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Technical Geekery Tips

Soren Bjornstad

Microsoft Word



I've been on this topic for too long, but if you need the normal right-click menu (with things like changing the font, bullets, delete, etc.) on a word that has been flagged by the spell-check, you won't be able to do it. The best way to fix this is either to right-click and Ignore or Add to Dictionary to get rid of the flag, or (if you don't want to do that) delete one letter, right-click (because it doesn't flag words that are not complete or are being edited) then add the letter again. A bit of a kludge, so hopefully this will be fixed in some later version.

If you're typing away and notice a spelling error, you can right-click it (if it's marked with those red squiggly lines) to see suggestions. This is especially useful if you're not sure how to spell it. You can also add a word to the dictionary this way.

This is an addition to the last tip. If you have your hands on the keyboard and don't want to reach for the mouse, you can use Alt-F7 to do the same thing. It seems weird, but get used to it and it will become natural and useful.

This works in all MS Office programs.

Internet Explorer



- Once again, this tip works on any browser. (I can't think of any more IE tips right now!)
- If you started using OpenDNS (instructions in last newsletter and included below), you can create shortcuts. For example, I can type “tech” to visit www.thetechnicalgeekery.com or “buggy_product” to visit www.microsoft.com. Also, you can create a very short name for something that's normally several levels of slashes deep.
- To get started, go to opendns.org and log in. (This is assuming you're using OpenDNS.) Now click the Shortcuts tab at the top and type a shortcut (which can be anything) and the website it goes to. Once you're done, click Create Shortcut and wait 3 minutes for the change to be rolled out to the servers.
- **Last Month's Tip:**
 - How would you like to boost your internet speeds for free? Time to try OpenDNS. (This will actually work on any browser.)
 - If you have a router, visit: <https://www.opendns.com/start/router/>.
 - If you only have one computer, visit: <https://www.opendns.com/start/computer/>.
- Once you've changed your DNS settings, you can create an account and take advantage of other features like the phishing and content filters, shortcuts, and more.

Firefox

Version 3



- In addition to last month's tip (listed below), I have something more to add.
- That tip works great if you notice right away, but what if you've kept working for a while longer, opened and closed a couple more tabs, then wanted a tab back? That's easy to fix too.
- To open a recently closed tab, go to History → Recently Closed Tabs, then select the one you want.
- If you want to increase the number of tabs held in memory here (because you frequently work with a lot of tabs) see the PDF “Firefox Advanced Configuration” on my Tips page (<http://www.thetechnicalgeekery.com/Windows/tips.html>). The setting in question is named “`browser.sessionstore.max_tabs_undo`”. Don't make it huge, though, because those closed tabs are taking up your memory and possibly slowing down your computer while not doing anything.
- Last Month's Tip:
- Ever accidentally close a tab? Yes, me too. Easy to do, but easy to fix now because recently closed tabs remain in memory.
- To reopen it, just right-click the tab bar and choose “Undo Close Tab.”

Google Chrome

Version 1.0.154.65



- You know what, Chrome is so simple, I can't really think of much more to say about it. If you have a suggestion, write into me. I'll probably come up with something, but nothing comes to mind right now.

Keyboard Shortcuts



On all modern (post-Windows-95) versions of Windows (and many versions of Linux), you can press Alt-Tab (or sometimes Windows-Tab for a slicker interface) to see all your open windows. Press Tab repeatedly while still holding down Alt to switch, then release Alt to switch.

Fun Fact: This is officially called “CoolSwitch” by Microsoft. Yes, that's the technical term.

General Windows



- Windows 7 is out. My copy seems to be working fine. There have been a few minor installation glitches reported, but for the most part, it seems like everyone has a green light for upgrading.
- If you don't have Windows 7 yet and want to upgrade, you probably want Home Premium, which sells for \$120. There are numerous discounts available, so do some research. If you don't feel a pressing need to upgrade, it's probably fine to wait.
- If you want to know more about features, I will point you to my “Windows 7 Preview” feature on the Tips page, which is still fairly accurate, and to Google.

Editor's Note

Annoyances with Windows 7...



- Okay, well, this is really an unlimited topic, but I'll try to pick the biggest things.
 - Windows Update is still screwed up. Windows will still try to reboot while you're working.
 - Virtual desktops still don't exist. True, many users won't use them, but some like them, and just about every OS on the planet supports them.
 - Versions have been simplified, but they could still be better. Worse, some versions have switched names (Windows Starter and Home Basic).
 - The Shut Down button doesn't ask for confirmation. No problem once you get used to it, but coming from a previous version of Windows, it's unsettling. I like Ubuntu's approach better: a 60 second timer starts when you click Shut Down. You can confirm or cancel before the timer runs out.
 - Windows 7 is internally Windows version 6.1. Stupid. (Needed to fix application compatibility checks.)
 - Still crashes, freezes, and slows down occasionally. That's to be expected (it's Windows after all), but behind other operating systems like *nix based systems (eg. Linux, Unix, FreeBSD).

Announcements



- I may be planning to attempt to move to a home-based server to get around the exorbitant \$166 hosting fee for 2 years, but I should still have the same domain and links will still work. Not sure about this, but be ready for it.
- Report difficulties, technical issues, and/or factual problems with this newsletter to webmaster@thetechnicalgeekery.com.
- If someone you know wants to subscribe to this newsletter, have them visit <http://www.thetechnicalgeekery.com/Windows> and enter their email address.
- Visit <http://www.thetechnicalgeekery.com> for Windows downloads and many other features.
- As always, I welcome any comments, compliments, suggestions, and technical questions at webmaster@thetechnicalgeekery.com.

Formatting

- Although I'm not so good at this and it sometimes comes out inconsistent, I try to put wording that will appear on your screen in "quotation marks" or Capitalize All The Words In It.
- If there are multiple items to click on in a row, I use an arrow like this: →. By the way, if you're interested in how to insert those in Word, just use --> (two hyphens and a greater-than sign) and hit the spacebar.
- If you have to type something, I put it in *italics* to avoid confusion about whether to type quotation marks or not.