A **Word** in your e**a**r

The simple word processor is now more akin to a multifunctional app, so many novice users are put off exploring a program's really useful functions. Eleanor Turton-Hill comes to the rescue, focusing on particular features and shortcuts to help you get the most from Word 6.0.

Word processors have changed beyond all recognition during the past few years. They used to be simple, easy to understand programs with basic screens and a small selection of typefaces and layout functions. Now they're massive multifunctional applications which let you create and combine graphic images, tables and text.

In many ways, word processors are now easier to use than ever before. The interface, thanks to Windows, has made most common tasks far easier to grasp, and there's more online help in case things go wrong.

The major stumbling block for beginners, however, is the sheer proliferation of functions to be found in a modern word processor. Common procedures may be easier to use, but you'll find they're embedded in a massive quagmire of complex features and utilities. In short; word processors are now much, much, bigger. But to the uninitiated, this vastness can be so daunting that much of the application can remain unexplored.

The Windows word processor market is divided between three main packages: Microsoft Word for Windows, WordPerfect for Windows, and Lotus Ami Pro. By far the biggest seller is Word for Windows (currently at version 6.0).

This month, I've taken a look at a range of features in Word, which ought to come in handy no matter whether you use Word daily or are completely new to the package.

Customising the icon bars
One of the first things you'll need to do when you start Word is to set up your toolbars so that the functions you use most will be readily available.

It's annoying having any more than two toolbars at the top of your screen, as each one you add makes the working area progressively smaller. To get the ideal combination of buttons simply right-click (use the right-hand mouse button) anywhere on the toolbar at the top of the screen, and a

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Shortcuts

Selecting text
- Double-click anywhere on a word to select it.
- Triple-click within a paragraph to select that paragraph.
- Place the cursor at the beginning of an area of text to be selected, hold down the Ctrl key and use the four arrow keys to highlight an area manually.
- Use Ctrl+Shift +End keys to highlight all text from the current point onwards.
- Use Ctrl+Shift+Home keys to highlight all text before the current point.
- Use Ctrl+A to select all the text in the document.
- To select a sentence, hold down the Ctrl key and click anywhere within that sentence.
- Hold down the Alt key and at the same time select an area of the screen using the mouse. This allows you to select irregular shapes, which is useful for deleting graphics from the screen.

Other shortcuts
- Capital letters — Place the cursor on any word and press the Shift and F3 keys. If you hold down the Shift key and keep pressing F3, you'll see the word toggle between three modes as shown below:
  (1) example
  (2) Example
  (3) EXAMPLE
- Place the cursor anywhere in a paragraph and use Ctrl+2 to create double-spaced lines.
- Use Ctrl+1 to turn a double-spaced paragraph back to single spacing.
- To add end-notes (appendices) to a document hold down the Alt and Ctrl keys, and press E. For footnotes, use Alt, Ctrl and F.

Getting to know Word

1 *Text enlarged using WordArt*

2 *Autotext saves you having to retype long names*

3 *Outline provides a ready-made structure for making notes*

menu appears. Select Customise and a dialogue box pops up displaying a list of available menus with their relevant button icons alongside. You can browse through the menu categories to find whichever buttons you need — just select the ones you want to use by clicking on them and dragging them over to your existing icon bar.

Creating letterheads

One of the most common and useful word processor facilities is the ability to create templates. In Word, these are saved as files with a .dot extension. The most useful application of this is in the creation of document headers, which are used repeatedly when writing letters.

For a simple illustration of this, create a new document and type your address at the top left-hand side of the page. Go into the File menu and select Save As. In the Save File As Type box, select Document Template and enter a name such as "lethead1". The new template is then automatically placed in the winword directory as a .dot file, and the next time you create a new document, "lethead1" will appear as a choice template beneath the familiar Normal default.

Playing around with text

The WordArt feature (see Fig 1) allows you to play around with text so that it can be made to sit on its side, climb up the edge of the page, or even run right off into the distance.

It's easy to set up for a letterhead or poster design: just place the cursor where you want the text to go and select Object from the Insert menu. Then scroll down the list of object types and select Microsoft WordArt 2.0. Click OK, and a small box appears on-screen. Enter your text in the box and click on the Update Display button.

The selection of icons on the left-hand side of the toolbar allows you to manipulate the text in various ways. Fig 1 shows text which has been enlarged, slanted and shadowed. When you've finished playing with the text functions, simply close down the small box and click anywhere on the screen to get back to the normal document view. The box containing text now has handles and can be resized across the page, or even deleted if you want to start again.

Autotext

If a certain group of words is to be repeatedly used in a document, the autotext function (see Fig 2) can save you having to continually re-type them.

For example, if you need to refer repeatedly to an organisation with a long-winded title such as "The Association of London Street Musicians", the name need only be typed once. Then, all you need to do is highlight the words and select Autotext from the Edit menu. A dialogue box appears, allowing either an acronym or short word to be substituted for the organisation's full name. In this case you could use ALSM. Now, all you have to do when you refer to the Association is type "ALSM", then press F3, and the full title will be inserted.

Outlines

If you need to draw up a plan for a speech or project, the outline view in Word (Fig 3) provides a ready-made structure for this.

Go into the View menu and select Outline. When you begin typing, the font defaults to Heading 1 — the largest of the three heading styles. You can toggle between them by holding down the Ctrl and Alt keys and pressing the number keys 1, 2, or 3. Each type of heading is indented from the margin to a different degree, as shown in Fig 3.   **PCW**