



# Windows *Me*

by Peter Campbell

**Windows *Me* is here! Or it will be by the time most readers receive this newsletter. What is Windows *Me* and should you upgrade to it? I haven't had a chance to try it yet, so I will base this preview on what I have read so far.**

## What's New?

Windows *Me* has a revised look, which *PC User* describes as "Windows 2000-ish", and a few other obvious changes. However, most of the new features "are either subtle or buried", the magazine says.

New, or improved, hardware support is provided for digital cameras, scanners, multimedia and home networking. If you have an Internet connection, "you will find this the most self-healing version of Windows yet", *PC User* claims. While you are online, but your modem is inactive, Windows will seek out and download any available updates.

Windows *Me* includes System File Protection to prevent DLL files from being overwritten or removed when you are installing a new program.

Perhaps the most important new feature is the ability to roll back to when Windows was working properly in the event of a crash. This requires a considerable amount of hard disk space, though, so be prepared to allocate up to a megabyte for the complete system and the roll back files, which by default take up 500 MB although they can be reduced to 200.

There is a "cool, new" media player and Internet Explorer 5.5, but you can download and add them to Windows 98, if you so desire.

DOS has all but been removed and the only way you can boot to DOS now is from a floppy disk. You can still run DOS programs, provided they will run in a window and do not require MS-DOS mode.

There are many other small changes that the magazine says will make working with Windows easier.

## 98's Successor

Windows *Me* is the long-awaited successor to Windows 98, but it is not for everyone. Each time that an "improved" version of Windows is released, some older hardware gets left behind and cannot use the new system, or will not benefit from the new features. This is not a criticism of Microsoft's policies, it is simply a statement of fact.

As new hardware, such as USB ports, is developed, support for the new hardware is built into Windows, saving you the trouble of finding and installing additional drivers. If you do not need this support you do not need to upgrade unless you are having stability problems. Even then, you may be able to retain your old operating system by patching it with the updates obtainable from the Microsoft website.

## Who can't use it?

Windows *Me* requires a Pentium class machine of, at least, 150 MHz. A 200 Mhz computer is probably a realistic minimum. Maybe you will have to do that upgrade after all, but have a look at the demo on the October issue of *Australian PC User* first.

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## Coming Meetings

### **September 12 — AutoCad**

We had scheduled this earlier in the year but were forced to postpone it. If you want to know more about how architects use computers, this is your chance.

### **September 26 — BuddyHelp with Jenny Clark and Robyne Ridgeway**

From what I have heard of BuddyHelp, this should be a very interesting demonstration. Apparently BuddyHelp can let you chat directly to someone with the expertise to help with that problem, via the Internet.

### **October 10 — MYOB 1st Accounts with Colin von Bibra**

Our survey showed quite a bit of interest in home and small business accounting. One program that can do the job is 1st Accounts. So don't miss this one.

### **October 24 — Internet Add-ons with Peter Campbell**

Another popular choice was Internet Add-ons so Peter Campbell has offered to discuss them and demonstrate some of the ones he uses to speed up browsing, keep track of all those Ids and passwords that are needed to access some sites, download whole websites for browsing later, and more.

## General Information

- The **Hobart Computer Users Group** meets on the **second and fourth Tuesday** of each month from January to November and on the **second Tuesday only** in December.
- The Group produces a **newsletter** monthly, except December/January, in time for the first meeting of the month.
- The Group also runs an email list ([hcug-list@southcom.com.au](mailto:hcug-list@southcom.com.au)). To subscribe to the list, send an email to [majordomo@southcom.com.au](mailto:majordomo@southcom.com.au) with the words "subscribe hcug-list" in the body of the message, not the subject.
- We meet at the **Aurora "Hands On" Energy Discovery Centre, 169a Main Road (opposite China Diner), Moonah.**
- Doors open approximately 7.40pm. **Meetings begin at 8pm.**
- Supper is available after the meeting for 50c.
- Visitors are always welcome.
- Annual subscription is \$25.00 per household per year, payable on 1<sup>st</sup> July. Half yearly payments may be accepted where circumstances warrant.

*"Thuggery" is published monthly and distributed to members, visitors and advertisers. Copies are also exchanged with other user groups in Australia and overseas.*

***Editor:** Peter Campbell  
**Asst. Editor:** Jenny Clark  
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***Masters:** Epson 640 courtesy of Peter Campbell*

***DTP Program:** StarOffice 5.1. Electronic Editions produced using StarOffice 5.2 and NikNak (5D PDF Creator)*

***Photocopying and collating:** OfficeWorks, Hobart*

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### **Advertisers please note:**

*All advertising copy must reach the Editor by the advertising deadline, or it may be excluded at the discretion of the Editor. We regret the necessity for this, but compliance with deadlines is essential so that the draft newsletter can be submitted to the Committee at their meeting on the first Tuesday of each month for printing approval. Advertising rates on application to the Advertising Manager.*

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# Presidential Pontifications

from Peter Campbell

## Thank you

Thanks for the vote of confidence, if that's what it was. To be elected unopposed can be a compliment, or it can mean that nobody else wants the job! Given the difficulty we had filling the three vacant positions, I suspect the latter.

## Get involved

I will start as I mean to go on. If you thought that paying your dues when the Treasurer twisted your arm, and coming to a meeting occasionally was all that was expected of you, you should have chosen someone else.

The Annual Survey form was the first step in getting more input from the membership. What do you want to see? Where do you want to go? It is important for **every** member to have an input so it is not too late to download the survey form from the website and hand it in at the next meeting. Do it now, someone has to be first!

## Last issue for some

If you haven't paid your membership fee for 2000/01, this will be the last issue of the printed newsletter you will receive until you do so. We make no apology for that. Producing the newsletter is expensive and we cannot afford to produce many "free" copies, though we do try to have a few spares for visitors.

## Electronic newsletters

In fact, we are still investigating the possibility of electronic newsletters and/or an electronic archive of old newsletters. Jenny has discovered an application that produces very compact multi-page TIF files. However, the files quadruple in size at the slightest

provocation. If we can establish that they stay compact while being downloaded, and only expand as they are written to your hard drive, we may adopt this method for our archive.

They can be viewed and printed with Imaging, which comes with Windows 98, but isn't installed by default so you may have to install it. Go to Control Panel / Add remove programs/ Windows Setup to add it. It may also come with some versions of Windows 95 so check your CD using the above procedure.

Alternatively you can use StarOffice Image, or some other graphics programs. However, not all graphics programs are suitable, as some do not show the multiple pages. Of the two methods that I have tried, Imaging is probably the better.

## Visitors

Talking of visitors, as I was a little earlier, I was surprised to find that most members apparently don't know how to identify them!

Only five of the nineteen members who completed survey forms at the AGM felt that they could help to make visitors more welcome. As you're not an unsociable lot, I can only conclude that you cannot recognise them!

In case you hadn't realised, those people wandering around looking lost and not wearing an engraved name tag, are visitors — future members! Go up to them and introduce

yourself. They don't bite! In fact, they are quite docile.

After you have introduced yourself, make sure that they have received a newsletter, that they know where the toilets are, and, if they have a question they want to ask, encourage them to do so in Problem Time. You could also point them in the direction of someone who can answer their query if they prefer not to raise it publicly.

It really is quite easy to do and it does help our reputation as a friendly group that welcomes people of all skill levels. You never know, you might even make a lifelong friend. Friendship have to start somewhere.

Cya

## Southern Internet Services

***Special deal for Hobart  
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# Hints, Tips & Suggestions

from all over

## Keep that tool open

In Publisher 98, when you click on a drawing tool you can use it once and then it closes. By pressing the CTRL key as you click on the tool of your choice, it will remain open until you cancel it.

This also works in StarOffice 5.2 and will probably work in other Windows-based programs. Try it and see.


In NewDeal Office, the default is for the tool to stay open until you select something else. No CTRL key needed!

## Return to Go!Zilla Main Window

When minimized, Go!Zilla™ can appear in the system tray as an icon or as a drop target (an always-on-top square of the Go!Zilla eye). To return to the main window, double click on the drop target, or single click on the tray icon. You can also quickly return to the Main Window from either of these minimizations by right-clicking on either of them and selecting Main Window from the pop-up menu.

## Spare Parts

Scanner manufacturers and importers come and go and models change, making parts sometimes hard to get. Unless you're spending your last centime on a scanner, you would do well to stock up on spare parts for it also. If you intend your scanner to be a long term investment it is better to buy a spare lamp now than risk not being able to get one because the scanner is no



### **Basic Product List**

We can supply a vast range of supplies for your home and small business computer users. Best prices given to members of the Hobart Computer Users Group Inc. who identify themselves when purchasing. Even if you only try us for items that others cannot, or will not, supply, we will use our best endeavours to do so. Combined with friendly and personal service, you will be pleasantly surprised.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Computer consumables</li><li>■ Photocopy consumables</li><li>■ Laser consumables</li><li>■ Printer</li><li>■ Fax rolls</li><li>■ Register rolls</li><li>■ Packaging tape</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Copy paper</li><li>■ Envelopes</li><li>■ Desk accessories</li><li>■ Computer paper</li><li>■ Pens and pencils</li><li>■ OHP Products</li><li>■ ATM Rolls</li></ul>
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**"If it's made we can get it"**

Please contact Glenn Tanner

284C Argyle St  
North Hobart 7000

Ph 6234 3212  
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longer supported.

## Open Spreadsheets at Start-Up — Excel 2000

You can automatically open a

frequently used spreadsheet each time you open Excel. To do so, select Save As from the File menu while in the desired spreadsheet. When the Save As dialog box appears, locate the Xlstart folder, located in the Office

directory. Click the Save button to save the file to this folder. The file you have selected will open automatically each time you start Excel.

With other versions of Excel and other spreadsheets, you can open them when you start Windows by placing the spreadsheet in question in the normal Windows Startup folder, or you can use the docu-centric nature of most modern applications. Place the document on your desktop and double-click on it to open both the application and the document.

With NewDeal Office, just leave the document and application open when you Exit to DOS. Unlike Windows, NewDeal does not close open applications and when you return, everything that you had open will still be open!

## Grammar Slammer

StarOffice 5.2 does not have a grammar checker and leaves you to your own devices when trying to write correctly. Now you can do something about that.

Although not a grammar checker, Grammar Slammer 2.0 is well worth installing. It works with all Windows 9x/2000/NT programs and Grammar Slammer 1.1 can be used with Windows 3.1.

Grammar Slammer can best be described as grammar help. It is in the format of a Windows help file. Although American-oriented, its coverage of common grammar errors is useful to even us Aussie English manglers and will teach you how to *write* more intelligibly. Because speech has tone and inflexion to clarify the meaning and writing doesn't, the latter requires a different approach. Grammar Slammer takes that approach.

It is shareware and you get a trial after which you asked to

register at a cost of \$USD25 (about \$AUD45 at current rates of exchange). Grammar Slammer can also be had as part of Language Vanquish, or Grammar Slammer Deluxe, which includes a similar program for spelling help.

<http://englishplus.com>

## What time is it?

Did you patch Windows for daylight savings time this year or did you adjust your computer's time clock manually for the early start of daylight saving time? If you made a manual adjustment, did you turn off the automatic adjustment for daylight savings?

If you didn't turn it off, your computer's clock will want to jump forward an hour on the last Sunday in October.

To turn it off, go into Control Panel and click on Date/Time and untick the square against "Automatically adjust clock for daylight saving changes".

If, next year, Tasmania continues to stay in line with Victoria, just adopt their time zone instead of Hobart's.

## Column Changes

Recent versions of Microsoft Word allow you to change the number of columns midway through a page. You do this by choosing to have the columns "From this point on". StarOffice 5.2 does not do it that way and until recently I did not realise that it could achieve the same effect without the use of text frames.

To change the number of columns midway through a page in StarOffice you click on Insert and then Section. However, don't try to alter things in the middle of a long and complex document as it may destroy the formatting on

subsequent pages and, in any case, will take quite a long time to finish whatever change it does make. Make the changes on a blank page by inserting the sections at the top of the page and then typing or pasting in the text into the appropriate section.

## Outlook Newsgroup Search

Newsgroup names don't always clearly reveal the type of information that is in the postings. If your search on newsgroup names doesn't locate what you need, search on descriptions. Check the search descriptions box as well. This tells Outlook Express to go back and download descriptions. Soon, you should be able to scroll through your list and see some descriptions. Don't expect miracles, though. Not all newsgroups have descriptions.

## Help

Windows 98 tries hard to be helpful. A hidden form of help is spread all over your screen. Put the cursor over a screen button or icon, such as the Start button, and if you stay there, you soon see a ToolTip. These little windows explain what you're looking at and sometimes also what it can do. Over the Start button, for example, you see "Click here to begin."

## Hot Key to Explorer

You can assign a hot key sequence to run Explorer. In Windows 95, right-click Start and select Explore. Double-click Programs and right-click Windows Explorer. Go to the Shortcut tab, and in the Shortcut key field. Try a hot key sequence such as Ctrl-Alt-Shift.

# Get an answer

by Peter Campbell

**There are many ways to find the answer to that burning question. Let's look at the possibilities:**

## THCUG

At most meetings we set aside some time to deal with members questions. So bring your question along to a meeting and ask it during "Problem time". That way other members learn the answer too.

Most of the Committee and a number of other members are willing to answer questions. However, you must remember that they do so at **their** convenience, **not** yours. How best to manage such questions is something the new Committee is looking at.

A guide will be published next month detailing who to ask about what, how and when. For example, it is no good asking me about Word Perfect and MS Publisher. I don't use them. Nor is it any use ringing me on Friday evening or during the day on Saturday. You will only get an answering machine. Some members may prefer your questions to be posed by email so that they can prepare a well-considered answer.

The Group also runs an email list and I will explain how to use that a little later.

And, of course, you can always send your questions in to the Editor, Thuggery, PO Box 563, Glenorchy Tas 7010 for publication in the next issue. Deadline for submissions is the first Tuesday of the month, but it is better to send your question earlier as space may have already been fully allocated before then and your question would then have to be carried over to the following month.

## Radio

Two Hobart radio stations run

computer segments where listeners questions are answered. Magic107's computer guru, Steve Leeper, answers questions and presents interesting information at 8.20 on Wednesday mornings, while the ABC's 936 has a segment on Saturdays at 9.30 am. Even if the computer guru doesn't know the answer, putting it to air can still get you an answer, sometimes by quite a circuitous route.

One listener in Launceston rang the ABC a few weeks back and posed a question about StarOffice. One of our members heard the query, contacted the questioner and contacted me. In the end, I was able not only to point the gentleman in the right direction with regard to his query, but also persuade him to upgrade to the latest version and consider signing up for one of Sun's on-line StarOffice courses.

## Ask Me

The very useful website <http://www.askme.com> will connect you with thousands of experts, not just on computer-related topics, but on many others.

You must first become a member, but this is a simple process and is free. Then, if you wish, you select an expert who handles your type of question and post your question, either privately or publicly. Alternatively you can post it for any expert who feels he can help with an answer.

If you have selected an expert, he/she will be notified by email that he/she has been asked a question and will log onto the website to read the question. Emails may also be sent by AskMe to other experts in that field asking them to check the latest questions.

Your selected expert, or any other expert who thinks they can

help, will then answer your question, request further information, or decline to answer it. You can rate his/her answer and the site tracks how long it takes and gives the average time that that expert has taken in the past to answer questions as well as his/her rating. This helps you to select who to ask.

## Email lists

Yet another way in which you can get an answer through the Group is to pose the question on the email list. If you haven't joined the list, send an email to [majordomo@southcom.com.au](mailto:majordomo@southcom.com.au) with "Subscribe hcug-list" (without quotation marks) in the **body** of the message. If you do it correctly, you should receive an automated acknowledgement and the "List Owner", Paul Turvey, will be notified that you have joined.

To post a question, simply address it to [hcug-list@southcom.com.au](mailto:hcug-list@southcom.com.au). Any subscriber to the list who can help will then post a reply which you will receive with your email.

## Newsgroups

There are many thousands of newsgroups and new ones are created almost every day. Newsgroups work in a similar manner to email lists, but are publicly available and there is no list of subscribers. Thus you can "lurk" in the background reading the many messages without anyone knowing you are there.

To get started, you simply get your newsgroup reader to download a list of all groups available from your Internet Service Provider. You then search through the list for groups that are devoted to the topic that you wish to discuss.

To access those groups you must

subscribe to them. This is done by marking those groups in your newsgroup reader. Then when you go on line, the reader will download the headers of messages in that group and sort them according to the subject line. Each sorted group is called a thread. You need only read the threads that are of interest to you.

When you click on a header, the reader will then download the message that goes with that header for you to read. This, of course, requires you to be online while reading messages.

Alternatively, you can set your newsgroup reader to download the message bodies automatically. This works well if you only read a few groups, especially if they do not have a lot of traffic. If you read some of the more popular groups, it will take quite a long time to download every message, and even longer to read them all.

If you have a question that you want answered, you write a message and post it to the newsgroup. Within a few hours, people all around the world will read your message and some will be moved to answer.

One disadvantage of newsgroups are what are called "trolls". Trolls are people who get their kicks by trying to incite readers of the newsgroup.

For example, someone might post a message in the comp.os.geos.misc group asking why anyone in their right mind would want to use NewDeal Office. Naturally this would provoke a series of responses explaining why users find NewDeal Office meets their needs.

If the person posting the original message is a troll, they will continue the thread, rejecting whatever arguments have been put forward and continuing to claim that users of NewDeal don't know what they are missing out on. Such an exchange is called a "flame war". Don't get involved. It is nothing but a waste of time.

## SeniorLink Members Only

If you are over 55 and no longer working full time, you could join SeniorLink. Members have access to a Help Desk staffed by Robyne Ridgeway. You ring Robyne and she endeavours to answer your question. If she cannot, she can draw on all the resources discussed in this article as she is also a member of the Hobart Computer Users Group Inc.

## Magazines

There are many computer magazines on the Australian market. Some of these accept questions from readers.

The two disadvantages that I can see in sending your question to a magazine is firstly the time that it will take before a reply is published and, secondly, the fact that after waiting all that time, your question may not be one selected for answer from the many they receive.

Read the answers to other people's questions published in magazines, by all means. You can learn a great deal from them, but try some of the other methods suggested, if you require an answer in a hurry.

## RefDesk

The RefDesk is a great place to start if you are trying to find the answer yourself. From this website, you have access to encyclopaedias, facts, search engines, births and deaths on today's date, Reuter's

news, and other sources of information. Check it out and then add it to your favourites, or bookmark it (depending on your browser).

## Books

There are several computer book series that have titles in them dealing with most of the popular applications. Some are written for people with no knowledge of the application. Good examples are the "Dummies" guides and "The Complete Idiot's Guide to". Other good books for the more knowledgeable include "Sam's Teach Yourself in 24 Hours".

Manuals, on the other hand, often seem to be written by people who assume you know the application as well as they do, or that you know the basics and just need help with some of the more advanced concepts. Not all manuals are like that, of course, some software producers put a lot of effort into their manuals. Which is of no help at all when the software is bundled with a computer but without a manual!

In such cases there will be fairly extensive help incorporated into the application. However, the hypertext linking in help files can often be harder to follow than a good printed manual or "Idiot's Guide".

Some software programs come with tutorials on the CD with them. Work through these and you will learn the basics of the application and may not have as many questions that need answers!

<p><b>Welcome to Refdesk</b></p> <p>Search the Web</p> <p><input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Go"/></p> <p> <a href="#">How to Google</a></p> <p>Search Refdesk</p> <p><input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Go"/></p> <p> <a href="#">Site Map - Start Here</a>  <a href="#">New Sites on Refdesk</a>  <a href="#">About Refdesk   Viewing Tips</a>  <a href="#">Free Net Access   E-mail</a>  <a href="#">ASK BOB   Archives</a>  <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a> </p> <p>Search for Books and Music:</p> <p><input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="GO"/></p> <p></p>	<p><b>Reference Site-of-the-Day</b></p> <p><a href="#">Lexical FreeNet</a> Search for relationships between words, concepts, and people; a combination thesaurus, rhyming dictionary, pun generator, and concept navigator. [ <a href="#">Archives</a> ] [ <a href="#">Site-of-the-Week</a> ]</p> <p>To Receive Site-of-the-Day Enter Email Address</p> <p><input type="text"/></p> <p><input type="button" value="Send"/></p> <p><a href="#">Tell a friend about Refdesk.com</a></p> <p><b>Facts-of-the-Day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Astronomy Image-of-the-Day</a></li> <li><a href="#">AP Pictures-of-the-Day</a></li> <li><a href="#">Births, Deaths, and Events</a></li> <li><a href="#">Daily Almanac</a></li> <li><a href="#">Daily Moon Phases</a></li> <li><a href="#">Refdesk Fact-of-the-Day</a></li> <li><a href="#">Refdesk Thought-of-the-Day</a></li> <li><a href="#">Today in History: AP - HC - LOC</a></li> <li><a href="#">Word-of-the-Day: OED - MW - RH</a></li> <li><a href="#">Hurricane Cam - Updated Hourly</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Reference Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Editor's Picks: Sites 2000</a></li> <li><a href="#">Facts Encyclopedia</a></li> <li><a href="#">7,500+ Sites - 73 Topics</a></li> <li><a href="#">Fast Facts 2000</a></li> <li><a href="#">375+ Sources of Facts</a></li> <li><a href="#">First Things First</a></li> <li><a href="#">Journalist's Tools</a></li> <li><a href="#">Search Engines</a></li> <li><a href="#">Essential Reference Tools</a></li> <li><a href="#">Editor's Picks, 13 Topics</a></li> <li><a href="#">Facts Subject Index</a></li> <li><a href="#">2,000+ Sites - 24 Subjects</a></li> <li><a href="#">Quick Research</a></li> <li><a href="#">300+ Research Sites</a></li> <li><a href="#">USA &amp; World Newspapers Op-Ed   Journalists</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Wed, Sep 6, 2000</b></p> <p><b>ATOMIC CLOCK</b></p> <p>September 2000</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Su</td> <td>Mo</td> <td>Tu</td> <td>We</td> <td>Th</td> <td>Fr</td> <td>Sa</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> </tr> </table> <p>Calendar: <a href="#">2000</a>   <a href="#">2001</a>   <a href="#">Personal</a></p> <p><b>excite.</b> Top News by Reuters Updated 09/06 1:38 AM EST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Gore to Offer Budget Plan, 'Reserve Fund'</a></li> <li><a href="#">Bush Proposes Near \$200 Billion Medicare Overhaul</a></li> <li><a href="#">Firestone, Ford to Be Grilled on Mideast Tire Swaps</a></li> <li><a href="#">Israel Jacks Up Pressure on Arafat to Compromise</a></li> <li><a href="#">Pranksters Roll Out Fake Stars for Toronto Film Fest</a></li> <li><a href="#">more headlines/features</a></li> </ul>	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa							1 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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## Hot tips, FAQs and Tutorials

Many software producers collect together answers to commonly asked questions and place them on their website. They may call them "Hot tips" or they may call the collection an "FAQ" (Frequently Asked Questions).

Some, such as Sun Microsystems, also provide online tutorials and courses that you can take. Some of these may incur a fee.

## Search Engines

A search engine is a database of webpages and the means to search that database. When wording your search, you need to be as specific as possible. For example if you are looking for an online bookseller, don't search for "book", search for "bookseller". You could narrow the search further by including the title of the book you wanted to buy.

Most search engines have other ways of narrowing the search. Look for "Advanced search" or "Refine the search".

## SearchBots

Searchbots are programs which you run on your computer and which conduct searches for you, using several search engines at once. They can also verify that the pages found are still available, refine the search, and sort the results.

Good examples of searchbots are Copernic 2000 and WebFerret, but there are several others. Choose one and learn how to use it and you will find that it will enable you to zero in on the information that you are seeking quickly and easily.

If you don't have a searchbot program on your computer, try <http://www.dogpile.com> which provides a similar service online. Just enter the details for which you wish to search and Dogpile will run several search engines and summarise the results.

## Notice of Special General Meeting

A Special General Meeting of the Hobart Computer Users Group Inc. will be held at the Energy Discovery Centre, 169a Main Road, Moonah at 8pm on 10 October 2000, prior to the commencement of the Ordinary General Meeting scheduled for that date, to consider the following change to the Rules of Association:

Amend Section 8 sub-section 4 to permit both the Treasurer and Secretary to have petty cash advances and to limit those advances to no more than three times the annual family subscription. It is proposed to change the following wording:

*"Except with the Authority of the Committee, no payment of a sum exceeding ten dollars shall be made from the funds of the Association otherwise than by cheque drawn on the Association's bank account, but the Committee may provide the Treasurer with a sum of money to meet urgent expenditure....."*

to read:

*"Except with the Authority of the Committee, no payment of a sum exceeding ten dollars shall be made from the funds of the Association otherwise than by cheque drawn on the Association's bank account, but the Committee may provide the Treasurer and Secretary each with a sum of money not to exceed three times the Annual Membership Fees of the Association to meet any urgent expenditure....."*

## Groaners

from Dale and Ron Fisher

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, but when they lit a fire in the boat it sank -- proving once and for all that you can't have your kayak and heat it, too.

*Two boll weevils grew up in South Carolina. One went to Hollywood and became a famous actor. The other stayed behind in the cotton field and never amounted to much. The second one, naturally, became known as the lesser of two weevils.*

A three-legged dog walks into a saloon in the Old West. He sidles up to the bar and announces: "I'm lookin' for the man who shot my paw."

*This guy goes into a restaurant for a Christmas breakfast while in his home town for the holidays. After looking over the menu he says, "I'll just have the eggs benedict." His order comes*

*a while later and it's served on a huge fancy chrome plate. He asks the waiter, "What's with the fancy plate?"*

*The waiter replies, "There's no plate like chrome for the hollandaise!"*

Very early one morning two birds are sitting at the side of a large puddle of oil. They see a worm on the other side. So...the one flies over and the other one swims through. Which one gets to the worm first? The one who swam, of course, because "Da oily boid gets da woim."

*A neutron goes into a bar and asks the bartender, "How much for a beer?" The bartender replies, "For you, no charge."*

Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused his dentist's Novocaine during root canal work? He wanted to transcendental medication.

# Wandering the Worldwide Web

with Peter Campbell

Apply for your passport now and enjoy these exclusive privileges:

- ★ Unlimited access to the Wide, Wide World of Duck Tape
- ★ Free souvenirs from our Duty Free Shop
- ★ Permission to submit your own Duck Tape stories and artwork to the site
- ★ Citizenship in the world's most prestigious Duck Tape club

Don't want a passport yet?  
Travel with a temporary Guest Visa.

THE WIDE, WIDE WORLD OF  
DUCK TAPE

PASSPORT

LIMITED  
GUEST VISA  
ACCESS

**On our survey form we asked you to name your favourite websites. Here's some that we received:**

## Friendly Spider?

Arachnophilia is not a friendly spider, it is a solid HTML editor with which you can craft a webpage. What makes it unique, apart from its many features, is the "payment" arrangements, if they can be called that.

Arachnophilia is **not** free-ware, nor do you have to hand over cold hard cash. I'll leave you to discover for yourself just what the author wants of you. (I can't help wondering how many people actually pay the price he's asking, though.)

<http://www.arachnophilia.com>

## Just Ducky

Actually this one wasn't on the survey form, it's one that Jenny sent me earlier. This is an amazing example of what you can do with graphics on a website and of peculiar dedication to a product. A must see!

<http://www.ducktapeclub.com/widewideworldofducktape.cfm>

## Not Just for Dummies

The highly successful "Dummies" range of books cover most of the popular computer applications and operating systems. Now their publisher has set up a hints service. Sign up for "Dummies Daily" and you have a constant stream of hints in your email. (Where do you think we get some of ours?)

<http://www.dummies.com>

## In All Its Glory

Those pesky mainlanders are always rubbishing Tasmanians. At least, those who have never seen it tend to. Invite them to click onto this site and see what they're missing out on as they fight the smog and traffic in Sydney or Melbourne.

<http://www.tased.edu.au/tot/s/hobart.html>

## Information Anyone?

If you want information on almost anything, the RefDesk is a great place to start. Facts, figures, thesauruses, encyclopaedias, the atomic clock, Reuters news and more are just a few clicks away from the RefDesk.

<http://www.refdesk.com>

## Easy PC

If someone made a PC that you just took home and plugged in, turned on and away you went doing word processing, spreadsheets, simple databases, home accounts and more, what would it be like? Click one more button and fill in a few details to be up and away with Internet and email?

I've mentioned the GlobalPC before, but now it is on the US market and a Brazilian deal has been signed.

If you would like to take a test drive of software that doesn't have you ending a session by clicking on the Start button, you can download a demo from:

<http://www.myturninc.com/TestDrive.html>

The demo requires Windows 9x to run and is limited in functionality. For example, the Internet software does not have a functioning dialer. Nevertheless it should give you a feel for how the software works and how easy software can be.

## Last Issue

If you have not renewed your membership, this is the last issue of this printed newsletter you will receive until you do.

To renew your subscription, go to the Group's website: <http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/thcuserg>, click on Forms and right click on the application form to download it. While you're there, download the survey form as well. Complete the necessary details and post the two forms to the Group's address (See page 2 of this newsletter.)

# Back to Basics

Things you should know and do  
with Peter Campbell and Maurice Hughes

Back in the good old days to get your computer working properly you had to have a DOS system and then you loaded Windows 3 or 95 on top of that. Then later versions of Windows 95 and Windows 98 came with improved methods of installation, making the task much simpler.

Windows *Me*, which will be released in the middle of September takes the process a step further and only allows you to boot into DOS from a floppy disk. The version of Windows that follows *Me* will probably not have DOS as its foundation at all.

Once the system was built we then could relax because the hard work was over - but was it?

Here are a few suggestions to keep your computer running as smoothly as possible.

## Startup Disks

Startup disks may be needed whenever you install Windows 95 or 98. If you have the full retail version, or the OEM version supplied to computer manufacturers for inclusion with new machines, you may be able to boot the computer from the CD-ROM itself. However, if you have an upgrade version you cannot and must use a floppy disk.

If you can boot off your CD the Windows build will start automatically and a startup disk is not required. However, you will probably have to change your CMOS settings first before the computer will boot from the CD-ROM. Usually this involves pressing DEL as the computer is booting up and then going into the BIOS settings. Find the boot-up order and change it. Do not change anything else. Press ESC

to exit back to the main menu and then press F10 and okay the change you have made.

If you can't boot from the CD-ROM (or don't want to fiddle with the CMOS), you will need to boot your computer from a floppy disk

Windows 95 came with a bootable floppy that had enough of an operating system that you could get to a DOS prompt. Then you had to modify that system to recognise your CD to enable you to build Windows 95. Because of this you may need to get some help from a more experienced user. However, if you have a floppy disk that came with your CD and you are reinstalling Windows onto a hard drive that has Windows on it already, you can try installing the drivers on that floppy disk.

Windows 98 startup disks, however, come with a routine to test for a variety of CD-ROM drives and when the operating system loads you normally have access to your CD ROM and can start your Windows build. If your CD is not recognised you have to add the drivers as you would for Windows 95 and DOS.

Windows 95 can be built from the Windows 98 startup disk so try to get a copy of that from a friend. Boot the computer up to the DOS prompt with CD-ROM support and then run SETUP from the Windows CD-ROM.

## Rescue Disks

If you have a Zip™ drive, or have a utility suite installed, such as Norton's Utilities, System-Works, or Nuts and Bolts, you can produce a rescue disk (or disks). In the case of the software

that comes with the Zip drive, two disks are required — a floppy disk and a Zip disk. The software will create a floppy disk from which you can boot your computer and a version of Windows on the Zip disk.

If something goes wrong with your computer, you boot the computer from the rescue floppy and it then runs Windows from the Zip disk and takes you through various steps, such as virus scanning, scanning for hard drive errors, and repairing Windows system files.

If you don't have a Zip drive, your rescue disk will consist of a single floppy disk that will boot the computer and setup your CD-ROM drive.

## Add/Remove Windows Components

If you install everything on the Windows CD-ROM disk, it takes up a lot of room, which may be a problem if you only have a small hard drive. The installation program gives you a choice of "Typical", "Compact" and "Custom" so that you include only what you need. But what happens if you want to change the installation later?

In Control Panel choose Add/Remove Programs then Windows setup.

This will now display the groups of Windows components. To add an entire group click on the unchecked box for that group or to remove the entire group click on the checked box.

To add or remove individual items highlight the group and then click on the details button.

This will now display the items for that group and by selecting or deselecting those items you will add or remove them from Windows.

This procedure is documented on the screens displayed as you add items to, or remove items from your Windows installation.

## Backup

As I type this article it only exists on the screen and in a perfect world if I never turn off the computer I will always be able to read it, amend it or print it out. However, it is not a perfect world and I cannot just leave it open.

To make sure I always have a copy I save it to the hard disk. Sometimes, though, the hard disk may have problems and I will still lose my file.

To safeguard against this I copy the file to a floppy disk. But then, sometimes the floppy disk will have problems .....

The purpose of backup is to enable you to recover your file(s) in any situation. This short article could be scanned and put through an OCR program. It could then be re-created with a minimum of effort (that is I would not have to type it all in again) but if it had 400 pages scanning would not be the best option.

Normal backups are made to floppy disks, Zip™ disks, CD-ROM disks or magnetic tape. The crucial part of the backup is to make sure of the quality of the backup medium.

Your computer came equipped with at least a floppy drive. If you want to use other forms of backup you will need to have the appropriate type of drive — a Zip™ drive for Zip disks, a CD-ROM writer (or "burner", as they are sometimes called) for CD-ROM disks, or a tape drive for magnetic tape backups.

Floppy disks are an obvious choice for small files and zip (compression) programs, such as WinZip or EasyZip will write a file greater than 1 MB to a series of floppies. This compression and splitting over several disks can be done by using the Windows Backup program, which you will find by clicking on Start followed by Programs, Accessories and System Tools. If it is not there, refer to the section on how to add and remove Windows components and install it.

Larger files and groups of files will require more space and you will need to use other media.

Prior to writing to a floppy the disk should be formatted as a full format in Windows or through the DOS prompt. Fast format in Windows does not format the disk it only rewrites the file allocation table.

Formatted floppies that have bad sectors should not be used to back up files. A thorough Scandisk should be run on the floppy after formatting to make sure there are no errors Only then should the file(s) be backed up.

Label the disks and set the write protect notch to protect your file. If you keep a computer diary note the details of the backup.

Restoring backups is quite simple. Files which have become corrupted or a previous version is required can be restored by copying the file from the backup over the existing file on the hard disk if you have just copied or saved the files to the floppy disk.

Files which have been deleted can be recreated by copying from the backup disk to the location where they were copied from.

If you have used the Windows Backup system, you must run it again and choose Restore to put your files back. If you have used zip compression, you will have to uncompress the files before you

put them back.

In the event of a major disaster after building the system and installing the programs from the original disks you can then restore your backup files using the same technique.

Not all files need to be backed up but some files must be.

Only you will know! The rule of thumb is, if you cannot easily replace it, back it up!

## Scandisk

Corrupted sectors and physical errors on your hard drive will affect performance but you can clean your disk using the Scandisk utility. There are two options - standard which checks folders and files for errors and thorough which does a standard scan and then checks the disk surface for errors.

If Scandisk finds an error it will try to fix it and most times it does! If it finds a damaged section on your hard disk, the details stored where the error is found are written to another location and the error location is flagged as a bad sector so that it can not be used again.

If there is an error in the File Allocation Table that tells Windows where the clusters that make up your file are located, Scandisk will usually correct it.

If an error is found in a file that scandisk can not recover you will have to reload that file from the original disk or your BACKUP.

Some people prefer to add Norton's Utilities, or Nuts 'N' Bolts to their system. These packages of utilities include improved tools for doing disk defragmentation and scanning. If you have them, use them instead of the Windows tools and refer to their help files and/or manuals for further information on how to use them correctly.

## Disk Defragmentation

In the normal operation of your computer there are files being created and deleted all the time and as a result the area where a new file is written may be several small blocks rather than one large one. This is called fragmentation. Fragmentation slows down disk response times because to find data from the file you have to read from several locations on the disk, requiring the heads to be moved to each location and this takes time.

Defragmentation reads the disk and rewrites fragmented files so that they are one large block thus eliminating unnecessary head movements and speeding up disk accesses.

It is recommended that you run Scandisk prior to doing a defragmentation as Defragmentation checks for errors and will not proceed if it finds any!

## Installing/Uninstalling Programs

Programs come as the very simple through to the very complicated, and installing them has the same range. A very simple program will come on a floppy disk and after copying it to your

hard drive you will have to click on the .exe file or create a shortcut to run it. These programs can be deleted without any problems.

More involved programs will come with an install routine which you start and it controls setting the program up on your hard drive. Some of these install routines will write details into the Windows registry files and to remove them cleanly there is normally an uninstall procedure.

Most programs will install with few problems but trying to remove them may be a little different.

First locate the program you want to remove in the start menu and see if there is an uninstall option in the program routine group. If there is start it and hopefully the program will be removed. Any files which are not removed that are part of that program suite will be reported and you make the decision what to do with them. You may also be asked if you want to remove files that may be shared with other applications, but which do not appear to be in use. You can usually remove them without causing any problems, but, if you are unsure, then choose not to remove them. Leaving them won't do any harm to your system.

If the program does not have an uninstall routine go to Control Panel and ADD/REMOVE Programs. Here you will find a list of all the programs which are registered in Windows. If your program is in the list, highlight it and then click on the add/remove button and the program is gone...we hope... and any problems will be reported as above.

If the program is not in either of these areas you can delete it and any files and folders associated with it with no risk to any other programs. However, on restarting your computer you may get a message that the system cannot find a file that may be needed to run Windows.

To get rid of these messages you must search through the SYSTEM.INI file, using NotePad or another text editor, and find any reference to the missing file. If this does not eliminate the message, the next step is to run REGEDIT and carefully search through Windows Registry.

## Be Prepared!

Do all the things suggested in this article and you will minimise system crashes and keep your system working quickly. When disaster does strike, you will have the tools to deal with it.

*The Hobart Computer Users Group Inc.*  
*PO Box 563*  
*GLENORCHY TAS 7010*