

January 2007

Microsoft Word: Create a shortcut to your favorite font

Do you hate navigating the long list of fonts in the Formatting toolbar every time you need to use it a favorite font? Rather than clicking through the toolbars and menus to find your favorite font, you can create a keyboard shortcut—and never have to search for the font again.

1. Go to the **Tools** menu and select **Customize**.
2. On the *Commands* tab, click the **Keyboard** button.
3. Under *Categories*, click **Fonts**.
4. Under *Fonts*, click your font.
5. Put your cursor in the *Press New Shortcut Key* text box.
6. Press ALT+(any key combo here). E.g. for Times New Roman, press ALT+T+N (Be careful not to use a shortcut combination that has already been assigned, such as for Replace, Paste, and Find)
7. Click the **Assign** button.
8. Click **Close** twice.

Now when you want to apply the font to your text, select the text and press your key combination.

February 2007

Microsoft Excel: Compute an average that excludes zero values

While Excel's AVERAGE function ignores blank cells, it doesn't ignore cells that contain 0. This can result in inaccurate analysis of the data.

For example, let's say you want to calculate the average score for all students who took the final exam. Using the AVERAGE function, you might enter: **=AVERAGE(B3:B23)**.

But if two students were absent and received a grade of 0, the result of the formula wouldn't give a true picture of the average grade. However, you can calculate the average and exclude the absentee students' grades.

1. Enter the following formula: **=AVERAGE(IF(B3:B23<>0,B3:B23))**
2. Press CTRL+SHIFT+ENTER.

The entered formula first creates an array that includes only nonzero values in the range. The AVERAGE function then uses this array as its argument.

March 2007

Microsoft PowerPoint: Change Your PowerPoint Presentations View

When opening PowerPoint presentations, you may have a preference to have them open in Normal view, but if the presentation was saved in Outline view, that is how it opens up. Instead of continuously changing the view, have PowerPoint open all presentations in your preferred view.

1. In PowerPoint, go to the **Tools** menu and select **Options**.
2. Click the *View* tab.
3. Under the *Default view* section, click the down arrow and select the view that you want all presentations opened in. The default value is **The view saved in the file**.
4. Click to save your changes.

April 2007

Microsoft Access: Keyboard Shortcuts to Navigate Design View of Forms

When you use Forms design view, you might wind up spending half your time searching for all the tools you need and toggling between views. Access offers a number of shortcut keys that can eliminate much of the time spent finding (and then opening and closing) menus, toolbars, and windows.

For example, to get directly to Forms Design view from the database window, click on the form name under Objects, and press [Ctrl][Enter]. To toggle from design view to run view, press CTRL+. (period). To toggle back, press CTRL+, (comma). To see other available form views, such as datasheet view, keep pressing CTRL+. or CTRL+, until you reach the desired view.

With so many windows in Design view, it's often difficult to see the form. But, you don't have to leave the field list and property window open while you design the form; you can access the field list by pressing [F8]. Press [F4] to display the properties of a selected object.

When adding multiple controls to your form, you can save considerable time by locking down the toolbox tool. Once you lock down the toolbox tool, you don't have to click the toolbar button each time you wish to add the same control to your form. For example, if you want to add several check boxes to a form, double-click the check box tool in the toolbox, and your mouse becomes a check box drawing tool. You can draw as many check boxes as you need without having to click the check box button again. Once you have finished inserting all the check boxes, press ESC or click the tool on the toolbox to unlock the check box tool.

May 2007

Microsoft Word: Changing the default Date field format

Word comes equipped with a collection of field codes you can use to automatically generate document information. One of the most commonly used Word fields is the Date field, which generates today's date.

The quickest way to insert a Date field in your document is by going to the **Insert** menu and selecting **Date And Time**. In the *Date And Time* dialog box's *Available Formats* list, choose the date format you'd like Word to use, and then click **OK** to insert the field in your document.

However, other Word features that employ the Date field, such as AutoText and the Field dialog box, don't make it so easy to choose the date format you'd like them to use. When you don't specify a date format, Word uses the default date format, which might not be what you want. Here is how you change Word's default date format.

1. From the **Insert** menu, select **Date And Time**.
2. Select the format you'd like to use as the default, and then click **Default**.
3. When Word asks whether you'd like to set the default format to the setting you chose, click **Yes**.
4. Finally, click **OK** to insert your date field using the new default setting.

June 2007

Microsoft Access: Use three properties to make data entry easier in Access

While you can use the Form Wizard to create forms quickly in Access, the forms it produces are not always as user friendly as you might want. By adjusting just a few form control properties, you can make it easier to work with the forms.

For example, a memo control has a number of properties that make it easier for a user to enter data. These controls are not set for ordinary text controls. However, if users only need to enter 100 words or so, you might want to use a text control instead of a memo control—but be sure it's just as easy to work with the text control.

1. Open the *Properties* of the text control.
2. On the *Format* tab, click the *Scroll Bars* property and choose **Vertical** from the drop-down list.
3. On the *Other* tab in the *Enter Key Behavior* box, choose **New Line In Field**.
4. On the *Other* tab in the *Allow AutoCorrect* box, choose **Yes**.
5. Now users will be able to scroll through the text box, press ENTER to start a new line, and have their entries corrected with AutoCorrect as they type.

July 2007

Microsoft Excel: *Get the lowdown on the CONCATENATE function vs. the ampersand (&)*

There are two methods you can use for joining text from different cells—or combining the flexibility of a function within your text. You can use an ampersand (&) to combine a function with text, or the text from more than one cell. Alternatively, you can use the CONCATENATE function to combine different cell reference and text elements into a single text string. So, what's the difference? Which method should you use?

For the most part, these two methods produce the same results; they combine text and/or a cell reference's data into one cell, formatted as text. The only real difference is the number of items you can combine. There's no limit to how many pieces you can combine with the ampersand symbol. However, the CONCATENATE function is limited to 30 arguments, which means you can only combine up to 30 items. If you use Access, there is no CONCATENATE function in Access, but you can use the ampersand method. Therefore, if you know and use this method in Excel, you already know how to use it in Access, too!

August 2007

Microsoft PowerPoint: *Presenter's view for slide shows*

If you're working with a computer that supports multiple monitors, you can use this feature during a slide show to view speaker notes, but keep them hidden from your audience, jump to specific slides out of sequence, keep track of time, and more.

1. Go to the **Slide Show** menu and select **Set up show**.
2. Under the *Multiple Monitors* section, select the check box for *Show Presenter View*. If you do not have more than one monitor, you will receive an error message.

Presenter view offers the following tools to make it easier for you to present information:

- You can use thumbnails to select slides out of sequence and create a customized presentation for your audience.
- Preview text shows you what your next click will add to the screen, such as a new slide or the next bullet in a list.
- Speaker's notes are shown in large, clear type so that you can use them as a script for your presentation.
- You can black out the screen during your presentation and then resume where you left off. For example, you might not want to display the slide content during a break or a question and answer (Q and A) period.

September 2007

Microsoft Word: *Jump from a hyperlink destination to the hyperlink itself*

If you've clicked on a hyperlink and need to return to the hyperlink itself, press ALT+LEFT ARROW. (Keep in mind that you need to have saved your document at least

once before you use this method.) Alternatively, you can click the Back button on the Web toolbar. (If it isn't already displayed, you can access the Web toolbar by selecting going to the **View** menu, and select **Web** from the **Toolbars** list.)

October 2007

Microsoft Access: Calculate the percentage of records in a group

Although it's easy to count the number of records in a group, determining that number's percentage of the report's overall record count may not seem easy to do. Fortunately, it's easy to calculate the percentage.

1. Add a textbox control to the report's *Detail* section and name it **txtCountAll**.
 - a. Set its *Visible* property to **No**
 - b. Set its *Control Source* property to **=Count (*)**
2. Add a textbox control the *group footer* and name the new control **txtCountGroup**
 - a. Set its *Visible* property to **No**
 - b. Set its *Control Source* property to **=Count (*)**
3. Add another textbox to the *group footer* and name it **percent**.
 - a. Set its *Control Source* property to **=txtCountGroup/txtCountAll**.
 - b. Set its *Format* property to **Percent**.

November 2007

Microsoft Excel: Enter the same value in several cells at once

When you need to fill multiple cells with the same entry you may simply copy and paste the value or use Excel's Fill Handle to do the job. However, there's another technique that can at times be more efficient. Simply select all of the cells that you want to fill. Then, type the entry in the active cell and press CTRL+ENTER. Excel plugs the entry into all of the cells that were highlighted. Note that you can also use this technique to fill non-contiguous cells—simply hold down the CTRL key as you select each cell. Also, you can use the technique to enter a formula in multiple cells at once. If your formula contains relative cell references, Excel adjusts each formula to point to the appropriate relative ranges.

December 2007

Adobe InDesign: Create Boilerplate Text with Autocorrect

InDesign is much more user-friendly when it comes to typing text—thanks to the Story Editor—but you might wish for an easy way to type commonly used words or phrases over and over again. Use InDesign's Autocorrect feature to perform this feature.

Say, for example, that you have to frequently type the text “**as soon as possible.**” You can edit your User dictionary in such a way that InDesign inserts the phrase for you. To create boilerplate text:

1. In InDesign, go to the **Edit** menu, move to **Preferences** and select **Autocorrect**.
2. Select the *Enable Autocorrect* check box.

3. Click the button located at the bottom of the *Preferences* dialog box.
4. Enter a couple of letters that you normally wouldn't type in the *Misspelled Word* text box. These will be trigger to insert the text.
5. Enter the correct phrase, such as **as soon as possible**, in the *Correction* text box.
6. Click to close the *Add To Autocorrect List* dialog box, and then click to close the *Preferences* dialog box.
7. Type the letters you added to the *Misspelled Word* list in your document, press the [spacebar], and then watch InDesign insert the correct words much more quickly than you could've typed them!