

# The NCTCUG Journal

www.nctcug.org

February 2012

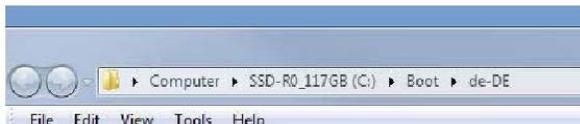
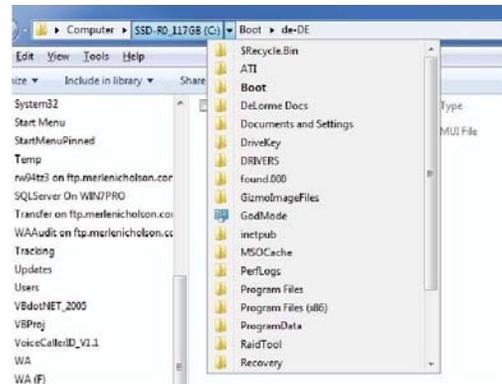
Volume 35 Issue 1

## Windows Explorer in Windows 7 (Vista, too)

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary, Tampa PC Users Group, FL; May 2011 issue, Bits of Blue  
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Here are some tips on using Windows Explorer in Windows 7 (Vista, too). The old "Up one directory" button that we all loved is gone in Win 7. It is now (always was) the keystroke Alt+Up (arrow). Although it's not hard to remember, I have it on a programmable key. I guess there's no point in making it a hotkey, since it IS a hotkey. Anyway, use Alt+Up for "Up one directory." Also, you can traverse up with the mouse. In the image below, you can click once on the text between the right arrows. In this case I can click on "Boot," "SSD-R0\_117GB (C:)" or "Computer," and the Explorer will move to those locations.



Also you can click on the arrows themselves and get this, dropdown list of file directories:

And while I'm at it, the in-context menu in Windows Explorer is slightly different when you hold down the shift key and right-click on a file: Two items are added as indicated in the below image. The Copy as path is really useful. It puts the entire drive, path and file name as text onto the clipboard. And if you Shift+right-click on a blank area in Windows Explorer, you get one with "Open Command Window Here."

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## Discovering Windows 7 – Part 18

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A reader emailed me to ask if I had any suggestions that would darken the text on his computer's display and make it more legible. It was an interesting question and it occurred to me that this would be a good topic for "Discovering Windows 7." In researching this topic I discovered Windows 7 provides three primary ways to improve the readability of your display.

We'll start with screen resolution. For the sharpest image, it's important for your video settings to match your screen. Click on the Windows Start button and type "screen resolution." In the window that appears select "Adjust screen resolution."

When you click on the button next to "Resolution" (marked in red) you'll see a slider that controls the range of screen resolutions available on your monitor. With LCD displays, the maximum number represents the number of horizontal and vertical pixels in your display. For the sharpest image, always use the maximum number of pixels; other settings may look blurry. After you've made your choice, click "OK."

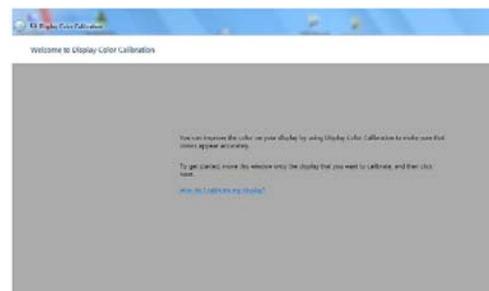
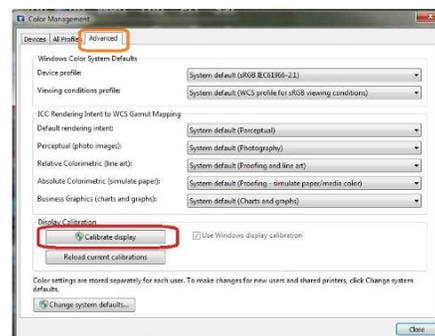


Next, let's look at color calibration. Color calibration adjusts the colors by changing different color settings so they are accurately shown on your screen. Windows 7 includes color calibration software with a "wizard" that makes it this easy to do. The changes that you can make depend upon your monitor and its capabilities so there may be some settings that you can't change. The "wizard" will let you skip steps that don't apply to your computer.

To start, click on the Windows Start button and type "color management" in the search box (marked in orange).

Windows will display a list of programs that include "color management." Select "Color Management" as shown (marked in red).

The "Color Management" window will open. Select the "Advanced" tab (marked in orange). There is a lot of information, with many settings on this page but we are just interested in the button labeled "Calibrate Display" (marked in red).



The welcome window for calibrating color opens. Click on the “Next” button in the lower right corner of the screen to start.

This will lead you through a series of screens. As you go through them you will learn how to adjust gamma, brightness, contrast and color balance settings. Brightness and contrast settings may not be available on all displays.

Laptops PCs, for example, often have brightness controls available among the function keys but no controls for contrast. If you have an LCD display, when you reach the last screen in the color calibration group, make sure that the box to “Start Clear Type Tuner” is checked (marked in red). Finally, to save your new color calibration, select the “Current calibration” button (marked in yellow) or click the “previous calibration” button to revert to the previous one.

The final step is to click on the “Finish” button to end color calibration.

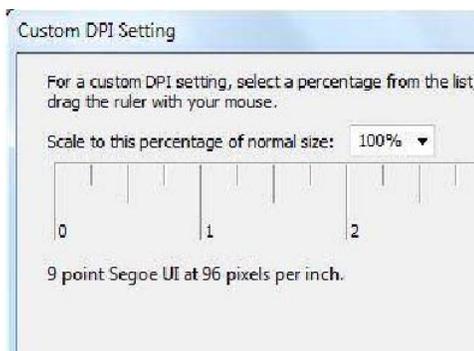
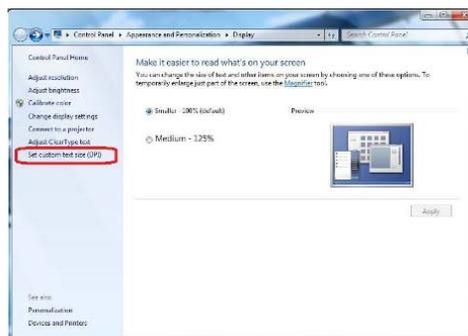
If you clicked on the box next to “Start Clear Type Tuner” (see above) you will see the screen shown below. This utility, as explained on the screen, improves the readability of text on LCD flat screen monitors. It doesn’t do anything for old style CRT monitors.

If the box next to “Turn on Clear Type” is checked (marked in red) when you click on the “Next” button (circled in blue), you will be led through a series of seven screens in which you select the “best looking” type (sort of like an eye test). This should give you the most legible type for your screen.

The final process that we’ll look at allows you to change the size of the letters on your screen. You begin by clicking on the Windows “Start” button and typing “display” in the Windows search box. In the window that appears, select “Set custom text size (DPI)” (marked in red).

When you click on it you will see the “Custom DPI Setting” window (see below). Experiment with various sizes to improve letter readability.

The above procedures are particularly helpful if you install a new display or video card on your computer. Even if you don’t, you may discover that they will be an improvement on the settings that were on your computer when you bought it. In my case I noticed a subtle, but significant, improvement in the display on my desktop PC.



## Bluetooth -- Not A Dental Diagnosis Or A Rare Tooth Problem

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

October 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor; [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org) president (at) spcug.org

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Bluetooth is the name given to a technology that uses short-range radio links, and is intended to replace the cable(s) connecting portable and/or fixed electronic devices. The vision is that it will allow for the replacement of the many propriety cables that connect one device to another with one universal radio link. Its boasts such key features as robustness, low complexity, low power and low cost, and it was designed to be operated in noisy frequency environments.

Bluetooth is a communications standard for interconnecting electronic devices and is defined by the Bluetooth specification. Bluetooth uses a form of data packet switching, a technology that is used to transmit digital data via a wireless communications link. Bluetooth operates in the unlicensed ISM (Industrial, Scientific and Medical) 2.4GHz frequency band, and avoids interference from other signals by hopping to a new frequency after transmitting or receiving each packet. Here is a little history, for you tech history buffs, to show how long Bluetooth has been around. Work on Bluetooth was started in 1994 by two Ericsson Corporation engineers, and the Bluetooth 1.0 specification was released May 1998. Version 1.0, with a data rate less than 1 Mb/s, had many problems, and manufacturers had difficulty making their products interoperable. Bluetooth 2.0 was released November 2004 with a faster data transfer rate (approx. 2.1Mb/s). And finally, Bluetooth 3.0 was released April 2009 with a data rate of up to 24Mb/s with improvements and new features and is the current standard.



Bluetooth uses a radio technology called frequency-hopping spread spectrum which chops up the data being sent and transmits chunks of it on up to 79 different frequencies. Bluetooth provides a way to connect and exchange information between devices such as Smartphones, laptops, personal computers, printers, Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers, digital cameras, video games, and others.

Bluetooth is an open, wireless protocol for exchanging data over short distances between devices, creating a personal area network (PAN). It was originally conceived as a wireless alternative to the old serial RS-232 data cables. Bluetooth is a network and thus can connect many devices, unlike RS-232 which was strictly serial point-to-point. Bluetooth is primarily designed for low power consumption, with a short range. Three ranges are defined in the standard: 100 meters (Class 1), 10 meters (Class 2), and 1 meter (Class 3). Because Bluetooth devices use radio (broadcast) communications, they do not have to be in line of sight of each other. Bluetooth makes it possible for these devices to communicate with each other and transfer information as long as they are in range.

Both Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are examples of wireless technology that use the unlicensed 2.4GHz frequency spectrum. Both have many applications in today's offices and homes such as: setting up networks, printing, connecting cooperating devices, and transferring data files among computers and smart devices. Wi-Fi is intended as a replacement for cabling for general local area network access in work areas. Bluetooth is intended as a replacement for cabling among equipment in close proximity. Wi-Fi is intended for use in equipment as a wireless local area network (WLAN). Bluetooth is intended for use as a smaller, personal area network (PAN).

A PC uses a Bluetooth adapter in order to communicate with other Bluetooth devices. While some desktop computers and most recent laptops come with a built-in Bluetooth adapter, others require an

external adapter, usually in the form of a Bluetooth Dongle. Bluetooth allows multiple devices to communicate with a computer over a single adapter. For Microsoft Windows platforms, Windows XP Service Pack 2, Vista, and Windows 7 all have native support for Bluetooth. (Previous versions required users to install their Bluetooth adapter's own drivers, which were not directly supported by Microsoft.)

Some of the more common applications of Bluetooth:

- Wireless control of and communications between a mobile phone and a hands-free headset. This was one of the earliest applications.
- Wireless communications with PC input and Output devices, the most common being the mouse, keyboard and printer.
- Replacement of traditional wired serial communications used in: test equipment, GPS receivers, Medical equipment, bar code scanners, and traffic control devices.
- Between game consoles such as Nintendo's Wii, and Sony's Playstation and their respective controllers.
- Between video camera and remote monitor in Baby Monitor Systems.
- Between Garage Door Opener Motor and Remote Garage Door Opener Controller.

As you can see from this list, there are many reasons for computer devices to communicate with each other. Here is a quick computer communications concept tutorial. When any two devices need to communicate, they have to agree on a number of things before the communication can begin. The first point of agreement is physical: Will they talk over wires, or through some form of wireless signals? If they use wires, how many are required; one, two, eight, 25? Once the physical attributes are decided, additional questions arise, such as how much data will be sent at a time? For instance, serial ports send data 1 bit at a time, while parallel ports send several bits at once. And how will they speak to each other? All of the devices in an electronic network need to know what the bits mean and whether the message they receive is the same message that was sent (i.e. checksums at the end of a message).

This means developing a set of commands and responses commonly known as a *Protocol*. Bluetooth is essentially a networking standard that defines these two levels, physical and protocol. Bluetooth protocols simplify the discovery and setup of services between devices. Before any communications can take place between two Bluetooth devices, they have to be paired. In order to pair two Bluetooth wireless devices, a password (or PassKey) has to be exchanged between the two devices. A Passkey is a code shared by both Bluetooth devices, which proves that both users have agreed to pair with each other.

A very brief description of Bluetooth pairing is as follows: Bluetooth Device A looks for other Bluetooth devices in the area. Bluetooth Device A finds Bluetooth Device B. Bluetooth Device A prompts you, the user, to enter a password (or PassKey). Bluetooth Device A sends the Passkey to Bluetooth Device B. Bluetooth Device B sends the Passkey back to Bluetooth Device A. At this point, Bluetooth Devices A and B are paired and able to exchange data. Data between the devices will be accomplished wirelessly, over-the-air, a great boon to those who dislike the "rats nest" of wires typically found behind electronic devices.

So, although dentists probably cringe when they hear the term, with all the computer devices you may have or are thinking of getting, there's probably a Bluetooth in your future.



## Windows 7 Jump Lists

**By Vinny La Bash, Regular Contributing Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL  
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There are those who say that Jump Lists are new to Windows 7, and there are those who say Jump Lists are nothing more than hyped-up extensions of the My Recent Documents menu which began in Windows 95. There is truth in both viewpoints.

Previous to Windows 7, the My Recent Documents menu listed the newest file version of its application. If a Word document was created at 7:00 am followed by a Spreadsheet edited at 8:00 am, followed by a drawing revised in Paint shortly thereafter, all three would be listed in reverse chronological order on the same list.

In Windows 7, each of those files would be on a separate list, each list comprised of files created by its own specific application. If you right-click on the Word icon for example, you see a list of the most recent Word documents that were created or edited by Word. A right-click on the Excel icon would reveal a list of the most recent Excel spreadsheets. The same holds for Paint, Adobe Photoshop, or PowerPoint.

Windows XP had the right idea, but the concept wasn't taken far enough. If an application that runs on Windows 7 is capable of generating files it will have its own Jump List. If you use one application heavily, it's very handy for that application to possess its own jump list. The Excel Jump List does not contain files generated by other applications, it shows only Excel spreadsheets.

Jump Lists act like application specific Start menus. You can find them on the application icons that appear on the Taskbar after the application is open. They also reside in the Start menu in the recently opened programs area. The Jump Lists on the Start menu appear a bit different than those on the Taskbar, but they function in exactly the same way. If you "pin" an application icon to the Start menu or the Taskbar you will get a Jump List by right-clicking on the icon.

Jump Lists have several defaults: the application's shortcut icon is displayed, you can close one or all windows that happen to be open, you can pin or unpin, see a list of up to ten recent files, and specific tasks associated with the application. If you bring up the Jump List for Internet Explorer 8, there is an item that let's you do InPrivate Browsing.

Right-click on any of the files listed in the Jump List. You can remove the file from the list, pin it permanently to the list, save it in another location, rename it, copy it, print it or even send it to another location.

An application's Jump List can be found in more than one location. If you open a Jump List from the Start menu and then open the same application's Jump List from the Taskbar or any other location, you will see exactly the same list of items. That's the kind of consistency that makes sense.

Different Jump Lists from the same application will show you the same thing, but a Jump List from Internet Explorer 8 will show something different than a Jump List from Media Player. IE 8 doesn't show recently played songs, and Media Player won't show you recently visited web sites. What you see on the list depends on the program.

Let's look at some odds and ends about Jump Lists that may prove useful. By default, the Internet Explorer icon in IE 8 is pinned to the Taskbar. When you wish to pin another application to either the Taskbar or the Start menu right-click on the application's icon, no matter where it is located, and pin it to either or both locations. You can unpin just as easily so don't worry about doing something you can't undo.

You can take an item from a Jump List and drag and drop to a new location such as the Desktop or a folder. Drag and drop to an email message and Windows will automatically attach it for sending.

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## E-mail Hacked? An Ounce of Prevention...

By Lee Seidman, Vice President, Business and Professional Microcomputer Users Group, Inc. (BPMUG), CT; February 2011 issue, The Help Key; Man (at) yahoo.com www.bpmug.org

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Recently, some unsuspecting e-mail users may have experienced dismay and shocking notifications suggesting that his or her e-mail has been hacked and used to send spam (or worse), even if the e-mail system is web-based rather than downloaded directly to one's computer via a local application like Microsoft Mail, Outlook, Outlook Express, MacMail, Entourage, Thunderbird, etc. (and hence, susceptible to operating system-level vulnerabilities). The primary suspect is the password used to access the account.

People tend to try to keep things simple by using the same password to access a variety of sites, but at the risk of security. People's e-mail account password should never be used for any other account or web site. Generally, e-mail can be compared to a postcard; although the message is destined for a particular recipient, it has the potential to be read by anyone as it traverses the Internet. Additionally, if one joins a web site that requests a password to subscribe, a confirmation e-mail is often generated clearly presenting the username (often an e-mail address) and the proper

password. The postcard analogy applies to that non-encrypted e-mail – it is open for anyone to read. A typical malicious-minded hacker (the "Black Hat") who either intercepts that e-mail or accesses that web site's consumer database would first attempt to use that password associated with that e-mail address to access the e-mail account. For example, if someone is whomever@aol.com registers to join community web site or message board site-whatever.com, generally he or she is asked to use his or her e-mail address as the user name. Site-whatever.com will ask the person to generate a password and often will send a confirmation e-mail identifying the username and password in clear text (meaning it is not obscured). The first thing a third-party (in other words, someone who is not the subscriber or a representative of the web site) may try to do is use the password contained in that e-mail to access whomever@aol.com itself.

Once a hacker with bad intentions gets into the e-mail, he or she may start slowly to not get noticed;

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If you unpin an item from a Jump List don't be perplexed if it reappears on the list the next time you open it.

You can't pin folders to the Taskbar because they are considered Windows Explorer items, but you can pin Windows Explorer to the Taskbar and folders will appear as items in the Jump List.

It can be useful to clear a Jump List for security or personal reasons. You don't have to unpin each item individually.

To clear a Jump List:

1. Open Control Panel.
2. Click Appearance and Personalization.

3. Click Taskbar and Start Menu.
4. Click the **Start Menu** tab in the dialog box.
5. Clear the checkmark in the Store and display recently opened items in the Start Menu and Taskbar check box.
6. Click **Apply**.
7. Recheck the box you cleared in step 5, unless you want the Jump List always empty.

Note: If you wish to change the number of items in your Jump Lists click the **Customize** button and follow instructions.

8. Close any open dialog boxes.

Some programs display useful tasks in their Jump Lists. Tasks on a Jump List can't be added to or removed.

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however, it does not require much effort for the “Black Hat” to change the password AND security questions (for password resets) to effectively lock the account owner out of his or her own e-mail. If nefarious activity is suspected to take place with one’s e-mail account:

- ✓ Inform those in your contact list of the circumstances, preferably by voice or an alternate e-mail account and make sure they understand not to engage the questionable content (usually seeking money in one form or another – especially via embedded hyperlinks); get as much help to act as quickly as possible as time is of the essence and everyone in that contact list is potentially at risk since they trust the e-mail is coming from you when in actuality it does not
- ✓ Change the password to access the e-mail account (and make it complex and very difficult to guess)
- ✓ Change the security questions to change the password
- ✓ Notify the e-mail provider
- ✓ If this is a commonly used password for online financial transactions (banking, purchasing, etc.), change the password for those e-commerce sites
- ✓ Keep all correspondence between the “Black Hat” and any contacts as evidence
- ✓ If money is involved, contact local and federal authorities at the Internet Crime Complaint Center (<http://www.ic3.gov/default.asp>), especially if the “Black Hat” actually defrauded someone out of money.

In general, it is a good idea to have an e-mail account for personal correspondence and a separate one for web-based subscriptions (or use a temporary/disposable e-mail address offered by the majority of providers). The key is to use distinct passwords; the online world can be a dangerous place in which to operate, but one’s own behavior usually determines the level of jeopardy one will risk in such an environment. A little forethought can prevent a whole lot of hindsight consternation.

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## Tablets

If you haven’t heard of a Tablet or a Tablet PC, you have been living under a rock. Tablets are a very easy way to work with email and to browse the Internet. Tablets have touch screens and run small Apps that perform tasks like playing games, getting the weather, sports scores, and other information. Currently Apple’s iPad is the most popular tablet, but competitors are starting to appear. Blackberry has a tablet called the Playbook. Motorola has the Xoom. Samsung has one called the Tab. HP recently introduced a tablet called the TouchPad.

Now that you are up-to-date on some of the technologies out there, it won’t be long before you buy a tablet to view your Netflix movies and buy a computer with a terabyte hard disk to tend to your FarmVille farm while doing most of your computing in the cloud. Technology is moving fast. Jump aboard and join the fun!



## Tech Terms

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS Newslette; [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com) sandy (at) compukiss.com

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If you want to be knowledgeable in today's world, you have to understand some high tech terms. Here are few of popular terms for 2011.

### Terabyte

For the last few years, we have talked about the amount of storage that a computer has in terms of gigabytes. Now we are starting to see computers offering terabyte drives. A terabyte is 1,024 gigabytes. Or to test your mathematical abilities, it is equivalent to 2 to the 40<sup>th</sup> power or 1,099,511,627,776 bytes. You don't need to know the details, just know that a terabyte hard drive can store thousands and thousands of documents, songs, and other data.

### SSD

SSD stands for Solid State Disk. This is a storage device like a hard drive. Unlike a hard drive, however, it contains no moving parts. SSDs are much faster than hard drives and so they improve the performance of a computer or other device.

### Cloud-Computing

In terms like "cloud computing," "cloud storage," and "cloud services," the cloud simply means the Internet. In cloud computing, applications that run on the Internet replace desktop programs that are usually stored and run locally on your own computer. When working "in the cloud," your computer or your mobile device is simply the conduit that connects with your data and with a program that accesses your data.

### Bing

Bing is a search engine that was developed and is run by Microsoft. It is a Google search engine competitor and performs a very similar function. Note the name. This may well be the first decent name that Microsoft has chosen since it put out Microsoft Office and Microsoft Word. You can check out Bing's search capabilities by going to [www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com).

### Video Streaming

Streaming is a technique for transferring data so that it can be processed as a steady and continuous stream. It is commonly used for video and movies. With streaming, the device you are using to view the videos can start displaying the video before the entire file has been transmitted. That means that you get to enjoy the video or movie more quickly. Today's streaming techniques also play movies more smoothly than previous technologies.

### Land Line

A land line is an old-fashioned telephone line that gets service from a telephone company and allows you to talk via telephones that are attached to the wall. People are giving up their land lines in droves to take advantage of cell phones and Internet telephone services.

### FarmVille

FarmVille is a Facebook game by Zynga. Millions of people play FarmVille. They raise flowers and crops, feed the animals, and organize and decorate their farms. It is a truly incredible game and judging by the numbers of players, it is also quite addictive. Ask around. If any of your friends are playing this game, have them show you their farms. I guarantee that you will be amazed.

### Netflix

Netflix is the leading subscription service for renting DVDs and streaming movies and television episodes over the Internet. It currently has more than 20 million members who pay \$8.95 or more a month for this service.

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## Shut down, Sleep, Hibernate — Which One, When And Why?

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

November 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor; [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org) president (at) spcug.org

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Shut-down is pretty straight forward: it removes power from your computer and ensures that the next time the power is turned on, the computer will go through the normal “boot up” process. Sleep and Hibernate are different and are “Powered Down” modes. The reason for using one of these powered down modes will differ depending on the type of computer, desktop or laptop, and the need to quickly get back to the operating mode after a pause in operation. Power usage, though always important, is mostly a consideration when using a laptop. How much operating time, before the batteries must be recharged, can be a big consideration for a laptop user. It can determine how useful the computer may be on a long flight, or how many movies the kids can watch on a cross-country road trip. Even with desktops, the increased cost of electricity can become a key factor for customers who are under pressure to manage their total cost of ownership (purchase price plus operating expenses).

The hardware that makes up today's laptops has gotten quite efficient and the Windows Operating System software's ability to manage that hardware's power usage has constantly been improved. One of the biggest improvements since the early 1990's has been the addition of these power down modes, to help provide longer battery life.

Improvements in battery technology has greatly increased battery capacity as well as battery lifetime. Besides improvements in battery technology, the Operating System control over the hardware can also improve the battery life. A job for the Operating System is to make the system as efficient as possible while still maintaining an acceptable user experience when turning the system on and off. (With the advent of Solid State Devices, in place of disk drives, we will eventually get to a very fast on and off experience. You can actually have it now, but it is very costly. By the way, try a tablet PC and see how fast it turns on and off; no moving parts in a tablet PC.)

The Windows 7 power management goals are simple:

1. Make turning a computer off/on as reliable, simple, and fast as turning a TV off/on, and
2. Maximize the battery usage if on battery, and reduce the energy consumption if on A/C power.

The first goal involves changing the model for what “off” and “on” really mean. By now, most everyone knows that turning a TV off doesn't *really* turn it *off*. It is still available to receive the remote control signal, so that it can come back on quickly. To the degree possible, “off” is really “sleep”, in Windows. When a PC goes into the sleep mode, the system state is saved in RAM; part of that 2 or 3 Gigabytes typically available in modern PCs. This arrangement creates the best balance between speed of resuming operation, and lowest power usage.

Currently, Windows 7 defines three power-down modes:

*Sleep* – a power-saving state that allows a computer to quickly resume full-power operation (typically within several seconds) when you want to start working again. Putting your computer into the sleep state is like pausing a DVD player—the computer immediately stops what it's doing and is ready to start again when you want to resume working.

*Hibernate* – a power-saving state designed primarily for laptops. While sleep puts your work and settings in memory and draws a small amount of power, Hibernation puts your open documents and programs on your hard disk, and then turns off your computer. Of all the power-saving states in Windows, hibernation uses the least amount of power. On a laptop, use hibernation when you know that you won't use your laptop for an extended period and won't have an opportunity to charge the battery during that time.

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## Don't Panic!

By **Berry F. Phillips**, Member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City;  
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I can almost imagine if Sherlock Holmes, my favorite fictional detective, had a computer in Victorian England, and he detected evil on his system what he would think. He would suspect a diabolical hacking by Dr. Moriarty. He would not panic but say calmly to Dr. Watson, "the game is afoot." Troubleshooting your computer is just like playing detective. There are certain steps that you can take before calling a computer tech and facing another horror story, the repair bill!

*(Continued from page 10)*

*Hybrid Sleep* – is designed primarily for desktop computers, is a combination of sleep and hibernate—it puts any open documents and programs (the system state) into memory and onto your hard disk (so nothing can be lost if power goes out), and then puts your computer into a low-power state so that you can quickly resume your work.

That way, if a power failure occurs, Windows can restore your work from your hard disk. Normally, when the user returns and "wakes" the machine, the system state is just restored from RAM, and the responsiveness to the user is fast. However, if for some reason power is lost (for example, if the PC is unplugged to move it — like you might move your TV), the system can still resume from the system state previously saved to disk with all context and data intact. (When Hybrid Sleep is turned on, putting your computer into sleep automatically puts your computer into Hybrid Sleep. Hybrid Sleep is typically turned on by default on desktop computers.) While Hybrid Sleep can be used on a laptop computer, it isn't as applicable. A desktop is vulnerable to power loss, while a laptop can, of course, run on its internal battery.

So, although there is a lot going on to produce and provide the power down modes, there really isn't much to think about. For desktops, let it go into, or select, sleep (which should be hybrid sleep) and for laptops take advantage of hibernate (your battery will thank you).

Panic control is to develop an objective detached mind of Sherlock Holmes as you begin your investigation of the evil in your computer. Sometimes breathing deeply helps. Sometimes getting up and doing something else and coming back to the problem helps. I find that often sleeping and coming back to the problem helps. Avoid getting too emotional and taking a hammer or some other weapon to attack your system remembering they computers expensive, and you do have lots of data on your system. Here are some basic instructions:

1. Restart your computer. Often software problems will correct themselves when you do that.
2. Check to make sure everything is working. If not check the connection to what is not working.
3. Check the electric power by plugging a lamp into the same power outlet that is connected to your computer to make sure the outlet is working.
4. Make sure the computer and monitor are plugged in.
5. Disconnect peripheral devices and restart the computer.
6. Listen for unusual sounds. Is the cooling fan running? Is the hard drive making noises?
7. Look inside the computer for wires that aren't plugged in all the way or other faulty connections
8. Start the computer from an external start-up disk, such as the system software CD that hopefully came with your computer.

Having said all that, I must confess that I have tried to save a buck being quite frugal and very Scottish only to make my problem even worse and of course more expensive for a tech (pro) to repair. If you do decide to call technical support, write down the exact problem and what you were doing when it occurred. Also note any error messages. Try to replicate the problem if you can. Be as specific as possible when talking to the support person. Computers can crash or hang when their hard disk become too full.

*(Continued on page 16)*

## How To Backup Securely

By Mark Tiongco [www.geeks.com](http://www.geeks.com)

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This Tech Tip addresses some frequently asked questions about how to safeguard your computer data on a personal and business level. It assumes that you DO NOT have gigabytes of music and movies that require extensive security measures to protect.

### 1) How should I begin to secure important data on my desktop computer or laptop?

First, it makes sense to designate 1 or 2 specific folders on your computer as the main folder for confidential file back-ups for several reasons. If you have to do a quick back-up, all you do is copy that folder to an external drive for an instant back-up.

Second, it provides a centralized location for all important data. Instead of having to hunt down the menu, sub-menu, sub-sub-menu of where you normally download company financial spreadsheets, you can set your browser and programs (such as Quickbooks, etc.) to save/download all important files to this folder.

Third, let's say you only save ALL important files on a flash drive/external hard drive. If your notebook gets lost/stolen, the thieves only have the programs and not the actual confidential files which are on the cheap flash drive.

### 2) Great, now how do I actually back-up my designated BACK UP folder(s)?

Here's where it gets tricky. You have several back-up options such as:

**A) Cloud** – Services such as Carbonite and Mozy offer low-priced back-up solutions. You basically upload all your confidential files to their cloud servers and are able to access them anywhere in the world where there is Internet access. The main issue is that, from a business security perspective, you have no idea where your data is stored. If, for example, it's stored in a server farm in China which gets hacked, then you're in trouble.

**B) External Hard Drives** – These nifty devices come in portable 2.5" and larger 3.5" flavors and offer more than generous dumping grounds for all things important. Once you plug it in, your OS recognizes it and pops you up with a folder showing it as a (giant) external drive with a letter (i.e. G:) Some even feature OTB (One Touch Backup) so you press one button and it backs up either your entire system or certain portions of it. Some external hard drives offer plug-in encryption that prevents unauthorized access. The issue with this solution is that you have to lug it around, which means it has a chance of getting lost/stolen and the formality of performing a back-up might become time-consuming to some.



**C) Flash Drive** – These little drives are more nimble, have zero moving parts and are highly portable. Unfortunately, this is also its Achilles' Heel as its relatively small size makes it prone to becoming misplaced or stolen. Also it does not have the capacity of a larger external drive. The good news is that some flash drives have built-in encryption which can be useful if it lands in the wrong hands.

**D) Home/Office Network Attached Storage Drive – Also called NAS**, this is an excellent solution for comprehensive back-up protection as these hard drives function as dumping grounds for an entire home or office network. It provides a centralized location for files, folders and documents which any connected computer can access and come in large drive sizes. However, security precautions should be utilized if the NAS has built-in measures as an unsecured NAS may be prone to prying eyes. For example, a NAS without security protocols activated while connected to a home Wi-Fi network is prone to being breached. Because of this, it's crucial to configure the NAS security as well as the router/network security for optimal protection.

**E) Backing up to CD/DVD/Blu-Ray** – Optical media back-up is actually a very cost-effective solution because CDs and DVDs are very cheap nowadays. Furthermore, if you're looking to close the books for a certain month on your business, burning to a CD-R or DVD+R sets the data in stone so it can't be manipulated on the disc. The problem is that if you have lots of data to back-up, the formality of using several CD-R or DVD-R discs to save might also become time consuming. In addition, you would have to make sure said back-up discs are placed in a safe place where the chance of it getting stolen is minimized.



3) Which back-up method should I pick?

While the above solutions offer many ways to back up your confidential data, the best way to minimize a data breach/loss is to follow a combination of multiple back-up solutions and proactive behavior. For example, it would be a good idea to store important sensitive data on your flash drive and encrypting it with TRUE Crypt while also saving duplicate file copies on your home NAS drive via secure VPN connection. If your flash drive is lost/stolen, True Crypt prevents the drive from being used without proper credentials and you can still access the very same duplicate files on your NAS server.

Regarding proactive behavior, you should be mindful of back-ups so you don't lose something you wish you saved 2 weeks ago.

There are also programs out there that can help secure data such as:

1. Folder Lock – Locks and can hide any folder you wish from prying eyes.
2. True Crypt– secures drives with extensive hardware encryption.
3. Acronis Drive Cleaner – Completely erases all drive data with several methods (DOD, Gutmann method, etc.) – works great if you're planning to get rid of old computer hardware.

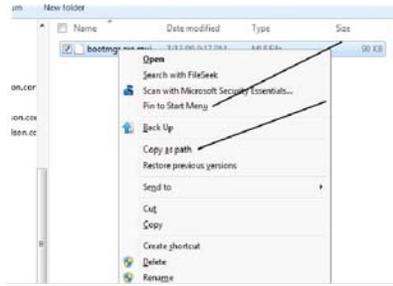
Remember, it's all about being proactive and being mindful of what back-up security solutions to use for your personal or business needs!



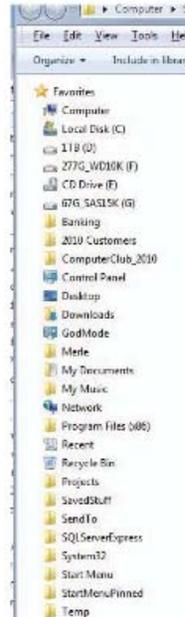
(Continued from page 1)

Less useful, but kind of interesting.

You may get other variations on a right-click, depending on the file type.



New folder			
	Date modified	Type	Size
.mui	7/13/09 9:17 PM	MUI File	



I also added a lot of items under Favorites, because I find the tree menu inadequate. It's not the entire tree, but it's 99% of all the places I go. This really works.

Also there are the Back and Forward buttons and the "Recent pages" button (see image below). The forward and back buttons do not traverse up and down the directory tree, but they have the history of the views of where you've been. As does the Recent pages button. You'll have to try the Recent pages button. It can be very useful.



## Washington Area Computer User Group

WACUG Meetings will be held on February 18, 2012 from 12:30 to 3:30 pm. WACUG will hold joint meetings with OPCUG [www.olligmu.org/~opcug/] Meetings will be held at the **Osher Lifelong Learning Institute** [www.oli.gmu.edu/] at George Mason University, 4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax, VA, known as the Tallwood Campus.

### Topics

Presentation by Dan Feighery  
 Photography / Digital Imaging  
 Learn 30: Lorrin Garson  
 Protecting Private Information with TrueCrypt

You do not need to be a member to attend. For more information on WAC meetings and events, call the WAC AnswerLine (voice) at (703) 370-7649. Also see WAC's Web Site at

<http://www.wacug.org/>

*Happy Valentine's Day*



## Washington Area User Group Partners

Working Together For Our Members  
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## This and That or Things That May Interest You

By Lynn Page, Editor, Crystal River Users Group, Florida

Dec. 2010 & Jan. 2011 issues, CRUG newsletter [www.crug.com](http://www.crug.com) newsletter (at) [crug.com](http://crug.com)

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### Windows Explorer — Check Boxes

I use the Control key to make multiple selections in Windows Explorer but you can also use check boxes. With Windows 7 in Windows Explorer, click Organize and select Folder and search options in the drop down menu. Select the View tab and in the Advanced Settings window scroll down, check the box for Use check boxes to select items and click OK. Then when hovering the mouse over a file in Windows Explorer, a check box appears next to it. Click the check box to select the file. The checked box remains next to the file. Clicking it again removes the check and the box disappears when the mouse is moved away.

### Windows 7

Run Multiple Copies of Applications from the Taskbar  
If a program is already running, to launch another copy of the application from the taskbar, hold down the Shift key and click the icon.

### Windows Live Mail Options

Access Mail, Email Account, Newsgroup, Feeds and Safety options through the drop down menus.

### Write Messages Offline

Windows Live Mail saves messages on your hard drive, rather than on the web. So when travelling or using an unsecured WI-FI write messages and read those already downloaded while offline. Then connect to the Internet to download new email and send messages you have ready and waiting in the Outbox.

### Add Recipients to Windows Live Mail Contacts

To add other recipients of an email, right-click on the recipient, select Add to Contacts and confirm the details. This works for recipients in the To and CC lists. Right clicking a recipient already in the Contacts list offers an Edit Contact option.

## NCTCUG Information

NCTCUG, Inc. 201 S. Kensington St. Arlington VA 22204-1141

Club Information call: 301-577-7899

Web Site: [www.nctcug.org](http://www.nctcug.org)

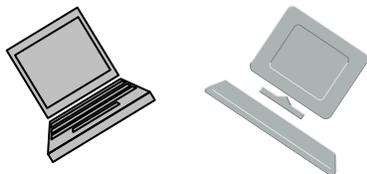
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All officer terms expire 2012

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### Article Submissions

Articles, helpful hints, and other items of interest to readers of the NCTCUG Journal are always welcome and will be published as soon as possible after submission. Priority is given to members' contributions. Articles may be submitted in MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) or plain unformatted text (C/R only at end of paragraphs, no indents preferred) via email to the editor [nctcug@verizon.net](mailto:nctcug@verizon.net)

### Membership Policy

The National Capital Technology and Computer Users Group, Inc. is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization founded in 1978 to educate users of all Tandy computers and MS-DOS compatible computers. Membership dues are \$25.00 (U.S. Funds) per year, with a \$5 surcharge for international mail. Membership in NCTCUG includes membership in all SIGs, access to the BBS and software libraries, and subscription to the Journal published 8 times per year. Applications may be obtained at any club meeting, by downloading from the BBS, by calling one of the officers or board members, or by writing to the club. A sample newsletter, membership application and related information may be obtained by enclosing \$1 and mailing your request to Jim Rhodes, 201 S. Kensington Street, Arlington VA 22204.

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### COMPUCENTER BBS

Is no longer in operation. It has been replaced by the 'compucenter' mailing list at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/compucenter/>

### If you are moving

Please send your change of address to the club address as soon as possible to avoid missing issues.

*Thank You!*

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Free up space by deleting unnecessary files and emptying the Trash or Recycle Bin.

Don't shock yourself or your RAM. When working inside the computer, turn the power off but leave the electrical cord plugged into the surge suppressor. Ground yourself by touching the casing of the power supply before touching any of the computer circuits. You can also wear a grounding strap which is very inexpensive. Every computer user should have a small computer tool kit.

I do not recommend the medical option of taking of panic pills for computer ills. I do recommend joining the Computer Club of Oklahoma City where we share with each other our positive as well a negative computer experiences. Knowledge is the real cure for panic in computing.

The motto of our computer club for years is: "The only stupid question is the one not asked!"

I wonder if I can get Sherlock Holmes as a guest speaker for the computer club. Do you think I may have become a bit eccentric as a fan of the world's greatest detective? Where did I leave my smoking jacket and calabash pipe? I will have to ask Dr. Watson or Mrs. Hudson!

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First Class

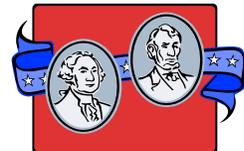


February 2012

1st Wed. (2/1)  
7 p.m. General Meeting

2nd Wed. (2/8)  
**Online-Only Webinar using Skype**  
for information see club page at  
<http://www.nctcug.org/webinarsig.html>

4th Wed (2/22)  
7 p.m. Internet SIG



3rd Monday (2/20)  
7 p.m. Board of Directors

Meetings are at **Carlin Hall**, 5711 S. 4th St.,  
Arlington VA: East off of Carlin Springs Rd, just  
south of Arlington Blvd/Route 50. See website for  
directions to post-meeting pizza gathering.