

ComputerEdge™ Online — 05/14/10



This issue: You Too Can Do YouTube!

How to put your movies on YouTube and expose your videos to the world.

Table of Contents:

[Digital Dave](#) by *Digital Dave*

Digital Dave answers your tech questions.

A reader wants to burn a CD to play music in his car; a laptop's default Windows 7 font size is so small it's almost unreadable; and a tip on using Google Translate to instantly translate Web pages and e-mail text.

[Putting Your Videos on YouTube](#) by Andrea Dunning

It's time to take the next step and post your video.

Sure, you use YouTube. Maybe you even spend hours lost in a video haze. Perhaps not. Regardless, it's time to take the next step. It's time... to post.

[Building Your Own YouTube Channel](#) by Andrea Dunning

Showcase your videos via a nicely polished package.

Whether you want a nice page for your relatives to come view your family videos or an awesome site for showcasing your collection of funny cat videos, your YouTube channel lets you present a collection of video clips to an audience through a nicely polished package.

[Windows Tips and Tricks](#) by Jack Dunning

Windows 7 Quick-Launch Confusion

A reader is puzzled by the changes to the quick-launch feature in Windows 7. In essence, the key to Windows 7 is learning to make liberal use of clicking the right button on your mouse and selecting the appropriate option.

chips and memory.com

intel

\$209

INTEL® Dual Core **E3200**
2.4Ghz Per Core
1GB DDR-2 MEMORY
20X DVDR/RW and
320GB SATA Hard Drive

(Click Banner)

If you're running out of power, space or HVAC, contact Castle Access

SAN DIEGO'S EXCLUSIVE BANDWIDTH NEUTRAL COLOCATION FACILITY

castle ACCESS
Enterprise Data Centers

CLICK HERE TO SEE INSIDE THE CASTLE

(Click Banner)

[Wally Wang's Apple Farm](#) by Wally Wang

Yes, you can YouTube from your iPhone.

A Mac or iPhone makes uploading videos to YouTube even easier. Also, the Guardian Eyewitness turns your iPad into a daily photography course; if you're having trouble learning iPhone/iPad programming, read "Beginning Mac Programming"; iDraw condenses the features of high-priced drawing programs into a tiny app; is Flash a luxury or a necessity?; and a tip on preventing Safari from automatically opening certain downloaded files.

[Rob, The ComputerTutor: Word Processing](#) by Rob Spahitz

Word Processing 101

This week, we start looking at word processing using Microsoft Word. Although we'll start by discussing the basics, Rob will also be throwing things in that most of you probably don't know, so scan through and learn something each week.

[Spam of the Week](#) by ComputerEdge Staff

The latest in annoying and dangerous e-mail currently making the rounds.

A faux e-mail that appears to come from your ISP's tech support department is making the rounds. Click Delete!

DEPARTMENTS:

[EdgeWord: A Note from the Publisher](#) by Jack Dunning

Feeding the Monster That Is the Web

The Web has become the repository for everything that can be digitized. There are no limits—and most of us are only scratching the surface of the vast digital content available.

[Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers](#) by

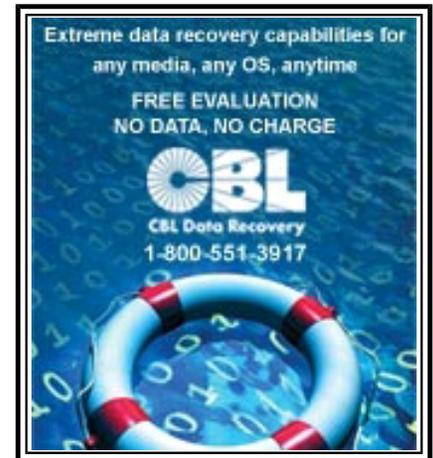
ComputerEdge Staff

Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns.

"Hidden Tools in Windows 7," "Twitter Spam," "Screen Rotation"



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Digital Dave

“Digital Dave answers your tech questions.” by *Digital Dave*

A reader wants to burn a CD to play music in his car; a laptop's default Windows 7 font size is so small it's almost unreadable; and a tip on using Google Translate to instantly translate Web pages and e-mail text.

Dear Digital Dave,

I have an older CD player in my car and cannot play MP3 music. How can I convert MP3 files and burn them to an audio CD that I can play in my car?

*Marcus
Alabama*

Dear Marcus,

Burning audio CDs, whether with MP3 files or other music formats, is one of the most popular uses for computers, and today's computers make it easy. There are many programs available for working with music and video files, but in most cases your computer will already have what you need to burn CDs with mixes of your favorite music.

Windows computers offer a program called Windows Media Player, which will not only play all of your audio files, but it will also facilitate burning those files to a CD that you can later play in your CD player. You can mix and match the file type that you are adding to your CD since Media Player will convert the files to the proper format for the new CD.

In Windows 7 and Vista, starting the process is even easier. Whenever you select a music file in Windows Explorer, a Burn button will be added to the toolbar at the top. When you click the Burn button, the process of creating an audio CD with Windows Media Player will be initiated. (In Windows XP, right-click on the file name and select "Copy to CD or Device.")

When you start the process, you will be asked to load a blank CD into your CD/DVD read/write drive. Be sure to use a standard CD disc and not a DVD disc, which will not play in your CD player.

You will be asked whether you want to initiate the CD as a data CD or an audio CD (see Figure 1). The data CD appears as Live File System and the audio CD appears as Mastered.

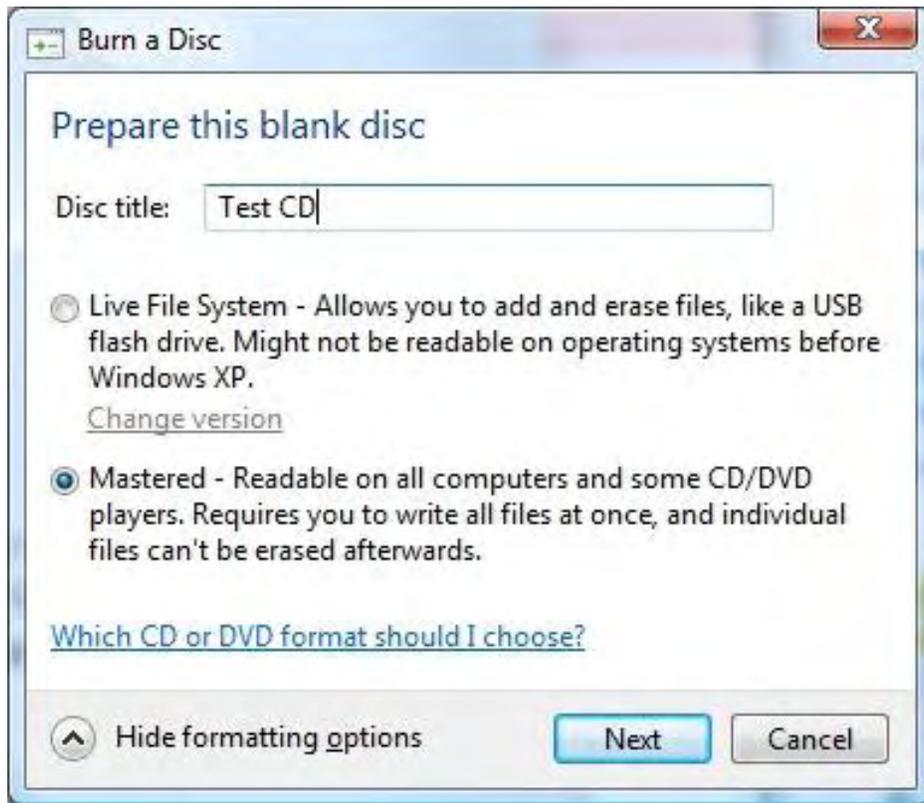


Figure 1. Choosing format options for a CD in Windows.

Every time you select a file and click Burn, that file will be copied into a special temporary folder. You can continue to add files from any source. When you take the next step in the process, Windows Media Player will open displaying the Burn List on the right side. (Some of these steps may vary in different versions of Windows.) At this point, you can continue to add songs, remove them, or rearrange their order. The program will tell you how much of the approximately 74 minutes you have used.

When you are ready, click the Start Burn button at the bottom of the list. You will then specify the final format for the CD (see Figure 2). Be sure to make an audio CD.

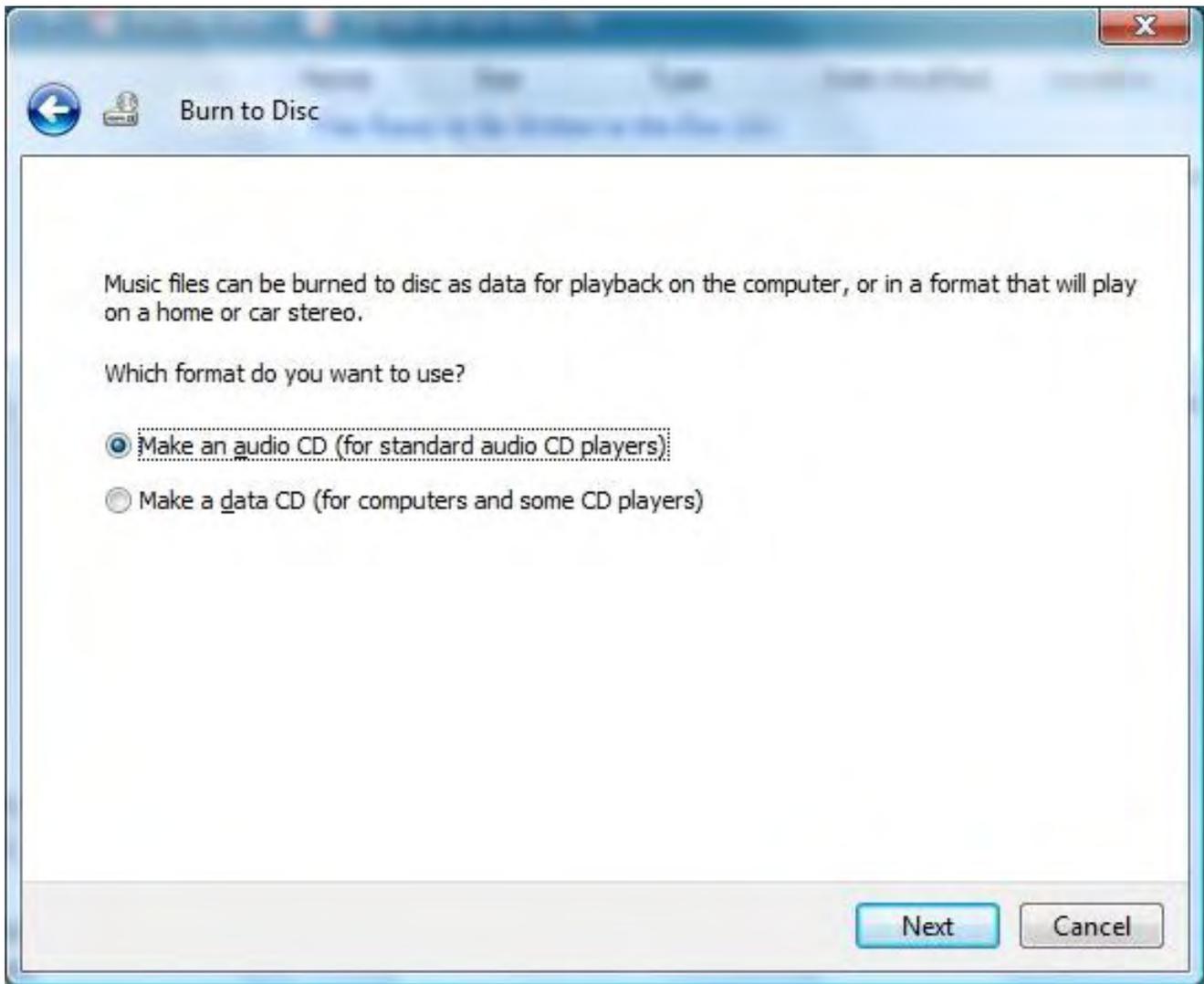


Figure 2. Select "Make an audio CD" for playback in a standard CD player.

A progress status window will open. It will take a few minutes to complete the burn. Do not interrupt the process. When completed, the CD should eject. It should play in your CD player without a problem.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I purchased a new laptop with Win 7 pre-installed. The Help display font size is so small that it is almost unreadable.

I can temporarily enlarge the font by using Ctrl-V/Z/I many times for each item, causing the fonts to become fuzzy, and as soon as I go to the next item, it reverts to the small size again.

I also increased the font size for regular Web pages, but that has no effect on the Help display. I went to the Microsoft Web site, and it seems that many others are having the same problem with no fix found.

From my past experience with you over many years, I figure that if anyone has an answer it will be you. Many thanks for the past and for this.

Carl Bliss
Encinitas, CA

Dear Carl,

I'm a little confused by the key combinations that you used. If you are enlarging and decreasing size in many programs, the combination is usually Ctrl plus "+" (the plus key) and Ctrl plus "-" (the hyphen key) respectively. However, your problem seems to be how to permanently change the font size within Windows 7.

The answer is in the Display window found at Control Panel/Appearance and Personalization/Display. (You can open this window by typing "display" in the Start Menu's search field and selecting Display from the menu, or right-click on the Desktop, select Personalize, and select Display from the bottom left of the window under "See also.") See Figure 3.

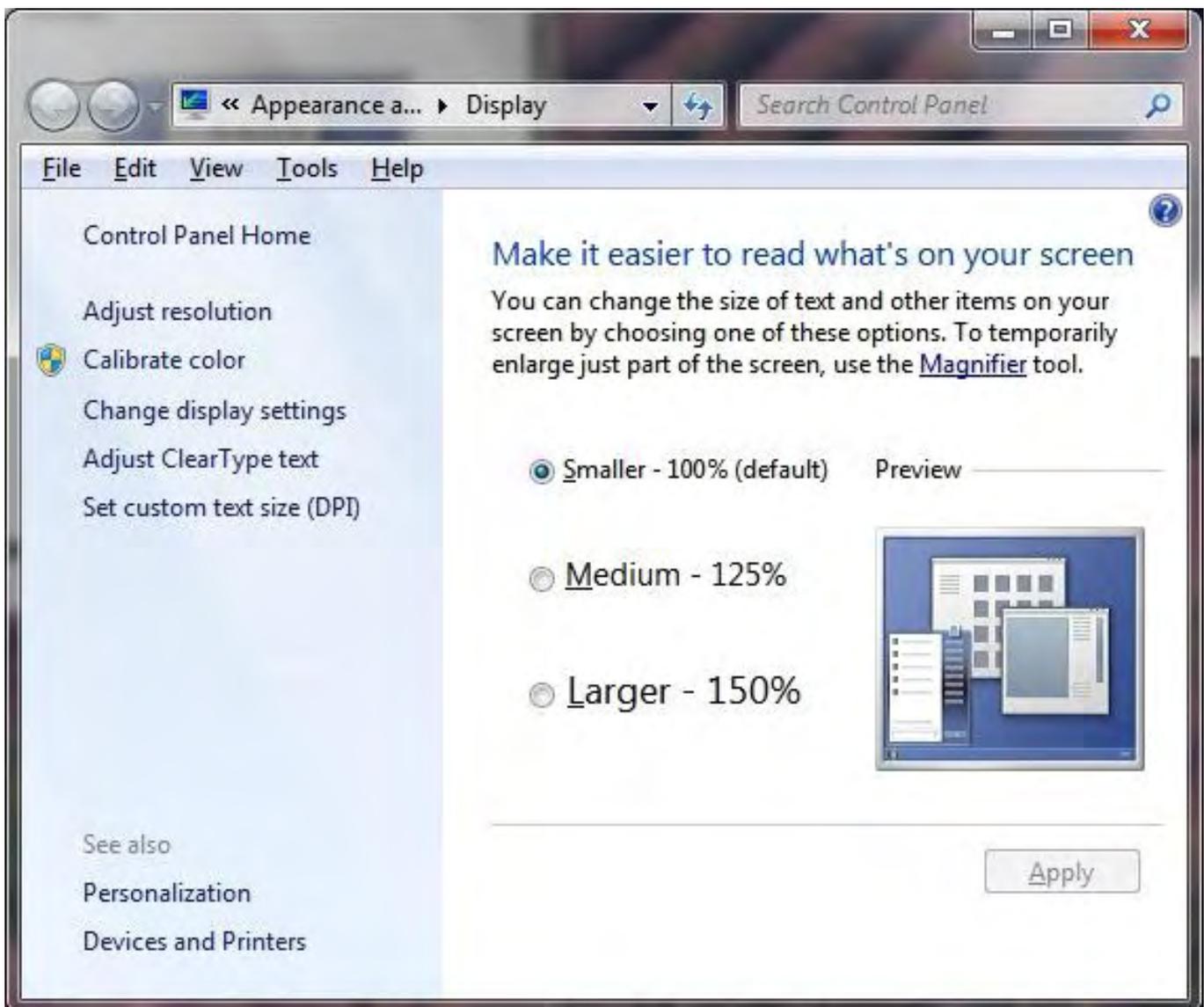


Figure 3. Setting text size in Windows 7.

There are three options from which to choose. If you need more options, select "Set custom text size" in the left-hand menu. You will be able to adjust to other sizes. You will need to log off Windows for the changes to take effect.

This change should work on the Help windows as well.

Another possibility is the Magnifier, which is an on-screen magnifying glass (type "mag" in Start Menu search). Alternatively, a real magnifying glass or reading glasses might work.

Digital Dave

Digital Dave's Tip

This tip was too cool not to include in this week's column.

Like everyone else, I receive a reasonable amount of spam. Most of it I can quickly scan and discard. Yet, I recently received one spam message that left me wondering if I was losing out on a great deal (Figure 4). I didn't even know the alphabet much less the content. I decided to find out what it said.

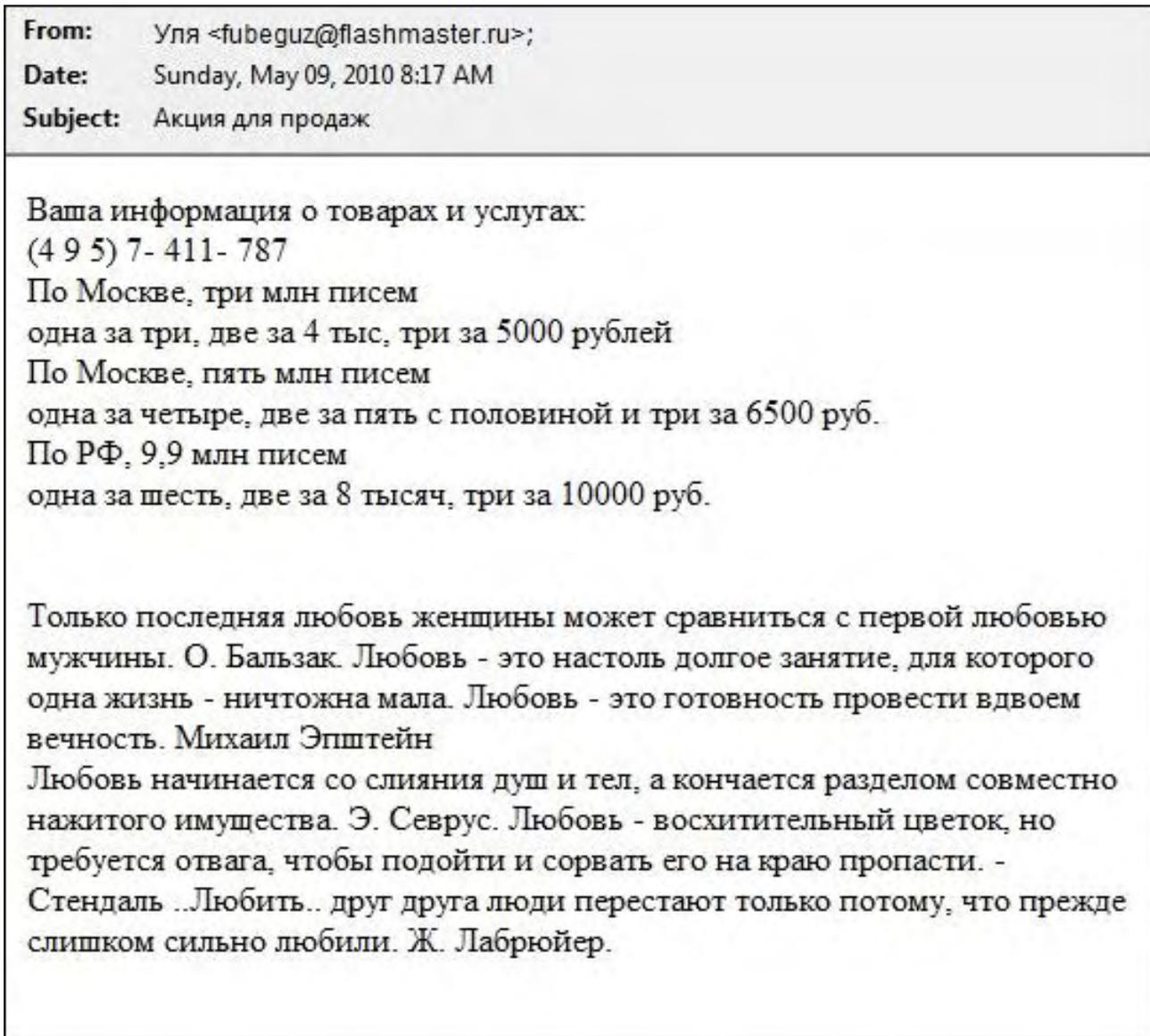


Figure 4. Spam from another country.

I didn't need to go any farther than Google—specifically Google Translate (*translate.google.com*). I almost immediately knew what the e-mail said (see Figure 5). Google Translate did all of the work.

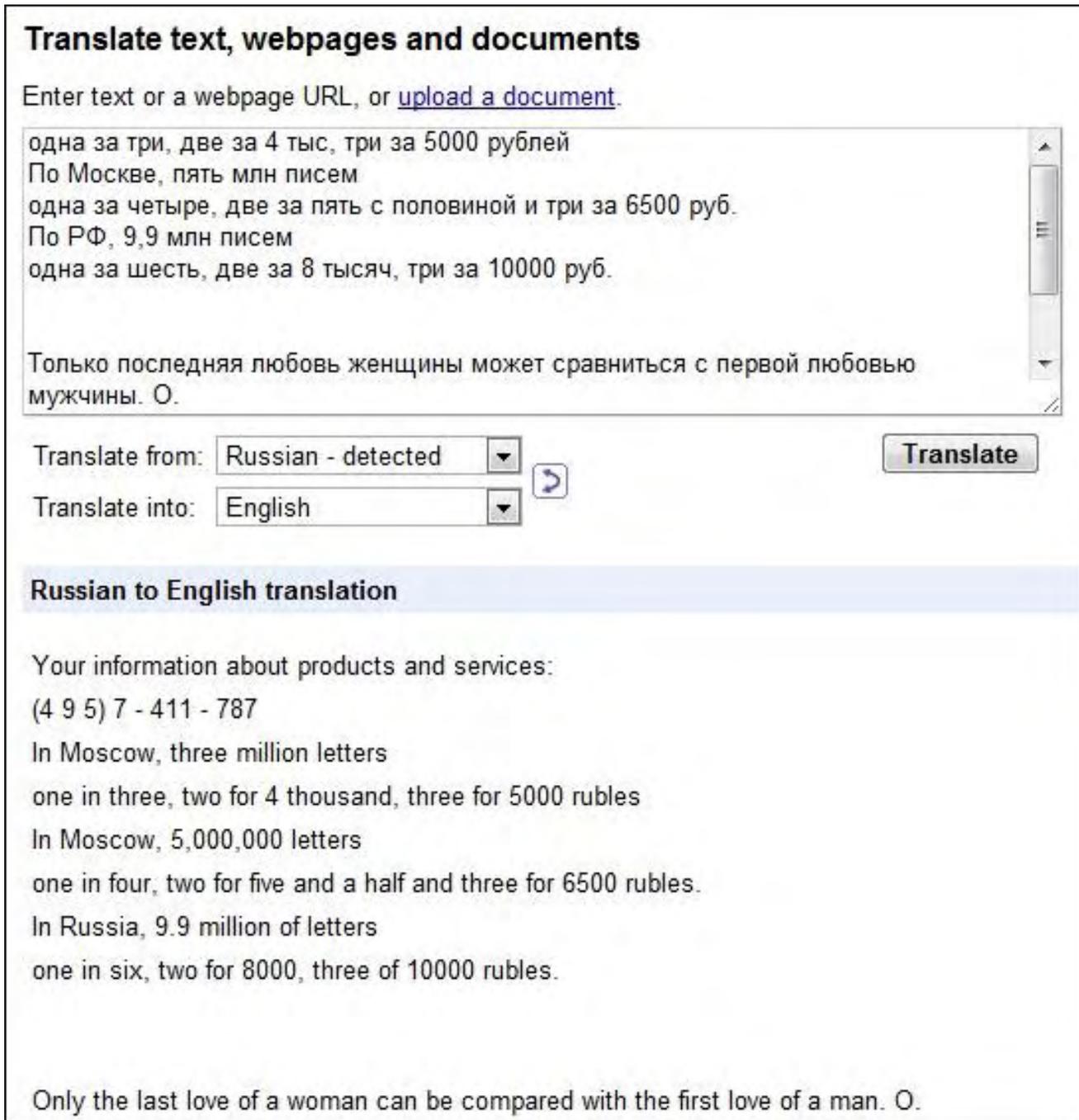


Figure 5. Translated spam.

All I had to do was cut-and-paste the text into the box. The program automatically detected the language and returned the translation shown below the heading "Russian to English" translation.

I was so impressed that I checked out some Chinese newspapers and translated the symbols with the tool. Google also has features for translating entire Web pages. In fact, when using the Google Chrome browser, I was automatically asked if I would like to translate the Chinese page. A click of a button and it was done. If you're not using Chrome, you can find the translate feature for other browsers in Google Toolbar.

There are other translators, such as Yahoo's Babel Fish (*babelfish.yahoo.com*), which have been around much longer than Google Translator. But, they don't translate nearly as many languages, nor do they auto-detect which language you're trying to read.

Digital Dave

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

The screenshot shows the YouTube homepage interface. At the top left is the YouTube logo. To its right is a search bar with a 'Search' button, and further right are 'Browse' and 'Upload' buttons. On the far right are 'Create Account' and 'Sign In' links. Below the search bar is the 'Videos Being Watched Now' section, which features three video thumbnails. The first thumbnail shows Betty White and is titled 'Is Betty White Ready For The SNL Gang?' with 200,534 views and channel 'WXIItv'. The second thumbnail shows Betty White in a kitchen and is titled 'Betty White on SNL. "The Delicious Dish" skit' with 361,475 views and channel '188balloons'. The third thumbnail shows James Boyd and is titled 'James Boyd - Britain's Got Talent 2010 - Auditions Week 4' with 640,131 views and channel 'BritainsGotTale...'. To the right of these videos are three promotional boxes: 'Want to customize this homepage? Sign In or Sign Up now!', 'Submit your video to America's Got Talent' with a link to 'www.youtube.com/agt', and 'What's New' with sub-sections for 'New Languages Launched', 'YouTube Business Cards', and 'More Choice for Users: Unlisted Videos'.

Putting Your Videos on YouTube

“It's time to take the next step and post your video.” by Andrea Dunning

Sure, you use YouTube. Maybe you even spend hours lost in a video haze. Perhaps not. Regardless, it's time to take the next step. It's time... to post.

Sure, you've been to YouTube. Someone sent you a link, maybe a coworker called you over to their computer to watch a funny cat video or that weird head crawling baby (www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRqGmmCy8aU). Maybe you even browse for topics of interest, or spend hours lost in a video haze. Perhaps not. Regardless, it's time to take the next step. It's time... to post.

In order to post videos on YouTube, you need to create a user account. Accounts are free, and should you happen to have a Google account you have the option to add YouTube to your existing account. You will still have a distinct YouTube user name, but the site will automatically point you to the user channels of your Google friends and allow people who know your e-mail address to find your user channel. Your account activity can also be posted on Facebook, Twitter and RSS feeds.

You Tube
Broadcast Yourself™ Home Videos Channels Shows

Do you already have a Google Account? [\(Why are we asking?\)](#)

Yes. Add YouTube to my Google Account.
Enter your Google Account email and password to add YouTube to your Google Account.

Google Account
Email:
Password:
 Stay signed in

[Can't access your account?](#)

No. I need a new YouTube | Google™ Account.
Enter your current email address and create a password.

Your current email address:
e.g. myname@example.com. This will be used to sign-in to your account.

Choose a password:
Minimum of 8 characters in length.
Password strength:

Re-enter password:
 Enable Web History. [Learn More](#)

Word Verification:

©2010 YouTube, LLC - [Terms of Use](#) - [Privacy Policy](#) - [Help](#) - [Community Guidelines](#) - [Contact](#)

Figure 1. Adding YouTube to your Google account.

Videos can be uploaded from your computer, or, if you're feeling spontaneous, recorded live from a Web cam. Each video can be up to 10 minutes long, although there is a 2GB size limit, so long videos will need to be separated into 10-minute segments. For tips on editing movies with Windows Movie Maker, please see "Movie Making in Windows for the Neophyte—and It's Free!" Just remember to save your videos to a final format, as the .MSWMM project files don't actually contain your video. YouTube supports high-definition video, up to 1080p, as long as you have the Internet connection to support the upload.

Some editing can be done in YouTube after a video is uploaded. If you feel the need to add music to your video, click on the AudioSwap button of any of your uploaded videos on your account page. You can then select any of the available songs to permanently replace the audio track of a video. Keep in mind that using the AudioSwap library allows YouTube to display ads with your video.

1: Select Replacement Audio

I'm Feeling Lucky Let YouTube choose a track for you

Or browse our audio track library:

Only show songs of similar length to my video

Genre	Artist	Track
Recommended Tracks	All	Bodies (3:22)
Acoustic	009 Sound System	Element Of Life (4:58)
Alternative & Punk	Black and Brown	Wild-Card Shuffle (2:21)
Blues	Christmas At The Devils House	Fish 1 (2:33)
Classical	Drowning Pool	Hey There Delilah (3:52)
Country & Folk	Ebu Gogo	Paralyzer (3:28)
Dance & Electronic	Evanescence	Bring Me To Life (3:56)
Easy Listening	Finger Eleven	"Breath Machine" (0:41)
Gospel & Religious	Ghost_k	"Stop" (blue mix) (3:35)
Hip Hop & Rap	Groove Cutter	"My Shooter" (Long Edit) (9:27)
Holiday	Jennifer Goodenberger	Song Of The Stars (7:11)
Instrumental	Ming+FS	Mourning (5:13)
Jazz	Momentary Sound Action	Training Montage (1:21)
Metal	Musicshake	Before the Great Shaking (4:32)

[About Replacing Audio](#)

2: Preview and Publish

Preview with selected track

Publish or Cancel

Please Note:
When you add a new soundtrack, the audio track on your video will be permanently replaced. You may want to upload a few videos to experiment with.
After you change your video's soundtrack to one from the AudioSwap library, the video won't be eligible for revenue sharing.
Advertisements may be displayed on videos that contain soundtracks from the AudioSwap library.

Help About Safety Privacy Terms Copyright Uploaders & Partners Developers Advertising
Language: English Location: Worldwide Safety mode: Off

Figure 2. Use AudioSwap to change the audio track of your video on YouTube.

YouTube also allows you to add annotations to videos. The annotation menu is accessible through the uploaded videos section of your account page. You can also invite friends to help you annotate by sending out a link provided on the annotations page. Plus, you can add captions to your videos. Machine transcription into English is available upon request.

Let's talk format. Chances are, if you're creating video with any sort of mass-market device or program, YouTube should be able to read it. YouTube supports .WMV (Windows Media Video), .3GP (cell phones), .AVI (Audio Video Interleave, supported by Microsoft), .MOV (Quicktime), .MP4 (iPod and PSP), .MPEG (standard file format), .FLV (Adobe Flash), .MKV (open standard file format). If your movie is in a more obscure file format, and you are unable to re-export the video in a supported format from the original source, YouTube recommends using FFmpeg (www.ffmpeg.org), available for free, to convert the file to one of the supported formats.

When you upload a video, you have the option to change the title of the video (the default title is the file name) and include a bit of information about the video. If you're sharing home videos with friends and family, this might be a few sentences describing the context of the video, but if this is a clip for public viewing you may want to describe what takes place in the clip. If you're hoping people will find and enjoy your clip, you'll definitely want to include a number of tags in the video description, so that your video will appear in any relevant searches.

YouTube Search Browse Upload MsTeachera Sign Out

Video File Upload

Digital Story_0001.wmv (80.5MB)

Upload progress: **16%** [cancel](#)
About 3 min. remaining...

Preview:

Video information and privacy settings

Title:

Description:

Tags:

Category:

Privacy: Share your video with the world (Recommended)
 Private (Viewable by you and up to 25 people)

[Save changes](#) or [Skip for now](#)

Sharing options

URL:

Embed:

Upload another video [My videos](#)

[Upload video](#) or [Record from webcam](#)

Videos can be...

- High Definition
- Up to 2 GB in size.
- Up to 10 minutes in length.
- A wide variety of formats

YouTube direct mobile uploads
Did you know you can upload directly from your mobile phone?
[Set up](#) | [Learn more](#)

Important: Do not upload any TV shows, music videos, music concerts, or commercials without permission unless they consist entirely of content you created yourself.

The [Copyright Tips](#) page and the [Community Guidelines](#) can help you determine whether your video infringes someone else's copyright.

By clicking "Upload Video", you are representing that this video does not violate YouTube's [Terms of Use](#) and that you own all copyrights in this video or have authorization to upload it.

Figure 3. Uploading a video file to YouTube.

While any video you upload is likely to remain anonymously buried within the millions of videos on YouTube, you can make videos private. Private videos are visible only to you and the 25 friends you can invite to see the video. There are two methods of sharing. The first is a private URL, which allows the first 25 people to access the video to watch it. This is the way to go if your friends don't already have YouTube accounts, though they will have to create accounts in order to be able to view the video. The second option is sharing directly with selected YouTube members. This gives you more control over who views the video (anyone with the private URL can view your video in the other sharing option), but requires your friends to already have accounts. If you run out of invitations, the video can be made public or another private copy of the can be uploaded.

Having read all that, you should feel confident enough to upload a video to YouTube. Whatever format your clip is in, it is probably compatible. If the audio is awful, you can add captions or replace it with music. If it is personal, make the

video private. All you need is an account—and it's free!

Andrea Dunning is a digital cartographer, AutoCAD drafter, World of Warcraft player extraordinaire and blogger with a Master's in Education. She also serves as tech support for her less computer-savvy family members.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Building Your Own YouTube Channel

“Showcase your videos via a nicely polished package.” by Andrea Dunning

Whether you want a nice page for your relatives to come view your family videos or an awesome site for showcasing your collection of funny cat videos, your YouTube channel lets you present a collection of video clips to an audience through a nicely polished package.

While you can always go to YouTube's main page and root around for videos, the heart of YouTube's structure is the channel. Channels collect a user's uploads, favorite videos and playlists into one place. Other users can then subscribe to channels to be notified whenever new videos are uploaded or updates are posted.

Failblog (www.youtube.com/user/failblog?blend=1&ob=4) is currently the most viewed YouTube channel, which is not particularly surprising given the popularity of "sporting equipment in the groin" videos (though I personally find succeedblog.org/ much more interesting), but there are also a number of respectable official channels. The White House (www.youtube.com/user/whitehouse) has a channel, as does National Geographic (www.youtube.com/user/NationalGeographic). The truth of the matter is, every user has a channel. So, whether you want a nice page for your relatives to come view your family videos or an awesome site for showcasing your collection of funny cat videos, your channel grants you the opportunity to present a collection of video clips to an audience through a nicely polished package.

YouTube is currently in the process of introducing a new version of the channel design. While existing channels won't be forcibly switched over until later in the year, the new design has some sweet features (such as in-channel editing, allowing you to tinker with the page design while still on the page). I would recommend upgrading sooner. If you've just signed up for an account, never fear, the new channel design is now the default.

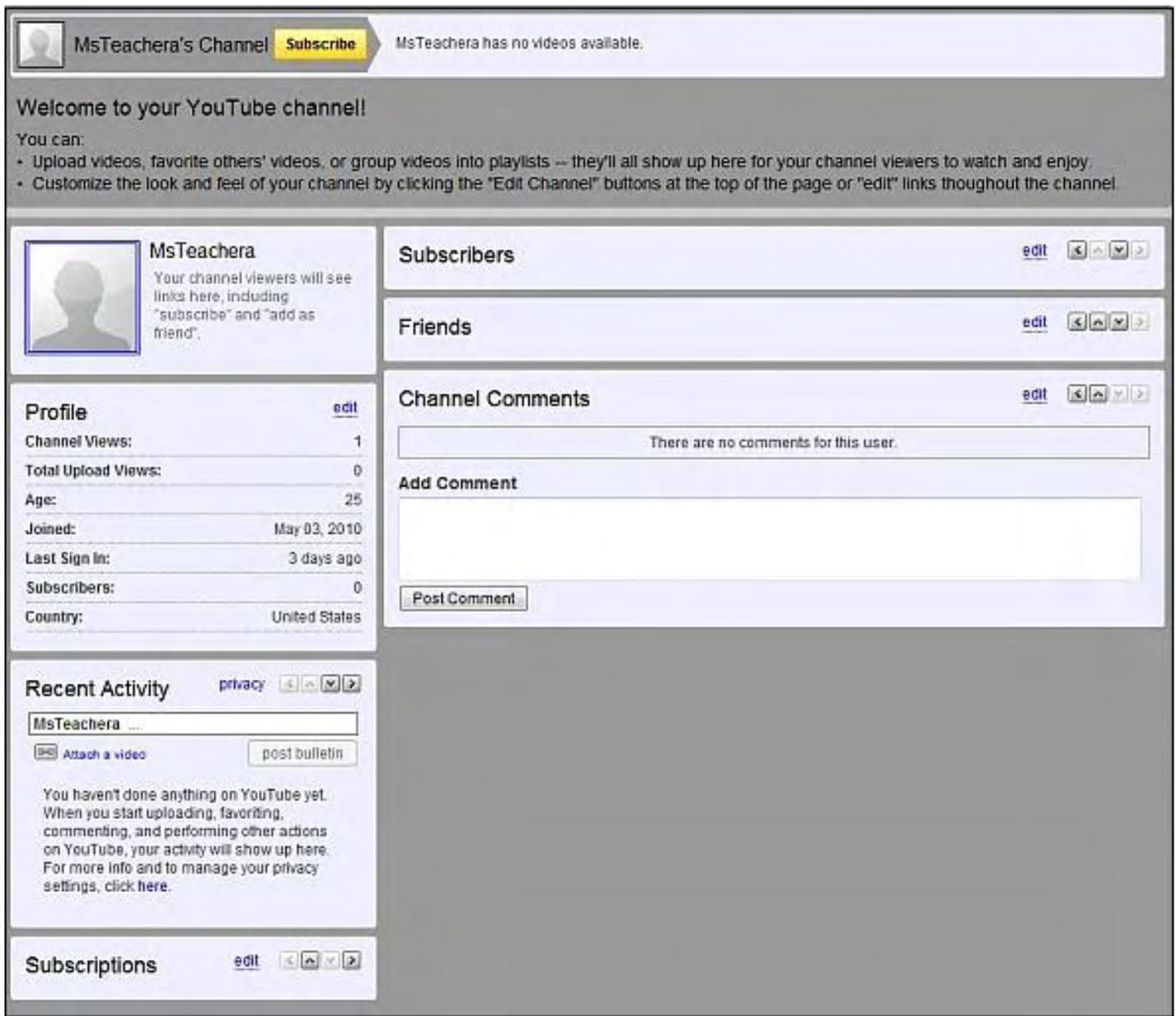


Figure 1. The new channel design for YouTube.

Now, as you can see, your channel will initially be naked, gray and boring. Up at the top of your channel is a whole menu of options, which will allow for a wide breadth of customization without having to resort to fancy tricks or HTML.

Posting a bulletin doesn't actually change anything about the look of the channel. Like your status on Facebook, bulletins are a way to inform friends and subscribers of any updates or developments. New video uploads will automatically be mentioned on the news feeds of subscribers, but you might want to send out links. Just remember that this is public information, so don't go posting the exact dates you're going to be gone on vacation.



Figure 2. Post Bulletin tab in YouTube.

The settings tab: Your channel isn't required to have a title, but it can help clue people in to the focus of your channel —"Family Vacations" versus "My Favorite Cat Videos." Channel tags work along the same lines, making the focus of your channel more apparent in searches. Channel type describes what kind of user you are: YouTuber (standard), director, musician, comedian, guru, or reporter. Changing the channel type opens up different options on the page, such as custom logos, tour date information and CD purchase links. The settings tab also offers the option of making your channel invisible, allowing you to work on your channel without the general public being able to access it.

Themes and colors, as you might imagine, allows you to change the page colors. There are a set of pre-made themes available, but you are free to change individual elements of a theme or even create a new theme from scratch. Solid colors aren't your only options, you can also use images for your background. The transparency of the backgrounds of the modules can also be toggled to allow the page background to show in places other than the edge of the page.

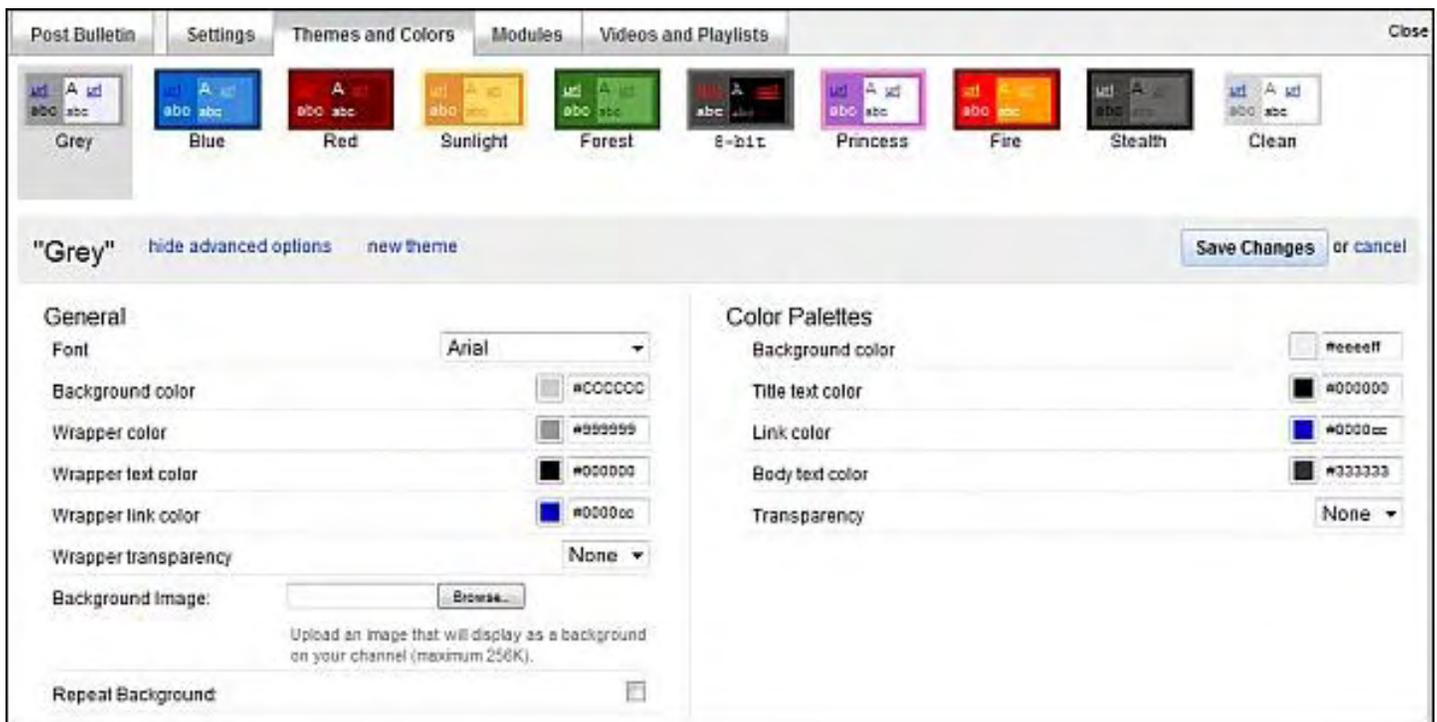


Figure 3. The Themes and Colors tab in YouTube.

The Modules tab allows you to toggle on and off various sections of the channels page. You can show comments, other channels, your friends, your recent activity, what groups you're part of, what you're subscribed to and who is subscribed to your channel. Each of the modules can be moved around the page into whatever orientation fits your fancy.



Figure 4. The Modules tab in YouTube.

The Videos and Playlists tab controls what videos appear on your channel. You can opt to show only your own uploads, only YouTube videos that you have selected as favorites, only playlists (selections of videos), or all of those items at once. This menu also allows you to toggle between player view (one large video playing with a list of other videos on the side), and grid view (all videos represented by small icons in a grid). Even if your channel includes all your videos and your favorites, you can select to feature one set or the other. You can also select which video you want featured. You could chose to have the featured video automatically start playing, but please don't.

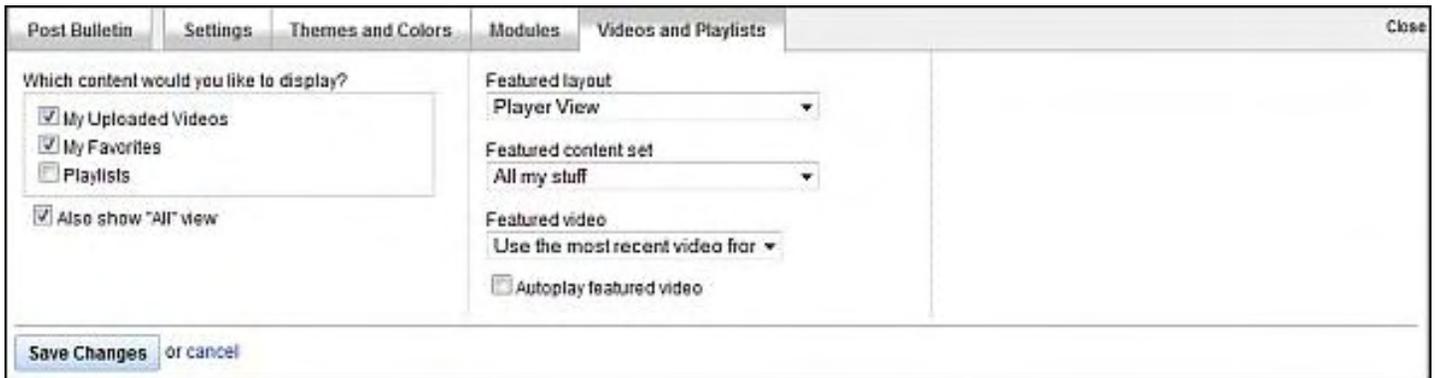


Figure 5. The Videos and Playlists tab in YouTube.

The final step in personalizing your channel doesn't happen on your channel page. If you haven't already done so, go to your account settings and upload a user picture. It doesn't actually have to be a picture of you, but your channel will look neglected if you leave the default silhouette.

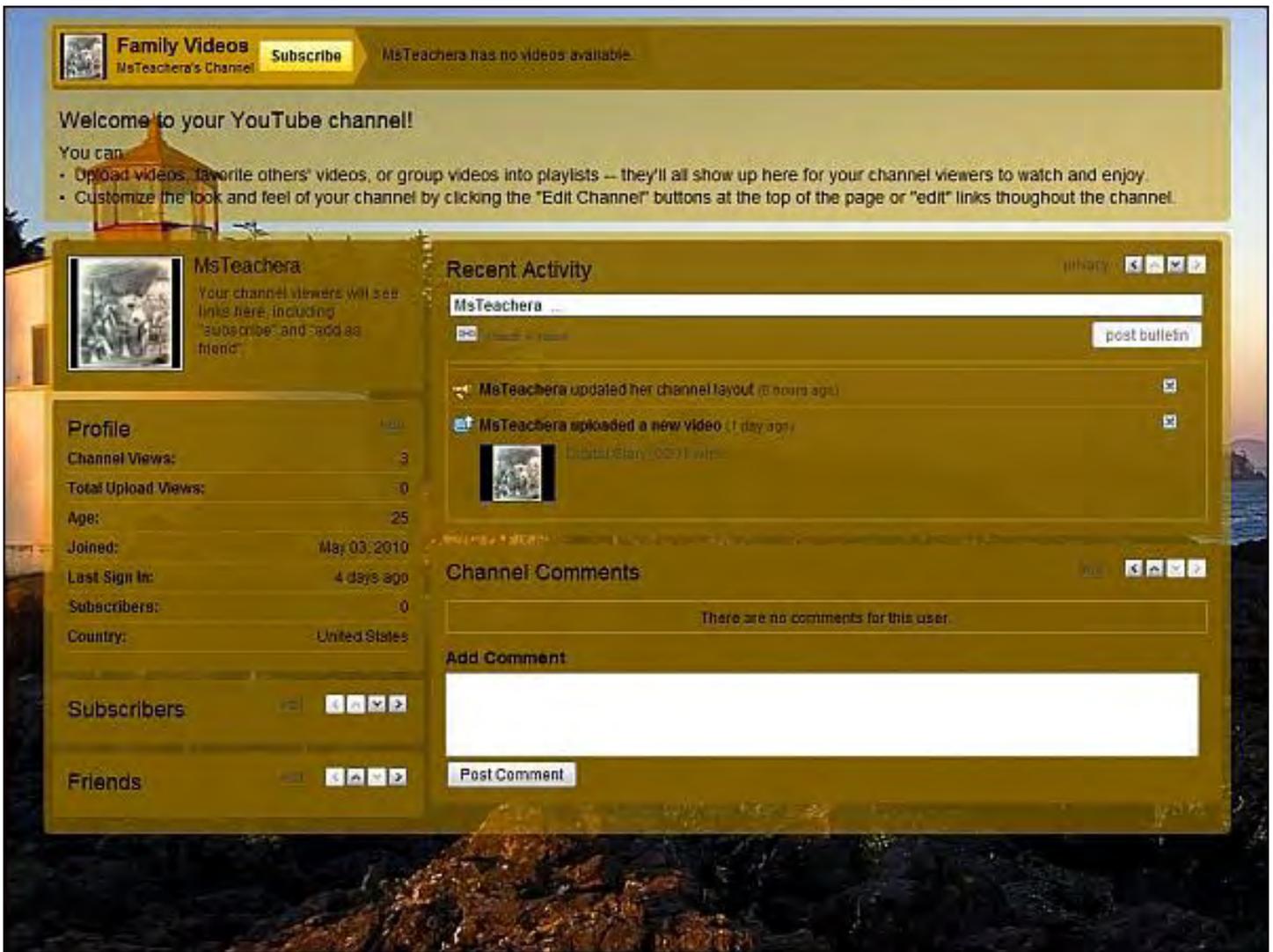
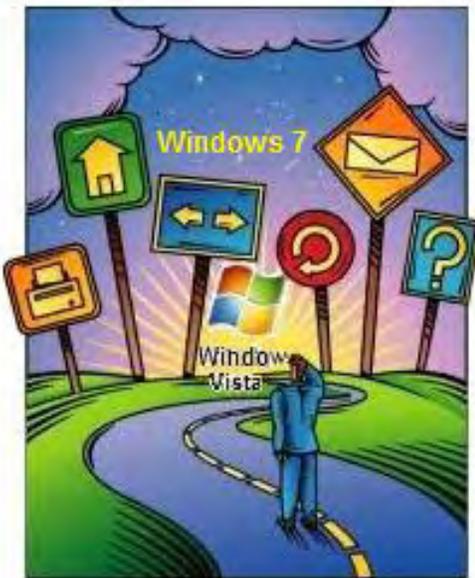


Figure 1. A pretty channel design on YouTube.

Having completed all these steps, you should now have a channel with a new color scheme, different windows, preferences adjusted, display toggled, and possibly even a bulletin sent to notify your friends of the changes. See? Isn't that a pretty channel? Now, go upload some content.

Andrea Dunning is a digital cartographer, AutoCAD drafter, World of Warcraft player extraordinaire and blogger with a Master's in Education. She also serves as tech support for her less computer-savvy family members.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Windows Tips and Tricks

Windows Tips and Tricks

“Windows 7 Quick-Launch Confusion” by Jack Dunning

A reader is puzzled by the changes to the quick-launch feature in Windows 7. In essence, the key to Windows 7 is learning to make liberal use of clicking the right button on your mouse and selecting the appropriate option.

Dear Jack,

I have an HP laptop running Windows 7 Home. Several things that changed from XP are frustrating for me, including Windows Media Player, but the worst is opening a new window. In XP, I used to minimize the window I was using, click on the "e" [Internet Explorer], and voilà! Now, when I do so, I get the old window back. People have suggested I use CTRL plus T. It works with some open windows, but more often not. My daughter has a Dell desktop running Windows 7 Home. In addition to the "e" at the bottom, she has another at the top of the screen, which brings up the new window. Please help.

Sally from MN

Sally, I understand your frustration. I have encountered the same issues. The implementation of the quick-launch buttons/tabs on the taskbar in Windows 7 is not uniform. Plus the button/tabs do not react in the same manner as the quick-launch buttons in Windows XP and Vista. Many of the actions available depend upon which programs you are using. I offer a few recommendations.

In Windows 7, the first time you click on a button on the taskbar, it will open a window and launch the program. However, in most cases, the program will be launched only when there is no other copy of the program open. After that first opening, the quick launch turns into a taskbar tab that will minimize and reopen the current window as a toggle. If you want to open more copies of the program (windows), then you need to right-click on the program tab and select the program from the menu (near the bottom of the menu just above "Unpin this program from taskbar"). This is a little more awkward than the old XP/Vista method, but it will allow you to continue to open additional windows of the program.

Perhaps your daughter has the right idea with a shortcut on the Desktop. Every time she double-clicks the shortcut, a new program window will open. To create a shortcut on the desktop, merely click and hold the left mouse button on the program name in the Start Menu (Microsoft key) or Windows Explorer (Microsoft key plus E), and drag it while holding down the left mouse button to an empty space on the Desktop.

You can also add a shortcut to the Start Menu by right-clicking on any program and selecting Pin to Start Menu. (This process can be reversed by right-clicking on any pinned shortcut and selecting the Unpin option.)

In essence, the key to Windows 7 is learning to make liberal use of clicking the right button on your mouse and selecting the appropriate option. At first, this will be awkward, but there are so many more options available including Pinned, Frequent and Tasks (Figure 1), that it will soon become second nature.

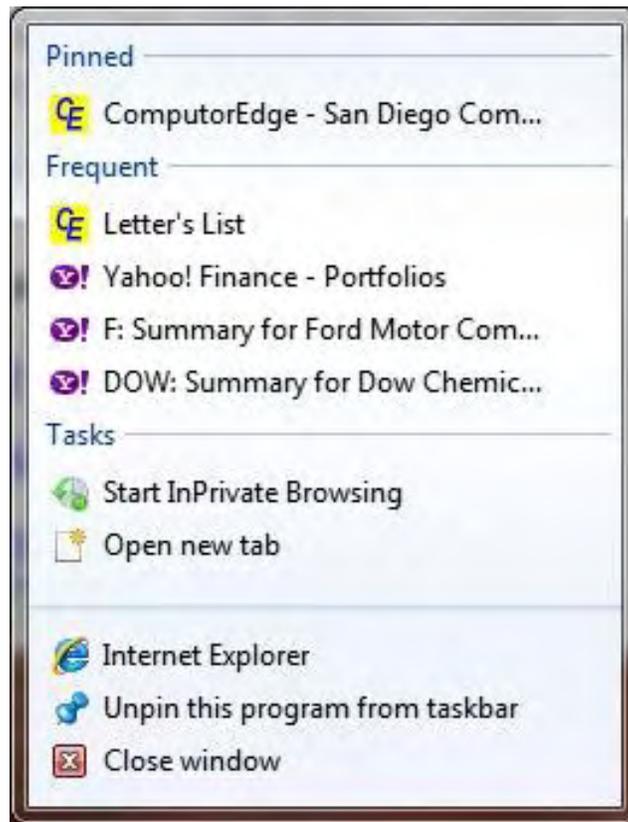


Figure 1. Open this Internet Explorer quick launch/tab button program menu by right-clicking on the Internet Explorer icon in the task bar.

One caution is that not all programs behave in the same manner on the taskbar. For example, OpenOffice.org will continue to act as a quick-launch button by creating one new tab for all the copies of the program even after the first opening. Internet Explorer will display all open tabs in all open windows when you hover over the tab, while Chrome and Firefox will display only the selected tab for each open window. These actions may change as future versions of the programs are released.

Ctrl+T is a program-specific key command that is designed to open additional tabs within programs such as browsers. It doesn't actually open a new window in Internet Explorer, but rather creates a new tab within the same window.

There are other ways to open programs, such as assigning your own hot-key combinations to a program shortcut. See the "Create Your Own Keyboard Shortcuts" section in an older column. Although it was written for Windows Vista, it still applies to Windows 7.

Sometimes even the smallest changes in the way a program works can cause us problems. We expect things to be where they were the last time we used them. I've experienced the same problem with Windows 7, but I've found that once I get used to the change, it is usually for the better.

* * *

Just read in our local paper about a program called Private Character Editor (I am interested in

creating a font using my own handwriting). The article also suggested that to learn how to use it, one should visit your Web site.

Do you or have you had an article about this program? Please advise.

Cynthia Thibeault

Thank you for your interest in our information. There was an introductory column on Private Character Editor earlier this year. "In all versions of Windows, Private Character Editor allows you to design your own characters for embedding in documents and printing." I would be curious to know how it works out for you.

Jack is the publisher of *ComputerEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is www.computoredge.com. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoredge.com

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Wally Wang's Apple Farm

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“Yes, you can YouTube from your iPhone.” by Wally Wang

A Mac or iPhone makes uploading videos to YouTube even easier. Also, the Guardian Eyewitness turns your iPad into a daily photography course; if you're having trouble learning iPhone/iPad programming, read "Beginning Mac Programming"; iDraw condenses the features of high-priced drawing programs into a tiny app; is Flash a luxury or a necessity?; and a tip on preventing Safari from automatically opening certain downloaded files.

Making a video to post on YouTube is easy. Just open a YouTube free account and follow the instructions as shown in this video upload tutorial (www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFyIT7rVZ0Q). Although no one knows whether your video of a cat playing the piano or a baby giggling at a TV set will become popular or not, a Macintosh or an iPhone makes uploading videos to YouTube even easier.

With the the latest iPhone, you can capture video directly through the Camera app, trim the beginning or end of the video (you cannot trim video in the middle), and then submit it to YouTube from your iPhone. This lets you capture something and post it right away without using a computer at all or worrying about video file formats.

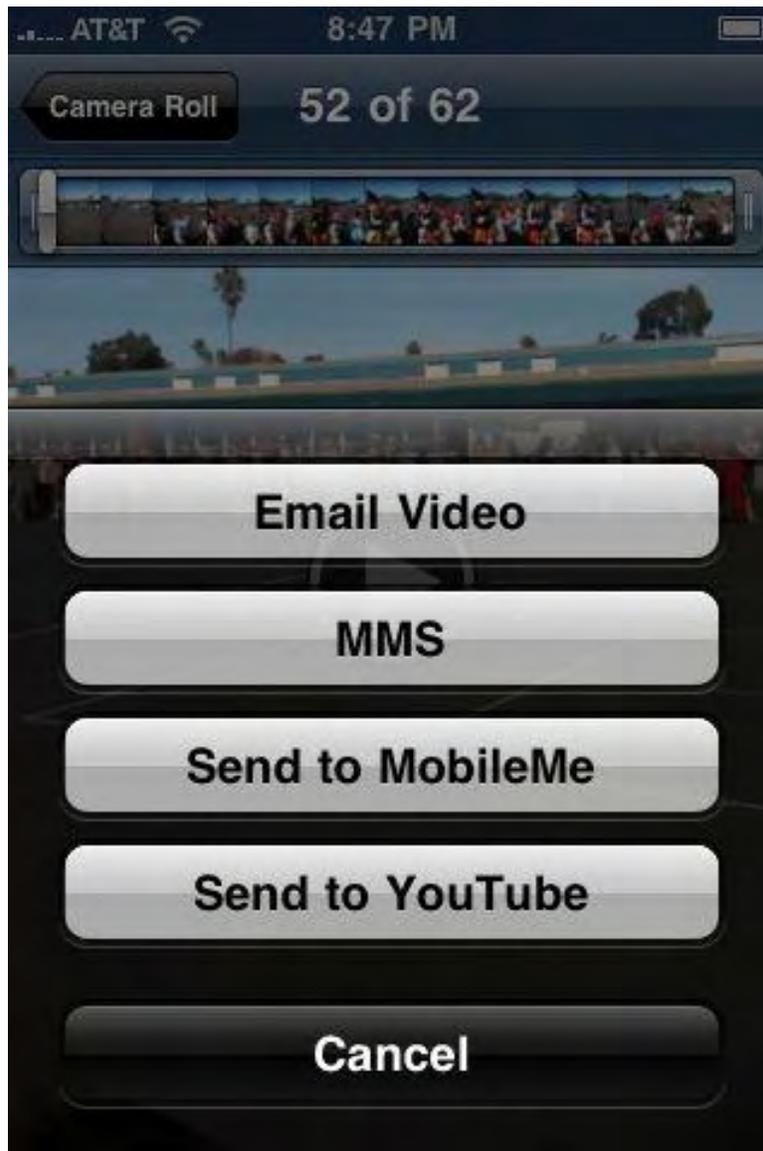


Figure 1. The iPhone lets you capture and submit videos to YouTube.

Posting a video directly from your iPhone can be fast, but if you want to edit the video first, you can import it into the free iMovie program (www.apple.com/ilife/imovie) that comes with every Macintosh. Besides letting you cut and splice video, iMovie also lets you add transitions between scenes, titles and templates to give your entire video a comic book or ancient film strip effect. If your video appears shaky, iMovie can even attempt to steady the image so your viewers don't get motion sickness watching your video.

When you're done editing or touching up your video, you can directly export your iMovie project to YouTube (assuming you have already set up a free YouTube account). Whether you captured a video with an iPhone (or other mobile phone) or a video camcorder, iMovie gives you a fast way to edit and upload your video for others to enjoy on YouTube. Now you just have to figure out the hard part: creating a video that someone else will actually want to watch in the first place.



Figure 2. After you edit a video, iMovie lets you export it directly to YouTube.

Learning the Tricks of Professional Photographers

One way to create interesting images is to learn from professional photographers. Many photographers write books and magazine articles, explaining their techniques, but if you prefer a daily tutorial from some of the best photojournalists in the world, download the free Guardian Eyewitness (www.guardian.co.uk/help/insideguardian/2010/apr/06/theguardian-eyewitness-app-ipad/) app for the iPad.

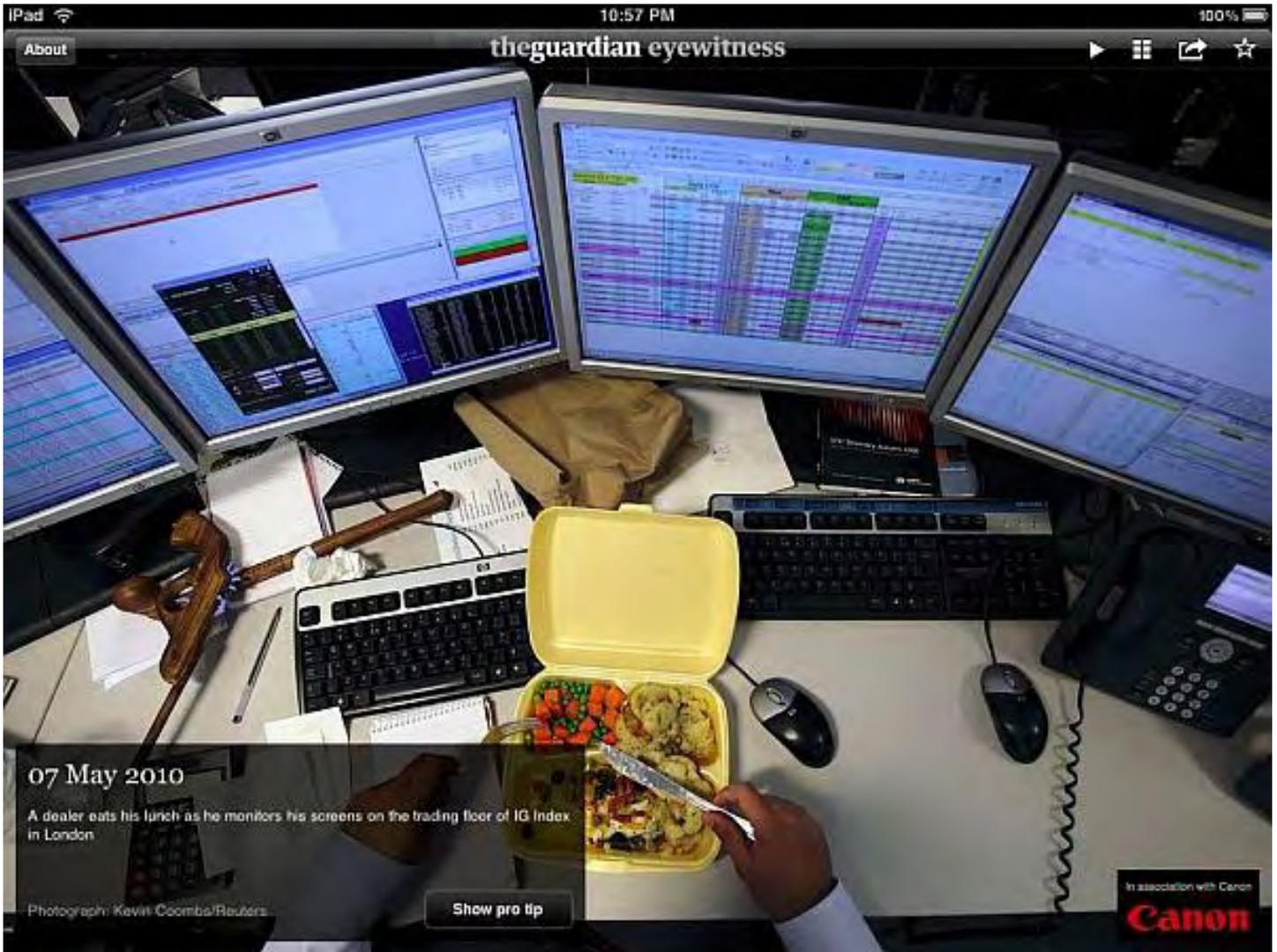


Figure 3. The Guardian Eyewitness iPad app provides fresh pictures from around the world.

Every day, this app loads pictures taken from around the world and provides tips for how that photographer captured that particular image and how you can apply those tips for your own pictures.



Figure 4. Each picture provides tips for how to capture similar images.

By using this free Guardian Eyewitness app, you can turn your iPad into a daily photography course or just admire the stunning images captured from around the world so you won't think the whole world consists of nothing more than your own neighborhood anymore.

Programming the Mac/iPhone/iPad

When Adobe tried to market Flash for creating iPhone apps, Apple quickly rewrote its App Store agreement, forbidding the use of cross-platform development tools for creating iPhone apps. Apple's reason is that cross-platform development tools aim for the lowest common denominator of each platform and ignore the strengths of each individual platform.

A more likely reason is that Apple doesn't want identical apps available on the iPhone and rival phones like the Android or Windows Phone 7. By forcing developers to choose between developing apps for the iPhone or any rival, most developers won't have the time to develop for the smaller markets, ensuring that the iPhone will continue offering the largest app library in the world.

If you're interested in writing iPhone or iPad apps, you'll need to use Apple's free Xcode compiler and learn Objective-C. Although Objective-C is similar to other C-based languages such as C++, Java and C#, there are enough subtle differences that programming in Objective-C will require a new mindset.

While there are plenty of iPhone programming books available, they all tend to share the same flaws. Specifically, they provide plenty of examples to show you how to create an iPhone app, but after you get done with the book, you still have no idea how to create your own app.

For those who need help learning both Objective-C and Xcode, look at *Beginning Mac Programming* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1934356514?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1934356514) by Tim Isted. Unlike iPhone programming books, this book focuses on teaching you the basics of Objective-C programming from declaring variables, creating loops and using objects. As you get comfortable with the basics of Objective-C, the book also teaches you the various commands of the Xcode compiler so you'll know how to use it to create your own programs.

Although the book focuses mostly on creating Mac OS X programs, the principles behind learning Objective-C and Xcode can also be used to create iPhone/iPad apps. After reading this book, all those other iPhone programming books that I read are finally making a lot more sense and the example programs are much clearer as a result.

If you're having trouble learning iPhone/iPad programming, start with the basics with "Beginning Mac Programming" first. If you grab an iPhone/iPad programming book first, you may find yourself not fully understanding how Objective-C programming really works. By learning how Objective-C and Xcode work first, you can then grab any iPhone/iPad programming book and really understand the specifics that make iPhone/iPad programming different from ordinary Mac OS X programming.

Best of all, by learning Objective-C and Xcode, you'll be using Apple's own tools so you'll never risk wasting time learning a development tool (like Flash) that suddenly gets banned by Apple, preventing you from selling and marketing your app.

iDraw on the iPad

Most people think the iPad is only good for consuming content such as listening to music or watching videos. However, the iPad can also work perfectly well creating content. After a small period of adjustment, the virtual keyboard works just fine for creating text for e-mail messages or full-blown documents if you use the optional Pages (\$9.99) word processor.

A more obvious use for creating content on the iPad involves drawing. Despite the lack of a built-in stylus, drawing on the iPad can be surprisingly intuitive just by using your finger. Two popular types of graphics programs are painting and drawing.

Painting programs can be more intuitive in creating pictures but much more difficult later for editing or manipulating images because painting involves changing the colors of individual pixels on the screen. To edit an object, such as a line or a circle, in a paint program means selecting and modifying each pixel that makes up that object.

Drawing programs can be harder to understand initially for creating images because drawing programs treat everything as a separate object. This lets you easily re-size, move or modify the object. For example, after you draw a line, you can adjust the curves in that line by extending and moving handles that appear around points on that line.

On a computer, the most popular drawing program is Adobe's Illustrator (\$599). If you want a similar drawing program for the iPad, consider an app called iDraw (www.indeeo.com/idraw) (\$8.99).

When you first create a new iDraw document, you can choose a background such as blank, graph paper, blueprint, or even an image such as a digital photograph.

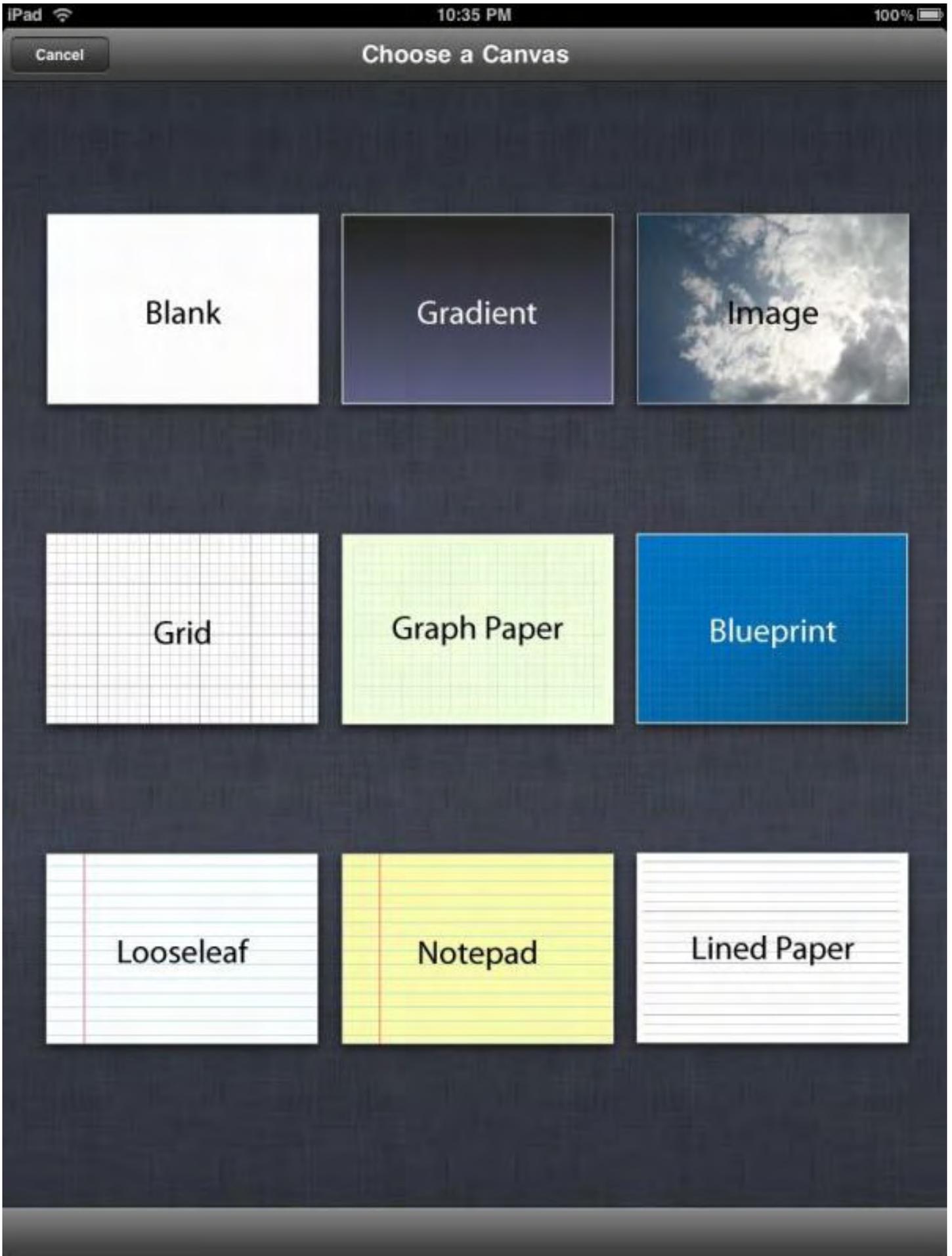


Figure 5. iDraw lets you choose a background for your drawing.

After you pick a background, just pick a tool from the toolbar at the bottom of the screen and draw lines or shapes on the screen with your finger. If necessary, modify those drawings to move or re-size them, or change their appearance from solid lines to dotted lines or black to red.

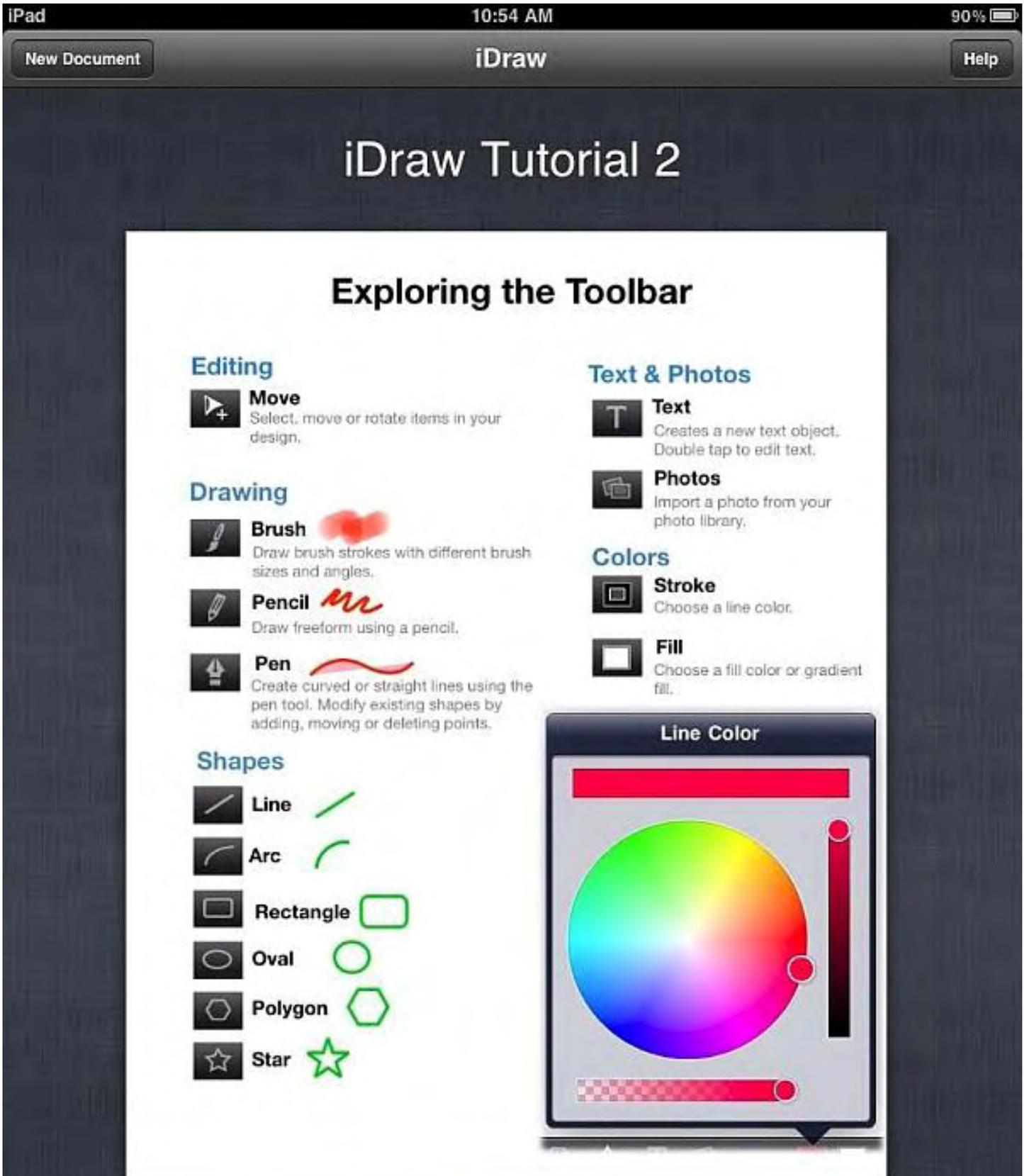




Figure 6. iDraw provides the most common drawing tools found in Adobe Illustrator.

To make drawing even easier, iDraw lets you store different parts of your drawing on multiple layers. A layer acts like a sheet of clear plastic so you can store different parts of your drawing on separate layers. Doing this lets you temporarily hide parts of your drawing just by hiding one or more layer. When you're done drawing, you can export your drawings as vector PDFs, which you can open and edit in a drawing program like Adobe Illustrator.

Overall, iDraw condenses the main features of higher priced drawing programs into a tiny app that runs on the iPad. With its ability to share drawings with any drawing program that can import vector PDFs, iDraw lets you turn an iPad into a portable electronic canvas for creating vector-based illustrations. An app like iDraw may not replace Adobe Illustrator on a computer, but iDraw can definitely turn your iPad into a portable drawing surface so you'll be able to create images wherever you take your iPad.

Although iDraw is a fun and powerful drawing app, be aware of its quirks. Unlike most iPad apps, you can't rotate the screen to work in either portrait or landscape mode. Instead, you're stuck in working only in portrait mode.

Another odd quirk involves transferring files from your iPad to iTunes on a computer. When you save drawings as vector PDFs, they appear in the File Sharing portion of the iTunes window. However, there doesn't appear to be a way to delete these vector PDFs from iTunes when you're done with them. This is more likely a flaw in iTunes than in iDraw, since this same problem also plagues file transfers between iWork on the iPad as well.

Despite these shortcomings, iDraw can turn your iPad into an electronic canvas. If you have an artistic bent or just enjoy doodling, iDraw can give you the ability to create drawings for fun or work wherever you take your iPad.

Flash Problems

Ryan Stewart, a Flash evangelist from Adobe, reportedly demonstrated the latest version of Flash running on a Google Android phone (www.theinquirer.net/inquirer/news/1635614/flash-android). Apparently Flash crashed and failed to load a Flash Web site correctly. When asked if the Flash beta could run Hulu, the answer turned out to be no once more.

For all those who demand Flash support on the iPhone or iPad, the real question is, why? If even Adobe can't get Flash to run properly on a mobile device without crashing, why would anyone want Flash to wreck their experience using an iPhone or iPad? How many people absolutely rely on Flash? Most likely Flash is more of a luxury than a necessity, and its inability to run on mobile devices simply highlights its deficiencies, so why do people blindly clamor for Flash when it doesn't even work?

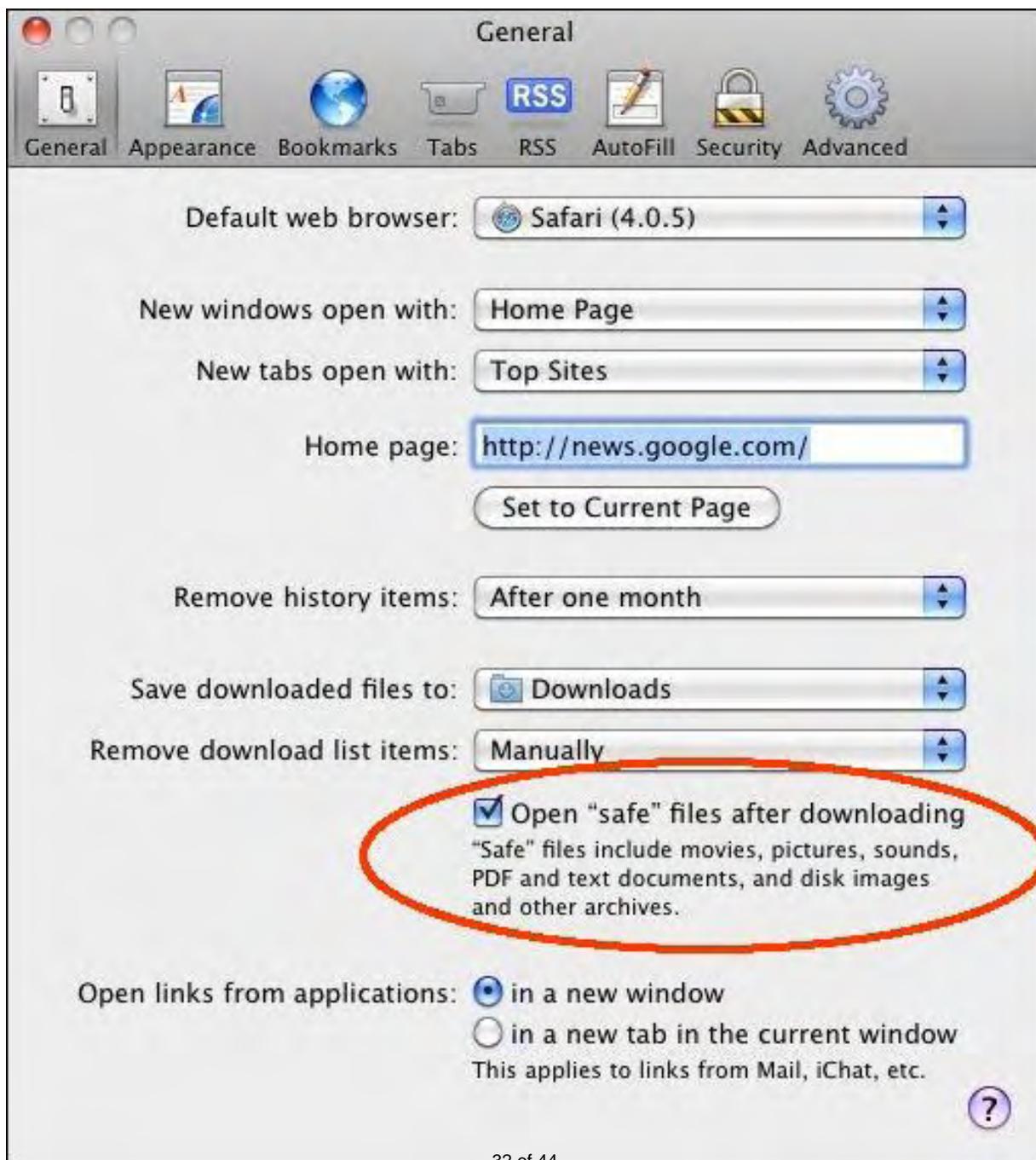
Most likely, those who demand Flash for the iPhone or iPad haven't bothered to look at the facts about Flash and simply want more features for the sake of having more features, whether they're useful or not. You might as well argue that a car is useless compared to a semi-trailer truck because a car only has four wheels and a semi-trailer truck can have up to 10. To learn more about Flash's deficiencies from Apple's point of view, read this (www.apple.com/hotnews/thoughts-on-flash) and then decide if you're arguing for Flash because you know all the facts or not.

* * *

It's perfectly possible to use a Macintosh without running any antivirus software whatsoever. (Just visit any Apple Store and you'll see dozens of Macintosh computers hooked up to the Internet without running anti-virus software, despite hundreds of people using them every day.) The problem with most Macintosh antivirus programs is that they're designed mostly to catch Windows viruses, which can never harm a Macintosh computer (although it could harm any Windows data stored in a virtual machine or Boot Camp partition that's running Windows).

Despite the lack of Macintosh viruses, you may still want to minimize your threat of infection. One way to do this is to prevent Safari from opening up downloaded files automatically. By default, Safari assumes that certain files (pictures, PDF files and text documents) are "safe," which probably isn't a safe assumption at all.

To keep Safari from opening such "safe" files, choose Safari/Preferences to open the Preferences window. Then click the General icon and clear the "Open 'safe' files after downloading" check box.



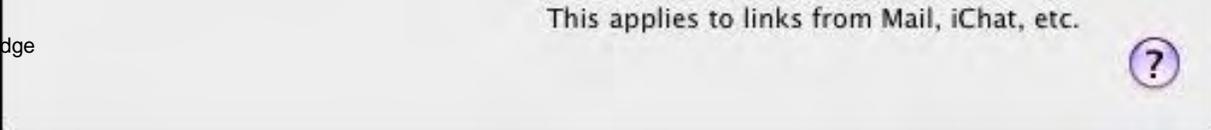


Figure 7. Preventing Safari from automatically opening certain downloaded files.

In the early days, before Wally became an Internationally renowned comedian, computer book writer, and generally cool guy, Wally Wang used to hang around The Byte Buyer dangling particples with Jack Dunning and go to the gym to pump iron with Dan Gookin.

Wally is responsible for the following books:

- Microsoft Office 2007 for Dummies (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470009233?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470009233),
- Beginning Programming for Dummies (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470088702?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470088702),
- Breaking Into Acting for Dummies with Larry Garrison (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468), Beginning Programming All-in-One Reference for Dummies (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470108541?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470108541),
- Steal This Computer Book 4.0 (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271050?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271050),
- Visual Basic Express 2005: Now Playing (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593270593?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593270593),
- My New Mac (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271646?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271646),
- My New iPhone (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271956?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271956),
- Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon Fisher and Gerald Fisher (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894).

When not performing stand-up comedy or writing computer books, he likes to paper trade stocks with the video game Stock Reflex (www.plimus.com/jsp/download_trial.jsp?contractId=1722712&referrer=wwang), using the techniques he learned from a professional Wall Street day trader.

In his spare time, Wally likes blogging about movies and writing screenplays at his site "The 15 Minute Movie Method." (www.15minutemoviemethod.com/) Wally can be reached at wally@computoredge.com.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Rob, The Computer Tutor

Rob, The Computer Tutor: Word Processing “Word Processing 101” by Rob Spahitz

This week, we start looking at word processing using Microsoft Word. Although we'll start by discussing the basics, Rob will also be throwing things in that most of you probably don't know, so scan through and learn something each week.

This week, we start looking at word processing using Microsoft Word. Although I'll start by discussing the basics, I'll also be throwing things in that most of you probably don't know, so scan through and learn something each week.

Manual Typewriters

In the old days, people often used typewriters to generate documents (letters, resumes, school papers, etc.). Before the electric typewriter arrived, the machines were entirely manual. You inserted paper and rolled it into place (sometimes with a mechanical handle). You also set a left and right margin through a variety of means. As you typed, a lever was elevated and snapped through ink-filled ribbon to leave an impression of the letter onto the paper, which then advanced the roller mechanism (the "carriage") a little to the left so that the next typed character was just to the right of the previous one. As you approached the right end of the page, most typewriters rang a bell to let you know that it's almost time to go to the next line. At the proper time, you'd push the carriage back in the other direction and advance the roller up (again, usually through that handle). At the end of the page, if you weren't paying attention, the paper would fall out of the typewriter.

In addition to these things, if you failed to press a key hard enough, it may not have left an impression, or just left a smudge of ink. Your page was probably very inconsistent in how well the keys hit the page. Also, each letter took up exactly the same amount of space on a line using what is now known as a fixed-point font. That means that the letters "w" and "i" take up the same amount of space on a line (versus handwriting these letters, where "w" will take up several times as much space as "i"). Forget about fancy text styles like you see in the newspaper. Oh, and don't make any mistakes as you type. Doing so means a big process of rolling the page up and trying to erase the ink before it dries, or back-spacing and using some kind of paint to cover the ink (then waiting for it to dry) then re-typing correctly. And if you wanted to insert a few new words (or remove some) after you typed the page? If you're lucky, you can squeeze it into the same line or next by overriding the margins. Otherwise, grab a blank sheet and retype the whole page.

Electric typewriters came along and made some of these functions easier. For example, the typing pressure was much more consistent and the carriage could be returned to the left edge with the push of a button. Also, rather than the carriage moving back and forth, most allowed the typing (printing) head to move back and forth.

Why am I reviving these horrible memories that some of us have about the old days of typing? Very simple: Some people still try to use some of the same processes on the computer.

Electronic Typewriting

With the introduction of the integrated computer (in the late 1970s), designers started using CRTs (basically televisions, a.k.a. monitors) to view output. (Yes, there were teletypes that mimicked the electric typewriters, but they

also interacted with the computer and responded...cool idea but certainly limited.) With the CRTs, the machines needed a different way to receive input. Since typical input was still text, the idea of an electronic keyboard was combined with the CRT (either integrated or connected by a wire). When you pressed a key, a signal was sent to the computer that talked to the CRT to light up parts to make it look like letters, numbers or symbols. But you know that, because that's how most of us work these days (until that evasive voice-recognition problem is fixed).

So with these keyboards it made sense to create tools to help with creating documents. Text editors came along. As we saw last week, these had the basic functions of a typewriter and a few more things like easier editing and the ability to save and retrieve without actually printing.

Common Mistakes

First, let's quickly review some common mistakes that people make when they use word processors. Well, some are not really mistakes, but there are much better ways.

Typewriter Carriage Returns—Not so much these days, but years ago, people who were first introduced to electronic word processing thought they were on manual typewriters. At the end of each line (rather than paragraph), people would press the Enter (or Return) key to go to the next line. That's not a real problem visually, if done right. However, if you decided to change the print margins or insert or delete words, you would have to manually update lines rather than tap into the benefits of computer technology to figure things out for you.

Single Font—Again, not so much these day, but some people think that the fixed-point font (usually known as Courier) is the only way to type a document. Of course, most word processors use a proportional font as their default so this is less of an issue.

Paragraph indents—On manual typewriters we didn't have much control over spacing on the page, so we'd hit the Tab key at the beginning of each paragraph. Modern word processors automatically adjust spacing between lines and paragraphs so that you don't need to indent the beginning line to tell where a paragraph appears.

Excess tabbing—This is probably the biggest ongoing mistake. People want to align text in columns and they use as many tabs as needed to line things up. The proper way to handle this is with tab sets (which, oddly enough, existed in most manual typewriters)! Tabs are used for indents; tab stops are used for alignment of columns.

Excess paragraph spacing—Similar to the tabbing problem, at the end of paragraphs people often press the Enter key until the cursor is at the desired location, especially when trying to get to a new page. Setting horizontal spacing or a page break are the preferred ways to handle this. (Try Ctrl+Enter for a new page!)

Bad styling—If you are creating a document with various sections (such as this article), you probably want a different font style (maybe bold, italic and a larger font size). Rather than set this over and over, you should apply a style to it. Now if you decide to remove the italic, you can update all of them with one change. Stay tuned for that one in a future article.

Navigation problems—So many people have yet to learn the shortcuts for navigating around a document. Try Ctrl+Home for the beginning of the document and Ctrl+ right/left arrow for jumping between words. More to come.

Microsoft Word 2010

Similar to Microsoft Word 2007, Word 2010 offers a "ribbon bar" in addition to all of the features found in many previous versions of Word. Figure 1 is a quick snapshot of Word 2010.

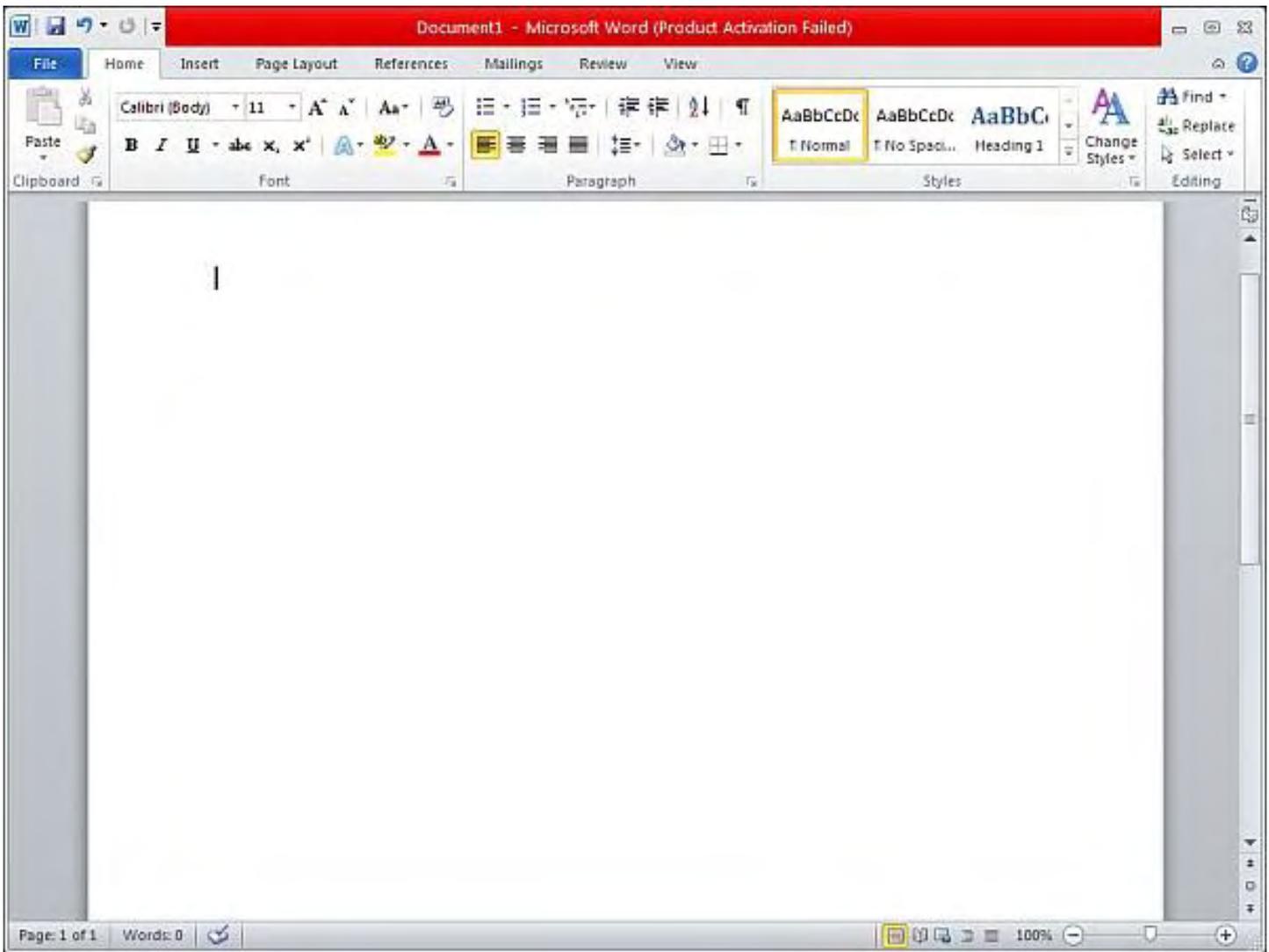


Figure 1. Word 2010.

FYI, the biggest difference between Word 2010 and Word 2007 is the new "File" tab, in the top left corner.

Before we get into all of the fancy features, let's go over the basics.

First, ignore the pretty pictures at the top. In the heart of the application is a big white box representing the printed page. Surrounding it is a gray area representing the background behind a page (which is just for show). Near the top left corner of the page is a blinking vertical bar, usually called an "I-bar" because it looks like a capital letter I. This is the cursor (the area where text will appear as you start typing).

As with typewriters and text editors, as you type the text will appear along the line. As you keep typing, eventually the last word will probably be removed from the end of the current line and relocated to the beginning of the next line.

For example, if you typed the previous line, the word "eventually" will autowrap to the next line as you begin to type it. (Note that this may vary if you are using a different version or changed any of the default settings.) Does this mean that Word placed a carriage return in there? No! Instead, it recognized that the word did not fit within the margins, so it moved it to the next line. If you go and remove a few words or add a few words near the beginning of the line, Word will recalculate the entire document and realign all of the words and paragraphs to match the left and right margins and top and bottom page margins.

What if you want to get more of a word at the end of an otherwise jagged line? In the old days we'd hyphenate words. These days we can do that or simply forget about it (since most people don't really care if the right edge has varied spacing). Also, you can change the paragraph or document to right-align or "double-align" (known as justified) the paragraphs.

Next, when you get to the end of a paragraph, you still have to let Word know. Press the Enter key and Word will direct your cursor to the next line, with a little extra spacing, ready for more typing, as seen in Figure 2 with the blinking cursor.

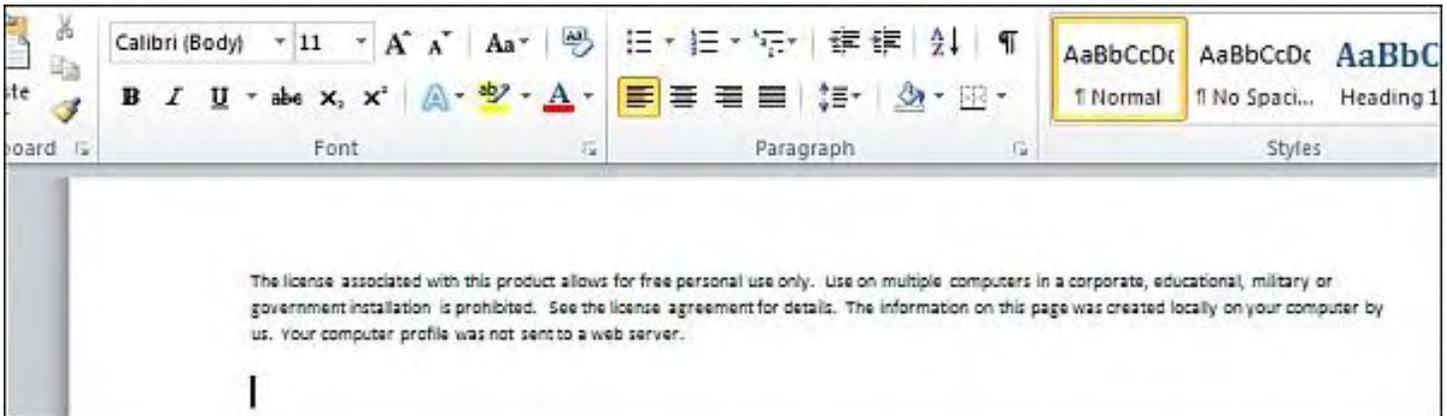


Figure 2. New paragraph with spacing.

Finally, when you get to the end of a page (as defined by the margins), Word will automatically start a new page for you. And, as with lines, if you add more words above the new page, the text will automatically adjust and remove or add pages as needed.

Formatting

With the basics of text entry out of the way, let's look at some of the nice features that word processing offers us. If you've played with just about any word processor, you're probably familiar with this, but let me throw in a few tidbits to make sure you know all the features.

First, formatting really means taking the text and giving it special characteristics. What may not be obvious is just how many types of formatting are available, and these can be applied to every single piece of text separately.

The most common formats are: font style, bold, italics, underlined, font color and font size.

Font style is the generic name for a collection of characters with a specific name. For example, the old typewriter style called Courier (or Courier New) is a fixed-point style for each letter, digit and symbol. Also, each letter has a serif ("foot") that is supposed to help the reader follow the text as though a line is drawn at the base of the letters. What's nice about fonts is that they can be created to look like anything you want, including script, calligraphy, handwriting, accented letters, Greek letters or even fancy graphics like smiley faces. Usually we only see the ones installed on our machine, like "Times New Roman," "Arial" and "Calibri" (as seen in Figure 2 above). If the hundred delivered with Office and Windows are not enough, you can usually find custom ones for sale (or for free) on the Internet. In addition, Corel Draw used to allow you to create your own (in version 4); I assume it still does.

Bold text is any text that is slightly enhanced by appearing thicker. In the word processing world, this usually means that it appears twice, overlapping, but one slightly shifted right of the other. Word, and most applications, also lets you use the Ctrl+B combination (hold down the Ctrl key, then press the letter B, then release both) to turn bold text on and

off (toggle). Technically, bold text is considered a different font, but in almost every case, it is delivered together with the non-bolded version so you won't notice. One interesting thing is that some applications allow you to set levels of boldness, but I've never seen it in action. For example, you can set text to Semi-bold, Bold or Extra Bold in Microsoft Access, but they all appear as just standard bold. I guess this was done in anticipation of something that never really happened. MS Word seems to have only one bold setting, so it seems that the computer world isn't ready for levels of bold yet.

Italic text is also just a simple variation of the standard font. It is basically the same font with the top slanted slightly to the right. Most applications allow you to toggle this with Ctrl+I.

One nice thing is that many of these formats are cumulative. That means that you can activate bold then italic to get bolded-italic text (which is considered yet another font)! This text appears double-struck with the top slanted to the right.

On to underlining. After seeing the above information about bold and italics, you might think that underline is just the same. Add underlining and it's a new font? Well, that's just not how it works. Underlining is simply applied as a characteristic of the existing font. And, as you might expect, you can toggle it with Ctrl+U. The odd thing about underlining is that Word 2010 has 17 different types of underlines (as does Word 2002)! Who would have guessed? So how do you get them all? We'll explore some of these at a later time. For now, you'll just get the standard single underline rather than the double-underline or wavy underline or dotted underline or dashed underline or . . .

Font color and size? Word lets you select pretty much any Windows color to your text. That means that you have more than 16 million colors available. Of course, most of those are pretty dark, and many are so close that they are hard to distinguish, but the flexibility is still there. And the sizes are a bit more complex. Some fonts come with different collections of predefined sizes. They are typically called bitmapped fonts. If you try to use a size that is not included in the font package, Word will try to scale a nearby font size to match, and it usually looks pretty pixilated and jagged. For this reason, most fonts are now scalable.

This means that the fonts are actually defined by a mathematical formula (one for each symbol), and when you request a font size, it recalculates for that size and tries to match it to your screen resolution to make it look nice. And if you print it, it recalculates it to the printer settings to get a good-looking printout. To get these, the easy way is to look at the toolbar (as seen in the Font box in Figure 2 above) and change the settings. There you can also see the other items listed above.

With all of these formats, you're sure to add nice formatting to any document you create.

Next week, we'll look at a few more formatting features and explore a few more shortcuts to assist with creating the perfect document.

Rob has been in the computer industry for over 25 years and is currently a part-time teacher, offering classes in Excel, Access, Visual Basic, and a variety of other technical tools. He has loved *ComputerEdge* since 1990 and can be contacted at *RSpahitz@Dogopoly.com*.

Looking for a great boardgame? Grab a copy from DOGOPOLY.com (*dogopoly.com*) and have a dog-gone great time.



[Return to Table of Contents](#)



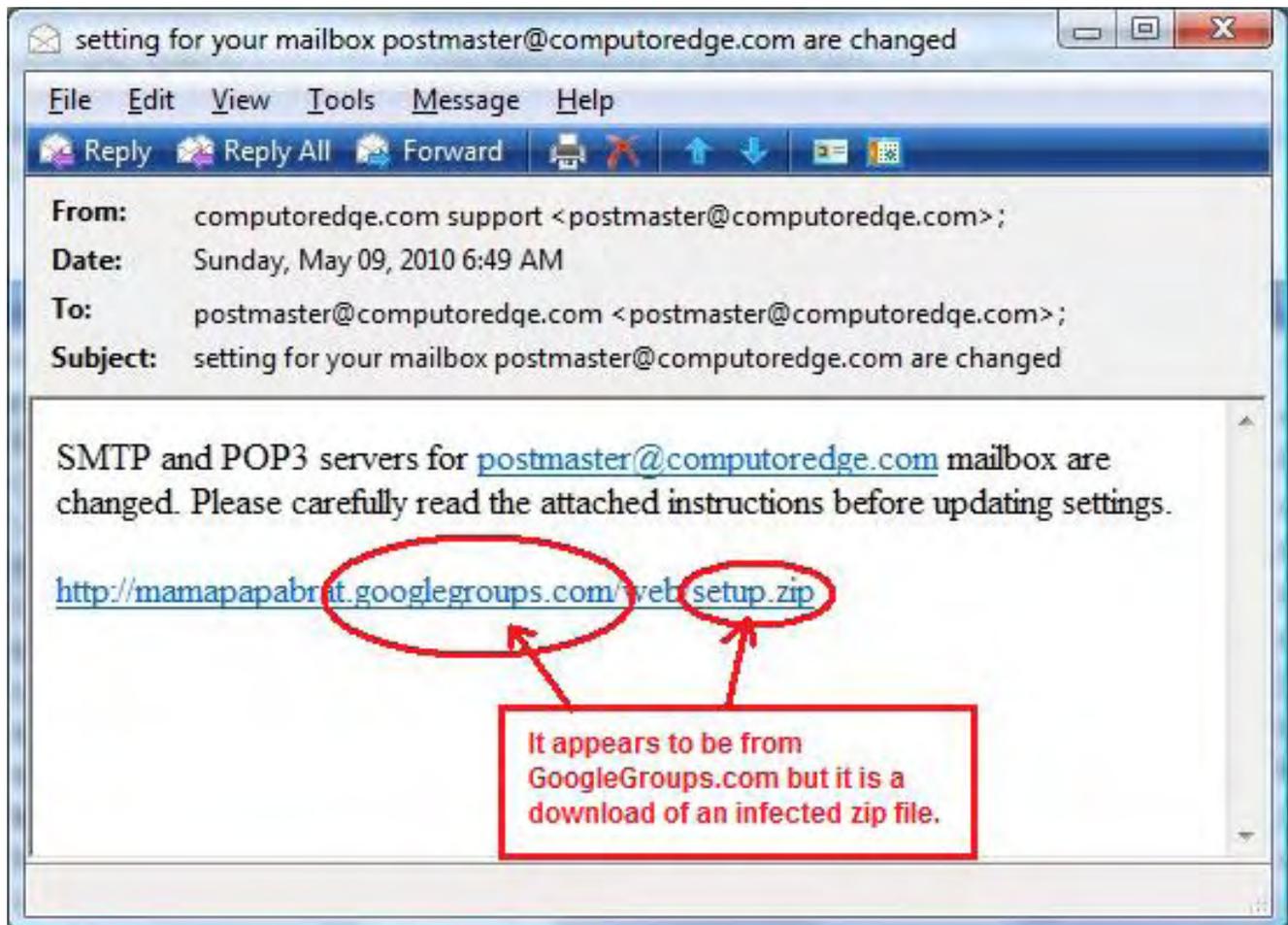
Spam of the Week

Spam of the Week

“The latest in annoying and dangerous e-mail currently making the rounds.” by ComputerEdge Staff

A faux e-mail that appears to come from your ISP's tech support department is making the rounds. Click Delete!

The latest attack will appear to come from your e-mail service provider. It will look like it comes from the e-mail support department for your provider (see Figure 1). The link directs you to a file on Google Groups, which seems legitimate enough. The problem is that anyone can post a file on Google Groups. This file is tipped off by the fact that it is a ZIP file.



Beware the ZIP file, and know that anyone can post a file on Google Groups.

If your e-mail is working properly, it would be rare for your provider to be making changes. If you are in doubt, contact your provider directly. Do not download the file linked in the e-mail!

Most likely your e-mail provider would use its own domain to provide support, not Google. If you have a Google Gmail account, you may be a little more tempted, but follow safety rules and contact Google security (www.google.com/security.html) to report the problem.

ComputerEdge always wants to hear from you, our readers. If you have specific comments about one of our articles, please click the "Tell us what you think about this article!" link at the top or bottom of the article/column. Your comments will be attached to the column and may appear at a later time in the "Editor's Letters" section.

If you want to submit a short "ComputerQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at ceeditor@computoredge.com.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

EdgeWord: A Note from the Publisher

“Feeding the Monster That Is the Web” by Jack Dunning

edge **WORD**

The Web has become the repository for everything that can be digitized. There are no limits—and most of us are only scratching the surface of the vast digital content available.

A number of years ago when I was out with some friends, the conversation turned to the Internet and everything that was available on the Web. They were marveling at the varied content. One person commented that there was probably even a Web site for the old television series *The Rifleman*. I immediately responded, “There is!” Answering so quickly was a mistake. Everyone assumed that the site was part of my favorites and I was being revealed as a super geek who indulged in old Western nostalgia Web sites.

The truth was that I had never visited any such site. I was only affirming that anything and everything will be posted on the Web by someone. It was only today that I did a search on the *Rifleman* series to confirm the existence of *Rifleman* sites. In fact, I immediately found two dedicated Web sites (www.riflemanconnors.com/ and www.riflemansrifle.com/). There are probably more, but the two were more than enough for me. At the time there was nothing I could say to convince my friends that I was only making a point and I had no real enthusiasm for the old Western—although I did watch it as a kid.



“Gertrude is really freaking out ever since Farmer Bill started posting videos of us on YouChicken.”

The Web has become the repository for everything that can be digitized. There are no limits and the cost is often free. Sites such as YouTube and Facebook make it easy for people to upload their lives, whether by written word, images or videos. I don't think that it is possible to comprehend how much is out there in cyberspace. It's like contemplating infinity. Think out as far as you can, and it's beyond that point. It would be far easier to read all of the printed books in the world than access all of today's Web sites.

Whether all that Internet content is useful is a totally different question. The vast majority is most likely useless drivel. Fortunately, we will never need to deal with most of it. The search

engines have done a pretty good job of culling out most of the garbage—although screening doesn't help when looking for something truly obscure. Popularity is our guide. Most of the various Web information systems (again, such as YouTube) will rank contributions based upon popularity. That way we can make the popular *more* popular by viewing or visiting only the most popular sites. This is the Internet's version of “the rich get richer.”

I'm more of an observer than a participant. The Web is a massive growth encompassing the entire world. No one is in control, yet everyone may be affected. For me it is fascinating and educational. I use the Internet to do research on computer problems and cheat on crossword puzzles, yet I know that I'm only nibbling around the edges. My wife and I

regularly visit our young grandchildren via Skype.

It's not a matter of being good or bad. The Web just is—and it's growing. Each week *ComputerEdge* makes a contribution to the Web, so in our own way, we at *ComputerEdge* are feeding the monster called the Internet.

Jack is the publisher of *ComputerEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is www.computoredge.com. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoredge.com

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

“Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns.” by ComputerEdge Staff

"Hidden Tools in Windows 7," "Twitter Spam," "Screen Rotation"

Hidden Tools in Windows 7

[Regarding Pete Choppin's April 23 article, "Hidden Tools in Windows 7":]

This was a very useful and informative article. I enjoyed reading it and sent it on to my friends. I would like to see more of this type.

Thank you,

-Dwane Arthur, Lenoir City, TN

Most informative writing! I'm filing this article for reference for when I'm buying a new PC with Windows 7.

-Joe McGuire, San Diego, CA

Can Backup be made to a DL (double-layer) DVD? That would definitely be a plus!

-William Massicotte, Columbia

William,

I have looked around and Microsoft doesn't mention anything about using double layer DVDs with the Backup software. But they don't say you can't either.

I would give it a try and see. Let us know what you find out.

-Pete Choppin

This article covers user-supportive goodies that many of us might never "discover" during the full ownership period of a Win 7 computer. So, many thanks for the information.

-Cicero, Colorado Springs, CO

Twitter Spam

[Regarding the April 23 Spam of the Week: Twitter Spam column:]

Hopefully the reference to "unread" messages would be a tip-off.

-Randy Crumley, San Diego, CA

I understand how you can be bored with Twitter. So far, I've found only one person worth following. I'm set up to receive and thus pay 20 cents per post via SMS. But he stopped creating new posts last year. He's still listed on Twitter as "computoredge."

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

Screen Rotation

[Regarding the April 23 Windows Tips and Tricks column:]

Very creative. I used this as an example of free will to a philosophy professor at SMU. If you have an interest in philosophy, I can send you the paper.

-Mark Burton, Albuquerque, NM

Read the article, was interested, and I tried it on my netbook. It worked. I have an HP mini 110 with XP. Pretty cool stuff. Although, I don't know when I would want to view a screen at this angle?

Thanks,

-Patencio, Lemon Grove, CA

Apparently, this technique is graphics-card dependent and is not specifically a Windows feature. This means its availability will vary from computer to computer. Check your graphics setup.

-Jack Dunning

ComputerEdge always wants to hear from you, our readers. If you have specific comments about one of our articles, please click the "Tell us what you think about this article!" link at the top or bottom of the article/column. Your comments will be attached to the column and may appear at a later time in the "Editor's Letters" section.

If you want to submit a short "ComputerQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at ceeditor@computoredge.com.
