you are ready for the next step. As silly as it may seem, you must keep the Customize window open even when you don't need anything in it anymore. When you close the window, all your toolbars are locked and cannot be modified until you open it again.

Now you may want to change a few things. I like to have things labeled, especially if they are new. If you want your buttons or at least some of them labeled, right-click the target and choose Image and Text. You can also change the name while you right-click an object. Simply fill in a new name. The & sign simply makes the next letter underlined, which allows you to move to it by pressing Alt and then the underlined letter. If there is another one with the same underlined letter (such as on a menu) then you can toggle between them and press Enter when you reach the correct one.

When you are done with your customizations, drag the toolbar to its final place. This can be at the top or bottom (or even in the middle of the document or on the side). Then close the Customize dialog box. If you ever want to modify the toolbar, simply click the little down arrow pointed to by the arrow on the page (yes, confusing.) Then choose Add or Remove Buttons > Customize. You will end up with the dialog box you were using earlier and can right-click commands or drag new ones on.

Internet Explorer Version 7

You can change the search provider where IE goes when you type something into the search box at the right of the address bar. Simply click the arrow to the right of the magnifying glass and choose which one you want. For even more, choose Find More Providers.



Firefox

Get Firefox 3 at www.firefox.com.

Windows

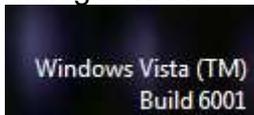
It may be that nobody has ever even thought about this, but having your Windows version displayed in the corner of your desktop can be handy. This tweak also displays the "Build" which is occasionally useful technical information. It also looks a bit geeky, so don't be surprised. This tweak seems a little bit odd, but it is also quite simple and not dangerous compared to other ways of getting this done.

To begin, start Notepad, which is usually under Start > All Programs > Accessories > Notepad. If you can't find it, simply press Windows (the flag key) + R. Then type 'notepad' (without the single quotes) and push Enter. Type the following into Notepad:

```
Windows Registry Editor Version 5.00
```

```
[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Control Panel\Desktop]  
"PaintDesktopVersion"=dword:00000001
```

If you have done this tweak and wish to turn it off, you can replace the final 1 with a 0. When you are done typing, save the file as "version.reg". Make sure to include the quotes this time. Then close Notepad and double-click the file wherever you put it. If you are using Vista, you will have to click through a security dialog box. Choose Yes in the resulting dialog box. Click OK in the next dialog box. As soon as you restart your computer, you will see the change.



General Internet

The Technical Geekery Forum has been moved and greatly improved! Posting now takes a fraction of the time. You do not need to register to post problems, although signing up if you use this service frequently will allow people to see who you are. To post on the forum, simply sign on, choose Computer Help, pick the category that has the most to do with your problem and click it, and click Post Something New That Will Annoy the Administrator As Much As Possible (or something like that). Note that there is a category for "Questions and Problems", so if you simply have a question about a better way to do something or whether something is possible, try it out! That's what the forum is for. To access the Technical Geekery Forums, go to

<http://forums.thetechnicalgeekery.com> or go to the Technical Geekery website and choose Forums. If you want to learn how to use the software better, choose Forum Information and read away.

Announcements

Report difficulties, technical problems, and/or factual problems with this newsletter to webmaster@thetechnicalgeekery.com.

Do you have any friends who you think would like this newsletter? Have them send me an email and ask to be added to my mailing list. If you wish to unsubscribe, you can click the link in the email.

Thanks as always for your support!