



Taking shortcuts

For word processor users, knowing the right keyboard shortcuts can be a real godsend.

Tim Phillips demonstrates some choice examples, introduces you to his very own macro club, and even finds time for some DOS advice.

Thanks to all those who replied to my call for participation in our macro cop. By now I should have turned you into a mailing list and set you a few challenges. The more the merrier, though, and if you're competent in any macro language or Visual Basic (or if you just fancy having a go), email me and join the club.

Many thanks as well to those who have written and emailed me with queries. These have snowballed in the past few weeks, and as I deal with your enquiries in batches, my reply might occasionally be delayed. I'm very pleased to be getting so much feedback, but please bear in mind that there's only me to do the admin.

Windows

Lionel Kremer's macro to cycle through open windows caused a lot of fuss. My replies via email were along the lines of: "Yes, I know you can cycle through windows using Ctrl+F6, but I keep forgetting, and when I'm cutting and pasting between documents, using the keyboard is a pain when I can put a button on the toolbar."

Nevertheless, the keyboard shortcuts in Windows are more useful to word processor users than to anyone else, because we have our fingers stuck to the keyboard a lot of the time. I personally prefer to whack in all the text I can and then do the fiddling around with a mouse and a toolbar later, but that's a comment on my typing. All you recently converted WordStar and WordPerfect DOS users will be getting itchy fingers, and anyone recording macros needs to know how to

move the cursor around, so it strikes me that a quick revision course on the keyboard shortcuts available to Windows users would be useful, not least to me. So here we go:

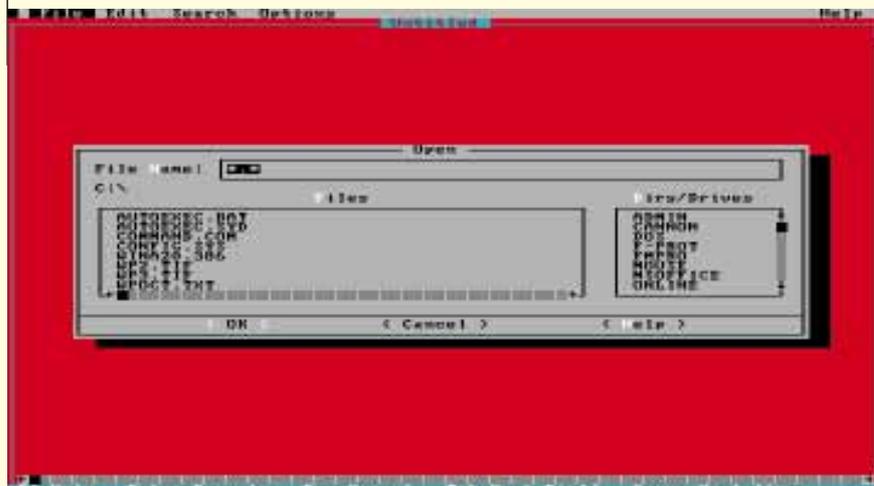
1. The simple stuff

In your dialogue boxes, Alt+the underlined letter of an option selects that option. To move forward and backwards one word at a time, use Ctrl+the appropriate arrow key. The beginning and end of a line is Home and End, and Page Up and Page Dn go up and down one screen.

2. Selecting text

One line (exactly) back from the cursor is Shift+Up, one line forward is Shift+Dn.

*Fancy new colours, more lines, and it's now looking for *.**



Here's one I had forgotten: Shift+Ctrl+End selects from the cursor to the end of the document — substitute Home for End and you select to the top. Use Shift with Home or End to select the rest of the line, either before or after the cursor. Not surprisingly, Shift+Ctrl+Cursor key selects the letter to the left or right of the cursor.

3. Copying and pasting

You know this — well, you should: Ctrl+C copies, Ctrl+X moves, Ctrl+V pastes, Ctrl+Z undoes.

4. Windows Write

Turn off your Num Lock and Write has a few extra goodies. Use the numeric keypad to select text: 5+Left, 5+Right moves to the next or previous sentence. Use the 5 key with the down and up arrows to move to the next and previous paragraphs. Finally, if your Write document has pages, use 5 plus the Page Dn or Page Up to move to the next or previous page.

DOS

Let's get right back to basics with DOS advice this month. I was shocked, nay horrified to find that a colleague was still editing in DOS using the execrable EDLIN program. Don't tell me — you do it too. I think I'm off to have a lie down.

If you have DOS 5.0 or 6.0, and I hope you have, then why don't you use EDIT for short word processing jobs? It's twice as good for batch files and is a respectable, if not overwhelming, text editor. But there are a few things we can do to immediately make it better: if you have an EGA card or better, type EDIT/H rather than EDIT and you get 50 lines of text on the screen.

You can fine-tune it using the Options menu. It won't let you set a font, but it does let you set the screen colours and the spaces that separate tab stops.

Next, get your DOS mouse driver working, and Edit is mouse-enabled. It's

quicker using the menus and scrolling. If you can't use a mouse, learn the cutting and pasting shortcuts. Edit is not at all quirky, in fact it is extremely well-behaved, and if you want to start someone off in simple DOS word processing it teaches good habits. You will find a list of shortcuts in the Help menu under Keyboard.

I admit to having learnt the last tip initially from the excellent *DOS 6.0 Techniques*, published by Ziff-Davis Press, which I highly recommend. EDIT defaults to looking for *.TXT files, which is a pain. To make it default to *.* you have to hack QBASIC.EXE with DEBUG.

I cannot stress enough the importance of making a backup copy of QBASIC.EXE. Please do this. Don't mail me if you haven't and everything goes wrong.

So copy QBASIC.EXE to QBASIC.TIM or similar to back it up. Then:

```
REN QBASIC.EXE QBASIC.PRG
```

```
DEBUG QBASIC.PRG
```

You get a "-" as a prompt. Type:

```
R DS
```

and it comes back with

```
DS 0DAA
```

Note this number (that is, the last four digits). If you're in DOS 6.0, add 2 to the left digit — that would be 2DAA in this case; if you are in DOS 5.0, add 3, to make 3DAA.

Now type:

```
E xxxx: DD70 "*. *", 0
```

(For DOS 6.0, xxxx is the number you got by changing the old number), or type:

```
E xxxx: C76F "*. *",
```

(in Dos 5). Then:

```
W
```

```
Q
```

```
REN QBASIC.PRG QBASIC.EXE
```

If it doesn't work, and be warned there are many cases in which it doesn't, at least you have your backup to rename to QBASIC.EXE. Don't you?

Tim's Macro Club

Welcome to the introductory session of Tim's Macro Club. Members were set these interesting problems:

1. John Lea, of Highgate, wants a macro so that both his document windows in Word 2.0 will scroll simultaneously (he's a translator). I'd like this too — any package, any solution.
2. David Harris of Easynet Cyberspace would like to enhance MarkCitation because he doesn't want to mark the same citation more than once on the same page. To elaborate: if he has text that generates a footnote, and this text appears twice on the same page, he doesn't want the same footnote to appear twice.



Big, big fonts — don't let your word processor tell you it isn't possible

3. Just a quickie: I'm interested in macros that provide some sort of billing function. For example, if someone bills by the word, or for the time spent on a document, I'd like a macro that automatically generates an invoice for it, or some type of report. Nothing too complex, please.

As a reminder: the macro club offers excellent prizes but operates by email only. You join by emailing me to tell me you're interested, and every so often I'll mail you all a challenge. Mail back your efforts (uencoded if it's Internet mail) and the best ones will win prizes and get into print. All macro languages, Visual Basic (sometimes) and even simple workarounds (if they're very clever) will be accepted. Please note: by sending the macro to me, you thereby agree that I can redistribute it or publish it in this column, but you will be credited at all times.

If you don't have email, by all means have a go at answering the problems by post, but the time lag between when I write this and PCW's publication date means that you're unlikely to win anything. This section will be used for reporting the results of our little competitions and publishing the macros if they're short enough.

Top tips

More macros this month. A few of you said there's no point in writing a macro to flick through open windows, as Windows provides Ctrl+F6 specifically for this purpose. You're right, but if you put the macro on your toolbar it means you can keep hold of your mouse while cutting and pasting between documents.

Another shorty macro, from Dave Symington of Edinburgh: a simple four-liner that reverses two characters if you've made a mistake. This is WordBasic but you can record it as a keystroke macro in any word processor. Give this macro a shortcut key, because when you mis-type

you just want to hit the shortcut key immediately and carry on.

```
Sub MAIN
CharRight 1, 1
EditCut
CharRight 1
EditPaste
End Sub
```

You can record versions of this in almost any package. It's a good introduction to macros.

Phil Knight, of the School of Science and Technology at the University of Teeside, has noticed that the toolbar on his word processor only offers fonts up to 72pt. He wants something bigger.

Don't believe everything you see, Mr Knight. Just type in the bigger size in the box which shows font size, and providing you have chosen a software font, you get it. The 72pt size seems just a stylistic thing, not a restriction on fonts which you previously didn't have.

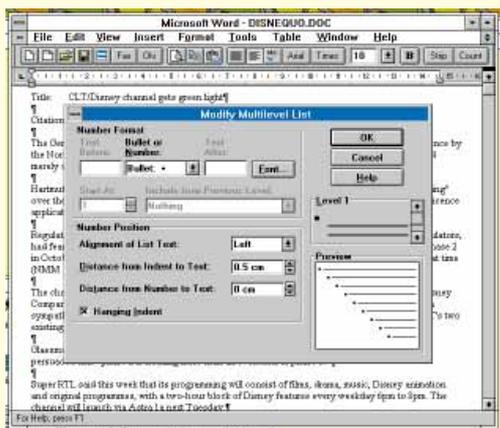
TrueType fonts, the standard in the Windows environment, will effectively scale as large as you want. If there are limits, I haven't met them, apart from in Write (see screenshot on previous page) which establishes an upper limit of 127pt. They will also be as small as you want. The pick boxes commonly offer only sizes between 8 and 72pt, but click in the box and type any number, and you'll get a font in that size. Note that smaller than 6pt is illegible and bigger fonts need kerning (adjustment of the spaces between letters manually) if they are to look good.

Problem solving

Simon Parmenter's wife Mo hacked into his CompuServe account to ask about auto-numbering paragraphs. Does Word support numbering 1(a), 1(b) and so on or just 1, 2, 3? she asks.

Yes, like Ami Pro or WordPerfect or, as she is accustomed to, WordStar 6.0, Word's implementation is quite powerful. In the Format menu, find bullets and numbering, and you get one of those multilevel dialogue boxes. Click on the Multilevel tab, and you have a variety of styles for multilevel numbering. If you want to change these, click on the Modify... button, which controls style, font, indent and gives you a preview. This goes nine levels deep, and if you need more — I'm not reading your document even if you pay me.

When Sharad Patel, at Xerox.com, tried to double-click a chart in a document, "Cannot open Microsoft Organisation Chart 1.0" was displayed. But what did this mean? Where could he find Organisation



Auto-numbering — as sophisticated as you like

Chart 1.0?

This is another example of the applet problem that we're all going to have to get used to. Unfortunately for Sharad, his chart was prepared using PowerPoint, then embedded — it's PowerPoint's Org Chart applet and has been available since PowerPoint 4.0. You must find a user with PowerPoint if you want to see it, because you can't get the applet separately.

This will be a feature of all our lives if OpenDoc catches on. The idea of OpenDoc, which is IBM's, Apple's and Novell's version of OLE on steroids, is that all documents will be composed of "parts", and one part will generate text, another will do the spell checking, another will generate a table, and so on. If you want to view the document, you need to own a copy of the part, or a "part viewer".

What's the point? Firstly, it means an end to monolithic applications. You're all struggling to keep up with the range of features in word processors (I know I am), and you don't use them. The idea is for you to buy only what you need. Secondly, OpenDoc will be cross-platform, and should spell an end to tedious converters for file formats. It's a neat idea, but idealistic, and not slated until 1996 at the earliest. I'll report in more detail when I have something to show you, although the previews I've had are impressive.

The idea with OpenDoc is to give away the Viewers that correspond to each part (which means you can look but not edit) for free. So in an OpenDoc environment, Mr Patel could have got a viewer and looked at his chart for nothing.

PCW Contacts

And that's that for this month. Surface or airmail to PCW, otherwise I'm on email at wong@cix.compulink.co.uk and CompuServe 100436,3616