

BRIGHTWEBS TIPS

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Gerri's Computer Newsletter

So what do Disk Cleanup and Defrag do?

A worried student asks: "If I run disk cleanup, will it delete programs on me?"

When you clean up the disk, it cleans out all the stuff in the recycle bin, the temporary internet files and anything you've deleted in email (which is a separate recycle bin).

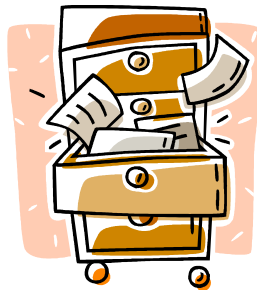
You may remember, or maybe you never knew, that when you view internet pages, the computer saves, on your hard drive, a copy of every single page you look at, so that it can load them quickly if you go back there again.

Disk Cleanup will erase all

those pages and make your system nice and neat again.

You don't lose any programs or anything important, but it doesn't hurt to look into the Recycle Bin and the Deleted Items folder in your mail before you run Disk Cleanup to be sure there's nothing in there you don't want to lose.

Disk Defrag neatens up all your files and puts all the bits back together in the same spot.



When you work on programs, creating files and documents, even viewing web pages, then close them, the computer puts all the bits in whatever empty space it can find on the hard drive. Eventually programs or documents can get spread out all over the place. Defrag puts them all back neatly together where they belong. They will run faster and more efficiently after Defragging. Do it at least once a month, oftener if you surf a lot.

Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools > Disk Cleanup and System Tools > Defrag

Fancy stationery for email?

It's pretty to use fancy stationery. But I recommend saving it for special occasions—birthday letters, Christmas and holidays. Here's why:

It takes as much as five times more space in your SENT MAIL folder, in the recipient's INBOX, and while traveling through cyberspace.

If the recipient has PLAIN TEXT EMAIL turned on, it can look really ugly to have all those codes at the top of your email. Your mail can also come through looking like it has an attachment and might get deleted without being read.

Another way to think about it is that the little picture files used to decorate stationery get stored separately for each and every e-mail message on which they're used. Think of thousands of useless

little .jpg files taking up space in your personal folders file. Is that a good use of space?

And it will have more impact if used sparingly

FAVOURITE APRIL LINKS

◆ http://www.nmfn.com/tnetwork/longevity_game_popup.html

Play the longevity game—how long are you going to live?

◆ <http://www.trackertrail.com/survival/fire/cokeandchocolatebar>

Wilderness survival tips— a coke and a chocolate bar?

◆ <http://englishbay.com/eb/walk1.html>

A walking tour of English Bay—try other neighbourhoods via a Google search

◆ <http://www.artomat.org/home.html>

Artomat—the original art vending project

Miscellaneous Tips From Here and There

A fast shutdown trick from my friend Don Graham:

"Most computer users are probably aware that you can close almost anything by using Alt+F4. But not all are aware that you can shut down the computer itself with that combination. It's faster than clicking Start, then Turn Off Computer. " Thanks, Don, for the reminder.

Let me add a word of caution, however. This method will not prompt you to save your work first, it will just shut down the program or the whole machine. You've been warned.

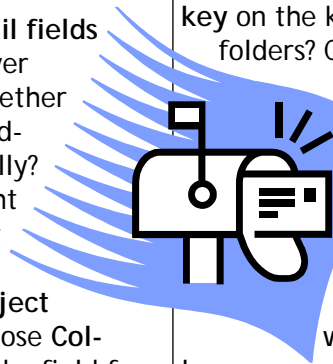
You can customize mail fields in Outlook Express—ever wonder how to see whether that email was really addressed to you personally? In Outlook Express, right click on the grey bar at the top (where by default it says From, Subject and Received, and choose Columns. Now you can add a field for To. Pick any other fields you like while you're here. This will let you see if you're just one of a whole bunch of people the email was sent to, and even if it was sent to a vari-

ety of addresses in hopes of hitting someone who might bite.

Periodically Clean out Deleted Items folder and also Sent items folder in email. In Outlook Express, click on Edit > Empty Deleted items folder. In Outlook, click on Tools > Empty Deleted Items folder.

To clear out your Sent Mail folder, left click on it in the folders pane on the left side of your mail window. Delete messages individually, or hold down the Ctrl key and tap the letter A to select ALL the messages, then left click on the delete key on the keyboard. (Don't see folders? Click on View > Layout > make sure there is a checkmark in Folder List). Empty the Sent Mail folder first, then the Deleted Items folder.

Don't reset that password yet! Some problems with internet connections this week reminded me yet again that one shouldn't be too quick to try typing in a new password if the other one doesn't seem to work. The problem may be on



Commercial Time:

In May and June I will be teaching some basics courses at Langara in their *Plus 50 Series*

Computer Basics May 10

Internet Fundamentals May 17

Internet Shopping and Banking May 31.

Understanding Personal Computers June 8-29th

Also a Web Design series starting June 14-28

To register for courses, call Langara Continuing Studies at 604-323-5585

These courses are low in enrollment size and taught at a more relaxed pace for the Plus 50 student. Come try one!

the other end, with your mail server. If you haven't changed anything, and suddenly you can't connect, try again a little later.

While we're on the subject, if you ever can't get on after several hours, call your ISP. They may have done some maintenance and left something in the wrong setting but they won't know if you don't tell them.

From the Tech Newsletters—so much information—so little time

Dan Gookin on the virtues of Dumpster Diving (in your hard drive):

Have you ever watched a video or listened to audio on the Internet and then were crushed when you found out that you couldn't save that thing to disk? Terrible, I know. But in fact, anything you see, hear, or watch on the Internet IS saved to disk. The information is stored in the Temporary Internet Files folder. All you need to do is find it and rescue it – dumpster dive. Here's how: *Read the rest of the article on his site at <http://www.wambooli.com/www435.html>* before you do the Disk Cleanup on page one.

Rose Vine on the risks of sending credit card numbers via email:

Never, ever give your credit card de-

tails over email.

It doesn't matter if you are sending credit card numbers to your sainted maiden aunt – don't do it.

You might trust the person you are sending the credit card number to but you can't be sure that's the only person who will read the email.

There's a possibility, however small, that the email could be intercepted (it's quite possible to 'sniff' at emails looking for the tell-tale patterns of credit card numbers).

Better not to take the risk – never include the credit card numbers in an email. You can send an email order, print it out and fax a copy of the message with the credit card numbers on the fax copy. Or arrange to

call and give the numbers over the phone. *See the rest of the newsletter "Email Essentials" at <http://www.office-watch.com/>*

Zip Your Folders ... Windows XP has zipping built right into it. Zipping some files can have a distinct advantage.

When you need to send several files, or a large file to someone via email, Zip the file (or files) into a single zipped folder and send it without stressing your Internet connection. Because you have shrunk the the files, they take less time to transfer.

How to Zip ...

See Mrs. Wizard's February issue at <http://www.compuquicktips.com>