



CLAS-IT NEWSLETTER

December 2001

Welcome!

Welcome to this issue of the CLAS-IT Newsletter, a source for quick computer tips to make your work life just a bit easier. In this *brief* memo we will seek to enlighten rather than overwhelm you, providing just a few juicy tidbits each month for your computing pleasure.

To share your own favorite tip or to suggest a topic for a future issue, please send e-mail to kathryn-moon@uiowa.edu.

~~~~ Eudora Tip of the Month: Sorting ~~~~

Normally messages in your mailbox are sorted by date, with the most recent messages at the bottom of the list. To quickly re-sort by a different field, click on the column heading for that field. For example, to quickly find all correspondence in your Inbox from Aletia Morgan, click the word "Who" at the top of your list of messages, then scroll toward the top of the list to find the A's. Or, if you can already see one message from Aletia, click that message once before sorting. Whatever message was highlighted before sorting will still be highlighted and visible after sorting, along with all the other messages from the same sender. To quickly see the list of all unread messages spread throughout your Inbox, click the Status column heading (looks like a blue dot in Eudora 5). The unread messages will be grouped together at the bottom of the list. To restore your mailbox to its original order, click the Date column heading.

To sort your messages in reverse order, just click the same column heading a second time.

Hint: If you suddenly notice that messages are in the wrong date order, you may have accidentally clicked a column heading. Just click the Date heading to sort by date.

~~~~ Virus Protection Tip of the Month: ~~~~ Windows Update

Protect yourself from the latest security threats by running Windows Update periodically. This simple-to-use program installs needed updates to your Microsoft operating system and takes just a few minutes to run.

On many computers, Windows Update is located on the Start Menu. If you don't see it there, open Internet Explorer and browse to www.microsoft.com/windowsupdate. Click on Product Updates, say yes if necessary to install the application, and wait for the catalog to display. The item you want is "Critical Updates Package." If there are any critical updates available for your computer, this item will already be selected. (Please don't select any other items unless you know what they are any why you need them.) With the critical updates package checkmarked, click Download, read the information page, click Download again, and accept the license agreement. The updates should install automatically and will probably require you to reboot when finished.

~~~~ Windows Shortcut Menus ~~~~

Whatever you need to do in an application, chances are you'll find it on a Windows shortcut menu. This context-sensitive menu opens when you right-click your mouse and changes depending on where you click. After the menu opens, move your mouse to the selection you want and left-click. Here are a few examples to get you started.

In Word, right-click on some highlighted text to get options to cut or copy, format the font or paragraph, or even create a hyperlink. Or right-click a toolbar to get the Toolbars menu.

In Eudora, right-click in a message to get options such as Reply, Forward, Make Filter, Delete, or Transfer (to another mailbox).

In Internet Explorer, right-click a hyperlink to open the linked page in a new window, print the linked page, or add it to your Favorites.

In Windows, right-click the desktop to quickly get to your display properties. Right-click the Recycle Bin to empty it or to open it. In My Computer or Windows Explorer, you can right-click a folder to scan it for viruses (if you're running McAfee VirusScan). And how do you quickly get to Windows Explorer? Right-click the Start Menu and choose Explore.

Here's a good one. For a quick side-by-side view of two documents, close everything except the two documents. Right-click a blank area of the taskbar and choose Tile Vertically.

~~~~ To Upgrade or Not to Upgrade? ~~~~

You may have heard about our new campus Microsoft licensing agreement covering many Microsoft products. Now that the newest versions of Microsoft Windows are available at no cost, should you upgrade? This article will help you make that decision.

First, a note on terminology. In this article we discuss upgrading your operating system (OS). The new agreement allows an existing Windows OS (such as Windows 95 or Windows 98) to be upgraded to Windows XP, or to an earlier version of Windows such as Windows 2000 or Windows 98. The agreement also covers Microsoft Office products

(Word, Excel, FrontPage, etc.) for both PC and Macintosh, but we will discuss Office upgrades in a future issue.

Why upgrade? A few of the reasons to upgrade are to take advantage of new features, stability and security benefits, to allow compatibility with colleagues with whom you share files, or to enable you to use newer hardware technology such as USB or firewire.

On the other hand, upgrading is not always a good idea. Each operating system has certain system requirements, and you must make sure your hardware and software will work with the new OS. Even if your system does meet the technical and compatibility requirements, be aware that an upgraded OS will likely make your system run slower than it does with its current OS, because each successive version of Windows uses more resources than the previous version.

If your computer does not meet the recommended technical requirements, an upgrade probably will not work well on your machine. The chart below gives our recommended system configuration for the various versions of Windows.

<i>Operating System</i>	<i>Processor Speed</i>	<i>Memory (RAM)</i>	<i>Hard Disk Size</i>
<i>Windows 98</i>	300 MHz	64 MB	2.5 GB
<i>Windows 2000 Pro</i>	400 MHz	128 MB	4 GB
<i>Windows XP Pro</i>	600 MHz	128 MB	4 GB

If you plan to upgrade to Windows 2000 or Windows XP, the next step is to make sure that your specific hardware is compatible with the new operating system. You can usually get this information from your computer vendor's web site, or from Microsoft's Hardware Compatibility List (HCL) at www.microsoft.com/hcl. In addition to checking your system, also verify the compatibility of any additional components such as an added sound or video card, camera, scanner, etc. Some vendors may charge for a new driver to make your hardware work with Windows XP.

Finally, you need to verify that your software applications are compatible with the new OS. Microsoft Office and the standard software available on the ITS web site and CD are all compatible with Windows 98 and Windows 2000. For Windows XP, the situation is more complicated. Newer versions of Microsoft Office are compatible with Windows XP; and McAfee VirusScan 4.5.1 is compatible after installing a service pack (available on the ITS software download page). Novell has not yet released an XP-compatible version of the Netware Client. And other applications, such as Eudora 5.1 and Corporate Time 5.1.2 appear to work with XP but have not been fully tested yet. For programs not listed here, check the software vendor's web site. Sometimes a free download is all that's needed; in other cases you'll have to purchase an upgrade to make the program work; and in certain cases you'll just have to wait until a new XP-compatible version is released.

More information on the campus Microsoft licensing agreement can be found at <http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/it/>. Click on the link for the September 26, 2001 Brown Bag Lunch.

~~~~ Get Computer Help ~~~~

The CLAS Computer Consultants are here to help you. To locate the Computer Consultant for your department, go to <http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/it/chart.shtml> or contact Kathy Johnson, IT Group secretary, at 335-3554.

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