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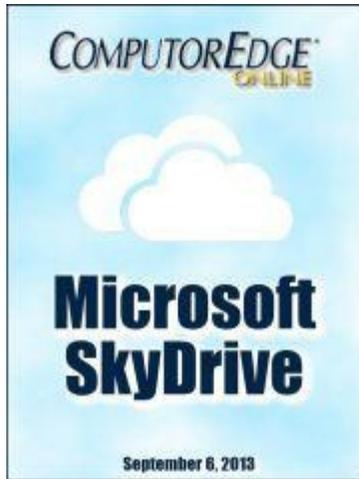
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Microsoft SkyDrive

Microsoft Offers 7 Gigs of Free Internet Storage (Plus Apps) to Windows Users.

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by Jack Dunning

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Digital Dave

"Digital Dave answers your tech questions." by *Digital Dave*

Printing Outlook.com E-mail; Why Won't Undelete Work on Flash Drive?; iTunes Folders vs Windows Explorer Folders.

Printing E-mail

Dear Digital Dave,

I have what I believe is a simple question and am hoping you will give me a simple answer. How do I print e-mail in Hotmail (Outlook?)? I have tried using my Snip tool but can only capture what is showing on the screen, which most times is not the entire message. I know I can go the "print screen" route but that yields the same stunted results. I cannot find a "Print" button anywhere and am hoping you can tell me under which technical hat I need to look.

Thanks much for all your help in the past. You are still in the "first click" position with every issue of ComputorEdge.

Sincerely,
Joe Piluso
San Diego, CA

Dear Joe,

While there are a number of ways to print Web based e-mail that will provide better results than the Snipping Tool or any sort of screen capture, all these programs have a print feature which will properly format the message for your printer. However, they don't always make obvious where to find it. At Outlook.com (Hotmail) even I had a bit of a job finding it. It is hidden in a menu under three dots (see Figure 1).
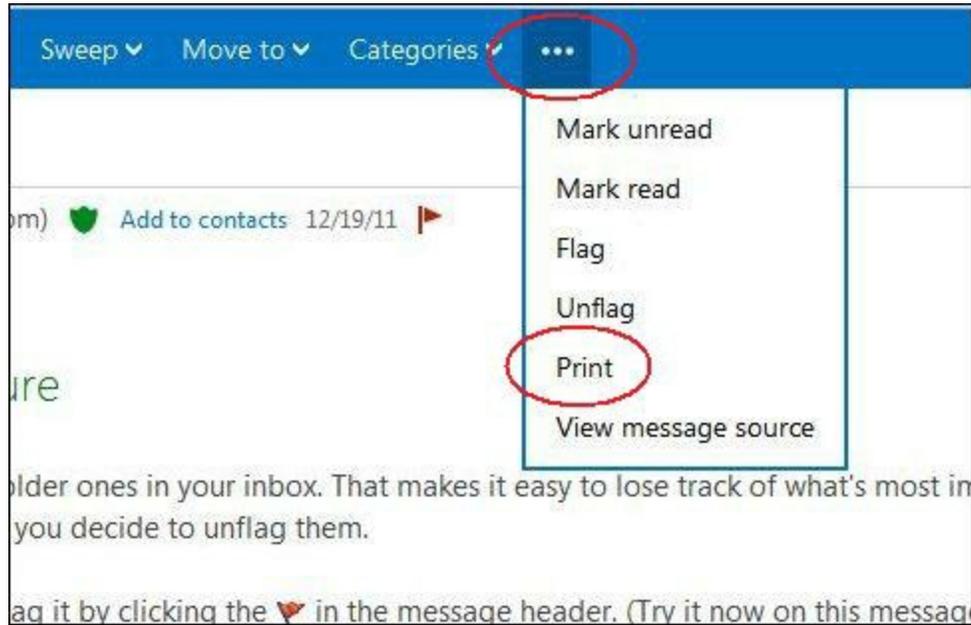
Figure 1. When the e-mail is opened in Outlook.com, click the three dots next to the Categories menu and select Print.

Click the three dots and select Print. Another window properly formatted for printing will open.

If for some reason you need to print a Web page and there is no special print option, then in most browsers you can right-click on a blank portion of the page and select Print. In some browsers you can select Print from the File menu at the top of the window or a Tools menu. (Depending upon which browser you're using, hitting the ALT key may display a hidden menu bar.) While this is not as good of an option as a print feature built into the Web page, at least it will allow you to print all of the page—even what you can't see on the screen.

Digital Dave

Why Won't Undelete Work on Flash Drive?

Dear Digital Dave,

Your help on this would be much appreciated.

The freeware Undelete is useful if a file has been deleted, but not yet overwritten.

Recently I mistakenly deleted an entire folder from a flash drive. It has never happened to me before, and not all files in that folder were backed up elsewhere.

Normally, Undelete has scanned my hard drive and shown me the likelihood of being able to recover any deleted files. Yet, when I use Undelete to scan this flash drive, the deleted folder

does not show up at all as potentially recoverable, and neither do any of the filenames of the files in that folder.

Do you have any ideas on what could be wrong?

Is there a different strategy that might work with this problem?

Thanks very much for any help you can offer.
Jay
San Diego, CA

Dear Jay,

I'm not sure how much help I can be. The undelete programs were designed for hard drives and seem to be inconsistent with flash drives. Plus, since flash drives are a little more prone to flakiness, it's possible that the files became hidden to the undelete program.

I'm not sure that any of this will work, but it's worth a shot. When people find that their files have suddenly disappeared on a flash drive, sometimes those files have actually been marked as hidden. (I know that this was not your problem since you deleted the files, but Windows makes deletions in the file table by adding a special delete mark without deleting the file.) Open the Command Prompt (Programs => Accessories => Command Prompt). Navigate to the flash drive letter (*cd f:*). Now enter the following and hit return:

```
attrib -s -h *.* /s /d
```

If the files are hidden, but still in the table, this should make them visible.

If that doesn't produce any luck, then I would start by downloading various other undelete programs such as [Recuva](). I don't really know why, but not all undelete programs produce the same results on flash drives. There are quite a few freebies out there and it's possible that one of them may do the trick.

Digital Dave

---

iTunes Folders vs Windows Explorer Folders

Dear Digital Dave,

I originally copied all my music CDs to Windows Explorer folders. Now I find that all the Windows folders are empty and the music has been moved to iTunes folders and the tunes have been rearranged. For example, I originally created a folder using the title of the album. The album now appears in an iTunes folder under the name of the artist and the

original Windows folder is empty. I prefer my original organization. Do I have to delete iTunes to prevent this from happening again?
David
San Diego, CA

Dear David,

No you shouldn't have to delete iTunes, but you might have inadvertently added your music to iTunes without the proper settings. The problem is that you have the option to add the files to the iTunes folder or leave them where they are and just point to them. Even if you add the files to iTunes, it is not supposed to delete the original files. (I suspect the files may still exist elsewhere, but you would need to do a search for the individual files to find their location.)

Most media playing programs have the option to just point to the original files, rather than copying them. If you lose those pointers, then the files will appear to be gone when running the media playing program.

For iTunes, open Preferences and click Advanced (see Figure 2). The second checkbox, "Copy files to iTunes Media folder when adding to library" should be unchecked.

Figure 2. Uncheck "Copy files to iTunes Media folder when adding to library" to prevent iTunes for copying the files.

This will prevent iTunes from messing with your music files. Rather than copying the files, iTunes will create pointers to the music files at their current location.

Digital Dave

SkyDrive for Internet Storage and More!

"SkyDrive Offers File Storage and Sharing, Plus Web-based Productivity Apps" by Jack Dunning

While Dropbox is a very good system for sharing files and folder between computers and devices, SkyDrive does that and adds software for editing the files. But, you don't have to choose. You can have it all...and Google Drive.

Microsoft has been offering online services for quite a while. It was years ago that I first signed up for [Windows Live](#) on a Vists computer to test what it could do. Microsoft has now dropped the Live name in favor of [SkyDrive](#) and [Outlook Live](#)—formerly Windows Live Hotmail. (It's not easy keeping up with all of the name changes.) When I first started using Windows 8, I had to login with my Windows Live account.

When I first set up the account five or six years ago, I played with the Calendar app and added many of my contacts to the system. Microsoft would send me daily e-mail reminders based on my calendar (birthdays, etc). After a year or so those e-mail stopped. (No big deal—I wasn't really using them anyway.) In the past couple of years I started receiving e-mail reminders again from my account. I did add the day for taking out the trash to the calendar, but other than that I still wasn't using the online services from Microsoft.

Over a year ago, I've started using the online file storage system [Dropbox](#) for sharing files. It's been great not only for moving files within my network, but for sharing [AutoHotkey scripts](#) and other files with people outside my network. I knew that Microsoft was a participant in the Internet storage wars with their own system called SkyDrive. I felt it was time that I took a closer look.

"I'm afraid that he's been uploaded to that great drive in the sky."

Microsoft SkyDrive

Microsoft SkyDrive is very similar to Dropbox in online storage, although, unlike Dropbox, ShyDrive it is closely integrated with a series of online services from Microsoft for e-mail (Outlook.com), calendar, contact management and a few scaled-down office apps. There are third-party apps for Dropbox, but you have to go looking for them. I only have one Dropbox app from HP which allows me to print from my iPad to the local HP printer. However, I'm not discussing the SkyDrive apps. At this time, I'm only taking a look at SkyDrive as an Internet file storage and sharing system.

The SkyDrive desktop app which connects PCs to the online files isn't supported on Windows XP or Linux, but I did find this technique for [adding SkyDrive as a mapped drive in XP](#). I don't think that Microsoft wants to encourage Windows XP users.

You can get access to SkyDrive by saving and running the [Skydrive download](#). You will need to establish an account—if you don't already have one. Once installed, SkyDrive appears as a folder in your Favorites and your user folder (see Figure 1). Based upon reviews of Windows 8.1 (coming in October), SkyDrive is more closely integrated and should already be loaded as part of the operating system.
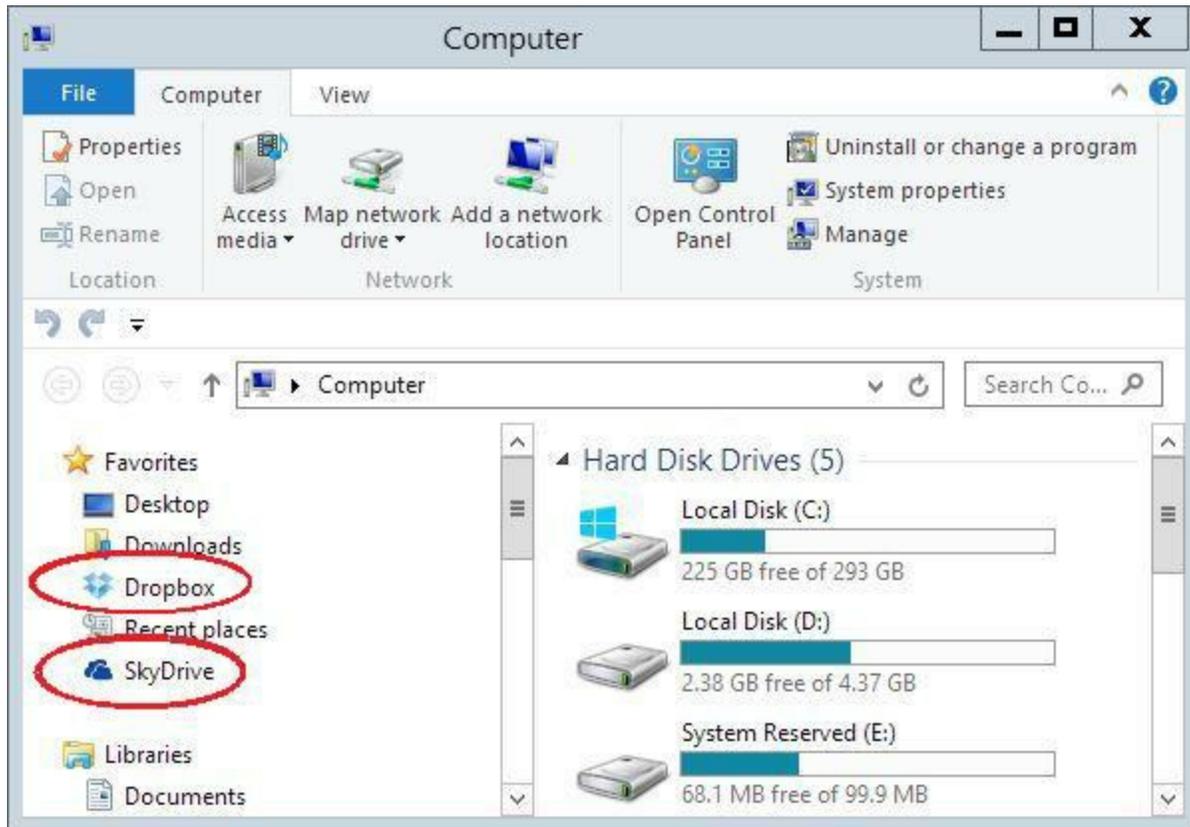
Figure 1. In Windows, Skydrive appears as a separate folder in Windows Explorer.

SkyDrive comes with 7 GBs of storage free. You can purchase more, if you think you need it. Dropbox starts at only 2 GBs free storage, but can be increased substantially by referring others or using certain apps (adding files from cameras and connecting the Mailbox app for iOS).

As far as I can see, there is no reason not to install SkyDrive, even if you already have other services such as Dropbox. The various services coexist just fine, as can be seen by the two service icons in Figure 1. In fact I would consider adding other storage systems such as Google Drive which comes with 15 GBs of free storage. The more extra storage the better, plus Google also has online apps similar to those at SkyDrive. You could use each different services for different purposes. (I did later install Google Drive without a problem. I now have 7 GBs from SkyDrive, 15 GBs from Google Drive, and almost 18 GBs from Dropbox— thanks to *ComputorEdge* readers who used my links. That's almost 40 GBs of additional storage. In the old days, that would have been the equivalent to another hard drive.)

Once you sign up for an account and download the desktop app to create the SkyDrive folder in Windows Explorer, SkyDrive is just there—all the time—like any other folder. You can use it as you would any other folder on your computer. This is exactly the same way that Dropbox works. It is a folder on each computer (or device such as a tablet) where the app is installed, but you can also access it online with any Web browser.

Adding Files to SkyDrive

Putting files into any of the online folders is as easy as copying the file from one folder to another. However, since it works almost identically to any other local drive, you may not want to just drag the file from one window to another. That will cause the file to be moved without leaving a copy in the original folder. Hold down CTRL while dragging to copy rather than moving the file.

Since sharing is one of the primary purposes of Internet drives, I looked at how it is done with SkyDrive. Select a file or folder in SkyDrive, right-click and select SkyDrive => Share (see Figure 2).
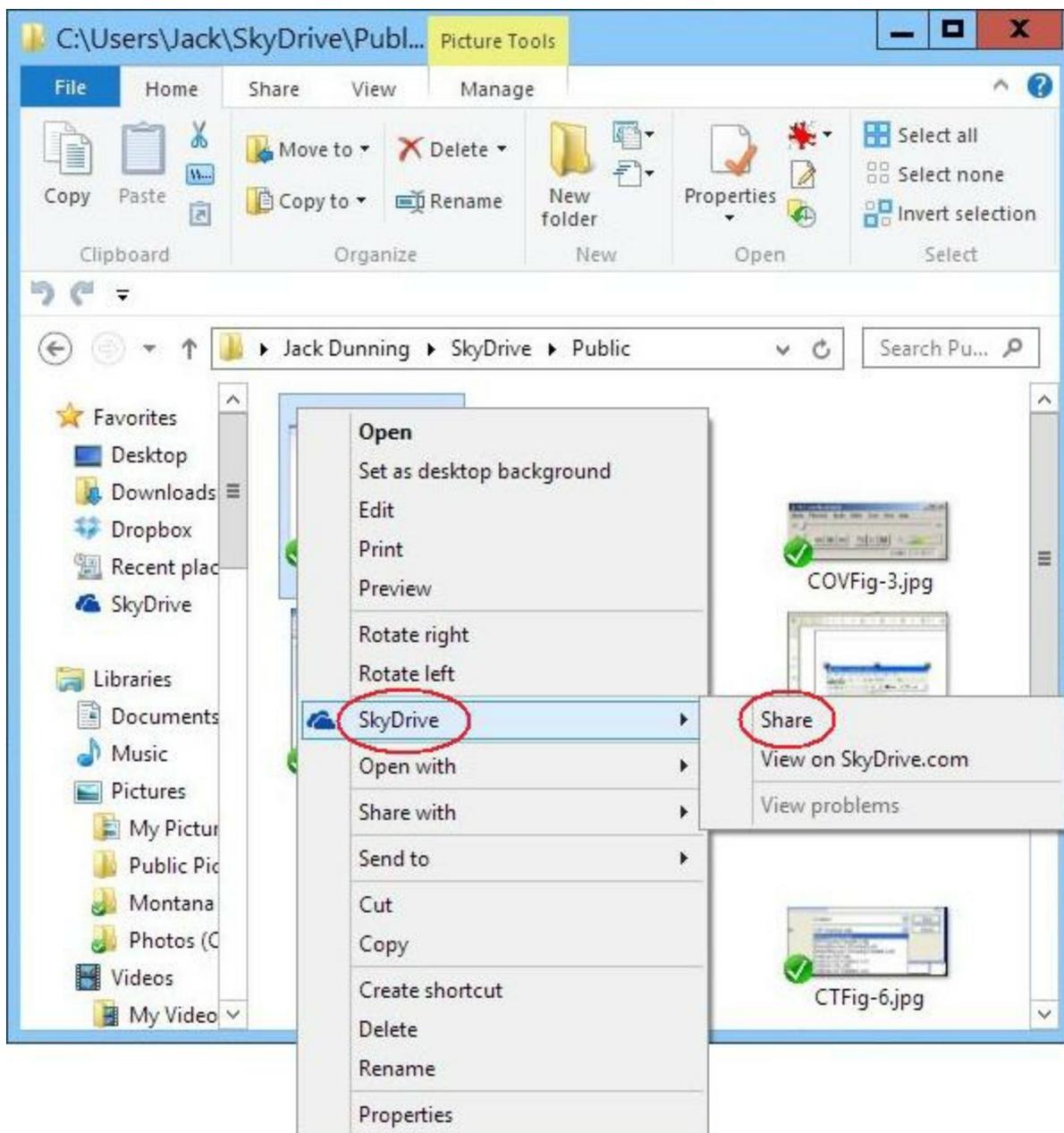
Figure 2. To share a file or folder on SkyDrive, right-click on the file or folder and select SkyDrive => Share.

The SkyDrive site will open with the default Web browser giving options for how you want to share the item (see Figure 3). The first option is to e-mail a link to whomever you want to give access. There are also options for posting the file to Facebook or a couple of other social media sites. I didn't bother to explore these options because I was afraid that it might actually work. (I have enough problems when I try to use Facebook.) If you enter an e-mail address and click Share, an e-mail with the link will be sent.
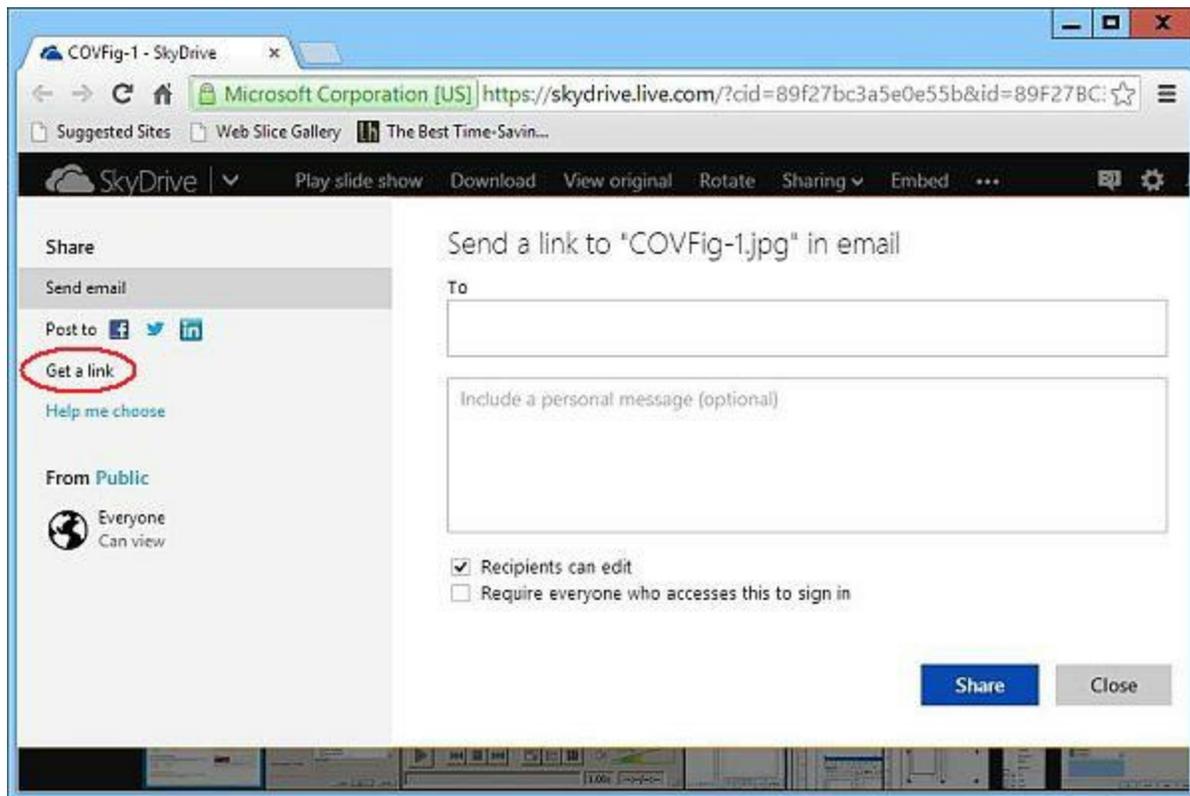

Figure 3. The first option for sharing a SkyDrive file is e-mail. If you "Require everyone who accesses this to sign in" the recipient will need a SkyDrive account.

In Dropbox it is quite easy to create links. It is similar to SkyDrive although your are not forced to visit the Web site. When you right-click on a Dropbox file or folder in Windows Explorer and select "Share Dropbox link" the new URL for the link is merely copied to the Clipboard and the sharing is in effect. However, you do need to visit the Dropbox Web page to delete the shared link. I find the Dropbox system for sharing and deleting links more intuitive.

The SkyDrive e-mail includes a link to the SkyDrive file or folder. If you "Require everyone who accesses this to sign in" the recipient will need a SkyDrive account. The option I usually prefer is "Get a link." This way you can generate a link that you can include in an e-mail or any other method of sharing information (see Figure 4). The options for the links are "View only", "View and edit", and "Make Public."
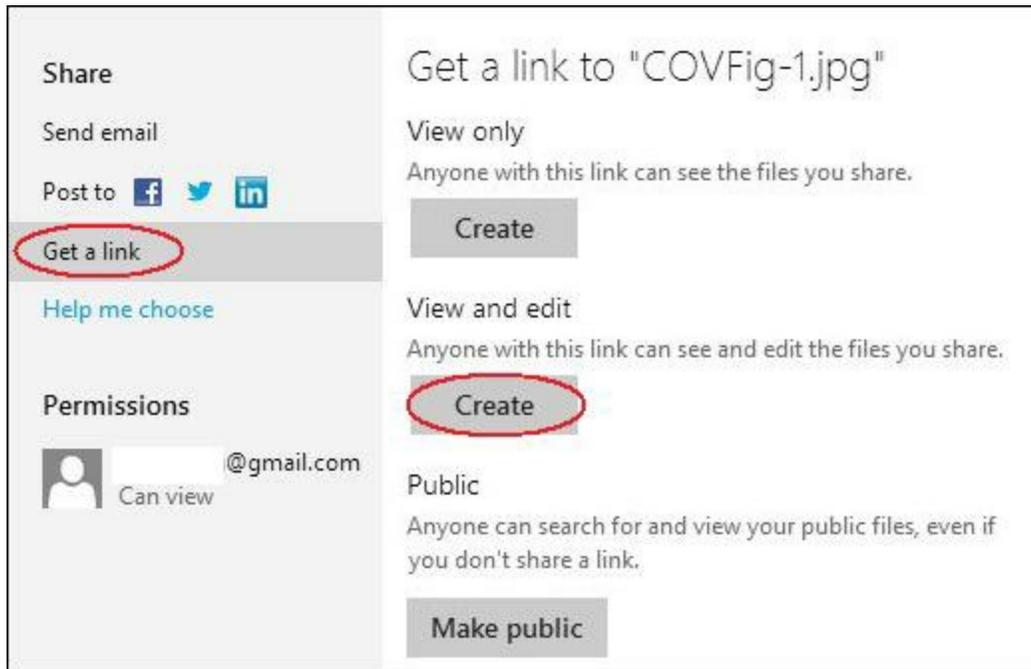
Figure 4. With the "Get a link" option, files and folders can be shares with the "View only", "View and edit", and "Make Public" options.

Dropbox does not have choices between "View only" and "View and edit" because there is no online editing capability built into Dropbox. SkyDrive, when working through your Web browser, offers a number of different editing capabilities including limited versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote. If you want to edit a Dropbox file, you do it as you would any other file on your computer with the installed programs. As you save changes in Dropbox they are immediately updated in the Cloud and on all connected computers.

A major advantage to using SkyDrive is that the editing apps are available from any platform which includes a Web browser. That means you can make changes to a file in SkyDrive, even if you're using an iPad or another device with Internet access. While Dropbox does have file sharing apps for those same devices, you are forced to resort to whatever tools are available on the device if you want to edit anything. It's not quite as easy as use the SkyDrive apps on the Web.

When a SkyDrive sharing option is selected, a window opens with the generated new link address (see Figure 5). You can copy this URL for e-mailing or adding to a Web page.
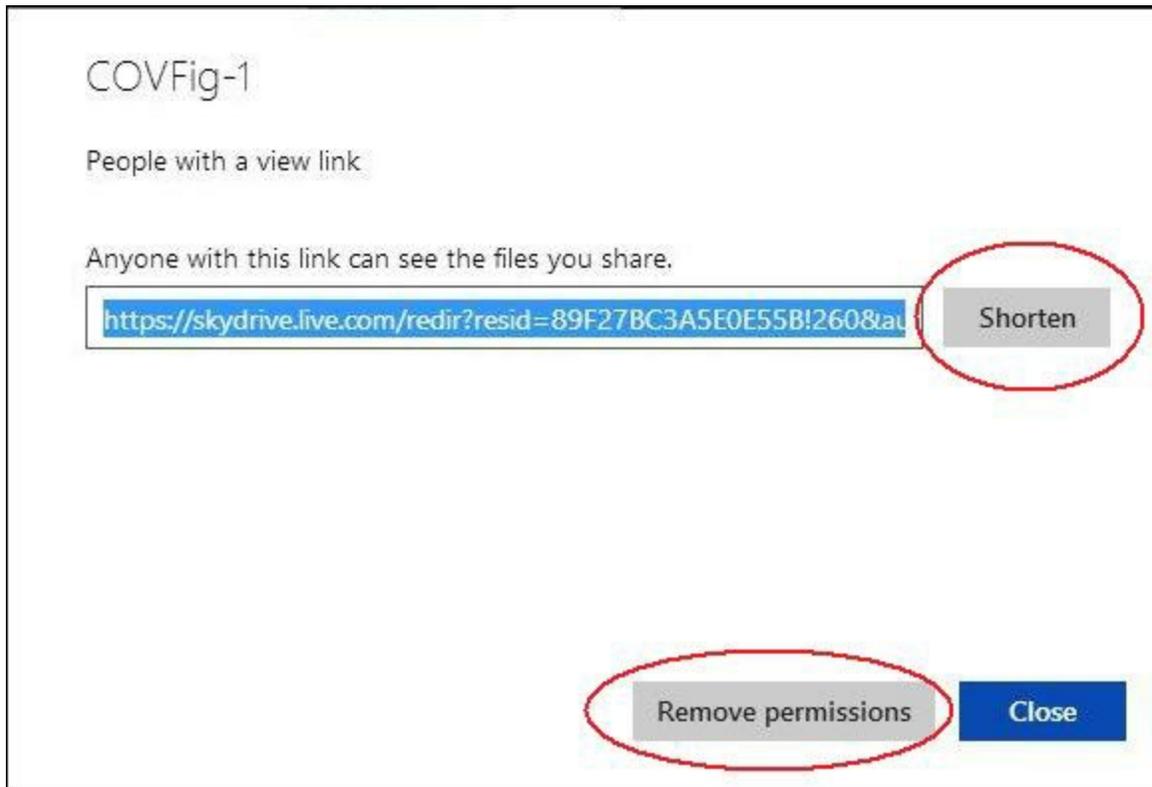
Figure 5. This "Create a link" window generates a URL which will navigate any Web browser to the shared file. If you want to unshare the file, click "Remove permissions."

You will want to note this location in SkyDrive for the future. Not only does it display the current URL to the file, but it's how you can "Remove permissions" to unshare the file. I find it much easy to delete shares in Dropbox where all you need to do is click the X on the right side of the a file or folder in the Links listing on the Web.

If you need a shorter URL for a posting with limited space (e.g. Twitter), click the shorten button. A much shorter URL will be returned for copying (see Figure 6). I didn't find a link shortening feature in Dropbox, although you can always use TinyURL. The advantage to the SkyDrive method of shortening the URL is no other Web site is involved in the process or Web navigation.
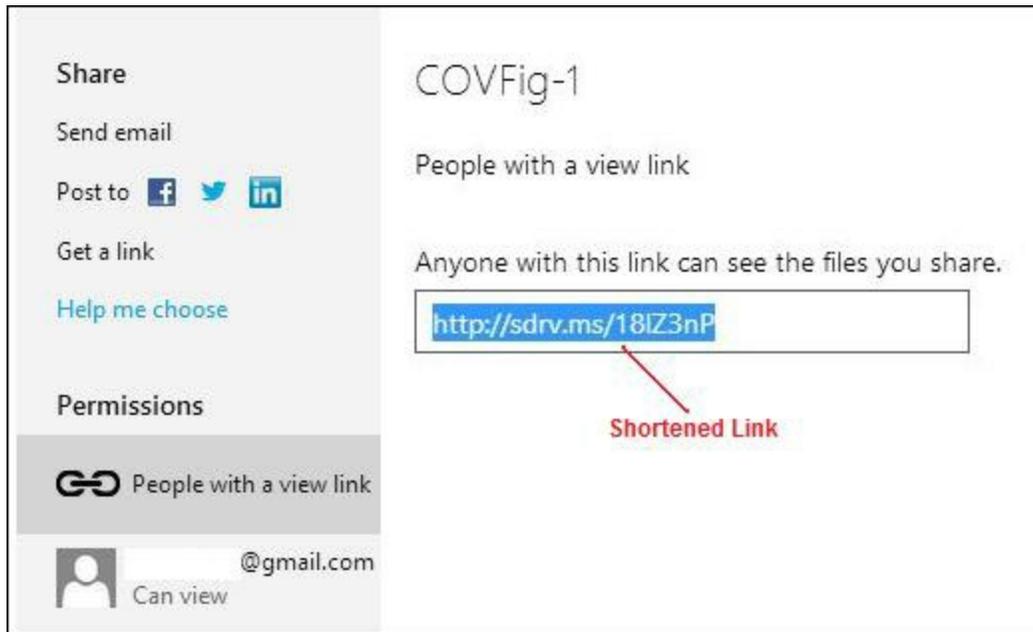
Figure 6. Clicking the Shorten button produces a shorter URL.

When someone follows the URL to the SkyDrive file, the image or documentation will be available in a page similar to Figure 7. The options available will vary depending upon whether you have allowed editing or not.
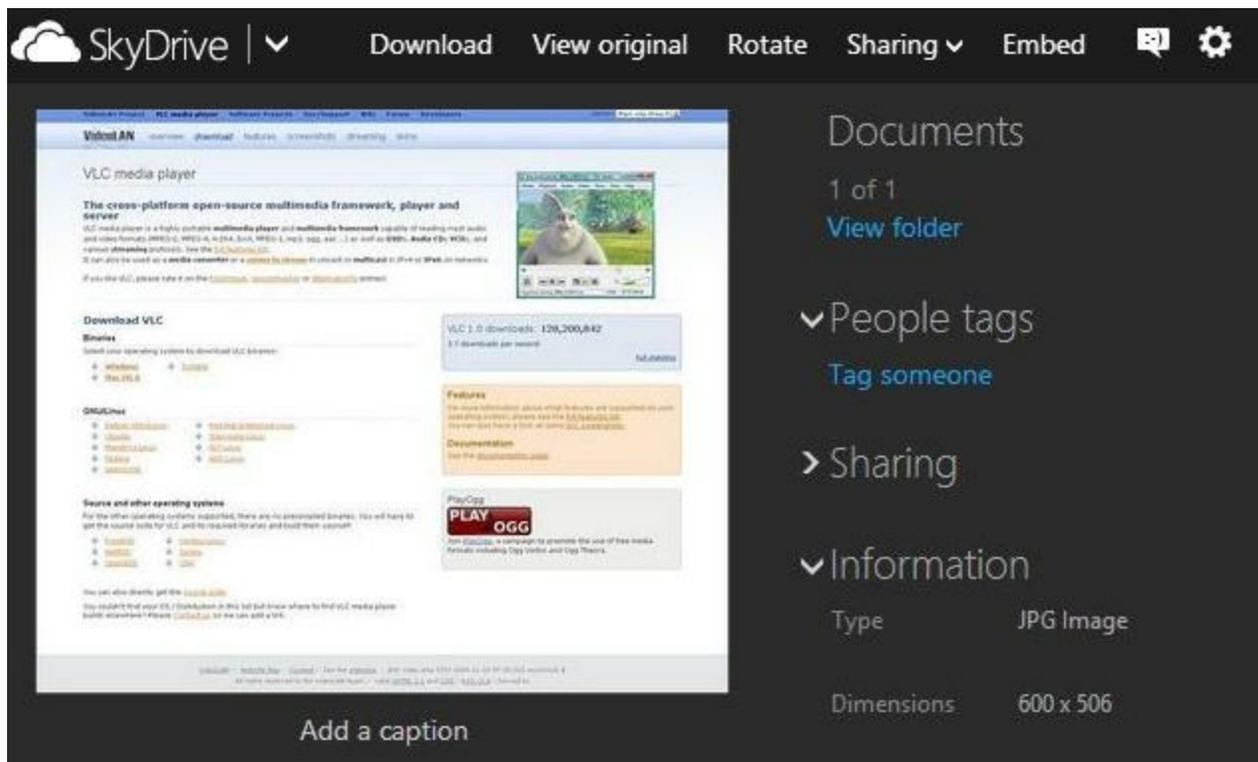

Figure 7. A SkyDrive page for an item linked for sharing.

It was fairly intuitive to set up a share, but I did have trouble finding the "Remove

permissions" link for cancelling shares. It was almost as simple as Dropbox to share, but any additional complications may relate to the fact that files can be shared with editing rights. That makes it possible for multiple people to edit the same file simultaneously on the Web. This may work out well for the Microsoft OneNote app which allows some level of free form editing across various platforms, including tablets. OneNote may deserve more investigation.

Of course to share SkyDrive between your computers, the Skydrive download needs to be installed on each computer. An easy way to install the software when you are already on the SkyDrive site is click the PCs link. (Any connected computers will be listed below the PCs link.) As shown in Figure 8, there is a link to download SkyDrive for Windows. This will give your Windows computers direct access to the same SkyDrive. (Again, this app is not compatible with Windows XP.)

Figure 8. Click the PCs link to download the SkyDrive Windows app.

After installation, SkyDrive will appear in Favorites in Windows Explorer, as well as, under the user's account as a folder (see Figure 9). This is what Dropbox does.
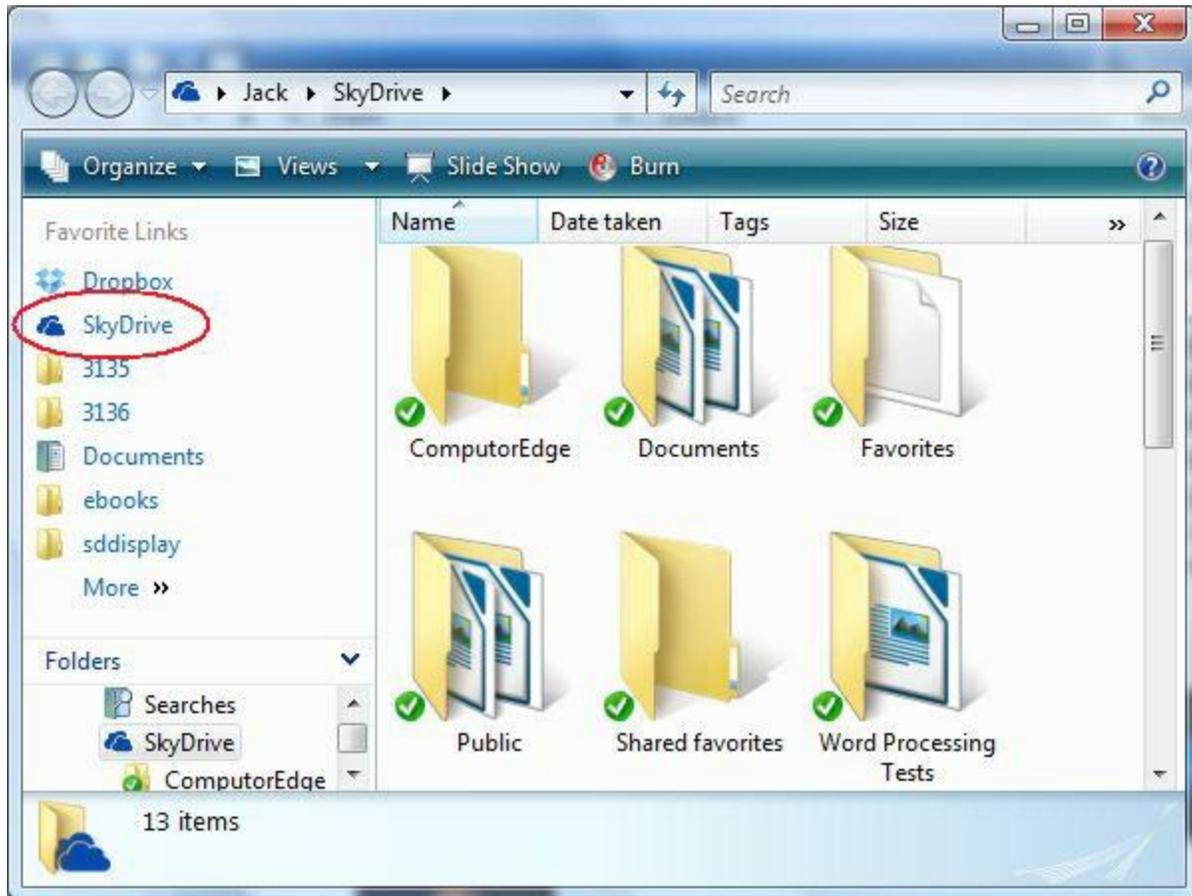
Figure 9. After installation, SkyDrive appears as a Favorite and in the user account folder.

If you click the down arrow next to the SkyDrive logo in the top left-hand corner of the SkyDrive Web browser window, tiles (in the fashion of the Windows 8 Modern interface) pop up showing the main parts of Microsoft's Cloud services (see Figure 10). Outlook.com is the current form of Hotmail. People is a contact management system which integrates with both the Outlook.com e-mail system and the Calendar app. The Calendar app allows the addition and editing of various calendars for different purposes.
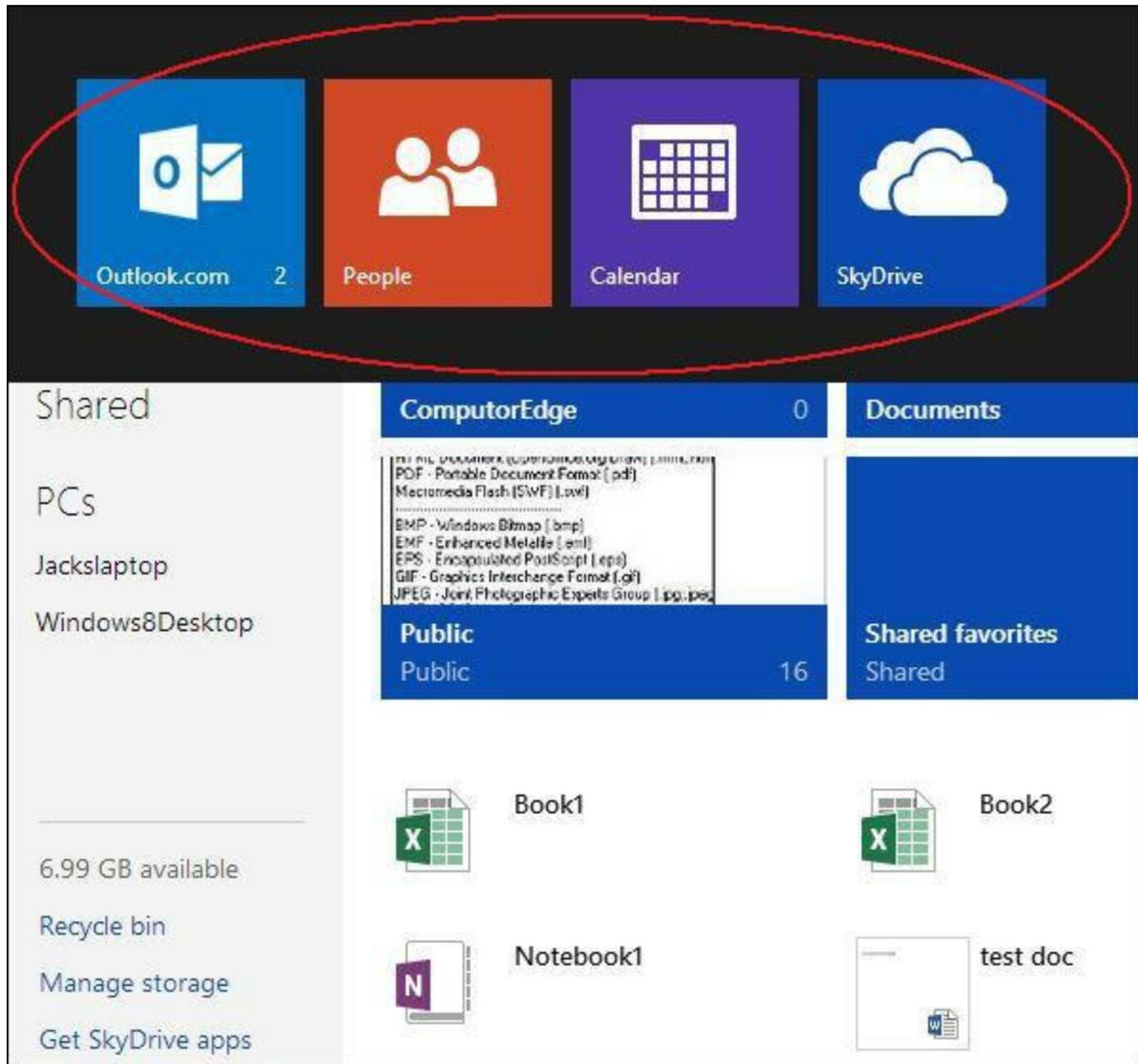
Figure 10. Click the down arrow next to the SkyDrive logo to access Outlook.com, People and Calendar.

SkyDrive also includes scaled down versions of programs in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote). For many people, these may be all that they need for editing and generating productivity files. Since they are Web based, they will also work across platform on devices such as tablets, although they may be a little more awkward to use. To create a new file, click Create and make the appropriate selection (see Figure 11).
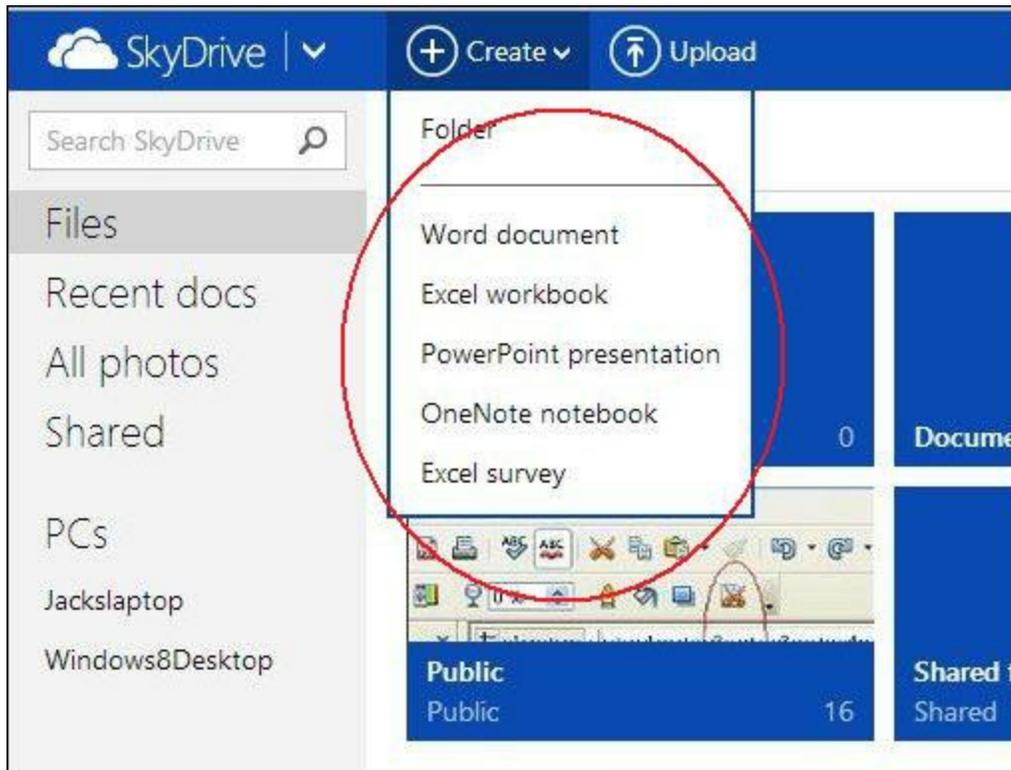
Figure 11. Click Create to open a new file for Word, Excel, PowerPoint, or OneNote.

The built-in applications make SkyDrive outshine Dropbox and competitive with Google Apps as a productivity system. Dropbox is primarily for sharing files. Plus SkyDrive starts with more free storage capacity at 7 GBs, although less that Google Drive's 15 GBs. If you had to choose, you may go with SkyDrive or Google Drive. But you don't have to choose. You can have them all, move files between them, and eventually decide which is best. Or never decide and keep using them all.

Jack is the publisher of ComputorEdge 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. Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:

Just Released! *[Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Computers](#)*.

Jack's *[A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility Software Ever!: Create Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8](#)* and *[Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey](#)*.

Our second compilation of stupid *ComputorEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *[That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputorEdge Cartoons, Volume II:](#)*
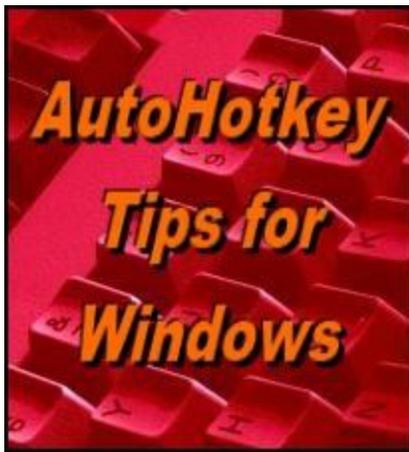
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A Beginner's Tip for Instant Dates and Fixing the Calorie Count App

"Hotstrings, Although Similar to Hotkeys, Give Added Flexibility to Auto-Replacement." by Jack Dunning

It's easy to forget the hotstrings can do more than just add text to documents through auto-replacement. They can also run snippets of AutoHotkey code. Plus, how to make the Calorie Count app compatible with more Web browsers.

New to AutoHotkey? See this "[Introduction to AutoHotkey](#)."

When using hotstring replacement in AutoHotkey, it's easy to forget the hotstrings can do more than just add text to documents. We tend to use hotkey combinations (e.g. CTRL++b) for all of our apps because they can be used anywhere. However there are times when using hotstrings to run snippets of code will make some tasks both simpler to do and the activation keys easier to remember.

A Beginner's Tip for Using Hotstrings as Commands

Normally, when doing auto-replacement the entire command is placed all in one line of code:

```
::imho::in my humble opinion
```

In this case, whenever *imho* is typed, it will be replaced with *in my humble opinion*. That could be the entire AutoHotkey app, although you would most likely add a few more lines. It is often overlooked that you can activate other AutoHotkey commands, not just text, with the [hotstring text](#). The key is that the commands must start on the next line after the hotstring itself.

AutoHotkey Users Tip: In the example above, *imho* becomes *in my humble opinion*. But if you capitalize the first letter, *Imho* is replaced with *In my humble opinion*, capitalizing only the

first letter of the first word—as you would want at the beginning of a sentence. If you are shouting, then *IMHO* in all caps will make the entire *IN MY HUMBLE OPINION* uppercase.

As an example making a hotstring act like a hotkey, if we were to use the *AddDate.ahk* hotkey combination (CTRL+🪟+d) discussed last week as the action, the following script would turn the text *Adate* in a hotstring:

```
:c*:Adate::
send, ^#d
Return
```

Since the first code after the second double colon (::) is on the next line, it is treated as a command rather than replacement text. In this case, *Adate* was used because it is not a word and is unlikely to appear in any text, especially since the first letter is capitalized. By placing the *c* between the first two colons (*:c*:*), AutoHotkey is told to require the hotstring to contain the capital letter. This helps lessen ambiguity when entering the hotstring.

The asterisks between the two colons (*:c*:*) tells AutoHotkey to execute the command immediately when the last letter is pressed without any terminating keystroke such as a comma or period. If the *AddDate.ahk* script is loaded, then the *MonthCal GUI* will be opened for date selection.

Possibly a more useful example is one where today's date (formatted Month, Day, Year—e.g. September 6, 2013) is entered into the document whenever you enter the text *Anow*:

```
:c*:Anow::
FormatTime, CurrentDateTime,, MMMM d, yyyy
SendInput %CurrentDateTime%
Return
```

This hotstring formats the current date (by default) and sends it to the active document or text editing field. It uses the same two options found between the first set of double colons as the previous example (*:c*:*).

It's important to note that this form of hotstring will execute just like any hotkey. You do not need to be working in an active editing window, although, if you are not editing, then there will be no result when the commands send text.

Making Calorie Count Import Work with More Web Browsers

After the *CalorieCount.ahk* script was first introduced, it was pointed out to me that the import feature for loading food and calories from the Web didn't work with Internet Explorer. I had only used Google Chrome while writing the script and had neglected to test it with other

browsers. (There's a lesson in there somewhere.) I checked it out and indeed that was the case. I have since developed a fix which is incoluded in the download now available at the *ComputorEdge* AutoHotkey Dropbox download Web site, but it is worth the time to discuss the problem.

Background for Problems with Carriage Returns and Line Feeds

When working with file structures it helps to understand that each line of text in a file traditionally ends with a carriage return and a line feed. This is based upon simulating the movement on typewriters when starting a new line. (This video shows what can happen to a skilled typewriter typist when using a computer.) On a computer new lines are started by first issuing a *carriage return* (`r is the escaped character used in AutoHotkey) which places the pointer at the beginner of the line, then issuing the *line feed* command (`n is the escaped character used in AutoHotkey) which moves the pointer to a new line. It is the same net effect as using a typewriter to start a new line. Although these commands are not normally displayed in most programs, they are often, but not always, both there.

I say "often" because in certain systems and formats only one of the characters is used— although interpreted as both within that program. This is the reason that you will occasionally import or copy-and-paste text from another file type and see everything run together or the opposite with plethora of lines with extra space between them. It can certainly be a nuisance. This is also the problem with the various browsers. They do not all handle the carriage returns and line feeds in the same manner. This adds to the difficulty of parsing the calorie data for different Web browsers.

When I viewed the copied data from the different browsers in an AutoHotkey message box (*MsgBox*), I saw a tremendous amount of variation from that found in the original test window (see Figure 1 for Google Chrome example). Some browsers included more lines and some less.

Figure 1. This is a view of the copied text in Google Chrome. There are numerous new lines in the copied text which vary depending upon which Web browser is used.

Internet Explorer even added an extra blank line at the beginning (see Figure 2). Naturally, this causes problems for consistency in parsing the data when using a loop delimited with new lines (`n).

Figure 2. This is a view of the copied text in Internet Explorer. Note the extra empty line at the beginning and numerous other new lines.

While the import routine is not depended upon the total number of lines, it does reference key points in the parsed data. If a new line is inserted between the reference point and the data, then the data can't be found. To compensate for the variation in the Web browsers the food import routine was rewritten tocreate a little (although not complete) standardization. The extra lines and the blank line at the beginning needed to be removed. That was done by adding the following code:

```
StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `r, , all
StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `n`n, `n, all
Firstchar := substr(clipboard,1,1)
If Firstchar = `n
        StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `n,
```

The first line of code removes all of the *carriage returns* (`r). This leaves only line feeds (`n)

to indicate new lines.

To remove empty lines all double line feeds (`` `n`n ``) are replaced with single line feeds (`` `n ``). This is not the best method for removing *all* extra lines. If there happens to be three or more line feeds in a row only pairs will be changed to singles as they are encountered which could leave some double line feeds. To replace them all, the same command needs to be rerun until there are no doubles line feeds left. To ensure that all double line feeds are gone, the command can be placed in a loop until they are removed:

```
Loop
  {
    StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `n`n, `n, All, UseErrorLevel
    If ErrorLevel = 0  ; No more replacements needed.
        break
  }
```

While this loop which runs until all double line feeds are removed may remove a couple of extra lines, it wasn't necessary in this app—at least for Firefox and Internet Explorer. Plus, if there is another invisible character between the two line feeds, such as a space or two, then the extra blank line will not be removed.

Neither of the first two lines of code deals with the problem of the blank line at the beginning of the data in Internet Explorer. The best way to remove it is to capture the first character (*Firstchar := substr(clipboard,1,1)*), then check if it is a line feed (*If Firstchar = `n*). If so, the line feed is removed (*StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `n,* which only removes the first line feed found).

Once this code is added to the Calorie Count app food import routine, the data is cleaned up enough to make the remainder of the import routine place the data in the right fields (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. This is a view of the copied text in Google Chrome. There are numerous new lines in the copied text which vary depending upon which Web browser is used.

While the data from Internet explorer is not formatted identically to that from Google Chrome, all of data keys are located in a way that the subroutine will retrieve the proper data with the code as explained in the original introduction of the Calorie Count app. I'm sure that it would be possible to make formatting identical, but it may not be worth the effort.

If you look through the current version of *CalorieCount.ahk* found at the download site, you'll see a number of places where *carriage returns* (`` `r ``) and/or *line feeds* (`` `n ``) may be stripped out, eventually adding the complete set (`` `r`n ``) back to the end of each line. This is done to ensure that the data is clean and readable in virtually any program. It may be overkill, but each time I added the code it was done for a reason, although I may not remember each incident.

The following portion of the script shows the additions discussed in context with the import routine. See the *CalorieCount.ahk* file available at the *ComputorEdge* AutoHotkey Dropbox download Web site in the *CalorieCount.zip* file for the entire script:

```
^#!c::                  ;Import food items from caloriecount.about.com

    WinActivate, Calories           ;added for right-click menu
    WinWaitActive, Calories
    Sleep, 200
    SendInput, ^c
    Sleep, 500
    StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `r, , all
    StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `n`n, `n, all
```

```
   Firstchar := substr(clipboard,1,1)
   If Firstchar = `n
           StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `n,

   StringSplit, RowData, Clipboard , `n,
;    msgbox, %clipboard%
   GuiControl, ,Food2, %RowData1%
   Uppercheck := substr(rowdata2,1,1)
       If Uppercheck is upper
           GuiControl, ,Food2, %RowData1%, %Rowdata2%
       Else if Uppercheck is digit
           GuiControl, ,Food2, %RowData1%, %Rowdata2%
   GuiControl, ,Food5, 1

   SelectedRow := 0
   GuiControl, ,Button3, Add to List

   Loop, %Rowdata0%
    {
       If rowdata%A_Index% contains Serving Size
           {
             StringReplace, RowData%A_Index%, RowData%A_Index%,", "", All
             StringReplace, RowData%A_Index%, RowData%A_Index%,`r,, All
             StringReplace, RowData%A_Index%, RowData%A_Index%,`n,, All
             StringReplace, Serving, RowData%A_Index%,Serving Size%A_Space%,
             GuiControl, ,Food3, %Serving%
           }
       If rowdata%A_Index% contains Grade
           {
             Next := A_Index+1
             StringReplace, RowData%Next%, RowData%Next%, `r
             StringReplace, RowData%Next%, RowData%Next%, Calories
             GuiControl, ,Food4, % trim(RowData%Next%)
             GuiControl, ,Food6, % trim(RowData%Next%)
           }
    }
Return
```
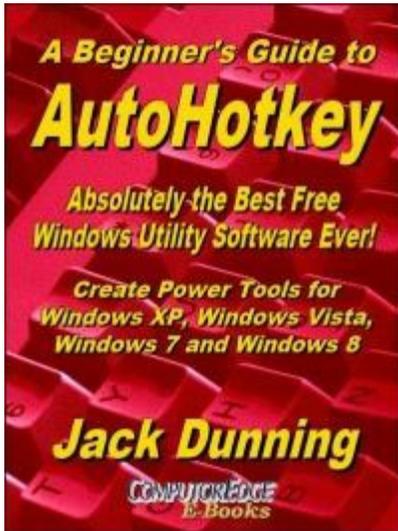
Next time, we will take a look at some alternative ways to launch e-mail with attachments, as well as, continue the discussion of the Calorie Count app.

<div align="center">*   *   *</div>

Now available in e-book format from Amazon, Jack's *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility Software Ever!: Create Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8*.

Building Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8, AutoHotkey is the most powerful, flexible, *free* Windows utility software available. Anyone can instantly add more of the functions that they want in all of their Windows programs, whether installed on their computer or while working on the Web. AutoHotkey has a universality not found in any other Windows utility—free or paid.
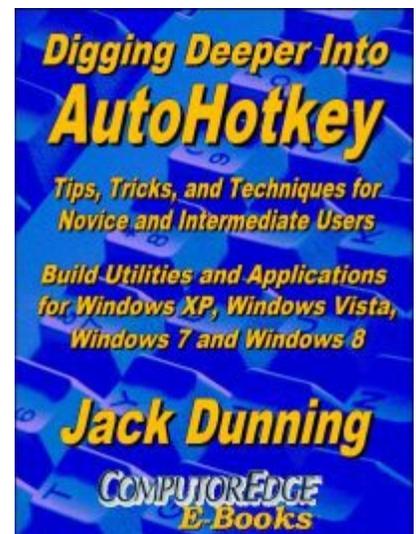
Based upon the series of articles in *ComputorEdge*, Jack takes you through his learning experience as he explores writing simple AutoHotkey scripts for adding repetitive text in any program or on the Web, running programs with special hotkeys or gadgets, manipulating the size and screen location of windows, making any window always-on-top, copying and moving files, and much more. Each chapter builds on the previous chapters.

For an EPUB (iPad, NOOK, etc.) version of A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey click here!

For a PDF version for printing on letter size paper for inclusion in a standard notebook of A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey click here!

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

Jack's latest AutoHotkey book which is comprised of updated, reorganized and indexed columns from the last six months is now available at Amazon for Kindle hardware (or free software) users. Since the columns were not all written in a linear fashion, the book has been reorganized and broken up into parts by topic. The book is not for the complete beginner since it builds on the information in *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey*. However, if a person is reasonably computer literate, they could go directly to this book for ideas and techniques without the first book.

If you've been following along with my AutoHotkey columns, then there is little new information in the book (although I have added more clarification for techniques I felt were either confusing or wrong). The only reason I can see to buy it would be as a handy reference. The AutoHotkey commands used are included in a special index to the chapters in which they appear. Even I can't remember everything I wrote.

For an EPUB (iPad, NOOK, etc.) version of Digging Deeper into AutoHotkey click here!

<p style="text-align:center">32</p>

For a PDF version for printing on letter size paper for inclusion in a standard notebook of Digging Deeper into AutoHotkey click here!

Jack is the publisher of ComputorEdge 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. Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:

Just Released! *Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Computers.*

Jack's *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility Software Ever!: Create Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8* and *Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey.*

Our second compilation of stupid *ComputorEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputorEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"*

Currently only at Amazon.com, *Jack's Favorite Free Windows Programs: What They Are, What They Do, and How to Get Started!.*

Available from Amazon, *Misunderstanding Windows 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8!* Also available at Barnes and Noble and ComputorEdge E-Books.

Available exclusively from Amazon, *Windows 7 Secrets Four-in-One E-Book Bundle,*
Getting Started with Windows 7: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Using Windows 7,
Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? Why You Should or Why You Should Not Upgrade to Windows 7,
and *That Does Not Compute!,* brilliantly drawn cartoons by Jim Whiting for really stupid gags by Jack about computers and the people who use them.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

"Complexity vs. Usability" by Wally Wang

Complexity vs. Usability; Expensive Touchscreen Monitors; News of the Obvious; NASA Using 3D Printers; Tracking Your Class Schedule; The New iPhone Rumor; iWeb Unnecessary.

There are more people who don't know how computers work than people who do know how computers work. That simple statement can be applied to any field such as saying that there are more people who don't know how cars work than people who do know how cars work. Yet this simple statement is what too many tech-savvy users overlook all the time.

The typical tech-savvy user thinks that just because he knows how to fiddle around with command-line interfaces and memorizing arcane commands, then everyone should take the time to learn this information as well. If people fail to do this, then they should do it anyway no matter how difficult, time-consuming, or confusing it may be. Technology should be complex and confusing so only a minority of people can control it and gain power over others like priests serving the illiterate masses.
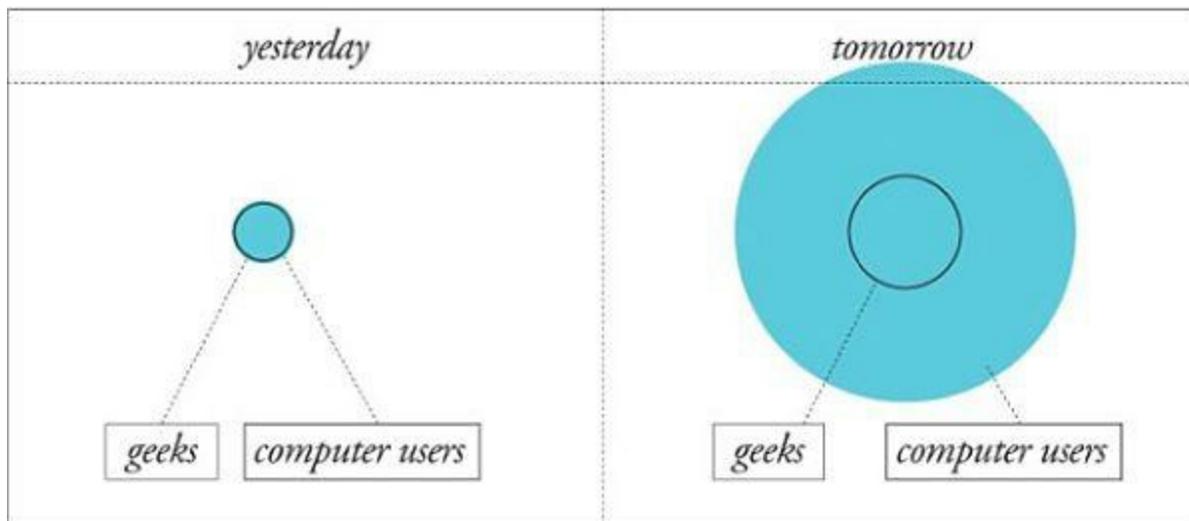

Figure 1. The number of tech-savvy users is far less than the number of ordinary computer users.

The truth is that most people don't want to know how their computers work and don't want to waste time adapting to their computers. I've been teaching computer courses for decades and the persistent, number one problem that most computer novices face is understanding and managing files.

When most people save a file, they don't know where it goes. Then they don't know how to find it again. Then they don't know how to copy or move a file from one folder to another because they don't understand how to navigate from one folder to another, or how they can keep following a hierarchy of folders only to wind up in a dead end. They also don't know what file extensions mean and why they even exist.

File management programs, such as the Finder in OS X or Windows Explorer in Windows, do not help most novices, but only confuse and complicate matters even more. That's why iOS does not offer a traditional file system, although power users constantly demand one. There are definite advantages to allowing file management, but also definite disadvantages.

By hiding file management from users, iOS makes the iPhone and iPad easier to use, but also less flexible. By offering file management, OS X, Windows, Android, and Linux gives users more power at the sacrifice of increased complexity and confusion. It's this ease of use vs. power debate that products must carefully balance, yet tech-savvy users do this all the time.

Someone perfectly comfortable installing their own operating system and building their own PC rarely complains that they can't build their own microwave oven or reprogram how it works. Instead, such computer tech-savvy users just use microwave ovens without complaining that it's lacking features for power users.

Computer tech-savvy users don't want complexity in every area of their life, just in computers. Imagine if the small minority of people who enjoy building and reprogramming microwave ovens insisted that everyone learn how to build and reprogram a microwave oven before they could ever use one. Would computer tech-savvy users eagerly embrace this type of additional complexity in their lives? Probably not, yet these same people feel no shame in urging computer novices to embrace greater complexity in computers while ignoring much simpler alternatives instead.

Most people want to use a computer, not maintain it. Only tech-savvy users enjoy maintaining a computer because it's fun for them, but they fail to realize that what's fun for them is horribly complex to almost everyone else.

If you read this blog post from EE Times, you can read how one person got tired of dealing with complexity that kept interfering with getting work done. The author initially chose an Android tablet for greater flexibility, but discovered that "...I found that when it came to daily functional use, I was spending more time making the system work than I was working at the system."

Although the author specifically talks about Android and indirectly about Linux, this could

apply to Windows and OS X users as well. Computers are generally too complicated for most people to use, and few people want to take a training class or read thick books just to do something as simple as write a letter, save, and print it. Yet that's the endless refrain of advice from tech-savvy computer users to novices.

At one time, tech-savvy computer users represented the cutting edge of the computer market. Now that computers have become commodities and smartphones and tablets threaten the tech-savvy user's fiefdom of arcane computer knowledge to keep out the uninitiated, tech-savvy computer users are either embracing new technology or resisting it by refusing to read anything that contradicts their point of view. This is simply a strategy for failure that too many tech-savvy users are ready to embrace to their grave.

Given their own stubbornness, these tech-savvy users will likely reach their financial grave long before they reach their physical one. Along the way, they'll likely get more frustrated as their knowledge becomes increasingly irrelevant to the vast majority of society, and even then they'll still keep refusing to change. When you meet people like this, you have to wonder why they keep using their computer knowledge to remain as ignorant as possible about other alternatives.

Simpler computers benefit the vast majority of users out there. Complex computers benefit the tiny minority of users out there. Guess which type of computers will appeal to the majority and represent the greatest market? If you need a hint, ask yourself why the iPhone earns more than every product Microsoft sells and you should have your answer.

Expensive Touchscreen Monitors

If you try Windows 8 on a tablet, its tile interface isn't bad. If you try Windows 8 on a PC with just a keyboard and a mouse, Windows 8 is much clumsier to use. Trying to use Windows 8 without a touchscreen is like trying to use Windows 7 without a mouse. It's possible, but far more cumbersome.

Unfortunately, touchscreen monitors are more expensive. Expect to pay about $100 more for a touchscreen monitor compared to a traditional monitor of the same size. While $100 isn't much, the bigger question is how much more productive will you be using Windows 8 with a touchscreen?
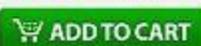
Figure 2. Touchscreen monitors cost more than traditional monitors.

First, there's the problem of constantly reaching out to touch your monitor. On a tablet or smartphone, this action feels natural since the screen is within less than an arm's reach anyway. On a desktop or laptop PC, this action can feel awkard, especially with a desktop PC where the monitor may be further than an arm's reach away.

There's even a name for holding your arm in front of you for long periods of time, dubbed "gorilla arm." In this Scientific American article, author David Pogue says "I spent a few weeks living with a couple of touchscreen PCs. It was a miserable experience. Part of the problem was that the targets—buttons, scroll bars and menus that were originally designed for a tiny arrow cursor—were too small for fat human fingers.

"The other problem was the tingling ache that came from extending my right arm to manipulate that screen for hours, an affliction that has earned the nickname of gorilla arm.

Some experts say gorilla arm is what killed touch computing during its first wave in the early 1980s."

Wired Magazine even states that "Researchers have documented usability problems with vertical touch surfaces for decades. 'Gorilla arm' is a term engineers coined about 30 years ago to describe what happens when people try to use these interfaces for an extended period of time. It's the touchscreen equivalent of carpal-tunnel syndrome."

Knowing this problem has existed for decades, why did Microsoft suddenly think that the Windows 8 tile interface with touchscreen monitors would somehow avoid this well documented problem on PCs?

Second, touchscreen monitors may work well with the tile interface of Windows 8, but once you get past this tile interface and load a program like Microsoft Word or Excel, how useful will touch really be in making you more productive? If touching the screen to manipulate Excel spreadsheets or Word documents gave you some features that you couldn't easily duplicate otherwise with a keyboard or a mouse, then touchscreens would sell themselves. But if you can't define a specific advantage that touchscreen monitors offer for being productive with Microsoft Office, what's the point of getting a touchscreen just to use the Windows 8 tile interface?

Just try Windows RT on a Surface tablet and you'll see that using Microsoft Office on a tablet isn't easy unless you're using the "optional" Surface keyboard. If you need to use a keyboard to use Microsoft Office, then why do you need a touchscreen monitor?

This lack of a compelling reason to use a touchscreen monitor for a PC makes the tile interface of Windows 8 relatively meaningless for PC users. That also means there's little reason to get a Windows 8 PC with a touchscreen, so don't expect PC sales to suddenly take off when Microsoft releases Windows 8.1.

If a touchscreen monitor doesn't give you a massive advantage to make you more productive, then why would anyone want to pay more for a touchscreen monitor? By asking simple questions like this, you can decide if you want to pay more for a touchscreen monitor just to make the Windows 8 tile interface easier to use. Perhaps a better way to make the Windows 8 tile interface easier to use is to avoid Windows 8 and just stick with Windows 7 instead.

If you insist on using Windows 8, try loading Windows 8 as a virtual machine on a Macintosh using Parallels 9, which adds a Windows 7 Start menu to Windows 8. Now you'll have the benefit of a start menu along with the security of using OS X to run Windows 8.
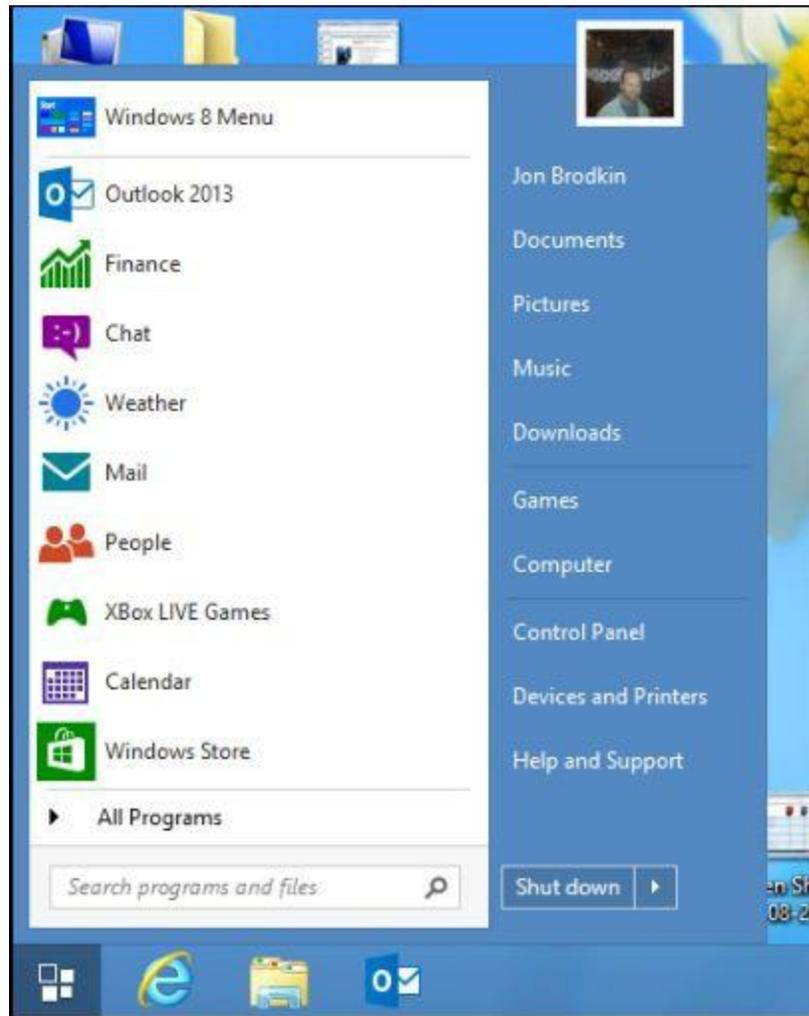
Figure 3. The new Parallels 9 adds a Start menu to Windows 8.

Obviously, buying a Macintosh just to run Windows 8 is too expensive for most people, but if you have to use Windows 8, then switching between OS X and Windows 8 as a virtual machine might be the best option short of just sticking with your current computer and ignoring Windows 8 altogether.

News of the Obvious

At one time, Blackberry ruled the smartphone market. Almost everyone in business used a Blackberry to the extent that people dubbed them "Crackberries." Then the iPhone appeared and changed the entire smartphone market.

At first, Blackberry ignored the iPhone and smugly assumed that people needed a physical keyboard. Since the iPhone didn't have a physical keyboard, it would pose no threat to Blackberry phones.

As sales of the iPhone skyrocketed, sales of Blackberry phones started dropping. Then people

started dumping their Blackberry phones in favor of the iPhone or Android phones. Finally, Blackberry decided to create their version of a touchscreen phone, the Blackberry Storm, which bombed in the market.

Undaunted, Blackberry took their time developing a new operating system and eventually released their Blackberry Q10, which [also bombed](#) in the market.

Blackberry's first failure was not recognizing the threat that the iPhone represented. Their second failure was rushing the Blackberry Storm to market before fully testing it. As a result, customers complained about the Blackberry Storm's touchscreen, which simply wasn't as good as the iPhone or Android phones.

Their third failure was taking so long developing their Q10 phone. By that time, iOS and Android had pretty much conquered the smartphone market. Once someone switched from a Blackberry phone to an iPhone or Android phone, they had little reason to switch back. People who had never used a Blackberry phone likewise had no reason to drop their iPhone or Android phone just to use a Blackberry phone. Once the smartphone leader, Blackberry is now irrelevant.

Blackberry's fall just shows what happens when even a dominant leader lets a competitor sneak up and steal their market before they know what's happening. Just study the ranks of fallen companies like Kodak, Montgomery Wards, Polaroid, Tower Records, and Borders Books to see how this scenario occurs time and time again. Failure comes from getting complacent and not reacting fast enough to what they initially perceive as no threat at all.

Blackberry won't be the last once-dominant leader to fall. Eventually, every leader will fall, and the reasons will always be the same. Yet all those high-priced executives will continue to deny the inevitable until it's too late, which makes you wonder why companies keep paying executives so much when these executives fail to see the obvious that eventually drives the company straight into the ground?

Every leader needs to remember that what makes them a leader today probably won't make them a leader tomorrow. Ask Borders Books how well their strategy to concentrate on retail stores and ignore Internet book selling worked out for them.

Next, leaders must realize that if they don't make their own products obsolete, somebody else will. Blackberry failed to anticipate this obvious fact and now they're suffering as a result. Leaders tend to get complacent and ignore changing trends around them until it's too late.

The Blackberry mentality for failure isn't unique. Just look at the people who insist that nothing will ever change and that new technology will always be inferior to today's technology, and you can see the future failures of tomorrow.

NASA Using 3D Printers

In the past, NASA had to wait almost a year to build specific parts for their rockets. Now with a 3D printer, NASA can build that same part in less than four months with a 70 percent reduction in cost.

Of course, don't think 3D printers always work 100 percent of the time. Just as ordinary printers can jam or print skewered text and pictures on paper, so can 3D printers mess up their designs as shown in this BBC photo gallery.

3D printers may offer tremendous advantages, but be ready for problems. If your 3D printer creates a complete mess, take a picture of the catastrophe and learn from your mistakes. That's the best way to learn anything anyway, so look at 3D printer failures as a learning experience rather than proof that 3D printers are absolutely useless, which is the way critics always judge new technology.

Tracking Your Class Schedule

In college, and even in high school, students need to keep track of their schedule since they may need to attend different classes on different days. In the old days, people carried paper schedules with them, but if you have an iOS device, you can use the Classes - Schedule app instead.

Figure 4. The Classes - Schedule app can keep you organized.

Besides showing your class schedule, this app also lets you jot down notes for each class, such as upcoming assignments or homework you need to turn in by a certain date. Naturally, this app will only be as useful if used regularly. If you need help staying organized, you might find this app can make your classes easier to manage so you no longer have an excuse not to do well in school any more unless the dog eats your homework.

The New iPhone Rumor

The latest rumor claims that Apple will announce the next iPhone on September 10 and officially release it on September 20. If you're currently in the market for a smartphone, you might as well wait if you can to see what the new iPhone offers.

With the release of the next iPhone, Apple will also release iOS 7, which should run on the iPhone 4 and newer models. Depending on the features of the new iPhone, you could always get an older iPhone model and just update it with iOS 7. You won't get any of the hardware features of the new iPhone, but you'll at least get iOS 7.

Shortly after the release of the new iPhone, expect Apple to start releasing new iPads and new iMac and Mac mini models. This Christmas, there should be plenty of new Apple products for sale so if you want one, start saving up now.

*   *   *

There's no point in keeping old files and programs that you no longer need. The less cluttered your hard disk, the faster your computer can run so deleting every unnecessary file can help.

One program you can probably dump unless you actually use it is Apple's iWeb program. Originally intended to help people create Web sites quickly and easily, iWeb simply got run over when people shifted to content-management systems like WordPress.

Figure 5. iWeb takes up 135.6 Mb of disk storage.

WordPress is easier to use and more flexible, so there's little reason to use iWeb. Back in 2006, iWeb was a great idea, but within a few years, iWeb was no longer a good idea so Apple killed it. Just search your Applications folder, right-click on the iWeb program, and when a pop-up menu appears, choose Move to Trash.

One nice feature of OS X is that it hides complexity from the user. Most programs consist of multiple files so if you delete a program in Windows, you still have to delete additional files. OS X makes an entire folder of program files look like a single icon so when you delete an OS X program, you're actually deleting a folder full of its multiple program files.

If you want to peek inside of an OS X program such as iWeb, right-click on the program icon in the Applications folder and when a pop-up menu appears, choose Show Package Contents.

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 participles with Jack Dunning and go to the gym to pump iron with Dan Gookin.

Wally is responsible for the following books:

My New Mac, Lion Edition
My New iPad 2
Steal This Computer Book
Microsoft Office 2010 For Dummies
Beginning Programming for Dummies
Beginning Programming All-in-One Reference for Dummies
Breaking Into Acting for Dummies with Larry Garrison
Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon and Gerald Fisher
How to Live with a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To)
The Secrets of the Wall Street Stock Traders
Mac Programming For Absolute Beginners
Republican Fairy Tales (Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us)
The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou
The 15-Minute Movie Method
Erotophobia (A novel)

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

Beyond Personal Computing

How technology is affecting new parents.

"Babies for the Tech Generations: Decibels, Statement-Pacifiers, and Leak-Option Gear" by Marilyn K. Martin

The X through Z Generations, raised at their computers and regarding the Internet as a bff (best friend forever), are more interested in social media and celebrity news than all those nature/animal TV channels showing the miracle of birth on the Serengeti. So they are more than a little surprised when unplanned parenthood pops a baby in their midst.

Suddenly, bleary-eyed parents become baby-centric, putting the rest of their lives on hold. They are doing 3AM one-hand Internet searches, while holding their screaming bundle-of-joy, on how to virtually "put a cork" in baby's shrill shrieking. After all, babies don't come with off switches, and there is no predictive-software for baby's next tantrum—let alone a list of possible solutions.

But, as each new generation finds their own messy way through parenthood, they meld their own unique ideas of "coping" with topical humor. And—in our Facebook Age—are thrilled to over-share with one and all.

Pregnant—and Adjusting

While almost-daddy keeps wondering what went wrong with the birth control, almost-mommy has a glow about her as she informs screamingly-happy grandparents-to-be, and starts shopping for maternity clothes. (Funny maternity t-shirts at www.cafepress.com and www.zazzle.com.) Every inch of an expanding tummy, or loan apps for a house or at least baby furniture, are duly posted and shared on social media. Morning Prego Exercise Classes are just around the corner at that gym that teaches Killer Karate every evening. And couples diligently research and share every "weekly stage" of pregnancy, mutually cramming for that final test called Birth.

"When choosing a name for your baby, go to the back door and shout it out a few times. If your neighbors laugh or wild birds show up to roost, choose another name." Unknown Parent

And later, wives lure their unsure husbands to Lamaze Classes by crowning them with that sports power word "coach," as in coaching almost-mommy how to huff and puff through natural childbirth. As the day of birth draws near, couples sign up for a diaper service, hire a Baby Concierge and maybe a Nanny, and put in reservations for the best daycare and preschool three to five years in the future.

Sibling Confusion over New Babies

Little six-year-old Johnny was excited when told that a baby sister or brother would soon be making an appearance. He shared the news with his teacher and class. One day when mommy's belly was quite swollen, she let him put his hand on her tummy and feel the baby's movement. Suddenly little Johnny wasn't talking about a new baby brother or sister anymore. So the teacher held him in for one recess, and asked why he no longer seemed to be excited about a new addition to the family. Little Johnny burst into tears: "I think Mommy ate it!"

Little four-year-old Peter wouldn't stop sucking his thumb. His exasperated mother couldn't get him to stop. Finally she said, "If you don't stop sucking your thumb, your stomach is going

to blow up like a balloon!" Later that day, Peter went to the park with his mother, and sat on a bench beside a pregnant woman. Peter looked at her stomach, then declared, "Uh Oh! I know what you've been doing!"

A father asked his young daughter want she wanted for Christmas. "More than anything, I'd like a baby brother." On Christmas Eve, her mother came home from the hospital with a baby boy. The following year, the father asked his daughter again what she wanted for Christmas. "If it's OK with Mom, I'd like her to come home from the hospital with a pony this time."

About to be Born: Pain or No-Pain?

The one fear-factor for most mommies-to-be is...Pain. According to Wikipedia it's called Tokophobia, which sounds more like a fear of Japan's capital, so maybe images of Godzilla running through almost-mommy's head are only fueling her fear of pain. So...skip that word.

Q: My childbirth instructor says it's not the pain I'll feel during labor, but pressure. Is she right?
A: Yes, in the same way that a tornado might be called an air current.

According to that well known parenting site, Squidoo, apprehension is normal when almost-mommies "grasp that they really do have a growing baby on board—and it has to get out somehow." Sound logic there. Then they name not one but three terms for "extreme fear of childbirth"—and not one of them references Tokyo.

These modern techie parents know everything imaginable has "options," including the pain of childbirth. The most popular anti-pain option for childbirth is an epidural analgesia, or a shot into mommy's spine with an attached IV drip. It's the only reliable no-pain childbirth option, and transfers childbirth from active parental involvement to equipment. Sort of a robo-birth.

Scheduling Birthdates

There's also another delivery method called a c-section (or Caesarian section), where the baby is surgically removed. Doctors may recommend a c-section to almost-mommies with difficult pregnancies or problems during labor. But busy almost-mommies today with no medical problems can have an "elective c-section," to pop out that baby amidst a tight schedule.

While c-sections used to be performed on 1 out of 20 pregnant women, that figure is now 1 in 4. But, if couples want to avoid being in the hospital on a major holiday, or on a day when they need to be present for a best friend's wedding, an elective c-section can be an attractive option.

Advice to Husbands: What Not to Say During Natural

Childbirth

• "When you lay on your back like that, you look like a python that swallowed a wild boar."
• "Do you think the baby will come before Monday Night Football starts?"
• "That was the kids on the phone. Did you have anything planned for dinner?"
• "How come your stomach looks like there's still another one in there?"

Finally Here!

So the baby is born, and most mothers admit the process wasn't half as bad as they had feared. Couples snap a gazillion photos, which they send to every known relative on the planet, and post on a dozen photo-sharing sites. Including Facebook to make those snobs in high school jealous of your cute baby. Meanwhile, online Mommy-bloggers debate whether to post nude photos of baby—or not. (HINT: If you post a photo of your googoo baby in the buff on Facebook, but then do a Google search to see buff-baby all over the Internet, you may want to rethink what you are willing to "share.")

Soon everyone endures dueling grandmothers guessing which of baby's facial features came from which side of the family. And then it's time to go home with your precious new addition, which changes you from a couple to a family. And everyone settles in to figure out how to survive this tiny new person who expects to be fed every couple hours, 24/7, and can scream louder than construction equipment. Seriously.
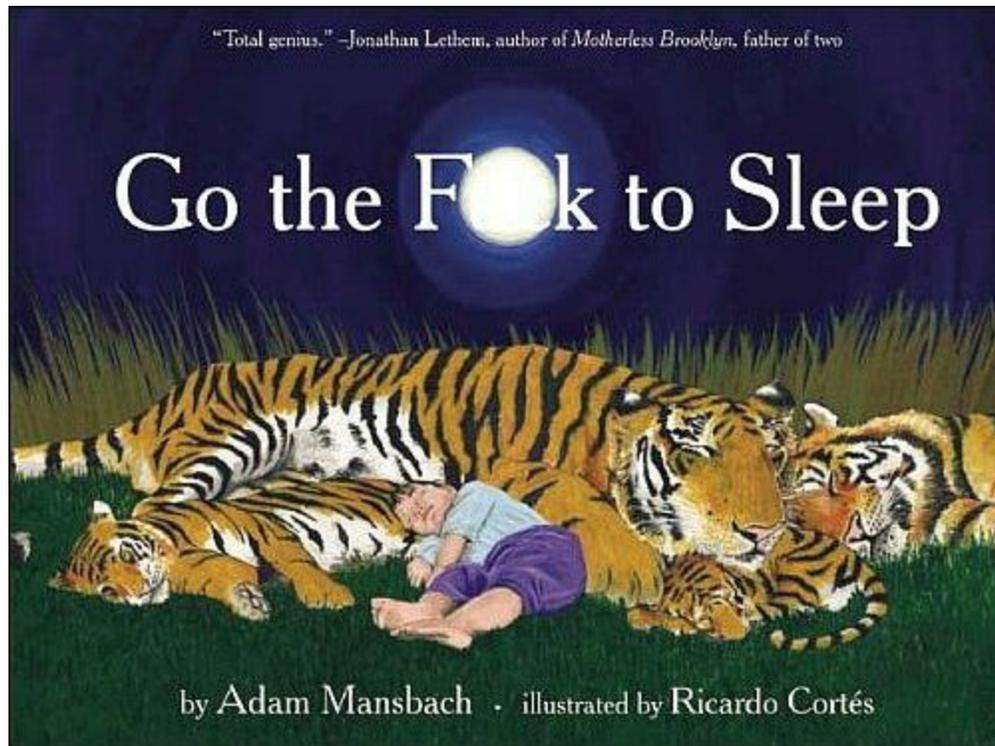
Sleep Deprivation And Your Jackhammer Baby

Babies can cry up to 120 decibels—which is equivalent to a jackhammer. The Internet is full of sleepy, terrified new parents, whose screeching new babies are louder than other new babies, and they don't know why. One set of new parents, who are also physicists, took the scientific approach and measured their new daughter's screams:122 dB at 4 inches from her mouth.

They also discovered that 120 dB is equivalent to the threshold of pain, which is also the level the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recommends you not be exposed to in the workplace. Which doesn't offer sleep-deprived parents with a newborn much consolation. But it does explain that "seriously worried" expression on the faces of strangers and relatives whenever your baby screeches, wondering aloud if he/she "is in pain."

In 2011, a "storybook for exhausted parents" took our X-Z generations by storm. The correct title was *Go The F**k to Sleep,* by Adam Mansback. Streaming past the usual cutesy and nonsensical nursery rhymes from Time Immemorial (which all seemed to be secret references to snotty royalty or the bubonic plague), Mansback writes honest but profane and hilarious

new nursery rhymes for today's techie parents.

If the usual advice doesn't work for your shrieking bundle-of-joy, one recommended "option" is to put baby in a carrying-basket atop a dryer and turning it on. Either the heat or the motion can calm down a crying baby when nothing else works. If you don't have a dryer in your home, taking baby for a car ride might produce the same effect.

Beyond that, maybe a little more humor would help, with statement-pacifiers or other baby gear from Cafepress.com, Babyhaven.com, Beso.com, or Lilsugar.com.

Is This Baby Normal?

According to the Slacker Sages at *Cracked Magazine*, a perfectly-normal baby may pop into the world with some, ahem, "conditions" that have new parents reaching for their monster-movie collection as research material.

Newborns covered in body hair are not budding werewolves, or doomed to be another Jo-Jo the Dog-Faced Boy. It's called "lanugo", and it will shed on its own. Babies also sleep with their eyes open and lots of facial twitches. While it may freak out new parents, it's normal, since babies need more REM sleep than adults. If you need more proof, check out all the YouTube videos with zombie-like staring and twitching babies.

Babies can also vomit from their noses, and spit up blood. While parents undoubtedly recognize this from a dozen My Haunted Baby student film entries, rest assured that it's normal, and his/her head will not spin around nor will he/she levitate out of its little crib. There's also a "soft spot" atop a newborn baby's head, which pulses and bulges. No, an Alien-larva isn't getting ready to pop out. Baby skulls just aren't fully fused yet, so they could

survive being squished and squashed coming out of the birth canal.

Diaper Dilemma: Cloth or Disposable?

Disposable diapers seemed at first like a God-Send: baby does its thing, and all you have to do is throw it away. But the chemicals can cause diaper rash in 50-60% of new babies. And there is an Urban Myth that disposable diaper plastics take 500 years to break down in landfills. (Although, obviously, disposable diapers haven't been around 500 years to test the validity of this theory.) But now there are flushable diapers that are biodegradable and "compostable."

Q: Why does a blonde only change her baby's diapers once a month?
A: Because the diaper box says "Good for up to 20 pounds."

Cloth diapers are the other option, but it's time consuming to wash them, and/or expensive for a diaper service that picks up and delivers. A new feature is biodegradable/flushable inserts for cloth diapers, which means just washing cloth diapers to sanitize them.

"Diaper spelled backwards is Repaid. Think about it." Marshall McLuhan

What Demented Dude Invented This Stuff for Babies?

For new parents surviving on sleep deprivation, beer/wine and Hot Pockets, at some point they start thinking of their tortured life of being New Parents. Then, feeling guilty for their self-pity, they have a flash of Do Gooderism, and decide to invent products to improve the lives of babies and the sanity of new parents worldwide. Here are some recent baby products that did—or did not—successfully address the Big Three Most Annoying Baby Attributes:

Gear for Screaming/Shrieking/Hollering Baby

Something called a Beeni Baby Hat was a little baby hat with ties to keep that pacifier firmly in place in the same hole that can emit screams louder than a jackhammer. The inventor gets an "A" for Effort and Sympathetic Understanding, but it got recalled as an asphyxiation hazard.

But if you are too zombified from no-sleep to read that hilarious statement-pacifier your sister gave you, you can check out an aptly named [get-your-baby-to-sleep Web site](#). It rates the best baby pacifiers, from newborn to teething, amid other "baby sleep training resources."

Gear for Messy/Leaking/Gassy Baby

Leave it to the fastidious Swiss to invent slightly [strange baby products](#) for "removing annoying baby stuff." Their Snotsucker (with filters) does just that from baby's nose. And if baby has a problem with colic or passing-gas, then the iWindi is a "single use catheter" that whistles when the, um, gas has passed.

Even for adults who love surprises, opening up a baby's used diaper to see what has "been emitted" can cure new parents of "loving surprises" for a decade. So how about a Baby's [Poop/Pee Predictor and Alarm](#) There's no explanation, but the photo showed these little plastic devices you stick on the outside of a clean diaper. When they detect moisture, or the scent of Excrement From Hell, they alarm. (Hey—laugh if you want to. The day I visited the site they were "Sold Out.")

Babies are incredibly messy. If upchuck isn't blowing out of one hole, poop is coming out the other. Or they are "wearing" their last meal up into their hair. Time to fill up the tub for a bath? Nah. Takes too long. You are modern parents. Go for the [RinseHopper](#), which is basically just a babyseat with a drain, and plop it (then baby) down in any sink. And, as the advertising puts it so delicately, "hose them down."

And when baby moves from milk to gooey-stuff-from-a-jar for sustenance, watching this toothless kid with an untrained tongue try to eat is a lesson in product-waste. Most of what you put in their mouth comes back out, as the parental-feeding-unit wipes it off their little mouth with a spoon and reinserts. So now we have Squirt, [The Baby Food Dispensing Spoon](#). You put the gooey-stuff in this popsicle-shaped dispenser, then just squirt it directly onto the spoon handle, and then into baby's mouth. Baby may not get much more food than the ole' jar-and-spoon method, but it's definitely less mess for mom and dad, especially if you're at an outdoor concert or in a restaurant.

Changing Table Gear for Squirmy Baby

No one wants their baby falling off the diaper-changing table while mommy's looking for a disposable diaper with a prettier pattern. So now we have the [Hulabye](#) which is advertised as "a simple, stylish solution for wiggle-free diaper changes." It's basically just a torso-band with arm-holes, so baby can't turn over or fall off.

But at a site called Totally Absurd Inventions, someone in 1980 was issued a patent for what the site has dubbed "[Junior Jail](#)." It features a diaper changing table for baby with ankle straps and a "torso barrier."

Just For Parental Amusement!

Hey, the X through Zers are big into entertainment. And why should having a baby be so serious anyway? By the time the little tyke hits six months, he/she sleeps through the night and

you've lost or vacuumed up enough earplugs to glue together and create your own bouncy-castle. Now baby can sit up, try out facial expressions, and smile with that toothless drooling beloved by grandparents near and far. Your baby is now a proto-person, and it's time for him/her to learn how to Par-tah!

Around 2009, a new trend for "baby wigs" popped up. Were parents too embarrassed with a bald-headed baby when strangers couldn't tell if it was male or female? Were new fathers channeling their own anxieties about male-pattern-baldness? Were bald babies too good at pulling off those idiotic pink or blue head bands for gender ID? For little bald baby girls, Baby Bangs has the answer. (I assume the tutu and fake flowers are extra.)

I couldn't find any bald baby boy wigs—except on eBay which combines doll wigs and baby wigs on the same page. (A baby boy with a nylon doll wig? Ugh! That's enough to send grandpa back to the comb-over!) But there's really not much more to say than Saturday Night Live's classic baby toupee sketch.

And don't forget that Halloween is the most fun semi-holiday of the year. You can "coordinate" parent and baby costumes. Or go shopping anytime online for your baby's first Halloween costume, since you can expect family and strangers alike to start asking what little Madison or Mason is going to be on Halloween (hopefully not starting in July).

(Many of these jokes and anecdotes can be found on joke sites all over the Internet. But special thanks to Cracked.com, Blog.chron.com, Wikipedia.com, Jokes.net and Basicjokes.com.)

Marilyn is a freelance writer and humorist, with a special interest (besides computers and technology) in Science Fiction. Besides short stories published in various magazines, she also has some new e-books available on Amazon Kindle: Hunting Monster Aliens *is an on-going series of novellas, about a wise-cracking team of ghost investigators who occasionally turn into alien-monster hunters.* Culture Crash! A California Yankee Transplanted to Texas *is a collection of humor essays chronicling her adventures in her new home-state.*

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"Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns." by ComputorEdge Staff

"Paper-"Less" Society," "Back to Software Subscriptions," "Formatting Flash Drives"

Paper-"Less" Society

[Regarding Jack Dunning's August 23 article, "Our Paper-Less Society":]

So how do we boycott the university monopoly on textbooks? $100-$200 for textbooks is obscene. They charge the same for paper or electronic. Teachers are mandating latest revisions and schools are revising every year. Some schools even publish their own books to prevent students from buying online. What a racket!

-Mark Burton, Albuquerque, NM

Thank you for "Our Paper-less Society," but people are using paper for more than paper airplanes! It brought to mind an article about building very sturdy, enduring homes from paper. It's explained at RealEstate.com or just do a Web search for "building houses from paper." It's not surprising that builders in Japan are leading the charge since the material endures earthquakes well. They call the mixture "paper-crete." My home office runs "nearly paperless," too, except for those people who refuse to touch a computer. I learn so much from *ComputorEdge* articles. Keep up the good work.

-Dorothea Lander, Lebanon, OR

Back to Software Subscriptions

[Regarding the July 12 Digital Dave column:]

Content Insider #297—If you read your software user agreement you never really bought it, you bought a license to use their stuff. It's the way it has always been for the big and medium iron folks.

Now that we've been adding apps to all of our devices faster than you can imagine the software folks thought it was time to take another look at the pay-as-you-go model.

Sometimes you just can't keep a good idea down. Who knows, you might be able to get it free along with an ad now and then. They're making it tempting and very hard to disconnect from the cloud. Best of all you'll always know you're working with the latest upgrade and that's a very good thing!

Here's the link.

-Andy Marken

Formatting Flash Drives

[Regarding the August 23 Digital Dave column:]

Consider formatting your Flash Drive with eXFAT instead of NTFS. It is more suited to removable media and works more seamlessly across Windows and Apple products. Some Linux builds support it as well natively. While NTFS has native read support on many platforms, it is Read-Only on an Apple OS without 3rd party software.

-Stephen, San Diego, CA

Before you can format a flash drive to NTFS, you will probably have to change the Policy for the drive. For the How To, visit Online Tech Tips. The site also gives you info about flash drives, flash drive formats, and the pros and cons for FAT-32 vs. NTFS.

-Don Davies, Ramona, CA

My post on Facebook:

Warning! Thumb drive dilemma. SanDisk 4G thumbdrive formatted Fat32 locks as 'read-only', no longer allowing you to delete private personal data, if you added more than 4G. Warranty becomes useless because you do not want to return it to SanDisk or store with it still containing your private personal data. You cannot reformat it. SanDisk warns that first you should have reformatted it as NTFS instead of FAT32 file system. Do you want return it to SanDisk or the store with your private personal data?

-Jim Lipke

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