

Keyboarding

Another overlooked skill is keyboard shortcuts. All the normal ones are listed right in your Windows Help system. Here are the shortcuts that I use daily:

F1 – The Help key. This works in almost every program, even Solitaire.

TAB – The tab key allows you to move from cell to cell in forms. Shift-Tab goes the other direction.

SHIFT-CURSOR – This allows you to select a section of text, or a series of objects like files. You could use your cursor keys to get to the start of the selection, press down the shift key and hold while you go to the end of the selection. You could then move, delete, copy the selection en masse.

Ctrl-Left Mouse – If you want to select 5 random items out of a list of 20, you can hold down the Ctrl key and select the desired items with the left mouse. To do it with the cursor keys, you press space bar on the ones you want.

Ctrl-Z – Whoops! This is the undo feature. If I have made a mistake in my typing or formatting, I can undo by holding down the Ctrl key and pressing Z. This works in almost all editing programs, whether graphic or textual.

Ctrl-C – Copies the selected item or items to the Clipboard. The Clipboard is a place in the computer's memory where things are temporarily stored. This can be pictures, sections of text or whole file folders. Because it is copying, it will leave the original item where it was.

Ctrl-X – This is the Cut feature. When pressed, it moves the selected item to the Clipboard. Warning! Remember, it will delete what you have selected and put it on the clipboard, you have to be prepared to Paste it right away to some new location.

Ctrl-V – Pastes the contents of the Clipboard to the newly selected location. This is handy for moving whole sections of text from one place to another, or for repetitive sections of text.

PrtScrn – This little-used button is used to capture screen shots. Here's how: When you want to capture a screen, press the PrtScrn button. Open up the Paint program (Start>Programs>Accessories>Paint, usually), and then paste (Ctrl-V) the screen shot. To save, you should select File>Save As, and then choose JPG as your file type. JPG files take up much less space than BMP files.

Home / End / Shift-Home / Shift-End / Ctrl-Cursor – Home and End allow you to quickly jump the cursor from the beginning to the end of a line and back again. Shift-Home and Shift-End allow you to select from your current position to either the end or the beginning of the line. Ctrl-Cursor allows you to move quickly through a line of text. Normally, pressing the right or left cursor key in a document will move the cursor one letter at a time. When the Ctrl key is held down, it will move one word at a time.

Alt-F4 – Closes the program or window that is currently open and active. If there is nothing open, then the Windows Shutdown dialogue pops up.

If you have question or comments, I can always be reached via email sean@intrex.ca or join our forums at <http://intrex.ca> for more in-depth conversations.