

Power Tools for Computer Users

Shortcuts, Tips, and Tricks

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A few notes before we start

- Your favorite search engine (Google, Yahoo!, DuckDuckGo, etc.) is your friend! So is YouTube!
- In this document, *Windows* refers to Microsoft Windows 10 or 11 unless otherwise specified.
- Some shorthand is used in this document:
 - *Ctrl* → *Control* key.
 - *Win* → *Windows* key (on a computer running Windows).
 - *Cmd* → *Command* key (on a computer running macOS).
- Since most users are running *Windows*, the computer section of this document is focused more on *Windows* than on *macOS* (the Mac operating system). When there are differences between how something works on *Windows* vs. *macOS*, an attempt will be made to point out those differences.

Mouse actions

- *Left-click* (i.e., clicking the left button on the mouse) is used to select something.
- *Right-click* is used to display an option menu associated with the item under the mouse cursor.
- *Click-and-drag* (i.e., holding down the left button on the mouse and then dragging the mouse cursor to another location on the display) is used to select everything within the rectangle defined by the drag.
- When editing an item (e.g., editing a filename in Windows *File Explorer* or macOS *Finder*, or editing a document):
 - A *single* left-click positions the selection cursor at the location of the mouse cursor.
 - A *double* left-click selects the current word; the selected item will be highlighted.
 - A *triple* left-click selects the entire item (e.g., the file name in *File Explorer* or *Finder*, or paragraph in a document).

Keyboard shortcuts

- A comprehensive list of Windows keyboard shortcuts can be found at <https://www.windowcentral.com/best-windows-10-keyboard-shortcuts>.

- One of my favorite “uncommon” keyboard shortcuts is *Ctrl+N*. This will create a new window of whatever program currently is active (e.g., Windows Explorer).
 - Another way to accomplish this is to right-click on the icon of an app from the task bar and then left-click on the menu item that has the same name as the app itself.
- Keyboard shortcuts for Windows that have the form *Ctrl+_* generally will have the form *Cmd+_* on macOS. To find how to accomplish other Windows keyboard shortcuts on macOS, refer to the macOS documentation. (Your browser is your friend!)
- When you display a menu of actions, each menu item will include the keyboard shortcut for the action, if the item has a keyboard shortcut.

The clipboard

- A guide to using the clipboard in *Windows* can be found at <https://www.guidingtech.com/what-is-clipboard-in-windows-10>.
- What are the differences between the *copy* (*Ctrl+C*) and *cut* (*Ctrl+X*) operations? Both *copy* and *cut* copy the selected item to the clipboard but *cut* also deletes the selected item from its original location.
- As described on the website mentioned above, one of the features of Windows is the ability to maintain and use a *clipboard history*. This permits you to select from all items you have put into the clipboard since you started your computer.
 - macOS users can refer to the website <https://setapp.com/how-to/how-to-view-clipboard-history-on-mac>.

Resizing, repositioning, and snapping windows

- Resizing and repositioning windows in Windows are common tasks. Refer to this site to learn how to perform these operations effectively: <https://www.customguide.com/windows-10/resize-and-move-windows>.
- *Snapping* a window refers to anchoring its position (and, sometimes, size). The site above describes how to do this in Windows.
 - If you are using macOS, snapping is accomplished through an app that must be installed on your computer; the installation and use of one such app can be found at <https://www.tomsguide.com/how-to/use-this-awesome-trick-to-get-window-snapping-on-your-mac>.

- In Windows, if two snapped windows butt up against one another, then moving the edge they share will adjust the size of both windows simultaneously.

Multiple desktops

- The terms *desktop* on Windows and a *space* on macOS refer to what you normally see on one display screen.
- Both Windows and macOS support the capability of opening and using multiple desktops/spaces and then switching between them.
 - Multiple desktops/spaces are very useful if you like to keep several apps open at once and you wish to group them according to some criteria of your choosing.
- To learn more about how to utilize this capability:
 - For Windows visit the website <https://www.howtogeek.com/688174/how-to-quickly-switch-between-virtual-desktops-on-windows-10>.
 - For macOS, visit the website <https://support.apple.com/guide/mac-help/work-in-multiple-spaces-mh14112/mac>.
- Once you have created multiple desktops/spaces, you can rearrange them and move apps from one desktop/space to another.
- If you are using a computer that has a *touchpad* (called a *trackpad* in macOS), the touchpad can make manipulation of desktops/spaces faster and easier. This is described in the websites above.

And even more ...

- Shortcuts, tips, and tricks for using your computer more effectively are too numerous to mention in one document. Instead, you can search for “windows shortcuts” or “windows tips and tricks” (and you can do this for macOS, too). Here are some links to get you started:
 - <https://www.windowcentral.com/55-shortcuts-and-tips-speed-your-windows-10-experience>
 - <https://www.techradar.com/how-to/the-50-best-mac-tips-tricks-and-timesavers>