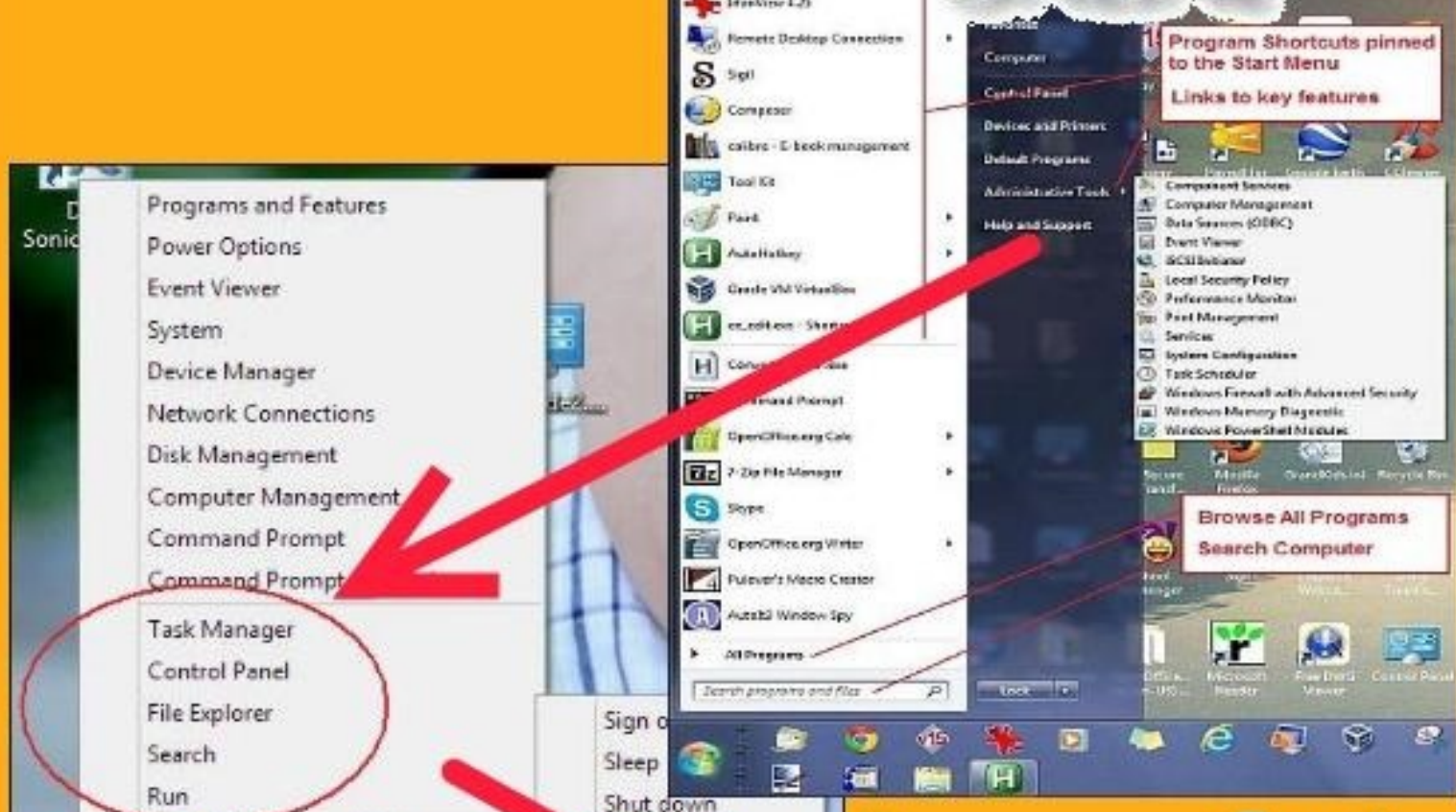


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Make Windows 8.1

Act Like Windows



November 1, 2013

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Make Windows 8.1 Act Like Windows

There are now settings in Windows 8.1 that cause it to behave more like older versions of Windows ... sort of.

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[Digital Dave](#)

by Digital Dave

Digital Dave answers your tech questions.

Dope on Antivirus Programs; Software Version Numbers; Where to Put Files for Future Viewing?

[Making Windows 8.1 Act More Like Windows](#)

by Jack Dunning

How to Get the Features of the Old Start Menu Back

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More!

by Jack Dunning

There Are 306 Icons Available in One Windows File, Plus Adding More to the AutoHotkeyControl App

It's not necessary to provide all of the icons for your AutoHotkey apps. Here's where to look and how to use them. Plus, the simplicity of adding more menu options to the AutoHotkeyControl script.

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The Appeal of Free

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Body Art, Messages or New Personas?

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Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

by ComputerEdge Staff

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

"Google," "Clipbrd.exe Missing in W8?" "Windows 8.1 vs. iOS"

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Digital Dave

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

Dope on Antivirus Programs; Software Version Numbers; Where to Put Files for Future Viewing?

Dope on Antivirus Programs

Dear Digital Dave,

What is the true dope on antivirus programs? I've been using Avast for 10 years or better on more than one computer without any problems that I'm aware of. Recently I took my machine into Staples for an unrelated fix. They did it no problem.

I also had them give it a tune up—it was free! They found 55 viruses on it and told me that almost all antivirus programs only worked after there was/is a problem. If no problem—no detection? What they recommended was a program called Sophos at \$99 and \$60/year after that.

*What gives?!
Stephen Schiller
Apple Valley, CA*

Dear Stephen,

I wouldn't be surprised if there is a financial relationship (if only a commission) between Sophos and Staples. That doesn't mean there weren't viruses (or supposed viruses) on your computer, but telling you that there are viruses on your computer is the typical way to getting you to spring for the big bucks. It is not unusual for virus detection software to find something that looks suspicious on a computer, but is actually benign. It's all a pretty iffy business.

The problem is that it's almost impossible to detect the most dangerous malware until after it is released into the environment because no one (except the source) knows of its existence until computers start getting infected. That means no antivirus software will detect all possible viruses. The truth is that most detection capabilities vary widely and even the best don't get everything.

Avast has a good reputation and is usually rated pretty high. I don't see a need to spend \$60 per year on software that's probably no better than most (and possibly worse). I don't know Sophos, but from [PCMag](#), "In testing, Sophos Virus Removal Tool 2.0 proved remarkably ineffective."

I use the free [Microsoft Security Essentials](#). Is it the best? Probably not, but the ratings for all antivirus software come and go. At least, Microsoft has a stake in every Windows computer working.

What's most important is whether you practice safe computing (avoid suspicious links, don't open unknown attachments, don't run strange software) or not. You do need some type of malware detection software to keep out the obvious junk, but don't expect that any program will give you complete protection.

Digital Dave

Software Version Numbers

Dear Digital Dave,

How do I find the version numbers of software on my computer—such as Windows, Outlook, Office, various programs?

Larry

Centennial, CO

Dear Larry,

There are a couple of different ways to get the version number of a software program. The first one (when the program is not loaded) is to open its Properties window and select the Details tab (see Figure 1).

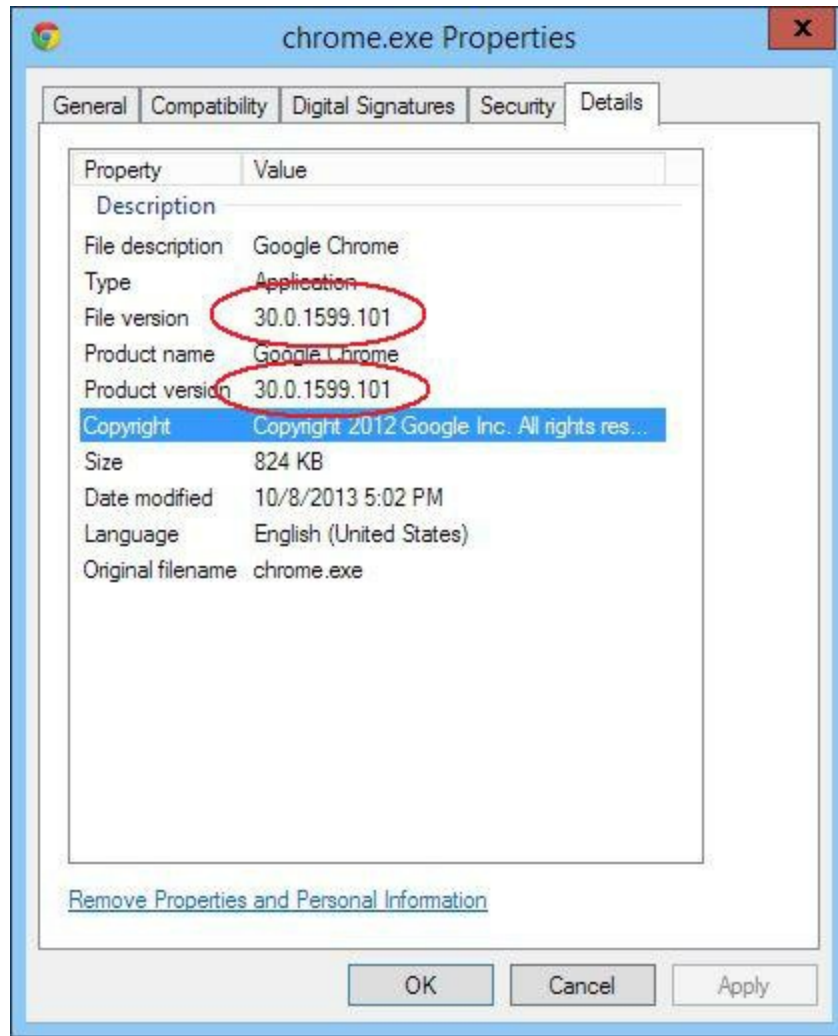


Figure 1. Right-click on the program name in Windows Explorer and select Properties and the Details tab to see the software version number.

To open the Properties window for a program, right-click on the program icon in Windows Explorer (⌘+E) and select Properties from the bottom of the menu.

Rather than search for the file name in Windows Explorer it may be easier to launch the software first. That way there will be less confusion if you happen to have more than one version of a command file on your computer. Most programs have an option in the Help menu called "About [program name]..." as shown in Figure 2.

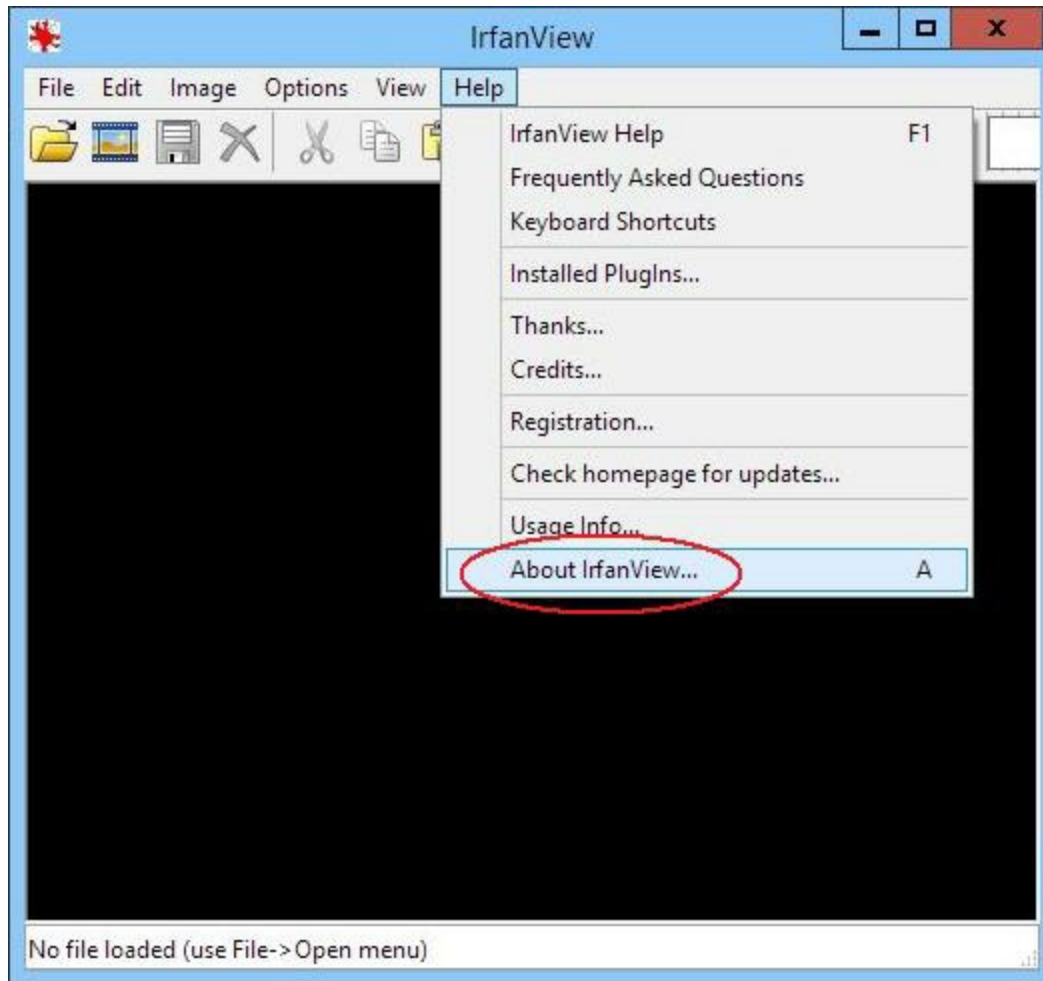


Figure 2. Open Help => About IrfanView... to get the version number.

Select this option and a window similar to Figure 3 will open. You can generally find the version number in this window.

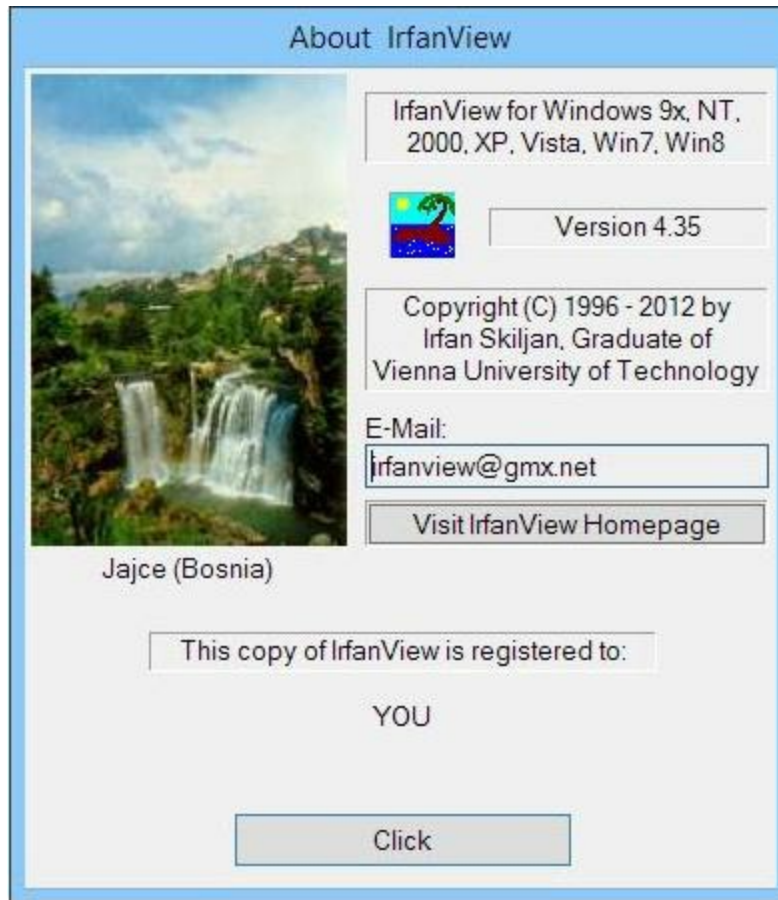


Figure 3. The "About..." window usually will include the version number of the software.

There are often occasions when you need to know the version number. Most commercial software keeps it in an option in the Help menu.

Digital Dave

Where to Put Files for Future Viewing?

Dear Digital Dave,

I have copied files to drive E: for backup when the disk is full. Where and how do I view the list of files?

Boswell

San Diego, CA

Dear Boswell,

That depends upon how you backed up the files and what operating system you use. (I'm assuming that you're using some version of Windows.)

To make backup easier for your Windows computer, Microsoft has included the Backup and Restore Center. With this backup program, you can designate a particular type of file to be copied or have all files on the drive copied—other than temporary files and programs. This can be done on a regular schedule, and after the first time, it will backup only the changed files. (In Windows 8, the backup program is called File History and must be enabled before its first use.)

The difference between using the center and copying individual files or folders is that the Backup Center will do everything in a category, creating a complete backup. It can be more comprehensive, less individual work and done on an automatic regular schedule. In Windows Vista and Windows 7, it is called the Backup and Restore Center.

If you used a built-in Windows program such as those discussed to backup the files, then it is likely that you will need to use the same program to recover the files. Backups are often compressed and in special folders used specifically for backup and are not easy to access without the proper tools. The backup program will also do incremental backups, so you can have multiple snapshots, but only save the differences to conserve disk space.

If you merely copied the files to the E: drive before deleting them, then you should be able to open Windows Explorer (+E) and navigate the drive E: to see and copy the files.

Note: You mention drive E:, but nobody is going to know what your E: drive (or whatever) is. People use the drive letters like it's the same for everybody, but for all we know their phone is plugged in and charging and they just copied their backup to their phone. If that's the case, then to access the backup, they first need to start charging their phone.

Digital Dave



Making Windows 8.1 Act More Like Windows

“How to Get the Features of the Old Start Menu Back” by Jack Dunning

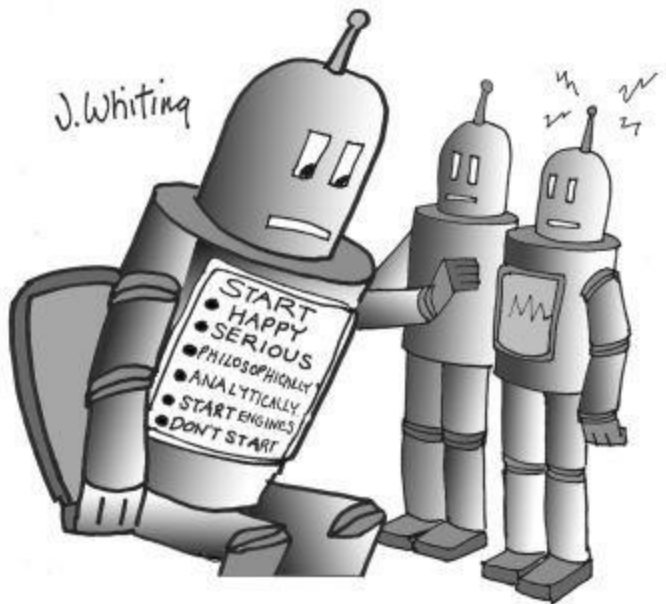
While it's not quite the same as the old Windows Start Menu, all those needed features (Search, All Programs, etc.) are available in Windows 8.1 without messing with the Modern Start screen. Here's how to set it up.

For a number of Windows users moving to Windows 8, there were two major annoyances in the original release. The first was the missing Start button on the Taskbar. The second was (and still is) the new Modern Start screen itself which is designed for tablet computers and hits the user right in the face every time the computer is booted. For these two reasons, many people have avoided upgrading to Windows 8.

With the release of Windows 8.1 Microsoft has attempted to address those concerns. It is now possible to make Windows 8.1 seem more like previous versions of Windows on a desktop or laptop. While Windows 8.1 is still not exactly the same as using Windows 7, Vista or XP, it's possible to do all the same familiar Windows functions with considerably less aggravation.

The Modern Start Screen

The Modern Start Screen in Windows 8.1 is very much as it was in Windows 8 (see Figure 1). While it does include more tile sizes (an extra small tile for packing in more apps and a larger square tile for displaying live images or information), it still looks and acts like a tablet interface. Additionally, there is a new link at the bottom of the Start screen to the Apps page which lists all programs for both the Desktop (traditional Windows programs) and Modern interface.



“It was so much easier when he didn’t have a Start button at all!”



Figure 1. The Modern Start Screen in Windows 8.1 has new smaller tiles (enclosed in the red square) and extra large live tiles (on the left). There is a new link to the Apps page (circled in red) for quicker access to all programs.

There's good news for people who hate the Modern Start Screen! With a few adjustments to some settings, in Windows 8.1, you can virtually ignore the Start screen while making your computer offer more Windows-like functionality.

The Old Start Menu We Love

All previous versions of Windows included a Start Button and Menu (see Figure 2 for Windows 7 Start menu). It offered a number of useful features that we grew to depend upon. Shortcuts to programs could be pinned to the Start Menu, plus a list of the recently opened programs appears just below the pinned shortcuts. There are links on the right side of the menu for quick access to other features and utilities (e.g. Control Panel, Documents, Administrative Tools, etc.) which can be tailored through the Properties window.

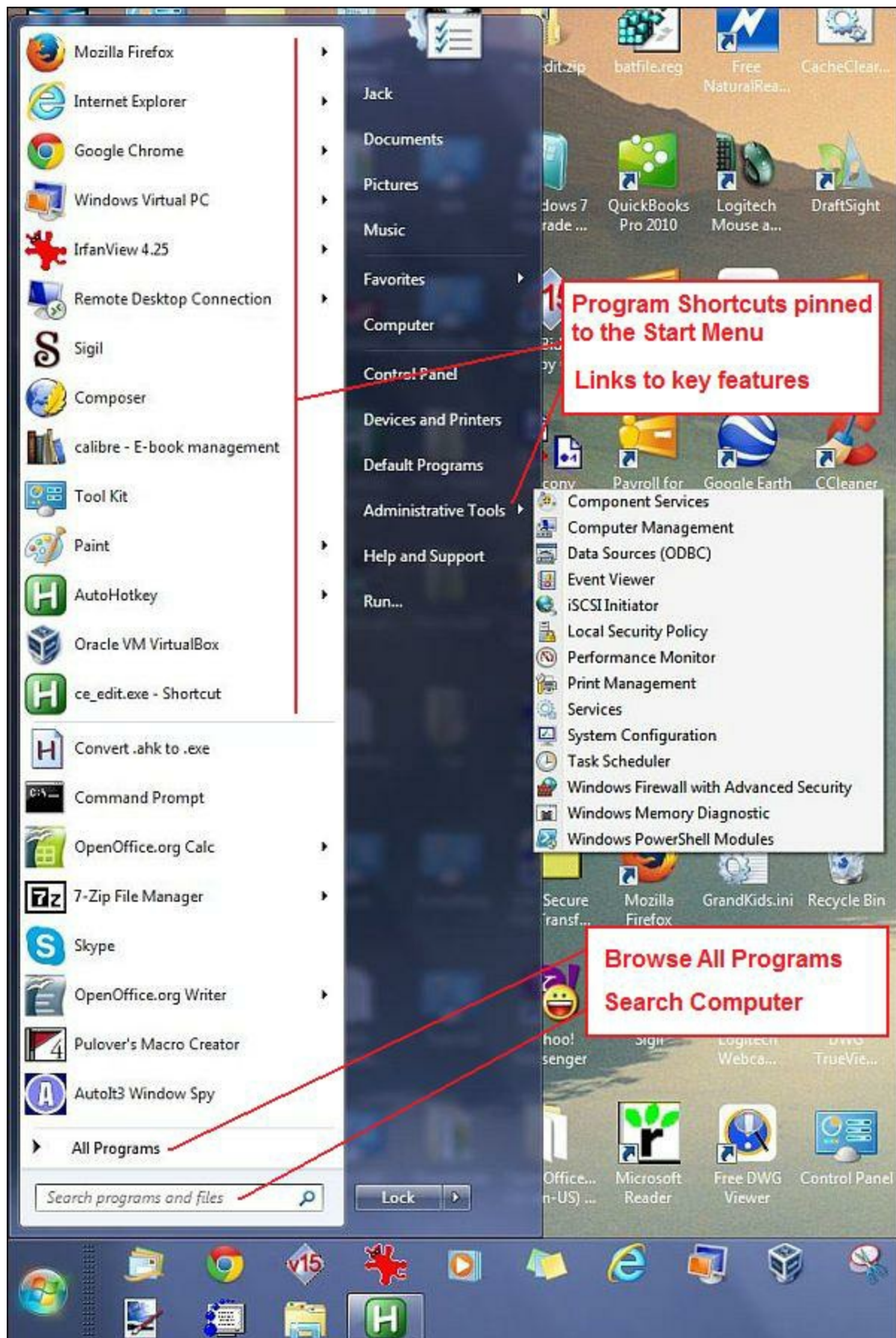


Figure 2. The Windows 7 Start Menu includes program shortcuts pinned to the Start Menu, links to key utilities and folders, a section to browse All Programs, and a convenient Search field (Windows Vista and Windows 7).

Possibly even more important are the All Programs link which allows quick browsing of programs and apps, and the Search field in Windows Vista and Windows 7. A newly installed program is appears colored to make it easy to see in All Programs. The Search field is a quick way to find programs and files. The goal is to configure Windows 8.1 so that it comes closer to fulfilling the functions we lost when the old Start Menu disappeared.

The Windows 8.1 Start Button

While Microsoft did not go so far as to restore the old Start Menu, it did add a new Start button to the Desktop Taskbar (see Figure 3). Initially, it doesn't seem much better than no button at all until you realize that a right-click displays the Windows 8 +X menu which now includes shut down and sign out options and a few other key features. Clicking the button itself only jumps to the Modern Start screen—which we are trying to avoid.

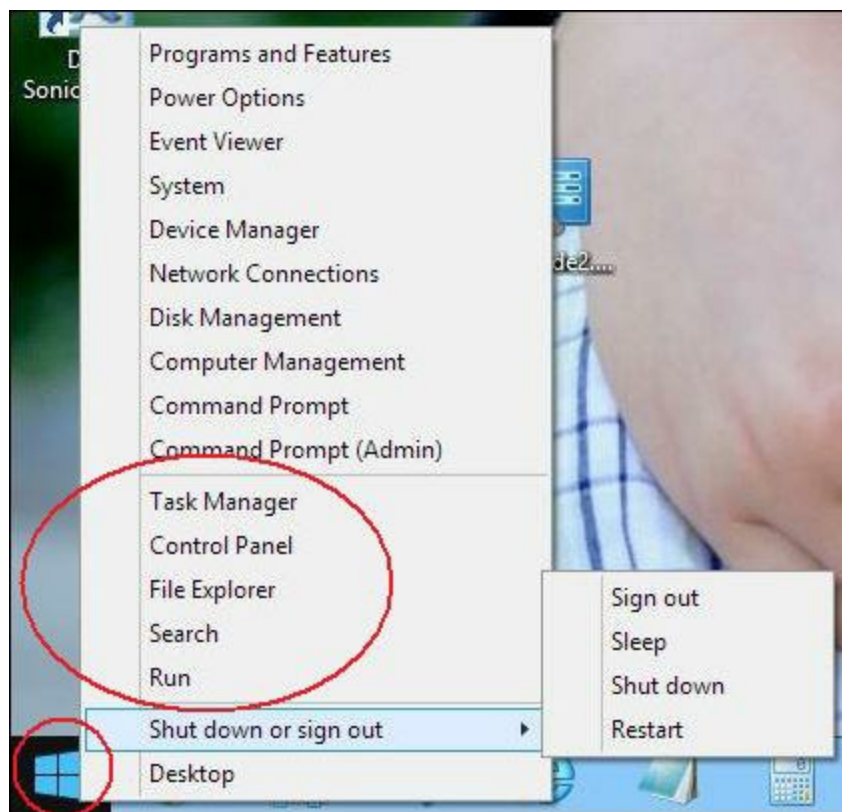


Figure 3. The Start button in Windows 8.1 only shows a menu when you right-click on it.

By making some changes to the navigation settings, we can: bypass the Modern Start screen when we login and go directly to the Desktop; get quick access to all our programs from the Start button while showing all of the Desktop programs first, and search the entire computer ("Everywhere") by default (+Q). While it is not the same as using previous versions of

Windows, this new functionality in Windows 8.1 makes it possible to use your computer in a similar manner without ever being faced with the Modern Start Screen.

Taskbar and Navigation Properties Settings

The key to changing how Windows 8.1 uses (or doesn't use) the Modern Start Screen is the Navigation tab in the Taskbar and Navigation Properties window (see Figure 4). To open the window right-click on an empty space on the Taskbar and select Properties from the menu. You can also do a search (right-click on the Start button and select Search or just use +Q, then type "taskbar."). If you happen to already be on the Modern Start Screen just start typing "taskbar" and select Taskbar and Navigation from the list.

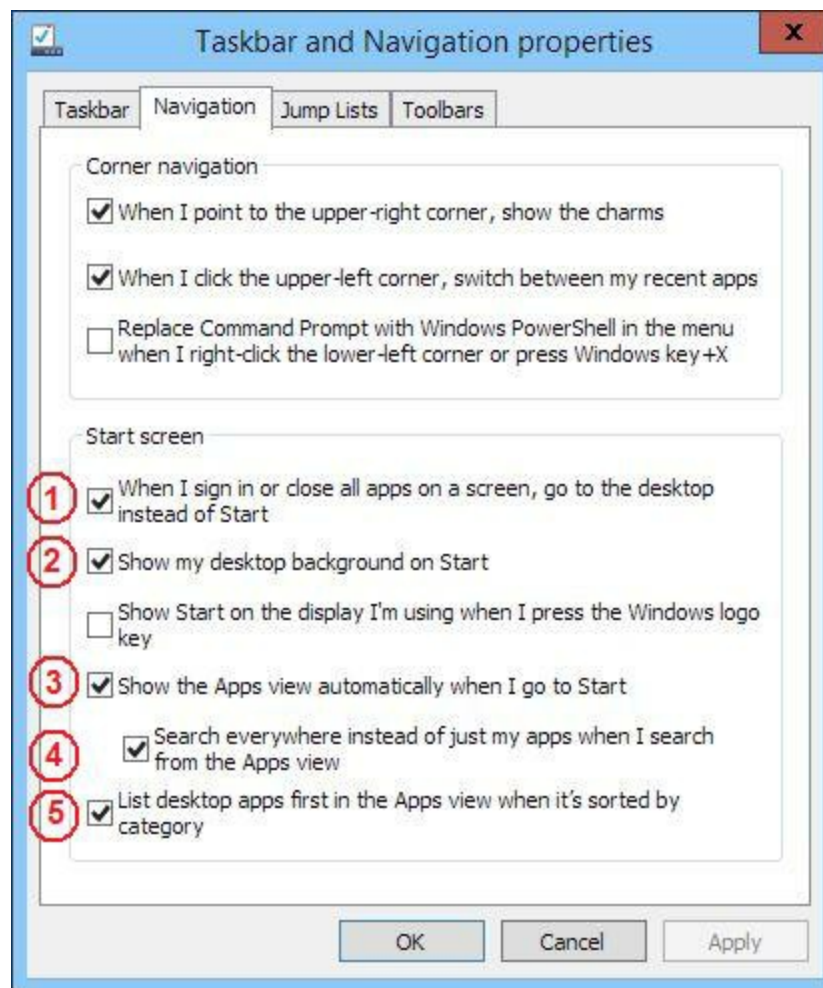


Figure 4. The Taskbar and Navigation properties window allows all the changes necessary to avoid the Modern Start Screen.

Go Directly to the Desktop

The first item (1) in Figure 4, "When I sign in or close all apps...go to the desktop...", sets

Windows 8.1 to bypass the Modern Start Screen. Check the box and click the Apply button. Now whenever you login, you will land on the Desktop—reminiscent of other versions of Windows.

The second item (2) is more of a cosmetic change which will give you the feeling of the Desktop since it will use the same background.

The third item (3) eliminates the popping up of the Modern Start Screen with its tiles when the Start button is clicked or the  key is hit by substituting the Apps view.

"All Programs" in Windows 8.1

The replacement for All Programs on the old Start Menu is called the Apps view in Windows 8.1. This screen in the Modern interface lists all programs and apps on the computer. If you're accustomed to using All Programs in earlier versions of Windows the Apps view is the next best thing. (In some ways it may even be better.) By checking "Show the Apps view when I go to Start" and clicking Apply, both the Start button and the WIN key () will then take you directly to the Apps view completely ignoring the Modern Start Screen (see Figure 5). There is still a small up arrow in the bottom left-hand corner (circled in red) which will take you to the Start screen (if you so desire), but it will no longer be the default.



Figure 5. The Apps view in Windows 8.1 which lists all programs and apps on the computer replaces All Programs in earlier versions of Windows.

If the fifth item (5) in Figure 5 "List desktop apps first..." is checked, then Apps view will

display the Desktop apps first in a manner similar to the old Start Menu. First a list of those programs accessible at the top level, then individual programs folders with their contents in alphabetical order. This view forces all of the Modern interface apps to the end of the line, usually way off the screen to the right.

On the down side for some old Windows users, the Apps view still operates in the same manner as the Modern interface (i.e. the scroll wheel moves the screen left and right).

On the plus side, unlike the old Start Menu, the Apps view can be sorted and/or filtered to make finding any program easier (see Figure 6). For example, sorting "by date installed" puts all the most recent installs first and sorting "by most used" puts the most popular programs (measured by your own usage) first. This adds a few more capabilities not found in All Programs on the old Windows Start Menu. (Note that unopened programs are marked with "New" in the Apps view sorted "by date installed.")

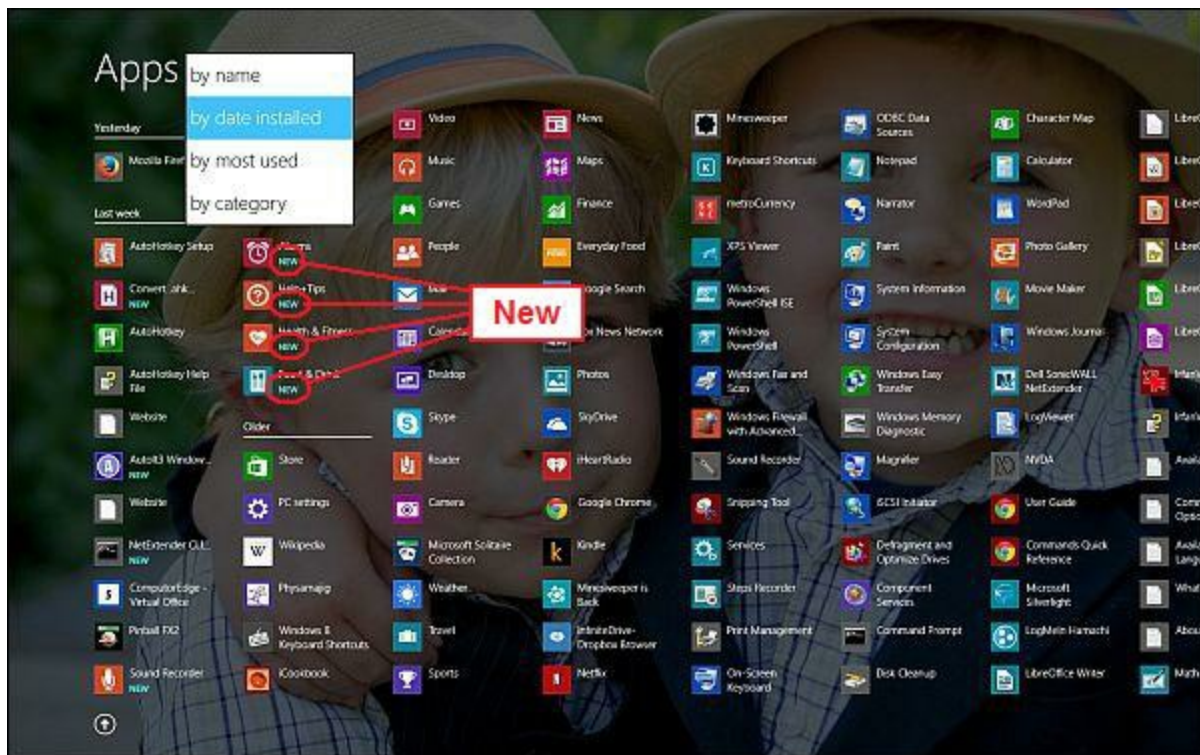


Figure 6. Click the arrow to the right of Apps and the order of the programs can be changed. Start typing and the program names will be filtered by the key work you input.

When in the Apps view (and if the fourth item (4) in Figure 4, "Search everywhere instead of just my Apps..." is *unchecked*) to find a specific program, just start typing its name. The Apps search field will pop up and start filtering the list of programs as each character is entered. If you want the search to default to "Everywhere", check the box and Apply. This search field is internal to the Apps view and is not the same search executed from the Modern Start Screen by typing, from the +X menu found in the new Start button right-click menu, or by hitting +Q.

If you prefer to use the new default "Everywhere" search when in the Apps view, check the fourth item (4) in Figure 4, "Search everywhere instead of just my Apps..." and click Apply. (One of the changes in Windows 8.1 is that many of the Modern interface apps now have their own internal search field rather than using the Windows 8 Search Charm.)

Search Everywhere by Default

One of the key changes in Windows 8.1 is that a search, whether activated from the Modern Start Screen by typing, from the +X menu found in the new Taskbar Start button right-click menu, or by hitting +Q, defaults to "Everywhere." This serves the same function as that of the Start Search field in the Start Menu from Windows Vista and Windows 7 by initiating an all encompassing search of the usual programs, topics and files (see Figure 7). The search field at the top of a blue vertical panel pops up on the right side of the screen regardless of whether the Desktop or Modern screen is active with a program or app.

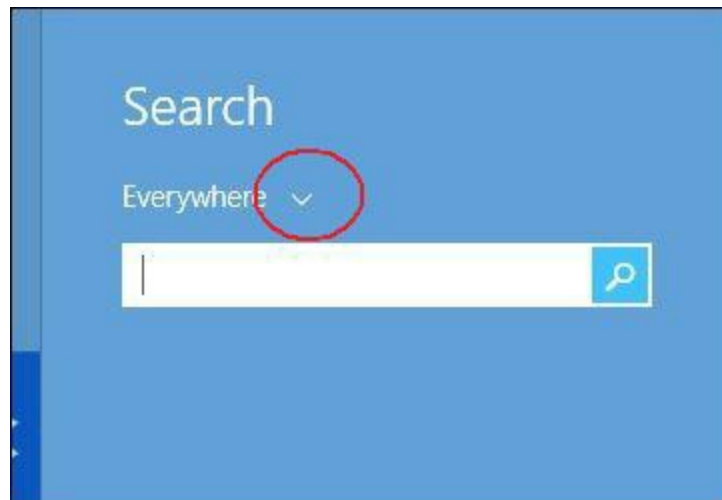


Figure 7. Although it looks totally different, the Everywhere search in Windows 8.1 operates in much the same manner as the Search field found in Windows Vista and Windows 7 Start Menu.

The "Everywhere" search can be filtered through the dropdown menu by clicking on the down arrow to the right (see Figure 8).

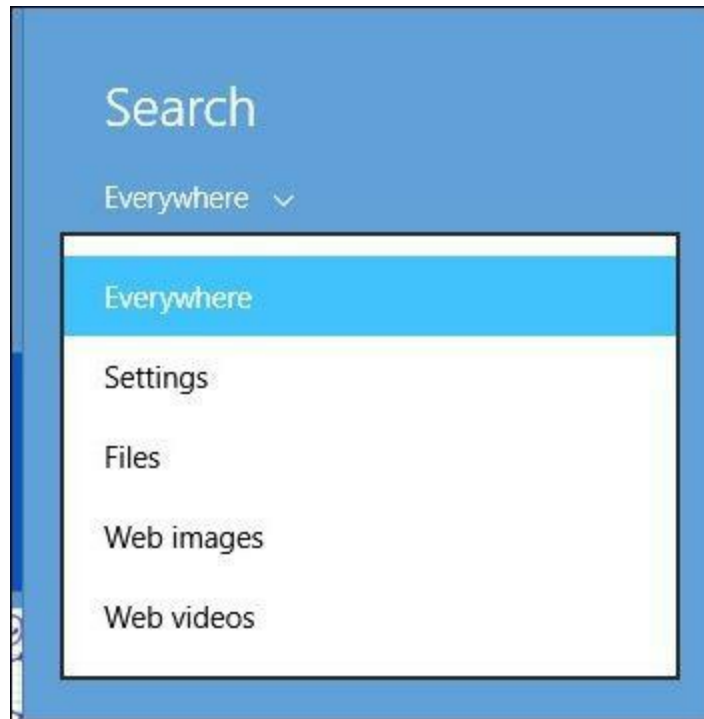


Figure 8. The "Everywhere" search can be filtered by Settings, Files, Web images and Web videos.

Never See the Modern Start Screen Again

For those people who plan to never (or rarely) use any of the many free apps available for the Windows 8 Modern interface, these few adjustments make it quite possible to never unintentionally see the Modern Start Screen again. There will be no need to organize the Start screen apps and adjust the tile sizes. It's almost as if the Modern Start Screen never existed.

If you really need one, there are a number of replacement Start Menus for Windows 8 which will bring back the nostalgia of earlier versions of Windows, but they don't do anything that can't be done by pinning programs to the Taskbar (or putting shortcuts on the Desktop) and using the other enhancement in Windows 8.1 navigation. I find that even when working in Windows Vista and Windows 7 (I still do both) I use Windows Explorer (File Explorer in Windows 8), the Taskbar, and my AutoHotkey [QuickLinks app](#) (see Figure 9) far more than the Start Menu. The only thing I need from the Start Menu is the Search and the one in Windows 8.1 (Windows+Q) seems up to the task.

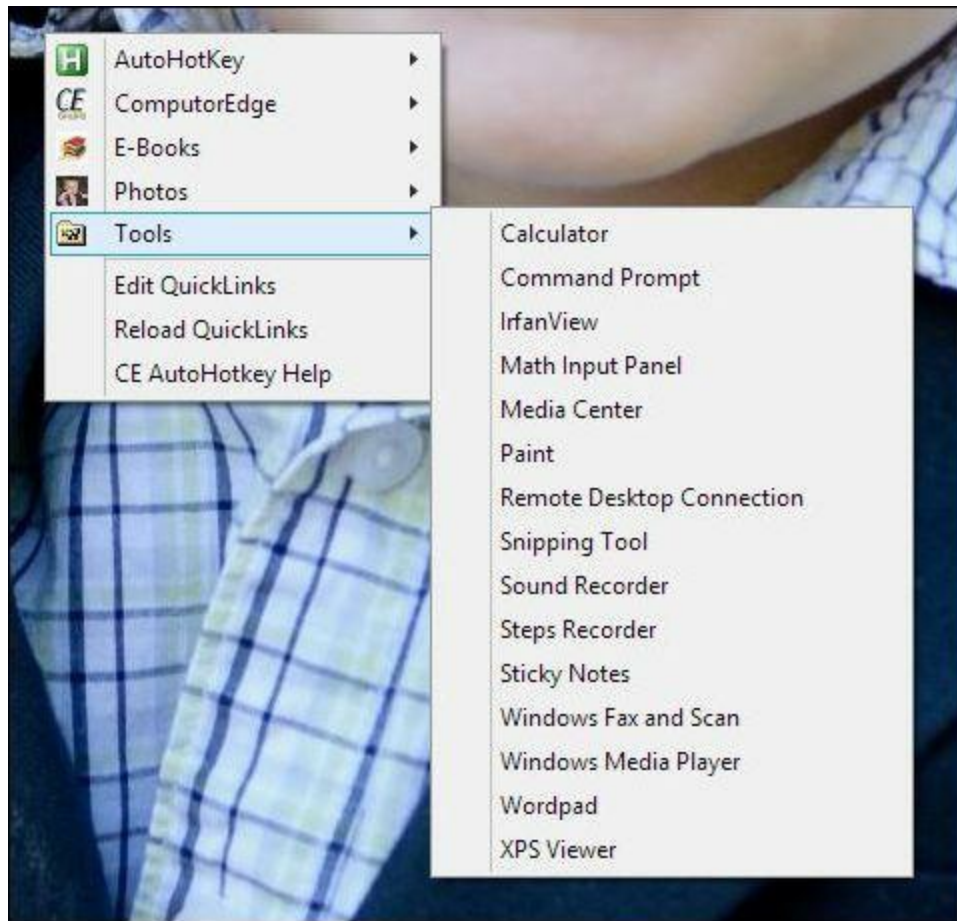


Figure 9. Jack's AutoHotkey QuickLinks app in Windows 8.1

Of course, everyone should do whatever makes them feel the most comfortable. I'm still of the opinion that Windows 8 isn't all that bad. With Windows 8.1 it is considerably less bad.

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

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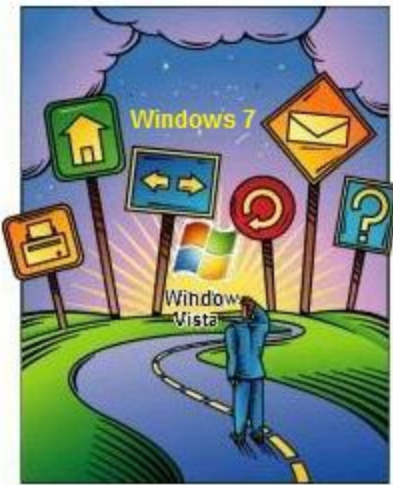
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Windows Tips and Tricks

Windows Tips and Tricks: Multiple Desktops with Sysinternals Desktops

“From Microsoft a Utility to Setup Separate Windows Desktops” by Jack Dunning

If you like to keep your work separate or have something to hide from the boss, the free Sysinternals Desktops may be the ticket for you.

There may be times when it's useful to have multiple Windows desktops available for separating working areas. Maybe you find that one desktop gets too cluttered for switching between apps. Or, possibly you just want a quick way to hide a screen from onlookers. (You really shouldn't be playing games at work.) Included in the free set of utilities from Microsoft [Windows Sysinternals](#) is an app which will add up to three more virtual working desktops to your Windows computer called [Desktops](#). With Desktops virtual work areas you can "read e-mail on one, browse the Web on the second, do work in your productivity software on the third," and play games in the fourth. Desktops may not be for everyone, but if you have a reason to want more work areas, then it may do the job for you.

Add Another Desktop to Your Windows Computer

There are other applications which will set up additional desktops on a Windows computer, but the free Desktops is lightweight and robust. Using the Windows desktop object rather than another window, it is less prone to error. However, since it is using the same files and system features there are some limitations.

After downloading, unzipping, and loading Desktops, a small box icon appears in the System Tray (see Figure 1). When the icon is clicked the four possible areas pop up for selection. (There is a little dot in the icon grid which represents the currently selected desktop.)



Figure 1. Click on the icon in the System Tray to select one of the alternative desktops.

It should be noted that since resources are shared a number features, such as apps appearing in the System Tray, may not be available in the alternative work areas. Also, windows cannot be moved between desktops. However, the same Windows Clipboard is used by all the virtual work areas, so clips can easily be transferred from one area to another.

There is an options window available for setting up hotkeys for switching areas (see Figure 2). (Right-click on the Desktops System Tray icon to select Options.)



Figure 2. The Desktops Options window allows the selection of hotkey combinations which can be used to change work areas.

I tested Desktops in both Windows 7 and Windows 8 and found it to be consistent in its behavior. Some programs such as Chrome would only open in one area. (This is an argument for using different browsers in different areas.) Other software could be loaded in all four areas. This is probably because those apps, such as Calculator, allow multiple instances to be running simultaneously. (Chrome allows multiple instances to be loaded, but only in desktop at a time.)

I noticed some of my AutoHotkey apps were a little quirky—especially if they were accessing windows in other AutoHotkey apps. Most of the apps ran just fine in all of the desktops.

To close Desktops, logging off or restarting is required. Otherwise, orphaned processes might occur. That's why there is no Desktops exit option.

In Windows 8.1, the new Start button was only operational for the main (first) desktop. The WIN key () works in all the alternative desktops, but it always jumps back to the first desktop to show either the Modern Start screen or the Apps view (depending upon your Navigation settings), as shown in Figure 3. Using  again then returns to the first desktop regardless of the original active desktop when  was first pressed. For this reason, using the Desktops hotkey combinations was a better option for returning directly to a particular work area. (Using the Function keys in the hotkey combinations worked better for me than the Number keys, probably due to conflicts with other Number hotkeys.)



Figure 3. In Windows 8.1 the Modern interface is integrated with the first desktop.

Desktops is simple and easy to use. Its operation is intuitive. However, you will need to play with it to determine if it is right for you. While it is not quite like having four computers in one, there are situations where it may come in handy—especially if the boss is walking in the door (ALT+F1).

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

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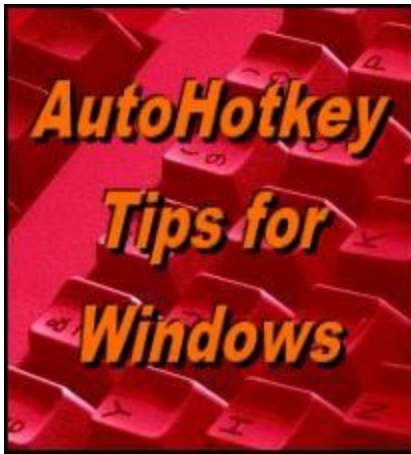
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**Yet, One More
Reason to Use
AutoHotkey
Free Software!**

AutoHotkey Tips for Windows: Adding System Icons

and More!

“There Are 306 Icons Available in One Windows File, Plus Adding More to the AutoHotkeyControl App” by Jack Dunning

It's not necessary to provide all of the icons for your AutoHotkey apps. Here's where to look and how to use them. Plus, the simplicity of adding more menu options to the AutoHotkeyControl script.

This week we will add a little more to the AutoHotkeyControl app by first inserting a standard Microsoft graphic as an icon in an Apps row, then by adding more options to the right-click menu accessing more features from another running AutoHotkey app. Plus, how to add menu items for launching standard Windows programs.

A Plethora of Icons

In Windows there are many standard icons available for inserting into AutoHotkey apps and menus. The problem is that most of them are hidden within other files. There is no search that will uncover them all.

These icons are embedded in files with DLL, EXE, and other extensions for files that support icons. To use them in AutoHotkey we merely use the filename and the number of the icon. In the [AutoHotkeyControl script](#), the Apps row now uses a gears icon which is found in the file *SHELL32.dll* in the *system32* folder, see Figure 1. There are a ton of other icons available in the same file (approximately 300).

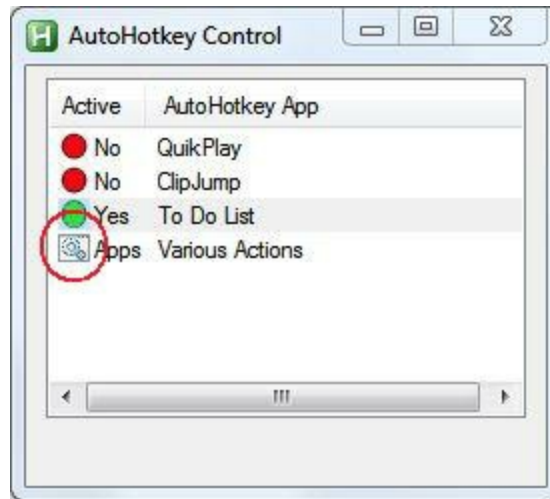


Figure 1. The gears icon used in the AutoHotkeyControl script can be found in the SHELL32.dll file.

To view the available icons simply open the Properties window for any folder in Window Explorer and click the "Change Icon..." button found in the Customize tab. The Change Icon window will open defaulting to the *SHELL32.dll* file (*%SystemRoot%\system32\SHELL32.dll*) (see Figure 2). Scroll through the list to view the options.

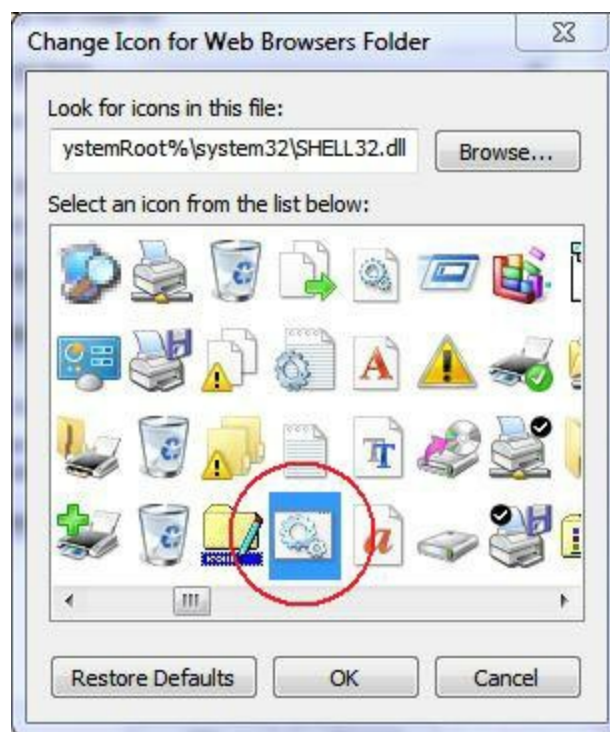


Figure 2. The file *%SystemRoot%\system32\SHELL32.dll* contains numerous icons available for use with AutoHotkey.

To use a particular icon, its number is needed. This can be determined by multiplying the number of columns by the rows (4) and adding any remainder. In this case the icon number is 72. If you want to view the icons available in any other file, simply click the "Browse..." button and navigate to the new file. File types which may contain icons will appear in the list—although most won't. If you want to use a specific program icon, find the EXE file and open it

with the same Change Icon window. Often there will be a number of icons to choose from.

To add the new icon to the AutoHotkeyControl *ListView* it must be added to the image list as discussed [last week](#):

```
ImageListID := IL_Create(4) ; ImageList is increased to hold four small icons.
LV_SetImageList(ImageListID) ; Assign the above ImageList to the current ListView.
    IL_Add(ImageListID, "RedDot.ico")
    IL_Add(ImageListID, "GreenDot.ico")
    IL_Add(ImageListID, "BlueDot.ico")
; The 72nd icon in SHELL32.dll is added to the list as the fourth icon
    IL_Add(ImageListID, "SHELL32.dll", 72)
```

All that's needed now is to change the icon number to four (*Icon4*) when the row is added to the *ListView*:

```
LV_Add("Icon4", "Apps", "Various Actions")
```

The hardest part is getting the number of the icon from *SHELL32.dll*. I've modified the AutoHotkey script example in the documentation for [ListView ImageList](#) to list all the icons and the associated icon number in *SHELL32.dll*. The AutoHotkey script (*ImageList.ahk*) and compiled version (*ImageList.exe*) can be downloaded in a ZIP file (*ImageList.zip*) from the *ComputerEdge* [AutoHotkey Dropbox Web site](#) and extracted for reviewing the *SHELL32.dll* icons.

Adding More Actions to AutoHotkeyControl

At this point it is relatively simple to add more options to the right-click menus in the AutoHotkeyControl script. This time more actions are added to the Various Actions row as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Options for "Setup Instant Text Hotkey", "Set Reminder", Check Grandkids Ages", and opening the Windows Calculator app are added to the Various Actions row in AutoHotkeyControl.ahk.

Each of the first three options shown in Figure 3 are running in an external combined AutoHotkey script launched during login. They are initiated with hotkey combinations. The last item, "Open Calculator" which opens the Windows Calculator, is merely an example of mixing in the launching of an unrelated Windows app.

The first step is add the Menu items to the appropriate [Menu command](#) in the script. In this case the *Utilities* menu::

```
Menu, Utilities, Add, Setup Instant Text Hotkey, SetHotkey
Menu, Utilities, Add, Set Reminder, SetReminder
Menu, Utilities, Add, Check Grandkids Ages, KidsAges
Menu, Utilities, Add, Open Calculator, StartCalc
```

The AutoHotkey apps listed in this menu structure can be found individually at the *ComputorEdge* [AutoHotkey Dropbox download Web site](#): *InstantHotkey*, *Reminder*, and *GrandKids*. For my purposes they are running from a combined AutoHotkey script, but they could just as well be running as individual scripts.

The next step is to add the labels (subroutines) for each new menu item:

```
SetReminder:
    Send, ^#r
    Return

SetHotkey:
    Send, ^!h
    Return

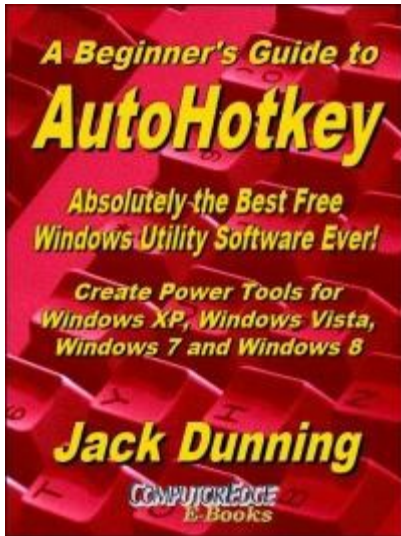
KidsAges:
    Send, #!g
    Return

StartCalc:
    Run, %A_Windir%\system32\calc.exe
    Return
```

As can be seen, if you have a number of AutoHotkey apps running with assigned hotkey combinations, they can quickly be added to a catchall category such as Various Actions in the AutoHotkeyControl script. The last label (StartCalc) shows how easy it is to add specific Windows apps. I can now remove the Windows Calculator from my Taskbar.

The entire sample AutoHotkey script *AutoHotkeyControl.ahk* can be found at the linked download site in the ZIP file *AutoHotkeyControl.zip*.

* * *



The new second edition with more chapters and an index to the AutoHotkey commands found in the book is available in e-book format from Amazon (and other formats—EPUB and PDF— at the ComputerEdgeBooks Web site linked below). 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*](#) offers a gentle approach to learning AutoHotkey.

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 *ComputerEdge*, 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!](#)

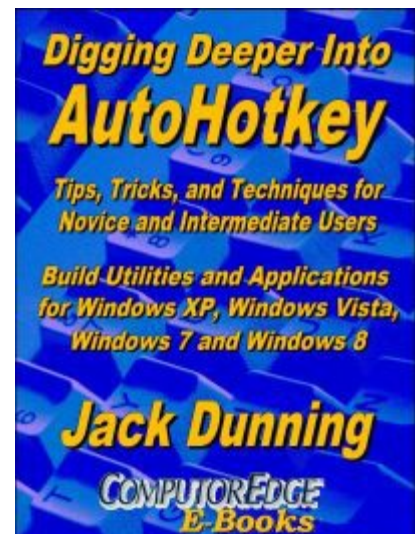
[For a PDF version for printing on letter size paper for inclusion in a standard notebook of A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey click here!](#)

* * *

Jack's latest AutoHotkey book which is comprised of updated, reorganized and indexed columns from *ComputerEdge* 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.

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

[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 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. 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 ComputerEdge cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! [That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputerEdge 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 [ComputerEdge 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

“The Appeal of Free” by Wally Wang

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

The Appeal of Free; Missile Alert and Spy Satellite App; Hewlett-Packard Embraces 3D Printing; Apple's Quarterly Results; Lying in the Corporate World; Activity Monitor.

When you give anything away for free, you immediately attract people's attention and start building trust. People like free because it lets them try something at no risk. If they like what they get, they'll likely want more. If they don't like what they got for free, they weren't your customers in the first place.

You can see many companies offering free samples, free white papers, and free software to attract customers. By offering something for free, you remove all risk for potential customers while also rapidly identifying your best prospects. People who like your free product are your best potential long-term and repeat customers.

Instead of giving away something for free, most companies waste money on pointless advertising. (Think of Microsoft's ads showing people dancing with a Surface tablet.) Such pointless advertising tries to appeal to everyone and often winds up appealing to very few people. As the book [*No B.S. Trust-Based Marketing*](#) explains, giving away something for free is the best form of advertising, especially if it doesn't cost you much to create and distribute it. That's why so many companies offer free e-books or software that can be duplicated and distributed endlessly at no cost to the company.

Of course, when you give something away for free, that free item needs to help prospects sample your product or service. Giving away free concert tickets to get people to show up at the opening of a Microsoft Store is pointless since nobody will ever go to a Microsoft Store afterwards to buy concert tickets ever again. A better approach is to give away free training classes in Windows or Excel to attract people into a Microsoft Store. Then if they like the training, they'll be more likely to buy something. To get, you have to give first, which is a basic principle that has been around for centuries although people still seem to resist this idea all the time.

T-Mobile recently announced that they'll be selling the new iPads that can connect to their

cellular network. To compete against Verizon, AT&T, and Sprint, T-Mobile plans to give away 200MB of data for free every month. If you go over that limit, then you'll have to start paying.

	250MB per month	\$14.99	Visit AT&T site for details
	3GB per month	\$30.00	
	5GB per month	\$50.00	
	1GB per month	\$14.99	Visit Sprint site for details
	3GB per month	\$34.99	
	6GB per month	\$49.99	
	200MB per month	free	Visit T-Mobile site for details
	2.5GB per month	\$30.00	
	4.5GB per month	\$40.00	
	1GB per month	\$20.00	Visit Verizon site for details
	2GB per month	\$30.00	
	5GB per month	\$50.00	
Includes Wi-Fi browsing; refer to carrier website for terms and conditions.			

Figure 1. Comparing iPad cellular plans.

People happy with T-Mobile's free service are more likely to sign up or switch to T-Mobile for their mobile phones too. Even if they exceed their 200MB data limit occasionally on their iPad, they'll still save money over rival iPad cellular carrier plans.

Giving away something for free might seem like an expense, but it's no different than the expense for advertising. The difference is that giving away something for free can actually attract customers while wasting money on useless advertising won't. (Think how many millions Microsoft flushed down the toilet with their pointless Jerry Seinfeld/Bill Gates ads.)

Apple is also using the free model as a way to promote the Macintosh. When you buy a Macintosh, you'll get free operating system upgrades for years until your computer is too old to run the latest features any more. In comparison, Microsoft still charges for major operating system upgrades.

Also free with every new Macintosh and iOS device is the iWork office suite. While only Keynote has generally been considered superior to PowerPoint while Pages and Numbers pale next to Word and Excel, iWork may be good enough for most people. Plus you'll get free upgrades to iWork too as long as your Macintosh or iOS device can run the latest operating system.

By turning operating systems and office suites into free products, Apple hopes to entice more people to buy a Macintosh or iOS device. Google also gives away their free office suite called [QuickOffice](#), so now any Android or iOS smartphone or tablet (or PC running Android) can create Microsoft Office compatible documents. Given the choice between free operating systems and office suites, or paying for an operating system and an office suite where the combined cost can equal the cost of the computer, are PCs running Windows and Microsoft Office really less expensive? The days of paying for operating system upgrades and office suites are over.

In the old days, Borland International used to make a ton of money selling compilers such as Turbo Pascal and Turbo C. Now few companies make money selling compilers because Apple gives their Xcode compiler away for free to entice more developers to create programs for OS X and iOS. Even Microsoft gives away free versions of Visual Basic and Visual C# to entice people to develop for Microsoft's operating systems. The compiler market is still alive, but it's a far cry from the early days when Borland International dominated the compiler market.

Two rival compiler companies, Xojo (which sells a Visual Basic clone) and LiveCode (which is a HyperCard clone) are now giving away their product for free. If you like it and want to distribute your programs, you'll need to buy a license.

Just as Borland International faded away when compilers became free commodities, so will the business model of charging for operating systems and office suites fade away over time. Not surprisingly, selling operating systems and office suites are two huge money makers for Microsoft. Cut away just a percentage of these profits and Microsoft can't help but make less money over time.

With Linux and OS X eating into the PC operating system market, iWork, LibreOffice/OpenOffice, and Google Docs attacking the office suite market, and Android and iOS taking over the mobile operating system market, where does that leave Microsoft?

To compete against free is difficult. People stick with Windows and Microsoft Office because they're used to them, not because that's always the best software they could possibly use. Free offerings can slowly eat away at the paid business model. Just ask Borland International if they still think they can base an entire business selling compilers any more. In a few years, check to see how much money Microsoft still makes from Windows and Office.

As Microsoft builds their own hardware like the Surface tablets and drives other tablet manufacturers away from paying for a license to use Windows, look to see manufacturers

embracing free alternatives like Android. The future looks bright for Apple and Google, and even a smaller company like T-Mobile. The future looks a lot more uncertain for companies that rely on the past to continue forever like Microsoft.

Missile Alert and Spy Satellite App

After 27-year-old software engineer, Dishad Othman, read a friend's Facebook page about watching a Scud missile flying overhead, he decided to create a program to alert Syrians to inbound [Scud missile attacks](#).

Based on sightings from eyewitnesses around the country, Othman's program uses mathematical formulas to track Scud missiles and determine their approximate destination based on trajectory and speed. Then the program sends out a warning by text message and e-mail, alerting people of the incoming danger. Othman's Web site is www.aymta.com, which in Arabic translates to the word "when."



Figure 2. A Scud missile tracking program can save lives.

If you're worried about spy satellites tracking your movement, you might be interested in

downloading the [SpyMeSat iPhone app](#) that can track when spy satellites might be [over your position](#). Now you can hide or at least wave to the people trying to track you from outer space.

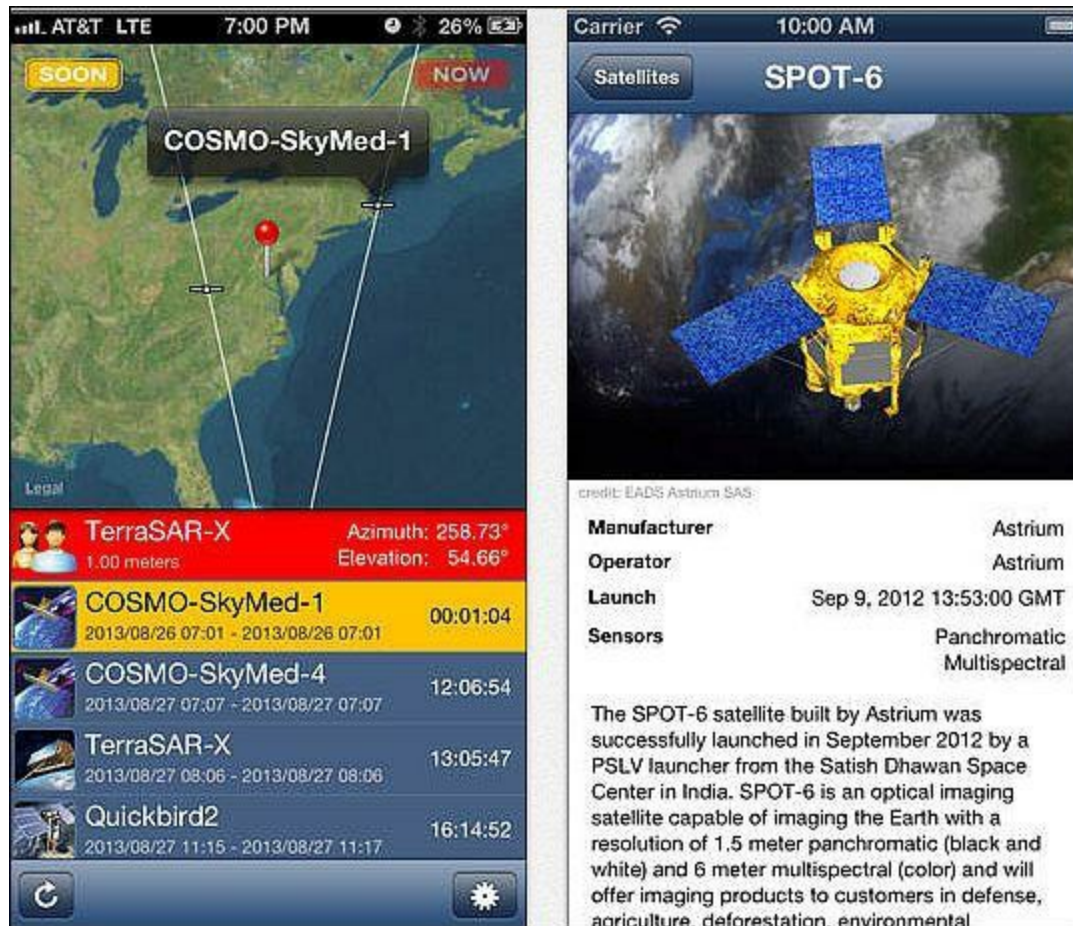


Figure 3. The SpyMeSat app can watch the spy satellites watching you.

These two apps are just another example of how mobile computing offers advantages that traditional laptops and netbooks couldn't do as easily. If you happen to be living in Syria, you might want to sign up to receive Scud missile alerts on your smartphone. With the power of a computer in your pocket at all times, smartphones provide greater flexibility to perform tasks that a traditional desktop or laptop PC wouldn't do as well.

Hewlett-Packard Embraces 3D Printing

After flopping in the mobile computing market with their Slate PC running Windows 7 and then their webOS tablet that didn't sell, Hewlett-Packard may finally have hit upon a winning strategy. The company sells plenty of printers so it only makes sense for Hewlett-Packard to jump into the [3D printer market](#).

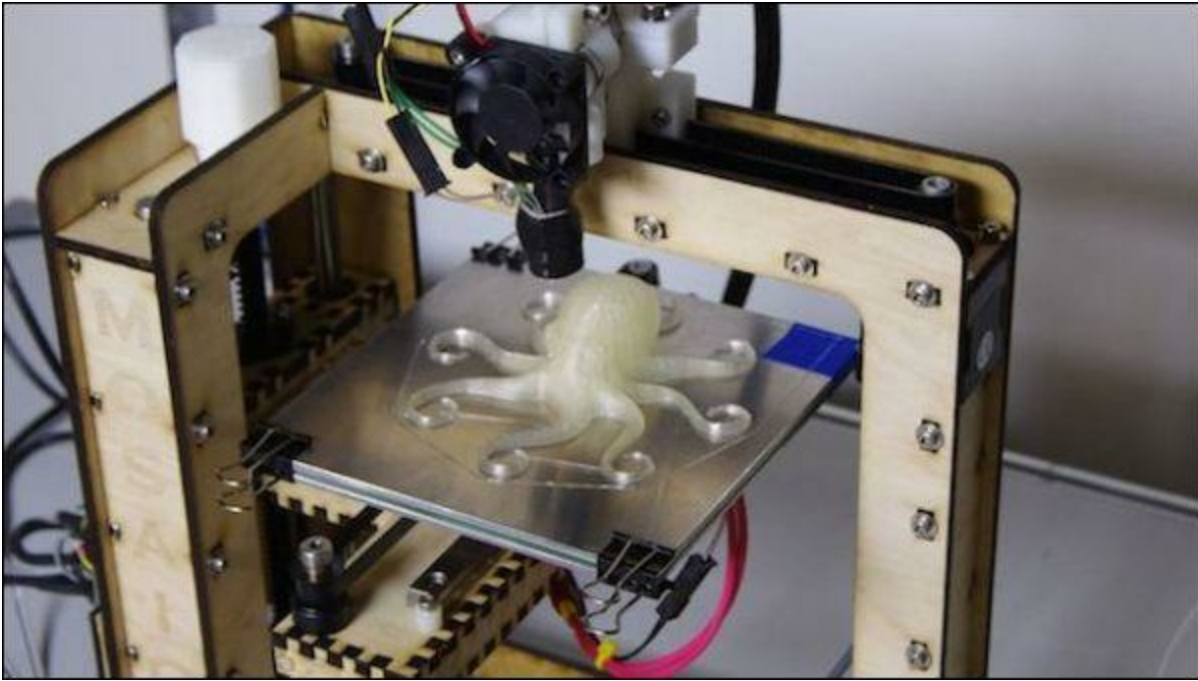


Figure 4. 3D printing represents a future growth market.

One problem with current 3D printers is that they often take hours to create a single object. Hewlett-Packard hopes to use their printer expertise to create and market a 3D printer that can create objects much faster at a lower cost. Right now the technology may not be at this level yet, but the future points to faster 3D printers at affordable prices just like today's laser printers that used to cost \$5,000 or more, but now can be bought for as little as \$100.

By pursuing 3D printers, Hewlett-Packard could prove to the world that they can still innovate. In the future when 3D printers become common, you might be relying on Hewlett-Packard technology to create your own physical objects like toys, jewelry, tools, or clothing.

Apple's Quarterly Results

In the September quarter, Apple sold 33.8 million iPhones compared to 26.9 million in the previous year ago quarter. Apple also sold 14.1 million iPads during the September quarter, compared to 14 million in the previous year ago quarter. More importantly, Apple sold 4.6 million Macs, compared to 4.9 million in the previous year quarter, which suggests that the drop in Macintosh sales isn't as dramatic as analysts feared, especially since Apple just released new laptops along with the Mac Pro coming out in December.

As Apple continues selling more iPhones and iPads than before, it's hard to believe that people once thought that the iPhone and iPad were failures. As Apple continues to refresh its Macintosh line, it's likely that the drop in Macintosh sales will continue steadily declining while sales of iPhones and iPads continues rising.

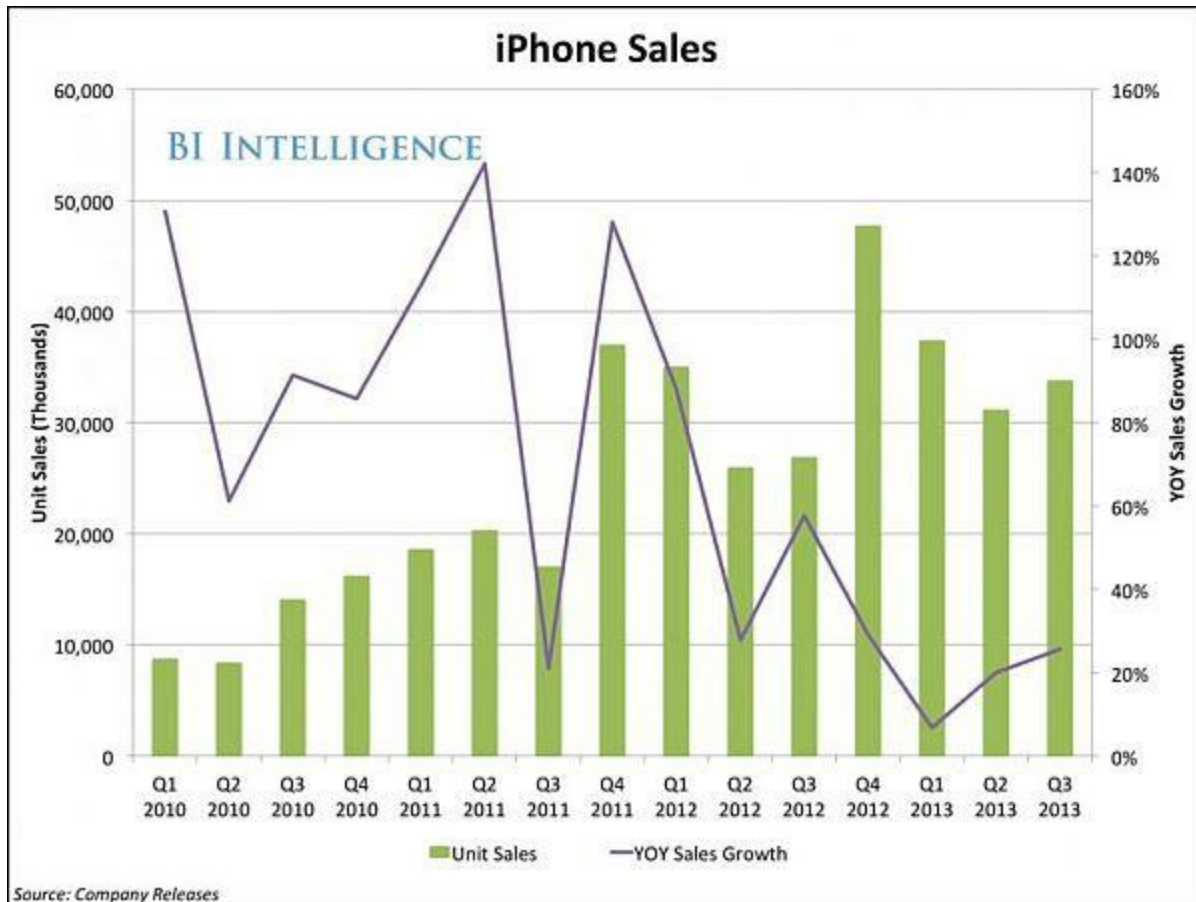


Figure 5. Apple keeps selling iPhones.

Apple keeps selling products and people keep buying them. With all new products heading into the next quarter, sales should increase from a year ago. Clearly Apple must be doing something right for so many people to keep buying Apple products. Perhaps when other companies realize that if they just worked to designed products that were easy to use, they might start selling more products to more people too.

Lying in the Corporate World

Samsung recently got fined for [hiring bloggers](#) to praise their products in Taiwan while criticizing products made by rival smartphone maker HTC. Such a practice of hiring people to say nice things about your company while lying about rivals is known as astroturfing since astroturf is fake grass and most people praise or criticize products on their own, which is known as a grassroots movement. So faking praise for your own products is called [astroturfing](#), which is what Microsoft and Nokia have been caught doing as well.

Certainly Microsoft's, Nokia's, and Samsung's CEO can put a stop to this practice, but the fact that it has gone on for years indicates tacit approval if not outright support. When you have to lie about anything, that's a huge signal that what you're doing isn't working. So rather than change what's not working, companies prefer to delude themselves and others by lying about

their deficiencies. If you're working for a company that lies about its actions, what does that say about the people running that company? About the people who know this and still willingly work there? About the people who support that company knowing that the company deliberately seeks to deceive the public?

Lying is so common among politicians that we often don't think about lying in the corporate world. Yet lying is unsustainable as a long-term strategy. Companies like Samsung, Microsoft, and Nokia would be better served if they spent their money making great products that people want, not lying to fool people into buying their existing products. If you have to lie to trick people into buying your products, you already know that your products are inferior. If you have to lie to criticize a rival's product, you already know what type of person you really are.

Think of [Bill Gates claiming](#) that people are frustrated with the iPad because they can't type or create documents on it. Yet this claim can easily be proven false by anyone who has access to an iPad. If you're totally ignorant about the iPad's capabilities, then such a statement might be excusable (while revealing your ignorance), but for a tech-savvy person like Bill Gates to make this outrageous claim seems preposterous. Certainly Bill Gates has the money to buy or at least try an iPad in a store. For a tech-savvy person to claim that you can't type on an iPad when you clearly can seems to suggest he's simply lying to criticize the iPad and promote Microsoft's Surface tablet instead.

Lying always works in the short-term but never works in the long-term. If lying is the only way you can get ahead, you're already behind. The better strategy is to fix what's wrong so you can truthfully be proud of what you offer. The alternative is to lie about what you have to offer and hope to deceive others into giving you what you want. Although lying seems to work, it can never last for long. If you lie all the time, then the only people you'll feel comfortable being around will be other liars, and who wants to deal with those types of people all your life?

* * *

If you're running a Macintosh plugged into an electrical outlet, you usually don't need to worry too much about power. However, if you're running a laptop, you probably don't want to run down your battery.

To identify potential energy gobbling programs, open the Applications folder and peek inside the Utilities folder to find the Activity Monitor program. If you load that program and then click on the Energy tab, you can see a list of which programs are using the most energy. Then you can shut those programs down if you don't need them, or use those programs sparingly whenever you're running off battery power.

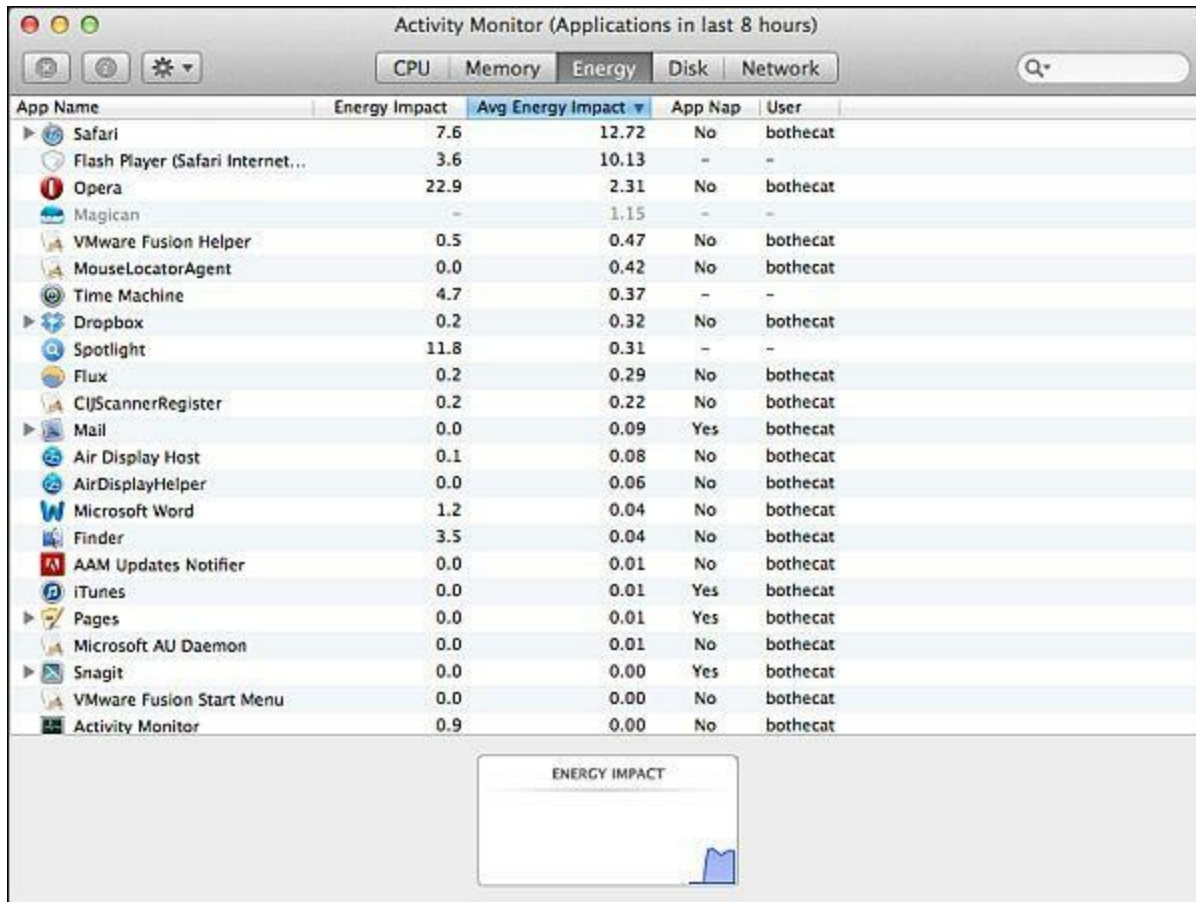


Figure 6. The Energy tab on the Activity Monitor program lets you see which programs suck up the most power.

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:

[Microsoft Office 2013 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 \(Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us\)](#)

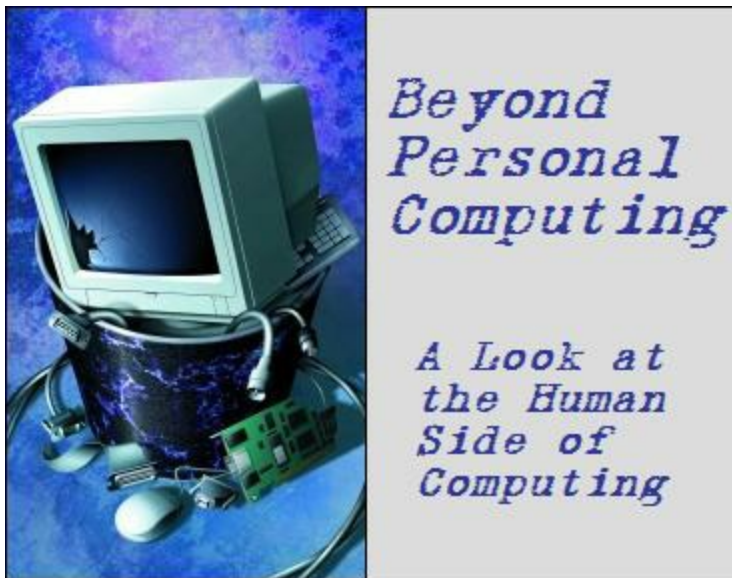
[The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou](#)

[The 15-Minute Movie Method](#)

[Erotophobia \(A novel\)](#)

[Math for the Zombie Apocalypse](#)

In his spare time, Wally likes blogging about movies and writing screenplays at his site "[The 15 Minute Movie Method](#)," finding interesting news stories about cats at his site "[Cat Daily News](#)," and providing the type of advice he wishes someone would have told him when he was much younger at his [personal Web site](#). Wally can be reached at wally@computoredge.com.



Tattoos

“Body Art, Messages or New Personas?” by Marilyn K. Martin

From the history of tattoos to tattoo jokes.

Tattoos in History: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly

Tattoos were discovered by European explorers in the 18th century in Polynesia, where the Maori used extensive facial tattoos called Moko as sacred identity markers. And Samoan males still employ a ritualistic form of waist-to-knees geometric tattoo called Pe'a, which is very painful and can take a week to years to complete. Tattoos in these cultures were used to denote everything from rites-of-passage, to symbols of religious devotion or high status. They were also used as marks of fertility, pledges of love, decorations of bravery, as well as talismans for protection. Basically what you've got today with the average prison tatt.

Captain Cook's naturalist made the first reference to Polynesian tattoos in the late 1700s, and later sailors took both the word—tatau—and the practice back to Europe. Later civilizations used the "indelible marks" for darker purposes. The Chinese used facial tattoos as punishment for crimes, or to mark prisoners or slaves. The Ancient Roman Empire required their soldiers to have identifying tattoos on their hands to make desertion difficult. While gladiators and slaves were also tattooed with exported slaves tattooed with the words "tax paid" and/or "Stop me, I'm a runaway" tattooed on their foreheads.

No one in polite European society knew what to make of this "indelible ink into the skin" in the 1800s, variously describing tattoos as scarring, painting or staining. But by World War II, the Nazis made infamous use of tattooing. Prisoners in Nazi concentration camps were tattooed on their arm with identification numbers, which came to represent the impersonal horror of the Holocaust. The Nazi's Waffen-SS also wore tattoos of their blood type under their left arm, near the armpit. After the war, the tattoos easily identified former SS, for capture and prosecution. Some ex-SS went so far as to shoot themselves through the arm to leave scars on/around the tattoo, that made later removal of the tattoo less obvious.

Tattoos Today

Children everywhere, at some point, have had fun with temporary-tattoos, from fingerpaints turning little brother into Superman, to "painting" Mom's makeup on baby sister. But to be truly creative as a pre-school tattoo artist, requires some markers and a very patient white dog with very short hair. Let's hope the word "washable" was on the marker package.



Today there are an estimated 10 Million Americans with at least one tattoo, and about 4,000 tattoo studios. Young people, especially, like collecting/wearing a lot of tattoos today as a form of ever-changing "self expression." While others go for elaborate "story behind" tattoos, either colorful full-back tattooed pictures or text of names on a list, or even long quotes from

literature. You can check out a good sample of most categories at TrendHunter.



You can even duplicate those Polynesian tattoos, now called Tribal designs. And people who would never have a "body art" tattoo, have embraced minimalist tattooing for everything from "permanent makeup" to ID tattoos on animals. Although, according to Vice.com, Russia is going through a strange craze of "cat-tattooing" their hairless cats. The question of "Why?!" lingers, but look closely in this photo and you'll see the owner's tattoo-covered arm too, by way of explanation.



Gang or Criminal Tattoos

There are also controversial prison and gang tattoos to identify affiliation and exploits. A 2004 study found an explicit link between tattooing and criminality. Osaka, Japan, now forbids new tattoos on city employees, and existing tattoos have to be covered, due to the strong connection between tattoos and the Yakuza, or the Japanese organized crime syndicate.

If you visit Tattoopins or Pinterest.com, you will see [gang and prison tattoos](#), that range from amateur drawings to elaborate pro tattoos. Teardrop tattoos by the eye, can mean a murder (or attempted murder) committed by the wearer, or the death of a friend to be avenged. (Although I don't suggest you approach a felon to ask for clarification.)

There are also a lot of barbed-wire-around-arm tattoos which, according to Buzzle, are usually referred to as a "[criminal tattoo](#)." They can mean everything from the wearer being a current or former convict, to just tough and weary souls who have endured too much pain in life and prefer to be left alone behind their personal "barbed wire fence." It can also have religious significance, if the barbed wire is more crown-of-thorns, representing strength through faith.

In July 2013, after the arrest of former-Patriots tight end Aaron Hernandez for alleged gang-related murders, MSN/Foxsports reported that NFL teams may start using police experts to inspect team [prospects' tattoos](#) in the future.

In September 2013, the US Army issued [new tattoo guidelines](#), that new recruits will not be

allowed to have tattoos that show below the elbows, knees or above the neckline. Tattoos that are racist, sexist or "extremist" are also forbidden.

Things You Never Want to Hear in a Tattoo Parlor

"Eagle? I thought you said Beagle."

"There are two 'O's' in Bob, right?"

"Dang! I hate it when I get the hiccups."

"Don't worry, your new tatt is one of a kind. Your Lucky Clover has five leaves, not four."

"Just let me toss back another shot here, and we'll get started."

"I've never done a Grim Reaper before. How about a skull and some hedge cutters?"

"I'm all out of red, so I used pink."

"Yeah, I made my own sign: 'Tatoo Paylor.' Why'd you ask?"

Tattoos from Hell

Leave it to our Slacker Sages at *Cracked Magazine*, to delve into the "Dark Inks" of homegrown or backyard tattoos, that probably involved too much alcohol and then unleashed secret hatreds that suddenly became very public—and permanent. Felix Clay writes in *Cracked* about Prank Tattoos, where someone asks a friend-with-a-tattoo-gun to do something dragon-y on his back, and sobers up to find a badly drawn x-rated picture and slang on his back. The backyard tattooer was charged with "grievous bodily harm," while the tattooed victim got a free cover-up tattoo.

Vengeance Tattoos pop up occasionally, usually between married couples when infidelity is suspected—and a willing tattoo artist is handy. A recent case in Singapore resulted in both the accusing-husband and the tattoo artist going to prison for several years apiece.

School bullies have been known to occasionally force a tattoo on the bullied, in exchange for not getting beat up. Even with the bullies expelled and sent to juvie hall, the young bullied soul with an x-rated tatt on his bottom, may have wondered if the beating would have been more painful but less permanent. Or how about a milder form of bullying when you tell your friends and family you want a tattoo, and refrains of "You'll regret it!" fill the air everywhere you turn.

Tattoos as Billboards: Folks Who Don't Play it to the End

A small tatt that can be hidden by clothing is nothing compared to the guy who got the idea to be a walking "tattooed billboard." He compounded the error by accepting payment to tattoo the URLs of porn sites on his face. Most of the porn sites were eventually shut down, and he

ended up with a face that was basically unemployable in more ways than one. When last heard from, in Spring 2013, he was auctioning off skin-space on the rest of his body for advertising, so that he could afford expensive laser surgery to remove the facial tattoos. But he has his standards: No racist or political ads.

And in the category of "not well thought out tattoos" are criminals caught in slam-dunk cases by surveillance cameras, such as the not-too-bright criminal caught in a bait-car who had his name and birthday tattooed on his neck. Or a young man headed to prison with a mugshot that shows "SKIN HEAD" and the Nazi swastika tattooed on his forehead. A few days of prison life may have him quickly regretting his "billboard face."



Comedians and Tattoo Jokes

Tom Papa says, "The only thing you have to focus on in your 20s is not getting a bad tattoo. You don't want to be 40 going, 'No, dude, it was different back then. Everyone loved SpongeBob. I swear—everyone!'"

Yo Mama is so flat, she tattooed "Front" on her chest.

Vernon Chatman says, "I just got one of those fake, iron-on tattoos on my arm. It's cheap, it's cool. It's a flaming skull inside a giant red burn mark."

Jeff Dunham asked a friend what kind of tattoo he'd get, if he ever got a tattoo. "A beautiful woman's face," the friend answered. Jeff asked where he'd put it. "On my wife's face."

Zach Galifianakis says, "The other day, I got a henna tattoo that says 'Forever'."

Chic Murray says, "She's a classy girl, though. At least all her tattoos are spelt right."

Man at the doctor's office, pointing at his arm: "It hurts between 'Mom' and 'The Snarling Dragon'."



Total Body, Extreme or Very Unusual Tattoos

Some folks get a little carried away and tattoo their entire body, usually to create a "new persona" that is as strange as it is freaky. One is Erik Sprague, called The Lizardman. He calls himself "a professional freak" on [his Web site](#). Besides being tattooed mostly with green scales, he's also had his tongue split, and implants for bumpy eyebrows. He's got a book for sale, and is available for "sideshow acts, stand up comedy and front for a band."

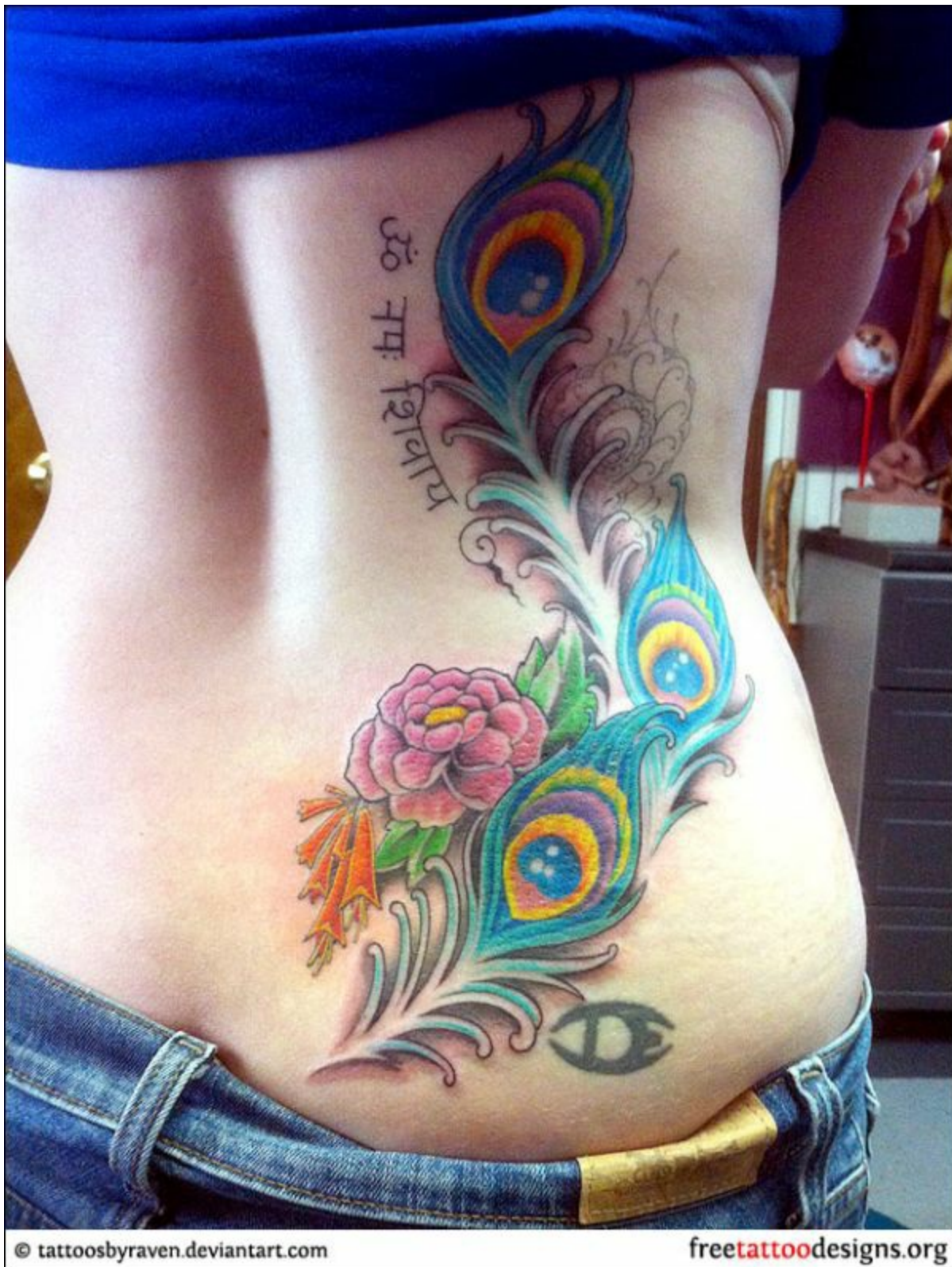
Extreme facial tattoos can also create a "new persona," either done as a "character" or "collected tattoos" that combine words/phrases and pictures. And then there is the category of "scientific tattoos," which can range from equations and laboratory gadgets, to "teachably correct" tattoos you normally don't see outside a dissection lab.





Female Tattoos

Tattooing historically was mainly a masculine pursuit. But by the 1990s, tattooing started gaining popularity with young women. FreeTattooDesigns.org says that tattoos for young women are generally smaller and prettier, ranging from flowers to stars, butterflies, hearts or ribbons. While some ladies go all out for elaborate full-back tattoos, most young women today prefer more "accent tattoos" that can be covered by clothing.

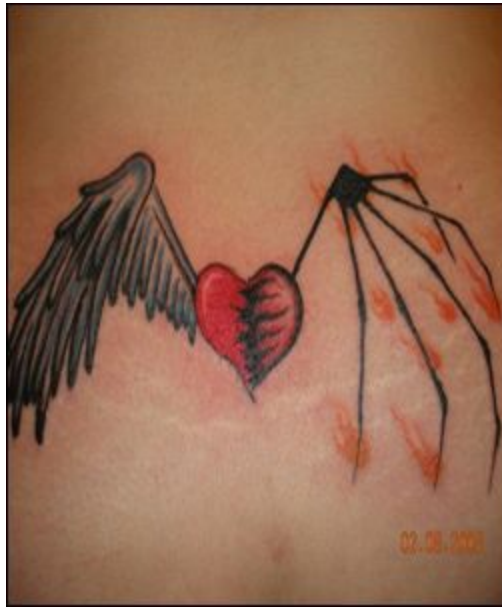


After the year 2000, however, lower-back tattoos on young women were popularized by female celebrities. These lower-back tattoos could be hidden by clothing, or accentuated by low-rise jeans. Due to the placement being considered erotic, and media portrayals of promiscuous young women with these lower-back tattoos, they came to be known as "tramp stamps," "bulls-eyes" or "a** antlers."

By 2012, according to the *New Yorker*, [more women](#) in the US (23%) have tattoos than men (19%). The article shows that American women have also had tattoos throughout history, although most were the result of capture by Native Americans, done to appear as circus attractions, or to advertise their services as tattoo artists.

Removing Regrettable Tattoos

To remove tattoos, the choice is usually painful and expensive laser removal. One physician who specializes in tattoo-removal, estimates that 50% of people who get tattoos later regret them. (Falling out of love and having that special-person's tattooed name removed is the most popular reason cited for wanting a tattoo removed.) Although some tattoos are so terrible, regretting getting them in the first place seems perfectly reasonable.



According to Discovery Fit & Health, complete tattoo removal isn't possible. Several methods of removal are effective, and the amount of remaining color depends on multiple factors, including which of 100 tattoo inks available today were used. Older methods of tattoo removal were Dermabrasion, Cryosurgery and Excision (where the tattoo was cut out). Today the standard removal process involves lasers. The procedure is bloodless and low risk with minimal scarring, but does require multiple visits that may (or may not) include anesthesia. Different lasers are used for different tattoo ink color removal. (Yellow and green are the hardest colors to remove, blue and black are the easiest.) It can be expensive, ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars, and health insurance won't pay for it.

The other option is a "covering tattoo" that will look better, but could also be expensive. Very few tattooists are also "cover-up specialists," which may be hard to find. It also takes a tattoo 3 to 5 times larger than what is being covered up, in order to have enough color and shade areas to totally cover the old tattoo. While some cover-up tattooists are now going over darker tattoos with white ink, either to try and "erase" the older tattoo, or make it easier to cover with

another tattoo. Or...you can just make it obvious that you have an older, unwanted tattoo, and tattoo "VOID" or "S**t Happens" over it, with no attempt at a total cover-up.



The horror of dealing with bad tattoos must be more than skin-deep, as they say, since Spike TV has just renewed its series, "Tattoo Nightmares," for a third season, with new episodes to play in 2014. (Their other tattoo show, "Ink Masters," has been renewed for a fourth season, and is Spike's "most watched" series.) "Tattoo Nightmares" chronicles three of the best cover-up artists, as they try to literally work miracles tattooing over bad tattoos. (Currently between seasons, you can check out past episodes for free on either Spike or YouTube.)

Can Getting A Tattoo Be Deadly? In the Wrong Back Alley—Oh Yeah

Apparently you can potentially die from being tattooed, especially if you get a tattoo from someone who caters to the tourist trade in a foreign country. Especially if little things like "clean and sterile tattoo equipment" take a back seat to how many tattoos they can do in a 24 hour period. According to *Cracked Magazine*, a diseased tattoo gun can give you anything from hepatitis to HIV, tetanus, tuberculosis, or polio.

In the US, tattoo-infections are relatively minor and only number around 50 a year, according to the CDC. And they haven't yet logged any cases of HIV-from-tattoo infections. But if you travel...better to bring back a copy of that stencil of battling yin-yang dragons you fell in love with, for your regular tattoo artist to put on you.

Tattoo Trivia

Although requirements vary from state to state, one generally needs to be 18, with a high school diploma or G.E.D., in order to get a license from a local health department to be a tattoo artist.

The New York Tattoo Museum opened in 2010, and is located in Staten Island's Old Town neighborhood. The owner, known only as Dozer, has plans to eventually add automated mannequins depicting Tribal, ancient Japanese and WWII-era tattooing methods.

Kickstarter has run 97 projects over the years that involve Tattoos (and some are repeats), but only 25 reached their funding goals. Documentaries, music groups, coloring books, art photography books, t-shirts, calendar projects, designer wear, personal films and road trips, a TV pilot called "Shark Monster" about a tattoo shop, Tattbabies tattooed dolls, and a 3D Tattoo Body Art Scanner, among others, were offered up for financial support at one time or another.

WorldTattooEvents.com lists 500 global tattoo events, from Dublin, Ireland, to Kathmandu, Nepal, and plenty of events in the US. (From the event posters, they look like biker rallies without the bikers.)

And according to [Needles&Sins](#), there have been some notable April Fools' Jokes involving tattoos. The most famous, from [ThinkGeek](#), was the "MoodINQ: Programmable Tattoo System," which supposedly teamed purchasers with cosmetic surgeons to "implant the E ink grid" on your body, then all you had to do was fire up the software and use a "wand" to change your grid-based tattoo whenever you wanted. (Go to the very bottom for "HAHA! April Fools!")

National Public Radio tried a tattoo-hoax in 1994, reporting that teens who got the logos of companies tattooed on their bodies would receive a lifetime 10% discount on those products. Alas, this was less hoax than predictive. By 2009, the "Melt Bar and Grilled" restaurant in Cleveland, Ohio, offered customers a "permanent 25% discount" if they tattooed the

[restaurant's logo](#) anywhere on their body.

Temporary Tattoos

There seems to be a lot of people who don't want permanent tattoos, but *do* want to occasionally don temporary party or costume tattoos. eBay.com has over 300,000 "tattoo" items, almost all in the temporary-tattoo category. Slip-on "Temporary Tattoo Arm Sleeves or Leg Stockings" (made in China) seems popular, as well as temporary tattoo stencils, from kids' airplane stickers/tattoos, to temporary makeup of tattoo lips or around-eye tattoo stickers.

Terms like "Tribal," "Celtic," "Primal," "Henna" and "Day-of-the-Dead Sugar Skulls" seem to be selling points for some temp tattoos. Although occasionally a temp tattoo's advertising includes a foreign translator's idea of key selling words. Like "OM Sign bindi body tattoo belly pole dancing party gypsy rave burning man sticke." Or how about some temp tattoo barcodes, crystal eye rock tattoos, armband temp tattoos, or StacheTats temp mustache tattoos?

For more specialized temp tattoos, there are even companies that specialize in that sort of thing, like [TemporaryTattoos](#), [TattooSales](#), [TattooFun](#), and [FunToos](#).

For more elaborate or adult temp tattoos, check out [Sugartats](#), for Halloween costume facial makeup tattoos, from Broken Doll to Scarecrow to Zipper Eyes. Or adult tattoos at TemporaryTattooFactory, or SexyTemporaryTattoos. (There are also plenty of erotic or porn temp tattoo sites on the Internet you can find yourself.)

(Much of this information and these jokes are on multiple Internet sites. But special thanks to [Wikipedia.org](#), [Cracked.com](#), [HuffingtonPost.com](#), [Freetattoodesigns.org](#), [Jokes.com](#), [FunnyComedianQuotes.com](#), [ComedyCentral.com](#) and [Pinterest.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.

Twelve months (July 2012 through June 2013) of Marilyn's [Little Known High Tech](#) series has been compiled into an almanac (with a complete index) available exclusively at Amazon. If you want a quick reference for the obscure or unusual in computers and the Internet over the last year, then [check it out](#).

ComputerEdge E-Books has converted many of Marilyn's computer humor columns into four

e-books. Now available in a four-book Kindle bundle from Amazon.com [*The Best Computer and Internet Humor, Anecdotes, and Jokes Found on the Web*](#). Marilyn's collection of the funniest stories about our computing machines and how we use them at home, the office, and in cyber space. Save 25% off the individual book price!



Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Google," "Clipbrd.exe Missing in W8?" "Windows 8.1 vs. iOS"

Google

[Regarding Marilyn K. Martin's October 11 [article](#), "Little Known High Tech Stories: Gadgets, Smartphones, and More!":]

"Google is developing Artificial Intelligence." "Google is getting into 'loan-sharking' (i.e., financial credit/lending)." Let's face it ... Google is the *Borg* (see Star Trek). Maybe Google will be downgraded by some other cyber-system in the future, but for now ... Google is the *Borg*!

-Shiva Nataraja, Albuquerque, NM

Shiva -

I don't know about Google appearing to mimic the Borg, but they do seem to be the one High Tech Empire that uses minimal publicity—and keeps their secrets well. (Will we ever know the real reason why Google's founder traveled to North Korea with the ex-governor of New Mexico awhile back?)

This is in contrast to Apple, whose company is limping along with no new gadgets (while sitting on a pile of cash), and every day you can find a dozen blogs, articles and breathless "reveals" on what they may (or may not) be up to. My favorite is their sloooooooooow stocking of new product, obviously to drive up their sagging stock prices. (I mean, Steve Jobs hired Tim Cook from Nintendo as his Operations Chief to sort out his tangled supply line. And now Cook has no control over the dribble through his product pipe line?)

-Marilyn K. Martin, Texas

Clipbrd.exe Missing in W8?

[Regarding the October 11 [Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column](#):]

I'm running Windows 8, but can't seem to find a *clipbrd.exe* file anywhere. Is it gone or changed in W8?

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

I mentioned the Windows program clipbrd.exe for viewing the contents of the Clipboard in [a previous Editor's Letters](#). People are having trouble finding it on Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8 computers because, as it turns out, it was only available in Windows XP. I must have copied it to my other computers. There are other places on the Web to find it, but I've decided to post it on the ComputerEdge [AutoHotkey Dropbox download Web site](#) in the ZIP file clipbrd.zip for anyone who wants it.

-Jack Dunning

Windows 8.1 vs. iOS

[Regarding the October 18 [Wally Wang's Apple Farm column](#):]

I really look forward to reading your column each week. It really makes me think. I grew up on PCs, but really like my iPad and my wife has an iPhone 4. We are about to upgrade to iPhone 5s's so I am not a MS zealot.

I am a little surprised that you seem to be expressing an opinion that iOS will be implemented on laplets (yes laptop tablets) better than Windows 8. I am taking a wait and see attitude. There are a lot of OS X and Windows programs that will have to be adapted to touch and who does it best/first will win. If MS gets a Kinect interface for laplets that works well, gorilla arms shrink. If Apple software vendors, like PhotoShop, create a great touch interface for iOS then Apple wins.

Microsoft has a bit of a head start in testing the waters and seeing what does and doesn't work so if they learn from their mistakes, who knows. Jobs is gone and so is Balmer. No telling what might happen. Then there is Android in the mix. My next laptop will be a laplet and right now the Surface Pro is the only one available, so if I have to replace my laptop soon, guess what I will buy?

Thanks again for a thought provoking column.

-Marcus, Alabama

The biggest problem with Windows 8.1 is that it's 100% designed for a PC (desktop and laptop), but still not optimized as a tablet. The biggest strength of iOS is that it's 100% designed for a tablet, yet can still be 100% functional as a PC. Most Windows programs are clumsy to use on a touchscreen, yet every iOS program is easy to use on a touchscreen or with a keyboard. It's basically a race to see who can get the most apps available for desktop

and mobile.

Right now, Windows has a huge lead in the desktop market but is still weak in the mobile market. iOS has a huge lead in the mobile market, but is still weak for desktop applications (think iWork). An iOS program can be easily adopted to run as an OS X program while a Windows 8 program is more difficult to translate to run as a Windows RT program, a Windows 8 program, and a Windows Phone 8 program. These difficulties greatly handicap the chances of Windows working well on desktops and tablets. The growing market is mobile, which gives iOS the momentum.

-Wally Wang

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