TC/PC Exists to Facilitate and Encourage the Cooperative Exchange of PC Knowledge and Information Across All Levels of Experience

January 2012

**General Meeting:
Tuesday, January 10 7PM**

General Meeting
Tuesday, January 10, 2012
at 7:00 PM

Eclectic and Electric Software Showcase with Door Prizes

**Location: Summit Place
8505 Flying Cloud Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344**

   Member Curt Trout will show and tell handy dandy electrical tips and tricks for your PC — all to make your life easier. These are inexpensive devices every member should have that can make all the difference.
   Members Jim Grotz and David Van Dongen will preview new features in Adobe Reader X; you know the free Adobe PDF reader every member has on his or her desktop. Have you overlooked simple changes that can secure Adobe Reader? Are you aware of and do you know how to use the new features in Adobe Reader X?
   Did you buy or receive a unique gadget this Holiday Season? Please bring it along to show and tell with your friends. Door Prizes will be given at this meeting to be held at the usual time and date at Summit Place.⌨

Last Month's Meeting: Outlook 2010
By Sharon Walbran, SQWalbran (at) yahoo.com

Members Steve Kuhlmey and Sharon Walbran introduced the changes in Microsoft Outlook 2010. This is the first version of Outlook to effectively adopt the ribbons format. Also, Outlook has changed the view options, especially to include conversations, like in Gmail, where emails sent back and forth on a particular topic or subject are grouped together making it easier to find, organize, and follow up email responses. The search box at the top of the email list allows the user to search using a word or phrase in the subject or message or sender's name and then highlights that item in every email that contains it. Outlook can also be configured to include messages sent via social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn as well. They walked through new features and how to use the various components of the program: email, calendar, contacts, notes, and journal. They also fielded questions from the audience. 🖥

Flickr: A look inside the photostream
By Larry Klees, member, Orange County PC Users' Group, CA, October issue, nibbles & bits, www.orcopug.org, lklees (at) dslextreme.com

Once upon a time there were only a few photographers in an entire city. Today, thanks to advances in digital photography, there are only a few people in an entire city who are not photographers. When you factor in the internet; millions of photos fly around the world every second with the aid of numerous applications.

One of these applications that I personally like is called Flickr. Anyone with internet access can have a free Flickr account. A Flickr account is based on a thing called a "photostream." Photographs and short videos can be uploaded to this photostream which can be used like a personal photo album. The photos can be left in the order they are uploaded or they can be organized into sets like "Christmas 2010," "fireworks," "black sheep of the family," etc. These can be viewed and, if you like, downloaded or commented on by contacts, friends, and family members. Flickr allows you to place anybody in those categories and you can allow each category different access privileges to each individual photograph.

Flickr's Home/Welcome page

You can join special interest groups like "Bugs" or "Macro Photography" or "San Francisco," etc. If you don't see a group you like, you can even start a group of your own. You can use all manner of search criteria to find photos in your photostream or elsewhere on Flickr.

When you log on to Flickr you are sent to a Home/ Welcome page. This page gives you a quick summary of what has happened since your last log on. From this page you can monitor views of or comments others have left on your own photos; or you can take a quick look at the new things from your contacts, friends, family members, or groups. You can also upload new photos to your own photostream or organize other aspects of your account.

Flickr can be a little overwhelming at first but you will soon learn your way around. Flickr honors copyrights, doesn't sell your information, lets you control access to your photos, and offers many other security features. Many people like the free accounts. Many more like the extra benefits of the pro account for about $25 per year. 🖥

The Tip Corner

By Bill Sheff, Novice SIG Coordinator, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA, November 2011 issue, The LVCG Journal, www.lvcg.org, nsheff (at) aol.com

Fixing USB hard drives

Regardless of what kind of repair work you do, a good idea is start with the easiest and cheapest. So if you run into trouble with devices plugged into your computer via a USB cable... let's start with the cable.

Make sure there is a good connection. Remove and reinsert the cable into a different USB slot on the computer. Swap the cable for another USB cable.

Still not working? Double click My Computer in Windows XP or Computer in Windows Vista. The plugged USB hard drive is the removable disk on the list. Right click Properties and see if there is something wrong. If the drive is not listed turn the computer off. If the USB device is not recognized a message appears and unplug all other USB devices on the PC. These may not be compatible with the USB hard drive. Reboot the computer once all the other USB devices are disconnected.

Finally, if you are utilizing a USB hub, unplug the device and connect it directly to the USB port. If still not recognized or working the answer unfortunately is that the hard drive is very likely defective.

Burning DVD discs in Windows 7

First let's review the two different DVD formats there are. They are DVD- and DVD+. DVD- (dash) was developed by Pioneer in the late 1990's, while DVD+ was developed b by the DVD+RW alliance which includes Sony, HP, Ricoh, Yamaha, and others. Just note that all DVD burners now produced support both formats, which makes it easy for the consumer.

However, it should be noted that all things being equal the DVD dash burns slightly faster.

Whenever I mention a CD or DVD below it means either a dash or plus format. DVD-R formats are for a one time burn, while DVD-RW discs are used for both reading and writing data and can be formatted over and over again.

Today there are many types of multi-media files, including data, audio, and video, and each could require different ways to burn it to a DVD disc correctly.

We will discuss common file types, the disc format they should be created in, and the type of blank disc to use for best results.

For Home Videos (from a camcorder or downloaded video) they should be created with an Authoring software such as Windows DVD Maker in a DVD-Video project and it's recommended to use DVD-R media.

Digital Photo files can either be backed up using a standard DVD burning software as a data project or be created as a digital photo slideshow by using a compatible software using DVD-R media.

Most Recorded TV shows from Windows Media Center should be Authored with windows DVD Maker in a DVD-Video project and burned to DVD-R media.

Music or audio files can be burned to blank CD-R discs using Windows Media Player. However there are two ways to go about this: First you can create a standard Audio CD which usually holds 74 minutes of music by creating an audio project or you can burn mp3 files as a data project to get more music on a disc. (Just make sure you have an mp3 disc player for proper playback).

A recent burn I did holds 182 music files on one CD+ disc, and it plays in my car.

Disc Image Files or ISO files require Windows, Roxio or Nero Disc Image Burner to burn the format correctly on either a blank CD-R or DVD-R disc (It just depends on the file size.).

Recording Home Videos to DVD

By utilizing the free Windows DVD Maker already included in Windows 7 installs you can simply and easily create home movie discs from your videos. The software will not make a Hollywood type film but will get you creating a DVD movie that you and your family can enjoy on your TV sets in the living room.

You simply start the software, load in some video that you captured off of your camcorder, create a custom DVD menu and burn away. You now have a DVD movie disc that you can watch on any standard DVD player.

Recording TV Shows to DVD Disc

In the old days, if your Windows PC came with a TV capture card you can hook up your cable line or satellite TV box and watch TV on your computer screen, but today with digital signals being encrypted you now need at least a separate cable box or DVR. If you use Windows Media Center you also have a built in DVR where you can record the shows you want. The best part is that you can also now burn them to a DVD disc and watch them on your TV set just like it was intended. To do this in Media Center all you do is insert a blank DVD, then click Burn CD/DVD and choose the Video DVD option. Then select a title name for the project and select the video clips or TV shows you want to burn from your media library and click the burn button. Media Center will handle the rest and give you a DVD disc that is properly formatted.

Sharing Digital Photos the Easy Way

One of the easiest ways to preserve, backup, and share your digital photos is to back them up to a blank CD-R or DVD. You can easily accomplish this by using Windows Explorer and choosing the Mastered format. All you do is insert a blank CD or DVD and on the AutoPlay box choose the "Burn files to disc using Windows Explorer" option. When the burn a disc dialog box opens choose a Disc Title and tick the With a CD/DVD player and click Next. Then simply browse to the digital photo folder you want to backup/burn and drag it into the empty disc folder. When ready to burn click the Burn to Disc box and you are good to go.

Burn a DVD From an Image File

If you come across an image file such as .iso you can watch it using Magic ISo or burn that image to a CD or DVD to see the contents in the file. Since .iso is a container for a file structure you need to extract it and by burning it to a disc will accomplish this. In Windows 7 you can use Windows Disc Image Burner. This is as easy as right clicking on the .iso file and choosing Burn Disc Image...yes it's that easy now in Windows 7.

(For some additional data take a look at BurnWorld.)

One Column Excel Tip

If you ever prepared a spreadsheet that consisted of hundreds of lines and only one or two columns and then decided to print it out, can you do it without running through a ream of paper for just the one or two columns? Well, yeah! But don't look for a simple solution.

Actually, the simplest way is to copy your entire data table (all 100s of rows) to the Clipboard and paste it into Word. You can then format the information in Word to use columns and print as desired. (You can also place headers and footers on your data easier within Word than you can in Excel.)

But if you are a purist and want to do it in Excel here are a couple of ways to print the data in columns on a single sheet of paper.

Let's assume you have data that is only one column wide by 100 rows deep.)
 1. In cell B2, enter the formula "=A26".
 2. In cell C2, enter the formula "=A51".
 3. In cell D2, enter the formula "=A76".
 4. Copy cells B2:D2 down to row 25.

Your data is now in four columns, without the original data being disturbed. Format your columns to the necessary width, place a page break just before row 26, and print just the first page of your data. You can also save the file as a template for future single column files.

Another approach is to copy the row and column(s) to a different worksheet. This is quick and easy to do using the keyboard (Ctrl+C to copy and Ctrl+V to paste), but there is a drawback. If the row or column you are copying contains formulas that rely on other areas of the worksheet, the copied data may not show the proper results. Thus, the best "cut and paste" approach would be to use the Paste Values command rather than just Paste. Back to Page 1⌨
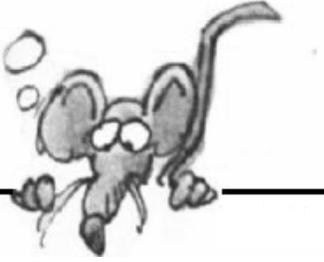
NIBBLERS

By Jeannine Sloan

MiFi

MiFi is a line of compact wireless routers produced by Novatel Wireless that act as mobile Wi-Fi hotspots. MiFi stands for 'My Wi-Fi'. The MiFi can be connected to a mobile phone (cellular) carrier and provide internet access for up to 5 devices. The MiFi works at a distance up to 10 m (30ft) and will provide internet or network access to any WiFi enabled peripheral device.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MiFi
A 3G or 4G mobile hotspot (MiFi) has a monthly cost associated. The cheapest I found

$30 for 200MB
$40 for 2GB
$50 for 5GB
$85 for 10GB

are these at http://mobilehotspot.com/ :

Use the Windows 7 Calibrate Feature

Click the Windows logo (a.k.a. "Start button") and search for *Calibrate.* Click *Calibrate display color.* You will be assisted through a variety of settings, including gamma, brightness, contrast, and so on. Read more:
http://www.pcmech.com/article/5-tips-to-ease-the-annoyance-of-calibrating-a-new-monitor/

How to Take a Screenshot with Microsoft Word 2010

2010 now has a provision to take screenshots and paste it directly into the word document. To take a screen shot, select the *Insert* tab in the ribbon and here you can see screenshot option. Once you take the screenshot, the image is automatically pasted in the document and you can do basic editing with the picture tool available in Word 2010.
Lots more Tips for Office 2010 can be found here:
http://techie-buzz.com/featured/office-2010-tips-and-tricks.html

Windows Media Player Controls

Right-clicking the Play/Pause button lets you choose slow, normal, and fast playback modes.

IE7 or IE8 Pop-up Blocker

To turn on or off Pop-up Blocker in Internet Explorer 7 or Internet Explorer 8
Open Internet Explorer by clicking the Start button . In the search box, type Internet Explorer, and then, in the list of results, click Internet Explorer.

Click the Tools button, point to Pop-up Blocker, and then do one of the following:
To turn off Pop-up Blocker, click Turn Off Pop-up Blocker.
To turn on Pop-up Blocker, click Turn On Pop-up Blocker.
To turn on or off Pop-up Blocker in Internet Explorer 9
Click the Tools button, and then click Internet options.
On the Privacy tab, select or clear the Turn on Pop-up Blocker check box, and then click OK.
http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/Windows7/Internet-Explorer-Pop-up-Blocker-frequently-asked-questions

Here's an Interesting Tip For IE 8 Or 9

Save paper and ink when printing on Internet. If you want to print a page, but don't want all the images on the page to waste your ink, you can use the developer tools to get rid of them. To activate the feature, press F12 on any web page and you'll see a new window open up. Select the Images menu item and press Disable Images to switch off all images on the page, something that can speed up printing if you're only interested in the text content. If you select View Alt Text from the same menu item, it displays text describing the images instead.
Contributed by Linda Nelson
Note from editor: The tools may appear as a row at the bottom of the window or within a window.

Add Calculating Rows and Columns to a Word Table

Excel isn't your only option if you need to evaluate values and your primary need is word processing. Use Word 2010's formula feature to perform simple calculations.
http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/msoffice/add-calculating-rows-and-columns-to-a-word-table/6058?tag=nl.e064

How to Recover a Draft of a Word 2010 Document

When the planets are properly aligned and the word processing gods are smiling, it's possible to recover those lost documents, the ones that Word calls drafts.
1. Click the File tab and select Recent from the list. You see the list of recent documents. When unsaved drafts are available, you see a link at the bottom of the list: Recover Unsaved Documents.
2. Click the link Recover Unsaved Documents. An Open dialog box appears.
3. Select from the list the document that you want to recover. The document may have an unusual name, especially when it has never been saved.
4. Click the Open button. Word opens and recovers the document.

The document you recover might not be the one you wanted it to be. If so, repeat these steps and choose another document.
You might also find that the document doesn't contain all the text you typed or thought would be there. You can't do anything about it, other than remember to save everything in the first place!
Read Dummies.com's illustrated article here: http://tinyurl.com/7trzxrs

Be Aware

Viruses travel not only in e-mails and programs, but also in screen savers, themes, toolbars, and other add-ons. Back to Page 1

Free E-Book Readers For Your Computer and Smart Devices
by Ira Wilsker, iwilsker@sbcglobal.net

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    I have been an avid reader since my earliest years. I used to be a regular at the public library, checking out so many books that I was on a first name basis with the librarian. Over the years, I have collected a huge library of books, having read virtually all of them. Even today, it is not unusual for me to purchase several books at a time. Now that more and more books are becoming available in at least one of the several competing e-book formats, and organizations such as Project Gutenberg(www.gutenberg.org, 36,000 free e-books available), and Google Books (books.google.com, over 3 million titles available, many free) have made thousands of free e-books available, e-books have become a viable choice for avid readers. There are also thousands of free e-books available in proprietary formats from Amazon (Kindle format) and Barnes & Noble (Nook format). Some third-party websites also compile updated lists of free e-books, such as FreeStuffTimes (www.freestufftimes.com/category/ebooks), and Calibre Ebook Management   (2855 mostly free e-books listed, drmfree.calibre-ebook.com/by/genre).

    There are several dedicated commercial e-book readers available, ranging in price from $79 to several hundred dollars, from companies such as Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Sony, and other makers. Smart devices, including Apple's iPad series, smart phones of various brands, and almost all tablet devices can display a variety of e-book formats. For those who already have a laptop computer, netbook, PC, Mac, or Linux machine, there are now several good free e-book reading software utilities available. Some of the free e-book reading software is proprietary, primarily enabling computer owners to read e-books distributed by the software publishers. Barnes & Noble has free Nook e-book reader software or apps for iPad, iPhone, Android, PC, and Mac (www.barnesandnoble.com/u/free-nook-apps/379002321), while Amazon has free Kindle e-book reader software or apps for PC, Mac, iPhone, iPad, BlackBerry, Android Phone, and Windows 7 Phone. Amazon also has a free web browser based Kindle reader (read.amazon.com) that works with Firefox (Mac, PC, Linux versions), Google's Chrome (Mac, PC, Linux, Chromebook versions), and Apple's Safari (Mac, iPad and PC versions); at present, Microsoft's Internet Explorer is not supported, but according to the Amazon website, Amazon is working on an Internet Explorer compatible version. Sony offers free e-book readers for PC, Mac, and Android devices including Android smart phones and tablets (ebookstore.sony.com/download).

    Rather than using a proprietary e-book reader that may be linked to a single source, and possibly capable of reading only a single proprietary format, many users may prefer an independent utility

that can read multiple e-book formats. There are many third-party e-book reader utilities available, several of which are free. One that has been top-rated in published reviews is the free Mobipocket Ebook Reader (www.mobipocket.com/en/DownloadSoft/ProductDetailsReader.asp), that has versions for Windows PC, Blackberry, Windows Mobile (PocketPC, Smartphone), Symbian (Nokia smart phones, Sony Ericsson UIQ), Palm, and Dedicated ePaper devices (Cybook, iLiad). The Mobipocket Ebook Reader runs as a free standing program on a PC, and can also synchronize e-books and related content with almost all portable and smart devices. While Mobipocket can import almost all major e-book formats, it converts them into the .prc format which is readable on any Mobipocket device. In terms of appearance, format, features, and readability, Mobipocket has had very positive published reviews, and is a very capable e-book reader.

Another free e-book reader is from Calibre (calibre-ebook.com/download), which is an open source reader that will run on Windows, Mac, and Linux computers, and is also available in portable version which can be run totally from a USB flash drive as long as the computer is running Windows XP or higher. The Calibre reader is one of the most capable e-book readers available, and can read and convert almost every available e-book format. Calibre can read cbz, cbr, cbc, chm, djvu, epub, fb2, html, htmlz, lit, lrf, mobi, odt, pdf, prc, pdb, pml, rb, rtf, snb, tcr, txt, txtz, formats, and convert any of these formats to epub, fb2, oeb, lit, lrf, mobi, htmlz, pdb, pml, rb, pdf, rtf, snb, tcr, txt, txtz. Any of these formats can be exported and synchronized with compatible smart devices, tablets, phones, and e-book readers.   Calibre also supports importing live news feeds from over 300 sources, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, Time, Newsweek, The Guardian, ESPN, and hundreds more; these news feeds can also be exported to smart devices. Calibre is one of the most popular free e-book readers, with over 6 million copies downloaded, and almost 500,000 copies a month currently being downloaded. Calibre is a very feature rich e-book reader that can do much more than simply display and convert e-books.

There are several other very good e-book readers available, but none are as feature rich as Mobipocket or Calibre. Tom's eText Reader (www.fellnersoft.at/eTR.htm) is designed to read plain text files such as the thousands of eTexts provided by the free Project Gutenberg (gutenberg.org), and display them in a more readable format, as if reading a book, rather than continuous plain text. Tom's eText Reader allows the user to control the size of the window, font style, and font size to improve readability. This software inserts page breaks automatically, bookmarks can be set, table of contents created, and the contents are fully searchable. Tom's eText Reader can also import RTF and HTML files, and open zip files.

An interesting free e-book reader is YBook, self described as "The paperback emulator" (www.spacejock.com/yBook.html). ; YBook is totally free, with no adware, no registration, and no spyware, and runs on all versions of Windows, as well as on Linux and Mac computers with Wine. YBook makes e-books appear as standard paperback books, and can display either single pages, or side-by-side pages. Page size, text size, margins, and page (background) color are all fully customizable by the user; there is no need to pan, zoom, or scroll with YBook, as all pages look exactly like pages printed on paper. This program can import and display text, html, RTF, PDB, PRC, and ePub e-book formats. Any e-books displayed in YBook can be searched for words and phrases, and bookmarks can be created as desired. YBook can directly download and import all Project Gutenberg e-books, complete with titles and index.

While I still prefer real books over e-books, I do have to admit that I have a few of these utilities installed on both my desktop and laptop computers, as well as on my smart phone, and I have downloaded over one hundred free e-books. With the countless free e-books available, as well as thousands of titles available for purchase or rental, e-books and e-book readers, either dedicated electronic readers or applications on computers, may very well be the wave of the future.

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January

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 **Systems on Saturday/ Word SIG 9:00-Noon**
8	9	10 **General Mtg Eclectic and Electric Software Showcase 7:00 PM Summit Place 6-7PM Pic Perf SIG**	11	12	13	14 **Linux on Saturday* 9:00-Noon**
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 **MS Office (including Access) on Saturday* 9:00—Noon**
22	23	2	25	26	27	28

February

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4 **Systems on Saturday/ Word SIG 9:00-Noon**
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 **Linux on Saturday* 9:00-Noon**
12	13	14 **General Mtg 7:00 PM Summit Place 6-7PM Web SIG**	15	16	17	18 **MS Office (including Access) on Saturday* 9:00—Noon**
19	20	21	22	23	2	25
26	27	28	29		[Back to Page 1](#)	

Broadsides

Compiled by Ron Broadhurst, Member, Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc., FL, November 2011 issue, The Space Coast PC Journal, www.scpcug.com, ringram728 (at) earthlink.net

These ideas are compiled from years of accumulations from various magazines, books, online sites, and my own personal experience. I claim neither originality nor ownership to any of its contents. My only intent is to share the various "tips, "tricks," & "hints" in hopes of helping & maybe enhancing your computing experiences. They are all intended for anyone who uses a PC. It is for beginners as well as advanced users. Enjoy and use as you will.

In the past my Broadsides articles have dealt with Windows XP and a few others. However, since the emergence of Windows 7, I have decided to add that OS in future articles along with XP. Any suggestions to these Broadside articles is appreciated.

How to customize the CTRL+ALT+DEL screen in Windows 7 Pro and above

When you press the key combination CTRL+ALT+DEL in Windows 7 (and Vista), you get a screen that shows you a number of options, including locking the computer, changing your password, logging off, and starting Task Manager. You can customize
this screen to show only those options you want to see, using Group Policy - if you're running Windows 7 Professional, Enterprise or Ultimate edition. Here's how:
1. Click Start
2. In the Search box, type gpedit.msc and press ENTER to open the Group Policy Editor
3. In the left pane, navigate to and click on User Configuration | Administrative Templates
4. In the right pane, double click the folder name "Ctrl+Alt+Del Options"
5. In the right pane, you'll see the items that you can remove (for example, "Remove Lock Computer"). To remove one, double click it and click Enabled to enable the policy and remove the item from the screen menu.
6. When you're finished, click Apply and then OK
     To see the change, press CTRL+ALT+DEL

How to display shortcuts and files in the Computer folder

In Windows 7, the Computer folder (formerly known as My Computer) by default contains all the drives and removable storage devices attached to your system. You can also display your favorite shortcuts to applications or documents here so you can get to them quickly. Here's how:
1. Open Windows Explorer
2. Click Organize | Folder and Search Options | View tab.
3. Check the box to show hidden files, folders and drives, and click OK.
4. Now navigate to this folder: Users \ \ AppData \ Roaming \ Microsoft \ Windows \ Network Shortcuts
5. Create the shortcuts in this folder that you want to display in the Computer folder.
6. Open the Computer folder and you should be able to see your shortcuts. To group them together underneath the Network Location, set Explorer to sort by Type.

Shortcut To Create New Folders In Windows 7

The usual way of creating a new folder in previous Windows operating systems was to right-click on a blank space in the window or computer desktop and select the new folder option. There was no keyboard shortcut available that could be quickly pressed to
create that new folder. This has apparently changed in Windows 7 as it is now possible to create new folders with the keyboard shortcut [CTRL Shift N]. All you need to do is press this keyboard

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shortcut whenever you want to create a new folder. The only thing left to do is to type in the name of the folder if you want to change it and hit enter to save the changes.
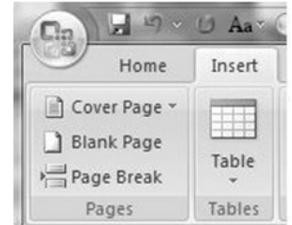
Insert blank page

Question: How do I insert a blank page between pages 5 and 6 in a Word 2007 document that contains 65 pages?
Answer: With your document open at the place where you wish to insert a blank page:
• Click on the Insert tab
• Click on the Pages group
• Click the Blank Page option.
This will insert a blank page.

Inserting the date and time

Undoubtedly, the time will arise when you need to insert the current date or time in your document. This may be in the introduction of a letter or in a header or footer. Word allows you to quickly insert the date or time in several different formats. This information is inserted as a field which can be updated manually or is updated automatically when you print the document.

To insert the date or time into your document, follow these steps:
1. Position the insertion point where you want the date or time inserted.
2. Display the Insert tab of the ribbon.
3. Click Date & Time in the Text group. Word displays the Date and Time dialog box.
4. Select a format for the date or time.
5. Select the check box at the bottom of the dialog box if you want the selected date or time to always reflect whatever is current. If you choose this, it means that Word inserts the date or time as a field so that it always represents the current date or time.
6. Click on OK. The date or time, as specified, is inserted in your document. Back to Page 1
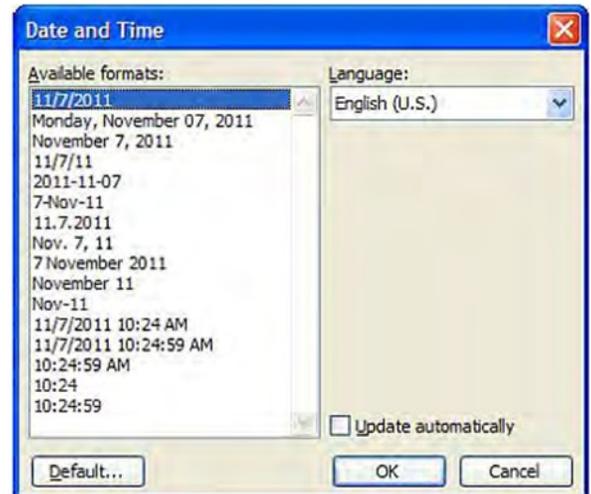
Shut down, Sleep, Hibernate - Which one, when and why?

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida, November 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, president (at) spcug.org

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

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

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

The Windows 7 power management goals are simple:

1) make turning a computer off/on as reliable, simple, and fast as turning a TV off/on, and

2) maximize the battery usage if on battery, and reduce the energy consumption if on A/C power.

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

Currently, Windows 7 defines three power-down modes:

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

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

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

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

So, although there is a lot going on to produce and provide the power down modes, there really isn't much to think about. For desktops, let it go into, or select, sleep (which should be hybrid sleep) and for laptops take advantage of hibernate (Your battery will thank you.). [Back to Page 1](#)