

TOGGLE

THE MICROCOMPUTER TURN (ON)

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR TACOMA-SEATTLE AREA MICROCOMPUTER USERS

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UPDATE

Word Processing

In *Inserting Int'l Letters into Word Documents* the author discusses the subject and provides the keystrokes for inserting several foreign language letters and symbols in a WORD document.

Operating System

In *Find Hidden Desktop Themes in Windows 7* the author says: "I am sure that you know that there are many downloadable Desktop Themes available from the internet but did you know that there are more desktop themes hidden in your Windows 7 operating system?" Take a look.

Communications

In *How to Use RSS Feeds on IE9* the author says: "Feeds, also known as RSS feeds, are content listings published by a website. They're used for news and blog websites, but are also used for distributing other types of digital content, including pictures, audio, or video." he provides a brief discussion of the subject.

In *Do you Want To Tweet?* author Linda Gonse gives you some beginner hints.

In *Do You Text?* the author notes that using a cell phone effectively with your kids may require that you learn a new skill namelt texting and follow some not too obvious rules. Frequent references to Google helped with interpretations.

Hardware

In *Control Multiple Computers with One Mouse* the author makes us aware of a free software program developed by a Microsoft employee to solve the problem of managing multiple computers with one keyboard. The program is free. Check it out.

In *Buying a New Windows PC* the author, Dick Maybach goes into some detail in listing what you need to specifiy when buying a new computer. Worth a read if you are in the market to upgrade.

In *Howto Upgrade Your Memory* the author says: "Adding more memory to your computer is usually the most cost-effective way to get a significant performance boost. But choosing the right RAM for your computer, and finding the right amount at the lowest price, is often a mysterious challenge. A memory configurator can help you get it right. Here's how..." Read! Learn!

General Interest

In *Dick's Clicks* the author discusses what uses he has made of an iPad which was given to him as a gift. Perhaps his experiences may help you if you have the same lucky experience.

In *Too Many Choices* the author discusses the many small computing devices from which to choose.

In *How to Hunt Elephants* the author comments on how different profession might approach the subject.



WORD PROCESSING NOTES & TIPS

Inserting Int'l Letters into Word Documents

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In our global society, languages have become more blended. English, for example, has adopted many words of different origins, some of which include special diacritical marks over the letters, as in the French word *passi*. Occasionally words can actually be misunderstood without a special mark over a letter, such as the difference between the “risumi” we provide when looking for a job, and “resume”, meaning to begin again. It helps to know how to insert these diacritical marks when using Microsoft Office. Word provides two fairly easy methods to add these marks: the Symbol dialog box and keystroke combinations.

The Symbol dialog box (formerly called the Character Map) is easy to find in Word. It can be useful but also a bit tedious when you're in the middle of composing a document. It provides both international characters and other symbols, such as the Euro symbol (€) or Pi (π). To use this dialog box in Word 2007, click the Insert tab, then Symbol to view a few common symbols. Click the one you want to make it appear where your cursor was flashing. Click Symbol, then More Symbols, to open the full dialog box. Click a letter or symbol, then Insert, and it's done.

This dialog box contains every symbol and international letter that Office has to offer, but inserting one may involve moving between different tables of fonts and symbol types before you locate the one you need. It is worth spending a few minutes exploring this box, though, if only to see what's available. Once you insert a symbol using the dialog box, it will appear with recently used characters and symbols in a row near the bottom of the box for easy access in the future.

Although the Symbol dialog box method is the best way to insert a symbol, there's an easier method of inserting international letters using a combination of keyboard strokes. This method involves pressing the Control key (Ctrl) on the keyboard at the same time as a punctuation or symbol key, then releasing these keys and pressing the key of the letter that needs the diacritical mark. Let's use the example of the acute *i*. First be sure your cursor is flashing in the spot where you want the character to appear. Press the Ctrl key and the apostrophe key at the same time. Release them and type the letter “e”, which will appear with its acute mark in place, *i*.

When learning this method, it helps to have a chart of the appropriate keys and corresponding diacritical marks nearby. The system is so logical that before long you won't need to refer to the chart except for unusual marks. The chart below gives you many of the ones you might need:

Intl Char Press these keys, then release and press the letter.

à, è, ì, ò, ù	Ctrl + ` (grave accent key)
á, é, í, ó, ú, ý	Ctrl + ' (apostrophe key)
â, ê, î, ô, û	Ctrl + Shift + ^ (caret key)
ã, ñ, õ	Ctrl + Shift + ~ (tilde key)
ä, ë, ï, ö, ü, y	Ctrl + Shift + : (colon key)
Å	Ctrl + Shift + @
æ or œ	Ctrl + Shift + &
ç	Ctrl + , (comma key)
ö	Ctrl + ' (apostrophe key)
ø slash thru zero	Ctrl + / (forward slash key)
? (upside down)	Alt + Ctrl + Shift + ?
! (upside down)	Alt + Ctrl + Shift + !
ß beta_	Ctrl + Shift + &

A few tips about this chart:

1. Many of the diacritical marks resemble the keyboard symbols that are used to create them, which makes them easier to remember.
2. Occasionally the Shift key is included in the procedure. This is because the keyboard symbol is the top one on the key and needs the Shift key to select it, as it would if it were a capital letter.
3. To get the upper case version of these letters with their marks, such as *I*, merely press the Shift key while pressing the letter.

If you find that you type in languages other than English on a regular basis, Word 2007 and 2010 offer quite a bit of help. You can see the list of the languages which have editing tools installed in Word by clicking the Office button (File in 2010) and selecting Word Options. Click Popular in the left pane and select the Language Settings button. I found, for example, that limited editing support is provided for more than 200 languages on my computer, including six dialects of French, five of Chinese, and twenty-one of Spanish.

If you need more tools in another language, you can download free Language Interface Packs or purchase Language Packs for about \$25, both of which provide extra editing tools for the language of your choice. Other options allow you to change the keyboard to a different language layout. To do this, open the Control Panel and put it in Classic view so all the icons are visible. Click the Region and Language icon, and then the Keyboards and Languages tab. English is the default, but you can add other languages from this dialog box. You can also customize formats for specific systems which differ among countries, such as currency and measurement, using the Format tab in that same dialog box.

If you are interested in exploring more about using Word in a language other than English, here is a link to get you started: <http://office.microsoft.com/enus/support/change-the-defaultlanguage-for-office-programs-HA010356057.aspx>.

Meantime, clip the chart included in this article to use the next time you need to type an “international” word.

TOGGLE Editor's Note:

Int the table above our word processor could not print the lower case Å, the yumlaut, nor could it print the upside down ? and ! marks.

OPERATING SYSTEM NOTES & TIPS

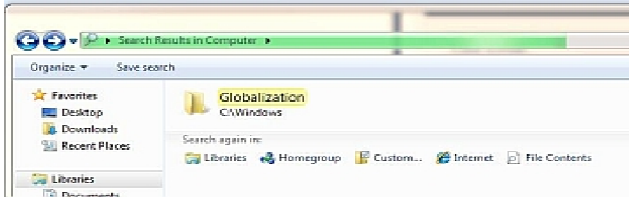
Find Hidden Desktop Themes in Windows 7

by Pamela Tabak, Computer Tutor Inc.

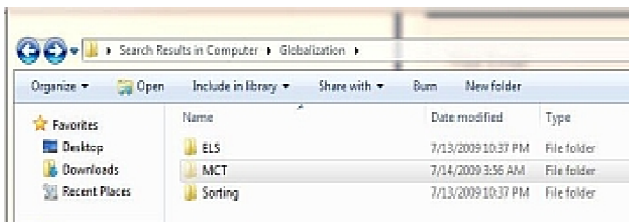
I am sure that you know that there are many downloadable Desktop Themes available from the internet but did you know that there are more desktop themes hidden in your Windows 7 operating system?

When you setup your Windows 7 operating system and stated that you were a resident of the USA or Canada, the operating system hid the other international desktop themes but I have found an easy way to locate them so that you have more choices at your fingertips.

1. In the bottom left corner of your screen your Windows 7 Orb will bring up **Windows Explorer** if you **right** click on it.
2. Choose Open Windows Explorer.
3. Type “globalization” in the **search box** located in the upper right corner. A long list of files and folders will appear.
4. Find the Globalization Folder and double click on it.

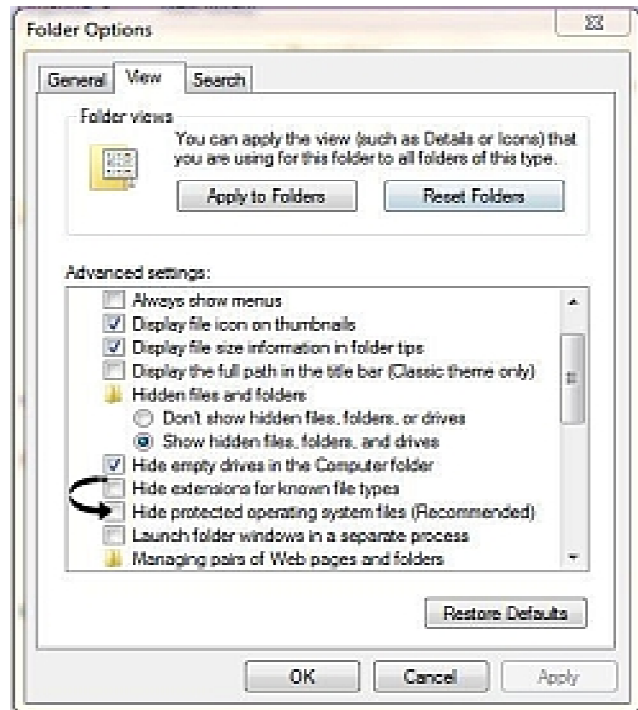


5. Double clicking on the Globalization folder reveals three more folders. The MCT folder is the one that contains the other international desktop themes.



6. If you find that the MCT folder is not listed you will need to unhide it as follows.

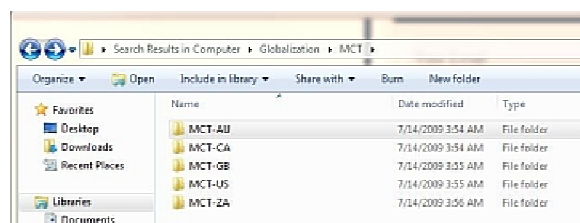
- a) Right click on the Orb in the left corner of your screen.
- b) Select Open Windows Explorer.
- c) Click on Organize.
- d) Select Folder and Search Options.
- e) Click on the View tab and uncheck Hide protected operating system files (Recommended.)



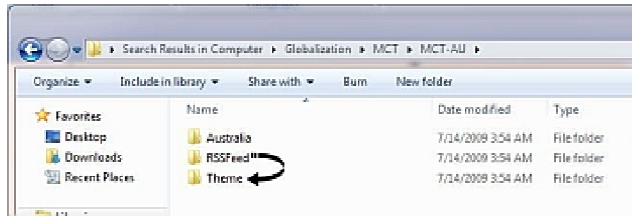
- f) You will receive a warning at this point. Just click **Yes** but I advise you to go back to this procedure after you have finished selecting your international themes and **check the box again to protect your files and folders.**



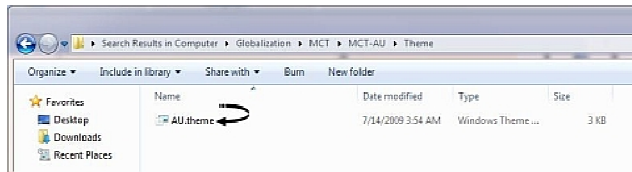
7. Now that you have the MCT folder in view click on it. I have the following folders to choose from: Australia, Canada, Great Britain, USA and Africa.
8. To see the selection of desktop themes in these folders double click on the ones that interest you.
9. To add one or more of these desktop themes to your computer double click on the folder or folders of your choice. I have chosen to click on the MCT-AU (Australia) for this demonstration.



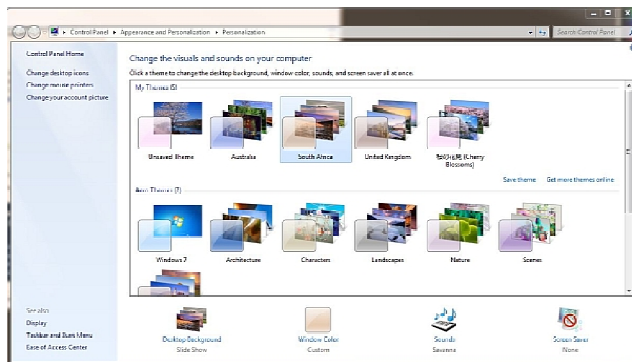
10. When the MCT-AU folder opens the following will appear:



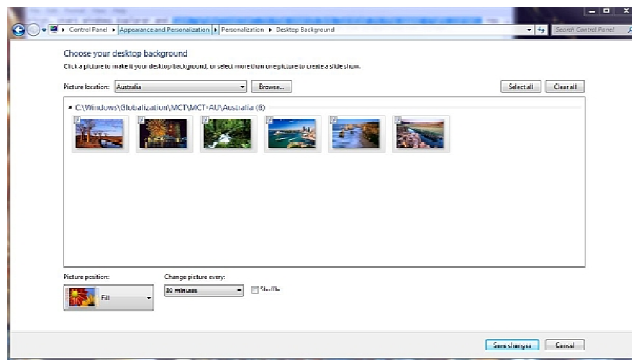
11. Now double click on the Theme folder shown above.



12. The Australia theme icon is now visible. Click once on this icon and the Australia desktop theme will appear on your selection of themes as shown below.



To select the pictures that will appear in your slide show, double click on the **desktop slideshow** icon which is the first icon on the bottom row of the image above, and uncheck any picture that you do not want to appear. You can also change the **position and frequency** of the pictures that you have chosen. The click **Save changes**.



COMMUNICATIONS NOTES & TIPS

How to Use RSS Feeds on IE9

Big Bear Computer Club Bearly Bytes February, 2012

Feeds, also known as RSS feeds, are content listings published by a website. They're used for news and blog websites, but are also used for distributing other types of digital content, including pictures, audio, or video.

Subscribing to feeds

When you subscribe to a feed, new content is automatically downloaded from the website, so the feed is always up to date. There are many ways to subscribe to feeds.

Here are a few:

- Subscribe to feeds directly from Internet Explorer. This is what's described below.
- Use RSS reader software.
- Click a link on personal WebPages.

To subscribe to a feed using Internet Explorer

- Click to open Internet Explorer. If the Command bar isn't visible, right-click the Favorites button, and then select Command bar.
- Go to the website that offers a feed.
- Click the Feeds button to view feeds on the webpage.

Note

If a Web Slice is available for the webpage, the Web Slice button will appear instead of the Feeds button. Click the arrow next to the button to view available feeds.

For more information on Web Slices, see Using Web Slices in Internet Explorer 9.

- Click a feed (if more than one is available). If only one feed is available, you will go directly to that page.
- Click Subscribe to this feed.
- Type a name for the feed and select the folder to create the feed in.
- Click Subscribe.

Viewing feeds

All of the feeds that you subscribe to are available in the Favorites Center. You can also add feeds to your Favorites bar.

To view feeds in Favorites Center

- Click to open Internet Explorer.
- Click the Favorites button, and then click the Feeds tab.
- Click a feed to view it in the browser.

To add a feed to the Favorites bar

- Click to open Internet Explorer.
- Click the Favorites button, and then click the Feeds tab.
- Right-click a feed, and then click Add to Favorites bar.

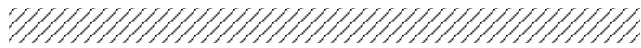
If the Favorites bar isn't visible, right-click the Favorites button, and then select Favorites bar.

- Click the feed, and then click an individual entry to view it in the browser.

Note:

- You can delete a feed from Favorites Center or the Favorites bar by right-clicking it, clicking Delete, and then clicking Yes.

Source: Windows Help and Support



Do You Want To Tweet?

By Linda Gonse, Editor / Webmaster, Orange County PC Users' Group, CA; September 2011 issue, Nibbles & Bytes; www.orcopug.org; editor (at) orcopug.org

Many more people are turning to Twitter now that they realize using it is more than announcing your breakfast menu and where you shop for your socks. So, if you are thinking of joining in on this real-time, constantly changing, global communication, but are unfamiliar with some of the jargon, let me help get you started.

When a person writes 140 characters or less in their message box on Twitter and presses Send, the message appears in their "timeline" and in the timelines of all the people who have chosen to "follow" that person. The message is called a tweet. You send tweets, get tweets, and read tweets.

When referring to other people on Twitter, the terms "tweeps" or "peeps" are used. I have seen "Twitterers" but that has too many letters to be used much. (No one uses "twits" which would be a negative term not linked to Twitter.)

All of Twitter has been called the "Twittersphere" but again, too many letters to refer to it in a tweet, unless it's in a short tweet. Tweets that you read and enjoy can be forwarded to people who follow you. Forwarded tweets are called Retweets. You can also flag a tweet you write with a hashtag which looks like a pound (weight) symbol. The # symbol plus wordorwordswithnospaces is inserted in a tweet, usually at the end. It allows that tweet to be seen by everyone who searches for that subject; for example: #twitterhumor

Hashtags have other purposes, too, but are not ever necessary to use in a tweet.

I often get breaking news from subjects that "trend" -- this is where a multitude of tweets are sent about the same time and the same subject. These tweets may or may not be marked with hashtags. Trending topics recently were Occupy Wall Street, RIP Steve Jobs, Chaz Bono.

Do You Text?

by Claudia Horack Bristow, Hilton Head Computer Club, SC; Sept 2011 issue, Island Computing www.hhicc.org

In what seems like a relatively short period of time, cell phones have become ubiquitous. There are no age limits for cell phone users. Seniors and more senior seniors use them. Our children and grandchildren seem never to be parted from their phones, which is frequently a good thing. Not only is it fun to chat with the grandkids, calling a grandchild is sometimes the only way I can reach my son!

Some people can't bear to be away from their phones; others only want them for emergencies or travel. Many people I know, and most of my kids, have foregone landlines in favor of cell phones. Some uses are appropriate; others are inconsiderate or dangerous.

Since my kids always have their phones with them, I figured I would be able to reach them more easily. Nope! Kids don't answer their phones these days. However, all is not lost. They respond well to a text message.

Following the principle "if you can't beat them, join 'em," I purchased a cell phone with keyboard. The results have been very gratifying but there IS a problem.

It is all those abbreviations my son uses. Half the time I didn't have a clue what he meant. Some were fairly obvious, like LOL ("lots of love") but wait, it turns out that LOL can, and usually does, mean "laughing out loud." So much for a mother's feel-good interpretation.

As the texting continued, the use of texting slang increased. At first I just asked my son what the acronym meant. But then it occurred to me that I was ruining my "cool" texting image by revealing my ignorance of the language. I began Googling unknown "words." Through Google I discovered that ROFL stands for "rolling on the floor laughing"; BRB stands for "be right back"; BTW is "by the way"; IK is "I know"; AMOF, "as a matter of fact"; HTH, "hope this helps" to name just a few.

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By far the quickest way to interpret texting slang is to Google the word but there are also online texting "dictionaries" and articles that are fun to browse.

Here are a few texting slang sites. Check one or two out:
http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/textmessageabbreviations.asp

<http://textingabbreviations.blogspot.com/>
<http://www.yourdictionary.com/dictionary-articles/texting-slang.html>

Pick out a few of the interesting ones, slip them in your next text, and WOW your kids and grandkids. GL and HF.

HARDWARE NOTES & TIPS

Control Multiple Computers with One Mouse

Big Bear Computer Club Bearly Bytes February, 2012

Many modern households have more than one computer. Often, each computer has a different owner. Some people, however, use more than one computer - and they coexist on top of the same desk.

If you're one of these multiple computer users, you may have two desktop units, or perhaps a desktop and a laptop or two. Using them all at once leads to problems, with a keyboard or two, perhaps a trackpad and even multiple mice to juggle. That gets very confusing.

You could get a hardware KVM switch. This lets you use one keyboard and mouse on multiple machines. However, those are expensive and a bit clunky.

A software developer at Microsoft had a similar frustration. So he created a solution. It's called Mouse Without Borders, and it's a free download.

Mouse Without Borders lets you easily share one computer's keyboard and mouse with up to 3 other Windows computers. You don't need a hardware switch, and setup isn't complicated. Just be sure all the computers are on the same network.

The download goes beyond clicking solutions. It also allows you to drag and drop files between computers. It additionally supports copy and paste functions and other cool features. Source: komando.com

Cost: Free

Link: blogs.technet.com (Download link is at the bottom of the post where it says Download Now)

Systems: Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7

Buying a New Windows PC

Dick Maybach, Brookdale Computer Users Group, NJ
August 2011 issue, BCUG Bytes (www.bcug.com) n2nd
(at) charter.net

Sooner or later, you'll be looking for a replacement for your PC. What requirements must the hardware satisfy? This article will assume you will be using the Windows 7 operating system, although almost any PC that supports Win 7 will also support any Linux distribution. If you purchase your PC from a well-established vendor, it will arrive with Windows already

installed and well checked-out. However, most of us keep our PCs for several years, which means that their performance should exceed what is needed today. Software vendors know that to sell new versions of their products, they must add new features, and these require more from the hardware.

Moore's Law, which says that integrated circuit performance doubles every 18 months, has been true for 30 years and shows no signs of changing in the near future. As a consequence, six years from now, PCs will be eight times as powerful as today's models, and software designers know and depend on this. Buying a barely adequate PC means that it may not adequately run any software on it that it wasn't delivered with.

Let's begin by looking at the hardware Microsoft recommends as a minimum for Windows 7:

- 1 GHz or faster 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit processor
- 1 GB RAM (32-bit) or 2 GB RAM (64-bit)
- 16 GB free disk space (32-bit) or 20 GB (64-bit)
- DirectX 9 graphics device with WDDM 1.0 driver

We see that the first choice is between a 32-bit and a 64-bit processor. At present, most home applications are available only in 32-bit form, and while these will run in a 64-bit environment, doing so provides little advantage, except that 64-bit CPUs can handle more RAM. (See the RAM discussion below.) This will probably change, perhaps as early as the next release or so of Windows. You might be tempted to go for a 64-bit processor, thinking that you will be able to upgrade to Win 8 or 9; however, don't forget Moore's law. When the time comes to upgrade, you will certainly find that your PC is hopelessly underpowered. A 32-bit processor is the correct choice, unless you have special requirements.

Processor clock speeds can now exceed 3 GHz, but processor architecture also greatly affects its computing rate, with the result that clock speed is not as good an indication of computing power as in the past. Indeed, AMD has stopped using clock speed to characterize its processors. Manufacturers achieve higher performance by putting multiple processors (called cores) on a single chip. Get at least a 2-core processor and preferably a 4-core one. You may not see much advantage initially, but Windows slows down as the number of updates increase, and you probably will add new applications, which become more resource-hungry with each release. Note the important difference between multi-core processors and multiple processors. The former are single packages with more than one computing component; the latter are multiple packages, each with its own stacks, cache memory, and input/output. Only the Professional, Enterprise, and Ultimate versions of WIN 7 can make use of more than one processor, although all 32-bit versions of WIN 7 can use up to 32 cores. Finally, consider getting a CPU with a Intel-VT or AMD-V supported and enabled. Without this, you can't run Windows Virtual PC (<https://www.microsoft.com/windows/virtual-pc/default.aspx>).

RAM is cheap, which means you should get as much as you can use. However, a 32-bit processor, can access a maximum 4 gigabytes of memory, and memory includes not only RAM, but also video RAM. If you have a high-end graphics controller with 1 GB of video RAM, your processor can use only up to 3 GB or RAM. Remember though, that many people use just a video controller on their motherboard, and such units use regular RAM for video storage. Once your system fills RAM with data, it begins to use swap space on your disk, and this drastically slows performance. I recommend you install as much RAM as your processor can address, 4 GB if you use an integrated video controller, perhaps somewhat less if you have a separate one. You can see a problem developing here; because the recommended RAM is at the limit of what the processor can see. To use more RAM, you have to use a 64-bit CPU and operating system, which is why I think that we will soon see a move to this configuration.

I recommend at least a 2000-GB (2-TB) hard disk. You do not want to run out of disk space and have to port all your software and data to a new one. Faced with this, most home PC users would decide to purchase a new PC. A competent PC shop can do this for you, and while the cost is reasonable, it will certainly exceed any savings you realized by skimping on the original disk size.

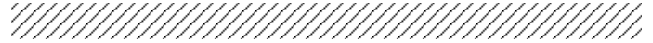
Most home PC users will find that the minimum video controller specified by Microsoft is adequate, but if you play action games or have specialized needs, such as photo editing or computer-aided design (CAD) you probably need a separate high performance video card, perhaps one compatible with DirectX 10 or 11. Graphics cards have faster processors than those mounted on motherboards and their video RAM is separate from that on the motherboard. You will have to do some research into the recommendations of your software vendors, not just for what you now use, but also for what you may soon install. However, replacing your video controller is much easier than changing disks, so you can upgrade later if needed. Pay attention to the connector for the display; although VGA is still common, many high-performance controllers use Digital Visual Interface (DVI), High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI), or Display Port.

Besides the basics above, you also need some peripherals, and the most important of these is the display. You will probably follow the recommendations of the PC vendor, but consider getting a larger one than standard. As we age, our vision dims and blurs, and more visual real-estate allows us to magnify images, which makes computer time more comfortable. Be a little careful here, and be sure the display interface is compatible with your video controller. Of course, you need a read-write DVD drive, and you may want to get one that handles Blue-Ray. If you have a pile of diskettes, you may also want a floppy drive, but the need for these is fading fast. Get as many USB ports as you can (version 2.0 or later), and at least two should be on the front panel. If you run out of ports, you

can add USB hubs, but the result is a tangle of cables, power cords, and power supplies. (This will happen anyway, but try to avoid making it worse.)

Keyboards and mice are cheap commodities and are easily upgraded. Current PCs use USB ports to communicate with keyboards and mice, so you may not be able to transfer these accessories from your old system.

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How to Upgrade Your Memory

from Ask Bob Martin,

Adding more memory to your computer is usually the most cost-effective way to get a significant performance boost. But choosing the right RAM for your computer, and finding the right amount at the lowest price, is often a mysterious challenge. A memory configurator can help you get it right. Here's how...

Do It Yourself Memory Upgrade

Upgrading RAM memory gives your system a bigger workspace in which it can process data as fast as possible. Every bit of data and software that you are currently using is stored in RAM. The rest is stored on your hard drive or removable media, where it takes longer to read and write data. If there is not enough RAM to hold everything you need, your operating system constantly swaps part of its working load in and out of RAM to the hard drive. That slows down processing and wears out your disk drive faster. So more RAM is generally going to improve performance; but not always.

Older operating systems like Windows 98 and XP can only address up to 4 GB of RAM; so adding more than that will not increase performance. Even Vista and Windows 7 retain the 4GB limit in the 32-bit version of those operating systems. If you have a 64-bit Windows version you can use up to 128 GB (Vista) or 196 GB (Win7). See this article to find out if you have a 32 or 64 bit system.

Even if your motherboard and operating system can handle it, most home and small business users don't need more than 4 GB of memory. Gamers and video editing professionals, or people who work with very large images, databases or spreadsheets, may benefit from 8 GB or more of memory. If you have less than 2 GB of RAM memory, you'll almost certainly benefit by adding more. As of this writing, you can find 2 GB of RAM for about \$20 USD.

Memory consists of millions of tiny transistors mounted on circuit chips, sometimes called RAM sticks. The chips plug into memory sockets on your computer's motherboard. In

laptop computers, a small cover conveniently provides access to the memory sockets on the bottom of the laptop's case. Accessing the memory sockets in a desktop computer usually requires one to unscrew and remove the case cover.

Memory technology and the hardware form it takes have changed many times over the years. So there are many different kinds of memory chips and sockets on the market. Do you need PC-133, SDRAM, DDR3? Are they DIMMs, SIMMs, or RIMMs? It is vital to match the memory type and the clock speed of memory that you buy to that which is supported by your specific make and model of computer. The type of memory that your computer supports and the maximum amount of memory that it will hold are documented in your computer's user manual. But what if you've lost the manual?

Memory Configurators, Finders and Scanners

Memory sellers don't want that to stop you from buying. So many of them provide handy online "memory configurators" or "memory finders". These are online programs that walk you, step by step, through the process of specifying the kind of computer that you have. Some memory finders will even scan your system, determine what kind of RAM memory you currently have, and show you recommended upgrades. The configurator/finder then lists all the available memory chips that are compatible with your computer and their prices. Then you can select the right chips with the right amount of memory on each chip, add them to your shopping cart, pay, and wait for them to arrive.

Of course, you can use a memory configurator to find exactly what you need, and then make your purchase elsewhere. Here are a few useful memory finders and memory configurators you can try:

- Crucial Memory Advisor <www.crucial.com/>
- Kingston Memory Search <www.kingston.com/us/>
- Corsair Memory Configurator <corsair.com/learn_n_explore>

Installing Your New Memory

Once your new memory chips arrive, it's fairly easy to install them in your computer. After powering down and opening the system unit, you'll see that memory sockets have swiveling, locking tabs on each end to keep the memory chips (sometimes called RAM sticks) firmly seated. Just flip back those tabs; pull the old memory chip(s) straight out without bending or wiggling them; insert the new memory chips (which are notched so you cannot insert them the wrong way), and re-fasten the tabs. On a laptop, it's even easier. Just remove a panel on the bottom of the laptop, and the RAM sticks can be easily removed or inserted.

Cheap memory upgrades are available, but you have to be careful of unknown foreign sellers. Sometimes memory chips are labeled with higher capacities than they actually have.

Quality control is uncertain with very low-priced memory chips. If the deal sounds too good to be true, it might be better to spend a bit more for a known quantity.

Cheap RAM is often available from computer liquidators who pull parts out of obsolete business computers and want to sell them fast. Memory chips have no moving parts so they rarely wear out; they just become obsolete as newer, faster RAM comes on the market. Check on eBay or search online for "used RAM" to find sellers. If you have an older computer, used RAM can save you some money.

GENERAL INTEREST

Dick's Clicks

Dick Ramette, Pres., Computer Club of Green Valley, AZ
October 2011 issue, Green Bytes (www.ccgv.apcug.org)
Rwramette (at) mindspring.com

Just imagine where we'd be if the Apple that fell on Sir Isaac Newton's head had been an iPad 2. Instead of merely discovering gravity, he would have gone on to invent the App Store and the Internet. A few months ago I was astonished to have an iPad 2 fall into my life as a surprise birthday gift from my Chicago son's family, and I've been discovering good stuff ever since. My first challenge was to resist addiction to games such as Angry Birds, Scramble and Solitaire.

Gradually I've come to spend more time with my iPad than with my PCs. It's far from a complete replacement, but this tablet sure is a comfortable convenience. It's a huge improvement over my beloved iPod Touch, which remains my choice for music while walking. The first thing I do each morning is to move my iPad from its charger to the sofa so that it's available as an adjunct to the Arizona Daily Star, using my WiFi connection and the Safari browser.

My most-used Apps are the NYTimes, HuffPost, Weather Channel, What'sOn for the TV schedule, Flixster for what's playing at Desert Sky, CCGV of course, Merriam-Webster dictionary which understands my voice, and HiCalc calculator. I also view my favorite comic strips, political cartoons and check my email, which remains on the server for later viewing on my PC.

There's a neat App called HSW HD, for How Stuff Works, which is like that proverbial box of chocolates where you never know what you're gonna get. It's fun to browse HSW with finger swipes, and I spotted an essay by Jonathan Strickland titled "How will computers evolve over the next 100 years?" You can also find this on the Web at: <http://www.howstuffworks.com/computer-evolution.htm>

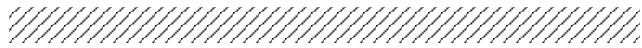
Another box of candy is Science360, an inexhaustible collection of pictorial goodies from the National Science Foundation. And when my 2003 Buick has aged a couple more years, I'll surely use CarZen to browse auto models with complete price and specs information.

ShowOfHands lets me see user opinions on numerous personal and political questions, displayed in pie charts for all states and for the nation as a whole.

So far I haven't read a book on my tablet, but I could. I've streamed movies from Netflix, looked at my photo collection and played my iTunes music. Really, there's no going back. My iPad, my recliner chair and I are at one with each other!

Quote of the Month: "...there may be no meaningful difference between computers and humans within 100 years. In that world, we'll be transformed into a new species that can improve upon itself at a pace unimaginable to us in our current forms. Whatever the future may hold, it's a safe bet to assume the machines we rely upon will be very different from today's computers." - Jonathan Strickland.

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Too Many Choices

by Wil Wakely, Seniors Computer Group, <http://www.SCGsd.org>, wilw31 (at) gmail.com. Originally published in Bits and Bytes, the newsletter of the Seniors Computer Group.

Choosing a computer used to be relatively easy: Do you want a desktop with a tower or a flat unit that fits under your monitor? This is no longer true. Now we have a plethora of choices: Desktop, Laptop, Notebook, Tablet, Smart Phone, and smart e-Book Reader. Perhaps I have missed a late comer; if so, forgive me. Let's review the features, pros and cons of each.

Desktop

For a fixed location, non-portable computer a Desktop is the best choice. It is the least expensive computer and can be easily customized to whatever your computing needs might be. It is a necessity for gamers and heavy-duty computing such as photo and video processing, CAD (computer-aided design), and data processing. There are wide choices of software and hardware which results in lower costs and greater availability of these items. Larger displays, multiple ones if desired, are available along with specialty multi-function keyboards and a variety of mice, all of which can be easily attached. More powerful computer chips, memory chips, video processors, large, multiple hard drives and pow-

erful wireless adaptors are choices only available with Desktops.

The choice between proprietary brands such as Dell or HP vs. a plain vanilla custom machine depends upon your budget and how much technical support you may need.

Laptop

Portable laptop computers come in a variety of sizes, prices and features. Many of the more expensive ones rival some Desktop machines in capability. The display screens are smaller than Desktops and the keyboards with the integrated touchpad mouse are not as user friendly as those on Desktops. Newer models have built-in Wi-Fi for connection to the Internet, whereas older models required a USB Wi-Fi adapter. Most Laptops have a built-in video camera for video messaging with friends via Skype. For equivalent features, Laptops are always more expensive than Desktops as are any repairs or upgrades. However, if portability of a powerful computer is a requirement, a Laptop is a good choice. An auxiliary USB external hard drive or large thumb drive (flash drive) is useful for backup and storage for Laptops.



Notebook

The Notebook is just a smaller, lighter version of a Laptop with a smaller screen and keyboard. It is not recommended for heavy duty use, but is fine for travel and is less expensive than Laptops, Tablets or Smart Phones. Most of the Laptop features are also found in Notebooks. Some Notebooks come with electronic memory instead of hard drives. This memory is faster and lighter, but holds much less data than hard drives. The Chrome by Google is a Notebook that utilizes the Cloud for much of its power and capability.



Tablet

A Tablet has no external keyboard, but the screen is touch sensitive so a virtual keyboard on the screen is provided instead. However, the touch-screen eliminates much of the standard keyboard activity. The availability of software for Tablets is growing rapidly, but there is nowhere near the number of titles available for the computers described above. For casual use, Tablets are fine for email, Web browsing, limited word processing and



spreadsheet work. Most Tablets are less expensive than Laptops, but often cost more than Notebooks. Tablets also have e-Book reading capability. They have no hard drive but Cloud storage via the Internet somewhat replaces this function. The iPad by Apple seems to be the leader in Tablets, but many competitors are coming on-line with similar features at lower prices.

Smart Phone

There are two major varieties of Smart Phones: iPhone and Android. The iPhone is a proprietary operating system by Apple and is more expensive than other Smart Phones, but is claimed to be more user friendly. The Android phone is an open source operating system developed by Google and as such has many more Apps, (software applications). The major drawback to these phones is the small display screen. They have touch screens in lieu of a keyboard. However, they are cell phones, which none of the above are. They are also connected to the Internet for email and Web browsing and can play music and video. The phones can be quite inexpensive because the carriers (Verizon, ATT, etc.) require signing a two year contract for the reduced cost. Breaking the contract early can be very expensive. There is a basic cost for the phone service and an equivalent monthly charge for Internet service. There also can be an additional service charge for data usage. Look for unlimited data-use contracts, if available.



Smart e-Book

Older e-Book readers were just that - monochrome digital book readers, e.g., early models of the Amazon Kindle. Newer Readers such as the Amazon Fire and Barnes & Noble Nook have full color touch screens with Wi-Fi along with their e-Book reader function. The Fire also has free Internet connectivity via Sprint. So the e-Books are now competing with the Tablets, having similar features but with a display size intermediate between Tablets and Smart Phones. Look for e-Book Readers to become even smarter in the near future.

So what's next? I predict expanded speech recognition and generation will soon be incorporated in most computers, as an alternate to touch-screen, mouse and keyboard. A larger selection of Apps will become available as software programmers jump on this lucrative bandwagon. Faster Internet connections are already available in selected locations and will come to your area soon. Look for LTE, 4G, 5G and even faster connections. Better displays that don't wash out in sunlight are being developed and we should see them soon. Lower prices and enhanced features due to competition favor the consumer and should happen very quickly. Decisions, decisions

Stay tuned!

How To Hunt Elephants

COMPUTER SCIENTISTS hunt elephants by exercising Algorithm A:

1. Go to Africa.
2. Start at the Cape of Good Hope.
3. Work northward in an orderly manner, traversing the continent alternately east and west.
4. During each traverse pass:
 - a. Catch each animal seen.
 - b. Compare each animal caught to a known elephant.
 - c. Stop when a match is found.

ENGINEERS hunt elephants by going to Africa, catching gray animals at random, and stopping when any one of them weighs within plus or minus 15 percent of any previously observed elephant.

ECONOMISTS don't hunt elephants, but they believe that if elephants are paid enough, they will hunt themselves.

STATISTICIANS hunt the 1st animal they see N times and call it an elephant.

LAWYERS don't hunt elephants, but they do follow the herds around arguing about who owns the droppings

SOFTWARE LAWYERS will claim that they own an entire herd based on the look and feel of one dropping.

SENIOR MANAGERS set broad elephant-hunting policy based on the assumption that elephants are just like field mice, but with deeper voices



Help Lines

HARDWAREHELP	AdvisorNo.
Reformat Hard Disk, FDISK	2,4,5
Install Hard Drive, CD-ROM/RW	2,4,5
Install Video Card	7
Partitioning Hard Drives	2
Internet/Intranet	6,7
Audio Cards	4
MPs Files, WMA Files, WAV Files	3,4
Burning CD's	3,5
Homesite	7
Net Objects	7

SOFTWAREHELP	AdvisorNo.
Win 95/98/ME/2K/NT/XP	2,3,4,7
Win 7	4,7
Microsoft Word	2,7
Microsoft Excel	4
Microsoft PowerPoint	4
WordPerfect	1,7
Norton/Symantec AntiVirus	2,3,6,7
Norton System Works	2,7
CompuPic / CompuPic Pro	3,7
Winzip, WinRAR	6
Ccleaner	3,4
Outlook, Outlook Express	2
Internet Explorer	2,7
RegSeeker	3,5
Instant Messaging	2
Installing Software after Reformatting	5
Deleting Files; Wiping	6

ADVISORS

Name	Phone	Hours
[1] Fred Shelton	(253)752-0120	Variable
[2] Bob Henkel	(253)537-6732	8A-8P any day
[3] Tom Stepanek	(253)922-7939	7-9P Mon-Fri
[4] Carl Tenning	(206)824-3843	6-9P Mon-Fri
[5] Oclad Wesley	(253)212-0352	6-9P
[6] Bob Thomson	(253)752-5582	Variable
[7] Ray Mills	(360)692-7568	6-9P Mon-Sat

Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers (TOG)

New Member Application/Existing Member Change of Address Form

For **Tacoma Open Group** annual membership, send form (if needed) & **\$25** to Bob Henkel., 10613 25th Avenue E., Tacoma, WA 98445.
 Make checks payable to TOG

Please print or type. Date: _____ Sponsored by: _____

Member's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____ Plus Four _____ Country: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work phone: (____) _____ E-Mail Address _____

TACOMA MEETING

When: **Mon 12 Mar 2012 -7:00 PM**
Where: SE Tacoma Community Centre
1614 99th Street E.
Tacoma, Washington

From I-5 take Exit 127 (Hwy 512) to Portland Ave., north on Portland to 99th, left over tracks. Building is on south side.

Future Dates: 2nd Monday of Month

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TOG Web Site: <http://www.toggle.org>

Deadline: 15th of this month to appear in next months' issue, if room

Corporate Sponsors:

Raymond Mills & Associates
www.rm-a.com

How To get To The Meeting

For those readers still unfamiliar with how to find our meeting place we have reproduced the map showing its relationship in Tacoma to Portland Ave S. and the 512 Freeway. The 512 Freeway can be entered from I-5 in Tacoma on the west or from Hwy 167 in Puyallup on the east. Proceed to Portland off-ramp and turn north to 99th Street. Some folks in the middle of Tacoma may prefer to take Portland southbound to 99th. At 99th turn west over the tracks and there you are!



TOGGLE

Tacoma OPEN Group for Micros
1808 Lenore Drive
Tacoma, WA 98406-1920

Change Service Requested

PROGRAMS

This Month's Meeting

This will be a regular monthly meeting. Meeting discussions are always interesting and the ever-popular Q&A (Question & Answer) period is sure to pique your interest, come up to your expectations and tickle your fancy. Come and share your own experiences, problems and discoveries.

No program presentation has been announced at press time, however, lively discussions of members' individual experiences and problems are sure to arise as they always do. Come and take part in these interesting exchanges.