

Keyboard Shortcuts for Windows computers

This factsheet highlights some of the actions you can carry out quickly on your computer by using key combinations rather than using the mouse to navigate menus and options. These key combinations are referred to as shortcuts as they are often a much quicker way of carrying out tasks. They can also be particularly useful for repetitive actions.

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1. What are shortcuts

This factsheet looks at using keyboard shortcuts instead of navigating menus using the mouse, which is often a more efficient means of interacting with your computer and can reduce the risk of repetitive movements.

The following pages highlight some of the basic keyboard shortcuts along with the guidelines for you to explore additional shortcuts available in the programs you use or the tasks you carry out.

Full lists of keyboard shortcuts are available in the Help facility of the programs you use; this can be accessed by pressing the **F1** (shortcut) key on your keyboard.

A note on Apple (Mac) computers

Although there are some keyboard shortcuts that are the same on Macbooks or iMacs, Macs have their own set of keyboard shortcuts. A list of these shortcuts is maintained on the on the [Apple website](#).

If you have any difficulties using the keyboard, such as


- pressing keys down so that you get a string of characters on screen
- brushing other keys by mistake and getting unwanted characters on screen
- can only press down one key at a time

AbilityNet's free online resource [My Computer My Way](#) will explain how you can adjust your computer to make it easier to use and reduce the impact of these sorts of issues.

There is also a factsheet on [Keyboard and Mouse Alternatives](#).

Conventions

The plus '+' key in these instructions means 'and'

Key	Action
Ctrl + P	This means: Press and hold the Control key, and whilst holding it down press and release the P key.
 + E	Press and hold the Windows key (normally located in the bottom left-hand of the keyboard, next to the Alt key), and whilst holding it down press and release the E key.
Ctrl + Alt + Del	Press and hold the Control key and the Alt key and whilst holding them down, press and release the Delete key.

Navigating Within Windows Using the Keyboard

Menus

- Press **Alt** plus the underlined letter of the menu name to jump there (i.e. **Alt** + **F** would jump you to the **F**ile menu.) On newer versions of Microsoft Office, pressing the **Alt** key will present you with letters and numbers on the menu items to help you navigate to the option you want.
- With drop-down menus, you can press the underlined letter of the item you want to jump to or use the arrows to choose an item and then press enter (↵) to select it.
- Use the **arrow keys** to access sub menus.
- Pressing **Alt** + **space** will display the window menu, where you can minimise, maximise and close the window.
- The **Start menu** can be accessed by pressing the **Windows logo key** (⊞) or by pressing **Ctrl** + **Esc**.

Dialog Boxes

- Like menus, pressing **Alt** and the underlined item of the item on the menu will jump to it.
- You can also press **Tab** to select each item in a dialog box in turn.
- To view the contents of a drop-down list, press **Alt** + **down arrow** or just **down arrow** to scroll through the list.
- For radio buttons or checkboxes, use the **arrow keys** to move through the list and press the **space bar** to select or deselect.

Opening Programs (Windows 10)

- Press the **Windows logo key** (⊞). The start menu will appear, and the cursor will jump to the search box:
- Either:
 - Begin typing the name of the program you want. Windows will begin searching as you type and will show a number of options (that will narrow down the more you type) When you see the name of the program you want, you can use the **up** and **down arrows** to select it and press enter to open it once selected.
- Or:
 - Use the up and down arrows to scroll through the full list of installed programs and press enter when you have selected the program you want.

Assigning shortcuts to launch programs (Older versions of Windows)

- On the **Start menu**, find the program you want to create a shortcut key for and, with it selected, press **Shift + F10** to display the context menu, and then **R** to display the properties for that item.
- Press **K** to jump to the shortcut key box.
- Press the key you want associated with this shortcut. Whatever key you select will be shown prefixed with **Ctrl + Alt** meaning that the shortcut key has been set to **Ctrl + Alt + *the key you selected***.
- Use this key combination to start this program whenever you like.

Windows Explorer

- You can access the Windows file explorer (Windows Explorer) by pressing **Windows logo key (⊞) + E**
- Use the **arrow keys** to move up and down in the list of folders or files.
- The **right** and **left arrow keys** will expand or collapse a group of folders.
- Press **Tab** to jump between the folder list on the left, the folder contents on the right and the main menu options.
- Within an item selected, you can press **F2** to rename a file.
- **F3** will jump to a search box that you can type in.
- **Alt + Enter** will display the properties for the selected file or folder.
- **Enter** will open the selected file or folder.
- **Ctrl + C** will copy the file or folder.
- **Ctrl + X** to cut the file or folder.
- **Ctrl + V** to paste a file or folder.

Common Program Shortcuts

- **Ctrl + S** will save the document or file you are working on
- **Ctrl + P** will print the document or file you are working on
- **Ctrl + N** will open a new document or file in the program you are working in

Manipulate Text Using the Keyboard

Moving the Cursor

- Use the **arrow keys** to move the cursor up, down, left or right, one character at a time.
- Use **Ctrl + left** or **right arrow keys** to move one word at a time.
- Use **Ctrl + up** or **down arrow keys** to move up or down a paragraph at a time.
- **Ctrl + home** will move you to the beginning of a document and **Ctrl + end** will take you to the end of a document.
- **Ctrl + pageup (PgUp)** and **Ctrl + pagedown (PgDn)** will move you up or down a page a time, respectively.

Selecting Text

- Hold down **Shift** and use **left** or **right arrow keys** to select one letter at a time.
- Use **Shift** and the **up** and **down arrow keys** to select one line at a time.
- Use **Ctrl + Shift + left** or **right arrow keys** to select whole words a time.
- **Shift + Ctrl + up** or **down arrow keys** to select a paragraph at a time.
- **Ctrl + A** will select All the text in the document.

Cutting, Pasting & Copying

When cutting, copying and pasting, the information is stored in the memory on your computer in something called the 'clipboard'. This makes whatever you are copying available to other programs, so you can, for example, 'copy' something from a webpage and 'paste' it into an email or document.

- **Ctrl + C** will copy a selection to the clipboard
- **Ctrl + X** will cut a selection to the clipboard.
- Use **Ctrl + V** to paste the clipboard contents back in at the cursor insertion point.

Formatting

With the text selected:

- press **Ctrl + B** to make text **B**old.
- **Ctrl + I** to make text *I*talic.
- **Ctrl + U** to Underline.
- **Ctrl + L** will justify (line up the sentences) to the left, **Ctrl + R** will justify right and **Ctrl + E** will centre the selection\paragraph.
- **Ctrl + [** will reduce text size and **Ctrl +]** will increase text size.

Reference Chart

Key	Action
Tab	Cycles through all controls on a dialog box,
Ctrl + tab	Cycles through the different pages on a tabbed dialog box
Alt + <letter>	Activates the menu represented by <letter>, where <letter> is the underlined letter in the menu title i.e. <u>F</u> ile would be alt + F
Alt + tab	Cycles through all open programs or windows. Keeping Alt held down, press Tab to advance to the next program and release both keys to switch to the selected program.
Ctrl + escape	Displays the start menu
Shift + F10	Displays the context (right mouse button) menu
Alt + space	Displays the Window menu (allows you to minimise, maximise and restore a window)
Alt + Enter	Displays the properties for the selected item
Alt + F4	Closes the active window
Ctrl + F4	Closes the active document within an application
Ctrl + S	<u>S</u> ave current document or file
Ctrl + P	<u>P</u> rint current document or file
Ctrl + N	Open <u>N</u> ew document in the active program
Windows Key + D	Minimises all programs and displays the desktop
Windows Key + M	Minimises all open programs
Windows Key + E	Opens a new explorer window
Windows Key + F	Displays the Windows search dialog box
Windows Key + U	Displays the Windows utility manager dialog box for controlling accessibility options.

Key	Action
Arrow keys	Working with text, this will move the cursor in the direction pressed. If in Windows Explorer, will move through list of files or folders.
Ctrl + arrow key	Working with text, this will move the cursor one word at a time, left and right, or a paragraph at a time up and down.
Shift + arrow key	Working with text, this will select one letter at a time in the direction pressed. Use with ctrl to select whole words at a time.
Ctrl + C	Copy selection to the clipboard
Ctrl + X	Cut a selection to the clipboard.
Ctrl + V	Paste the clipboard contents wherever the cursor is active.
Ctrl + B	Make text bold
Ctrl + I	Make text Italic (Italicise)
Ctrl + U	Underline Text
Ctrl + L	Justify text left
Ctrl + R	Justify text right
Ctrl + E	Justify text centrally
Ctrl + [Reduce text size
Ctrl +]	Increase text size

Autocorrect as a shortcut

Autocorrect is a feature in Microsoft Office programs that correct common typos or replace text-based symbols such as (c), to the proper symbol ©, for example. You can also use the autocorrect options to add your own 'custom corrections' for example 'YF' for 'Yours faithfully'.

To add your own options:

1. Go to 'File' – 'Options' – 'Proofing' and click the 'AutoCorrect Options...' button.
2. In the 'Replace' box, type the 'shortcut' you want to use
NOTE: It is a good idea to precede your shortcut with a symbol or something that distinguishes it from instances where you might want to use the letter combination (eg '/YF' rather than just 'YF')
3. In the 'With:' box, type the full version that you want written when you type your shortcut

Quickparts and Autotext

'Quick Parts' and 'Autotext' are more advanced versions of autocorrect that allow you to store paragraphs of text complete with formatting. You can also assign shortcuts to these blocks of text that enable you to quickly reuse them

2. How can AbilityNet help?

AbilityNet is a leading authority on accessibility and assistive technologies. We can assist individuals, charities and employers by providing:

- free advice and information
- free home visits
- workplace assessments
- consultancy services

Free advice and home visits

Our free helpline offers trustworthy, independent one-to-one advice about technology for anyone with any disability of any age. We take calls every day from disabled people, their friends, employers, teachers, colleagues and anyone else who wants to know how technology can help people achieve their goals.

We also have a network of friendly disclosure checked ITCanHelp volunteers who can offer free computer support to older people and people with disabilities.

You may have a problem with viruses, need some help installing software or be confused about updates or error messages. Our friendly, trustworthy volunteers have relevant IT skills and can help with computer systems, laptops, tablets and smartphones.

Our volunteers can help in all sorts of ways, including:

- choosing equipment to meet your particular needs, with suggestions on computer, adaptations, software or broadband
- helping install and set up new software, arranging settings and adjusting accessibility options
- diagnosing problems, malfunctions, viruses or software updates
- helping you get more from your computer, such as online shopping, video calls to friends, playing music or games....

To find out more about our IT support at home visit www.abilitynet.org.uk/at-home or call our free helpline on 0800 269 545.

My Computer My Way

My Computer My Way is a free, interactive tool developed by AbilityNet that makes any computer, tablet and smartphone easier to use.

It can help you ensure that your equipment is set up the best way possible to suit your particular needs. It covers all the accessibility features built into your computer, laptop, tablet, Chromebook or smartphone, and all the major operating systems – Windows, MacOS, iOS, Chrome and Android.

My Computer My Way shows you how to adjust your computer to assist with:

- vision – help seeing your screen
- hearing – help with sounds and audio
- motor – help with your keyboard and mouse
- cognitive – help with reading, spelling and understanding

You can use it for free at www.mycomputermyway.com

Workplace Assessment Service

When it comes to computing solutions, one size does not fit all. We believe that each case is unique, and that individual attention is vital. Our Workplace Assessment Service integrates personal, technical and organisational considerations to arrive at sound and realistic suggestions, documented in a report.

To find out more about AbilityNet's Workplace Assessment Service, please visit www.abilitynet.org.uk/workplace or call 01926 465 247.

Consultancy services

Our expert consultants are also available to assist employers who wish to take a broad, longer-term view in designing computer systems and associated work processes. Our experience and expertise can help you to achieve safe, healthy and productive working procedures.

To find out more about AbilityNet's consultancy services, call 01962 465 247 or email sales@abilitynet.org.uk

DSA / Student assessments

If you have a disability and are in higher or further education, you may qualify for a Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). If you are eligible you will receive a free assessment and may qualify for a grant towards any adjustments that you might require. This could help with the costs of buying a new computer or any other specialist equipment you might need.

For information, please visit www.abilitynet.org.uk/dsa or call 01926 464 095.

3. About AbilityNet

AbilityNet is the national charity that supports people with any disability, of any age. Our specialist services help disabled people to use computers and the internet to improve their lives, whether at work, at home or in education.

Support us

Visit www.abilitynet.org.uk/donate to learn how you can support our work.

Contact us

Telephone 0800 269 545

Email enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk

Web: www.abilitynet.org.uk

We are always keen to help share knowledge about accessibility and assistive technology. If you have any questions about how you may use the contents of this factsheet, please contact us at AbilityNet and we will do all we can to help.

4. Copyright information

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