

Tips for Using Windows 3.1 Help Tools

[Click here](#) to learn about ways to search through helpfiles for specific information

[Click here](#) to learn how bookmarks and annotations can make working with help tools easier and more efficient.

[Click here](#) to learn how Windows Help history can help you keep track of the subjects in a help tool

Miscellaneous tips and troubleshooting

You can print the contents of any Windows help topic (including this one) by clicking the PRINT button at the top of the help window. Help tools without PRINT buttons can still be printed by clicking FILE from the top menu bar and selecting PRINT TOPIC.



These three icons are used in most Dynamic Living Media helptools. This graphic is designed to show you where to click the mouse cursor.



This graphic indicates where you should *double*-click your mouse cursor.



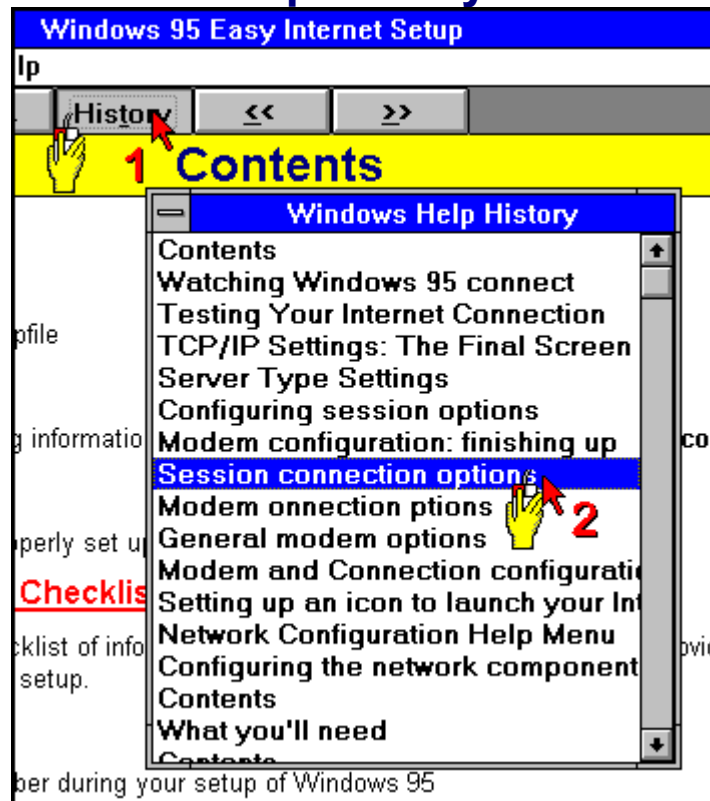
Windows 95 and most newer Windows 3.1 applications allow you to access menus by clicking the right mouse button when the cursor is pointing to a specific object.

Windows helpfiles don't always have the same menu options. Some Windows help tools are extremely complex and fully-featured. Always take a careful look at the drop-down menus and buttons on the help tool for any new program to see what unique features it might offer.

Did you know that you don't need a mouse to navigate Windows help tools? You can use the TAB key to move from one highlight to another and press ENTER to jump to the highlighted link.

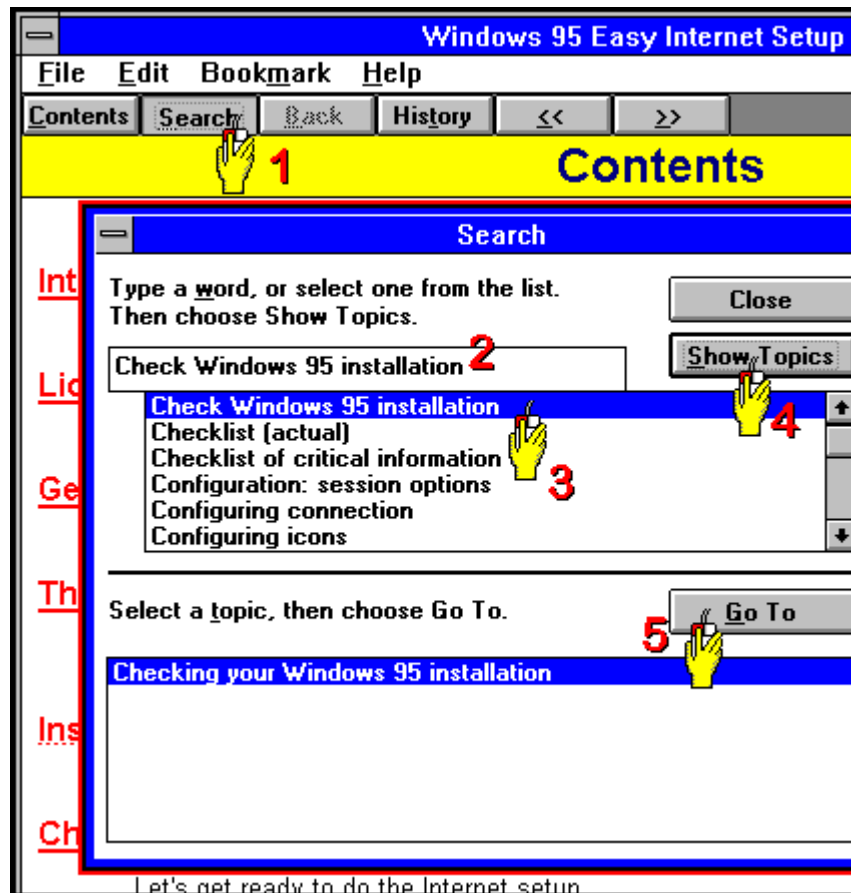
Windows Help history

This help tool has a **History** button at the top, which is especially handy if you are trying to follow a certain procedure and have to switch back and forth between screens. Clicking the **History** button (1) brings up a small screen such as the one shown here (2) which lists the titles of all of the topics you have visited so far. You can jump to any of the topics shown in the history list simply by clicking them. This allows you to quickly move back and forth between topics without having to remember how you got from Point A to Point P and then to Point W. This function works with all versions of Windows but looks slightly different on Windows 95.



Searching for specific information in Windows helpfiles

This sample screen shows you how to use the Search function built into Windows Help. (This screen will look different for Windows 95 but it will function the same way.) Click on any of the red numbers from 1 to 5 for explanations of each of the steps.



Click the **Search** button from the button bar on most Windows help screens to bring up the **Search** dialog box (outlined here in red).

This box, where it says *Check Windows 95 Installation*, is where you type what you are looking for. You can use the scroll bar to the right of the 4 to browse through an alphabetical list of topics, but if the helpfile is well-written you shouldn't have to do that.

You should be able to type one or two characters of the word or phrase you are looking for and see the topic you want pop up automatically...if it exists. For example, typing **CH** here would display all topics beginning with these two letters. As an example, if you were playing Solitaire and wanted to find out how to change the look of the cards, you could type **CARD**, **CHANGE**, **LOOK** or **APPEARANCE** to see which of these words brings up a help topic related to this function.

As soon as you see the topic you

want to browse, click on it as shown here.

Now click on the **Show Topics** button. You will see a list of all topics linked to the particular word or phrase you selected shown in the box at the bottom of the dialog box. In this case there's only one related topic.

Finally, click on the topic you want to read about from the list (in this case, there's only one topic), and click the **Go To** button. You will jump straight to that topic, saving a lot of hunting through topics for the specific information you need.

Bookmarks and annotations

These two features will be indispensable in working with many help tools, and if you haven't been using them we highly recommend learning how they work.

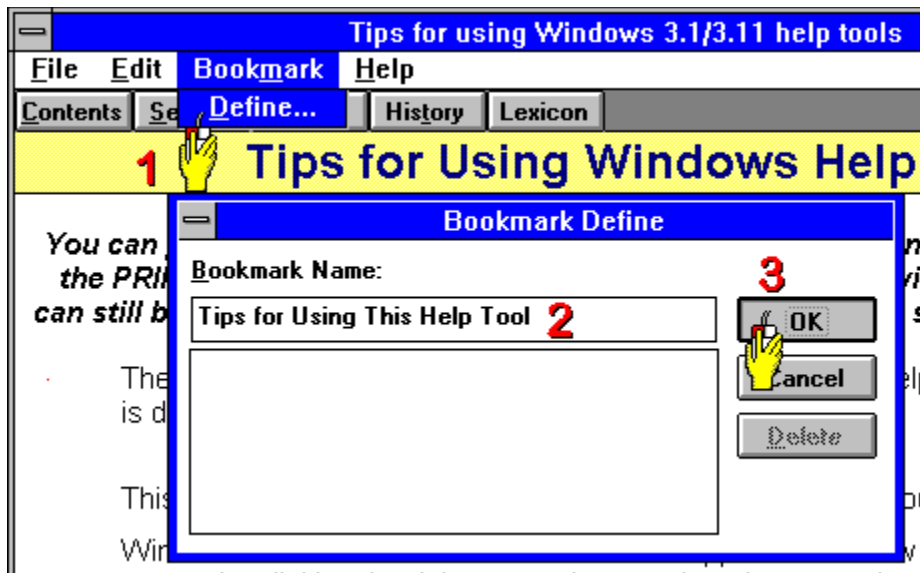
Bookmarks

Bookmarks, quite simply, are pointers to specific locations or topics in a help tool. Annotations are help topics *you* create. A bookmark lets you define what was important to *you* in a particular help topic and lets you jump to that topic instantly.

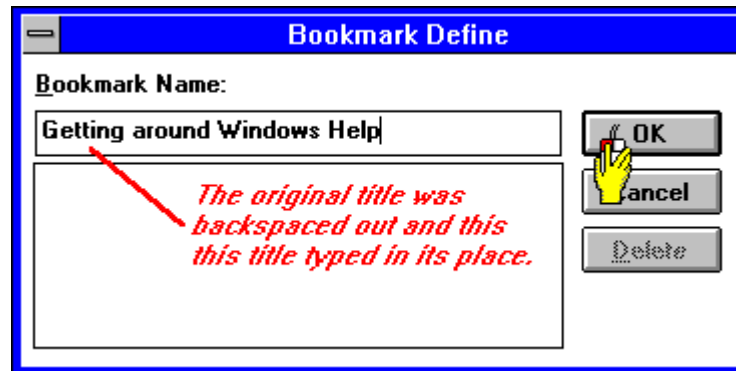
First Train for the Internet users will find this particularly useful, because most World Wide Web browser programs also use bookmarks to help you keep track of resources on the biggest help system in history: the Internet.

Working with bookmarks

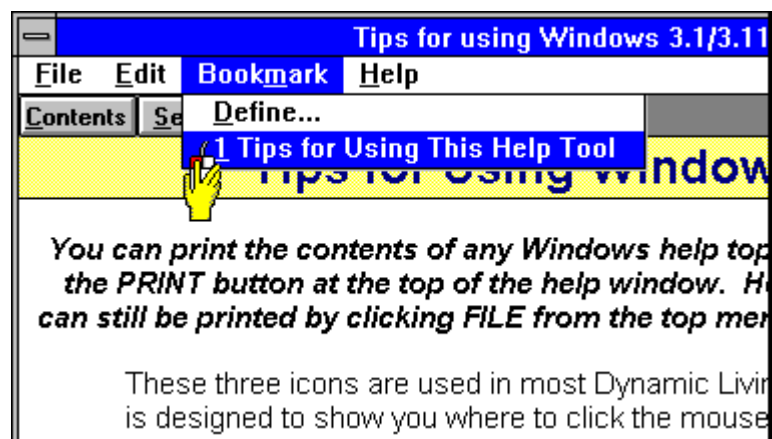
Working with bookmarks couldn't be easier. When you find a topic or bit of information you want to get to later without having to jump through all kinds of menus and mouse clicks, you simply click the **Bookmark** item from the Windows Help menu bar and select **Define (1)**. This box will pop up, and you can either accept the topic title in the box or change it. Click **OK (2)** and it's done.



Sometimes the title of the topic has nothing to do with the information in the topic that you want to remember, and sometimes the topic has no title at all. You can create your own custom bookmark by replacing the default title with your own remark as shown here.

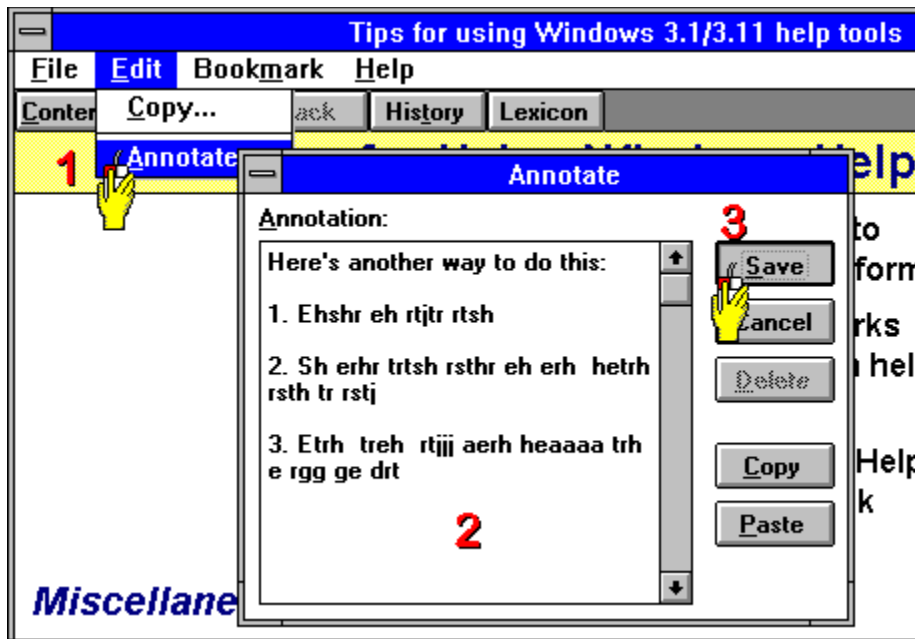


You can now get right to the bookmarked topic from anywhere in that help tool simply by selecting its bookmark item from the **Bookmark** menu. You can also erase and change bookmarks from the **Define** option by clicking the bookmark and either clicking the **Delete** button or changing its text.



Annotations

Annotations work a little bit differently. They let you add your own help to Windows helpfiles. Let's say you've heard about another way to do something which is described by this topic, and you want to add your own notes for later reference. This is where annotations come in handy.



First you click **Edit** from the top menu bar and select **Annotate** (1). This pops a blank text box onto your screen where you can type or paste text information. Here we've typed sample text into the box (2) just to show how you might want to use this feature. Once you finish typing, simply click OK (3) to close the text entry window and a file containing your custom help will be created on your hard disk.

These annotations are not available from the main menu bar. Instead, a paper clip shows up in the top right-hand corner of your help window. Clicking on the paper clip calls up the text box containing your notes. You can add to these, edit them, and copy to and from other documents, but you can only have one of these annotations per topic, and you cannot assign unique names or icons other than the paper clip.



Tips for Using Windows 95 Help Tools

[Click here](#) to learn about ways to search through helpfiles for specific information (an extremely useful feature of Windows 95)

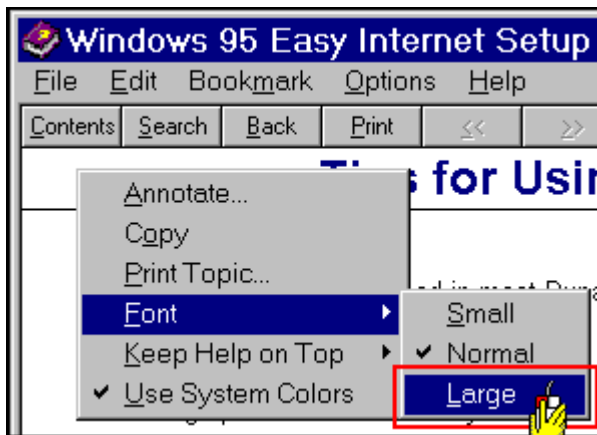
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Miscellaneous tips and troubleshooting



Does this picture look less than crisp in Windows 95? The "Crisp!" should appear sharp and easily readable. If it is badly distorted, click the graphic for help; you'll need to know about this "bug" in order to make effective use of this and other Windows help tools.



If this is the only easily-readable text on the screen, press your right mouse button, click **Font** and select **Large**. Windows 95 will save font size selections for each individual helpfile using this menu selection. [Click here](#) for a more detailed explanation.

Did you know that Windows 95 now lets you copy and paste text directly from a helpfile window? Try cutting and pasting bits of helpfile text for keeping notes of important information and tips you always seem to forget. Many users keep a copy of Notepad running on their desktop at all times just for this purpose.



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Windows Help video troubleshooting

Windows helpfiles that can be used with both Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 have a minor glitch that might make viewing this helpfile a problem. It seems that when you set up the appearance of Windows 95 to use large fonts with a high-resolution video display such as 800x600 or higher, Windows 95 appears to think that you need help viewing graphics too, and it blows them out of proportion. This makes it very difficult to browse helpfiles with screen shots and destroys the artistic quality of the best Windows 3.1 helpfiles. Here's how to fix the problem.

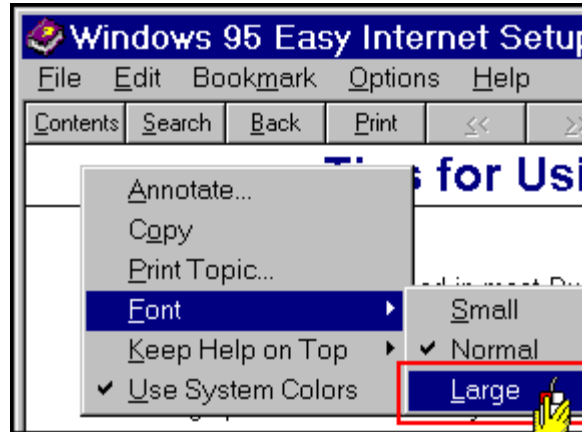
Clicking on the step numbers will display screen diagrams which show you how each step is accomplished.

- 1.** Click your right mouse button on the desktop to bring up the menu shown here and select **Properties**.
 - 2.** When the **Display Properties** menu pops up, click the **Settings** button **(1)** to bring up the screen shown here. Select **Small Fonts** from the **Font size** box at the bottom of the screen.
 - 3.** Windows will recommend that you restart your computer. You won't see any change in the distortion of helpfile graphics until you do.
 - 4.** If you are unhappy about the look of your system when you reboot, go into the **Display Properties** menu again and select **Appearance (1)**. If you are using Windows Standard, select Windows Standard (large) and you'll see a sample of how the desktop looks. If you want to tweak the fonts, Windows 95 allows you to use TrueType fonts in many places on the Windows desktop.
 - 5.** Be sure to click the **Save as:** button and select a name for your new desktop scheme before exiting! If you don't, Windows will not save your new font and color schemes.
- Drawback:** Windows 95 does not allow you to change the size of some types of screen text, and some screen fonts will still be small. If you want to change this, the only way to do it is to select **Large fonts** from the **Settings** screen of the **Display Properties** menu, and unfortunately this will still leave you with distorted-looking graphics in Windows 3.1-compatible helpfiles such as this one.

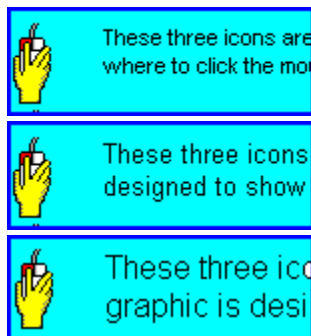
Changing Windows Help font sizes for increased comfort

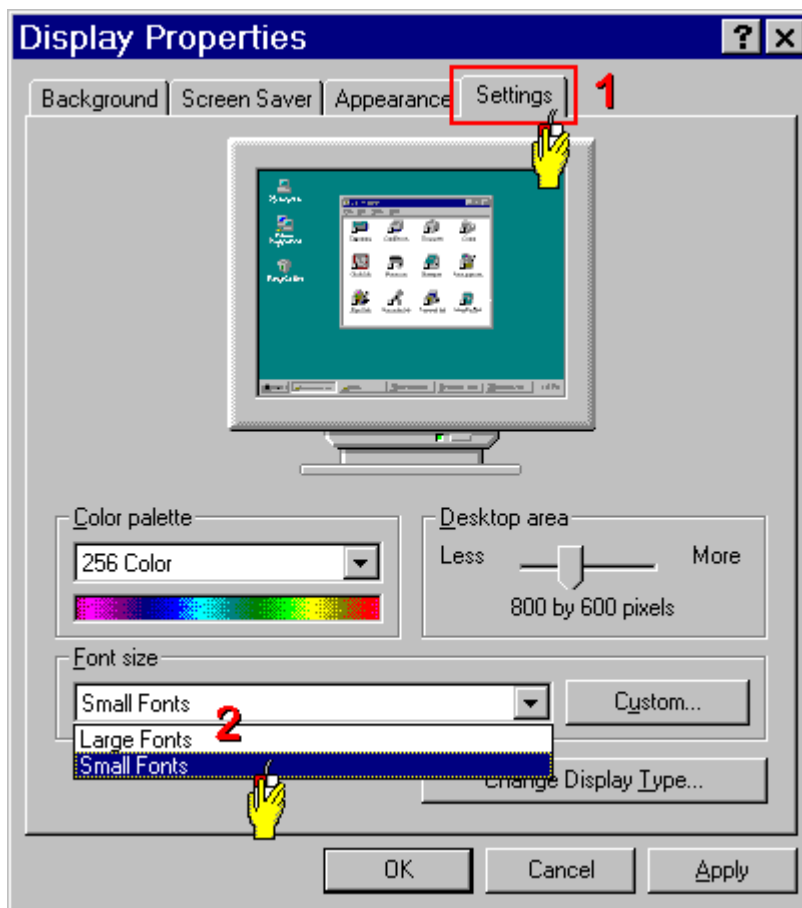
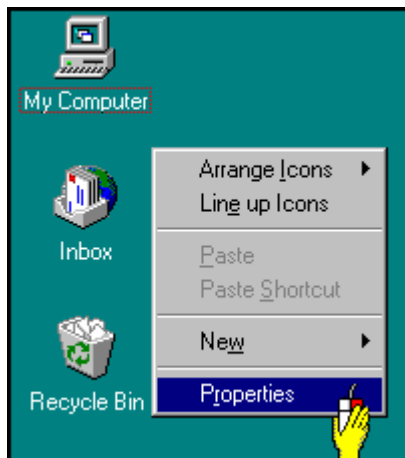
Windows 95 allows you to change the size of your help font "on the fly" for easier readability, and it makes Windows so much more comfortable that using Windows help tools as "online books" is now a practical reality. Windows will save custom font sizes for every help system you use, so once you've selected your font size you won't have to change it each time you start using a new help tool with different font sizes.

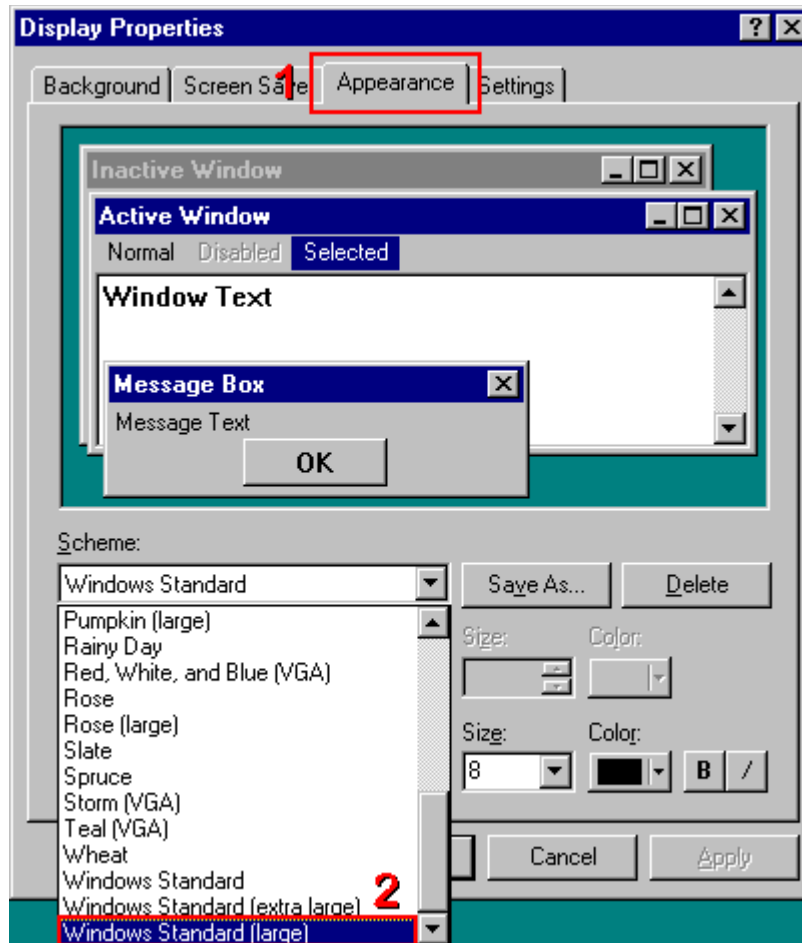
Click your right mouse button anywhere in the Windows help tool you are browsing and click **Font** as shown in this diagram. You'll be presented with three options, **Small**, **Normal** and **Large**. If you are using an 800x600 screen resolution or higher, select the **Large** option for maximum comfort. Windows will save your settings and you should never have to worry about them again.



Here's a sample of how much difference it makes to readability. The three images use small, medium and large fonts respectively.





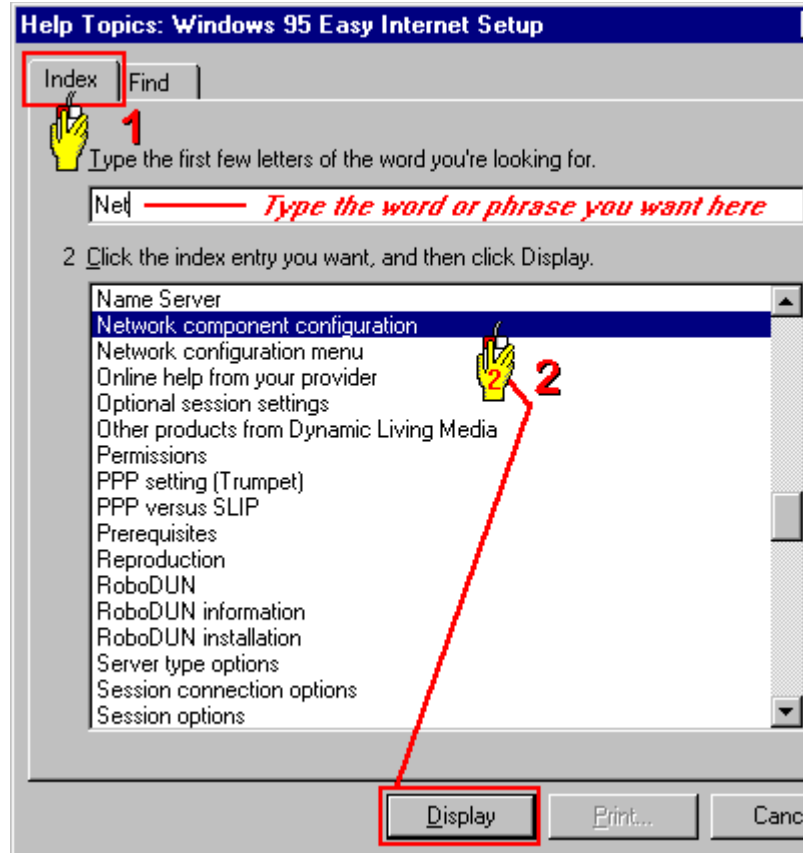


Searching for specific information in Windows 95 helpfiles (Part 1)

Windows 95 helpfiles offer some marvellous improvements over Windows 3.1/3.11 in terms of their ability to help you find specific information in helpfiles. You pay for this increased flexibility with extra time spent loading the helpfile, especially the first time you use it. There are two main options for hunting down information: **Index** (the fastest way) and **Find**, which makes a database of the whole helpfile before offering word lists to hunt through.

This first screen shows what you normally see when you click the **Search** button at the top of a help window. The window will pop up *usually* with the **Index** screen preselected for you as shown here (1). If not, select it yourself.

Type the first two or three letters of the word or phrase you're looking for in the text entry box, wait a second or two, and Windows will display a list of topics with those letters. Keep adding letters (or type a complete word) until the list is short enough to make sense to you.



Now you have a choice. You can either click on a topic and click **Display** to jump to that topic, or you can *double-click* on the topics title in the list box. This menu will close and you'll jump straight to the topic that contains the word or phrase you entered.

Next =>

Searching for specific information in Windows 95 helpfiles (Part 2)

The second method uses Windows 95s extensive databasing capabilities, and while it might look like an expert tool, its more useful than you might first think. Many Windows helpfiles are poorly constructed and don't have good topic layouts, and this databasing function allows you to jump straight to the information you want with little muss and fuss.

Click on the step numbers to see the screens associated with each step.

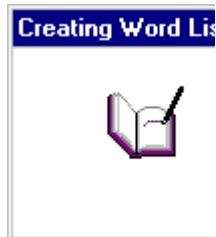
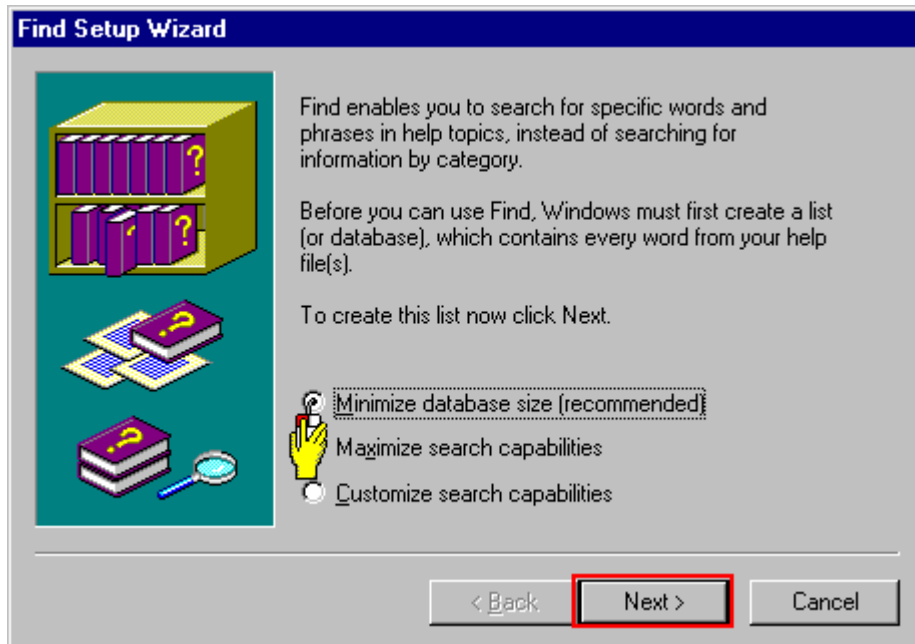
1. When you click on the **Find** tab instead of the **Index** tab, you launch Windows search wizard. In the first screen of the wizard, you are asked how extensive you want to make your search. Windows suggests the option shown as selected here (**Minimize database size**), and considering the time it can take to do a search in a large helpfile, this will be sufficient for 99 percent of the searches you need to do.

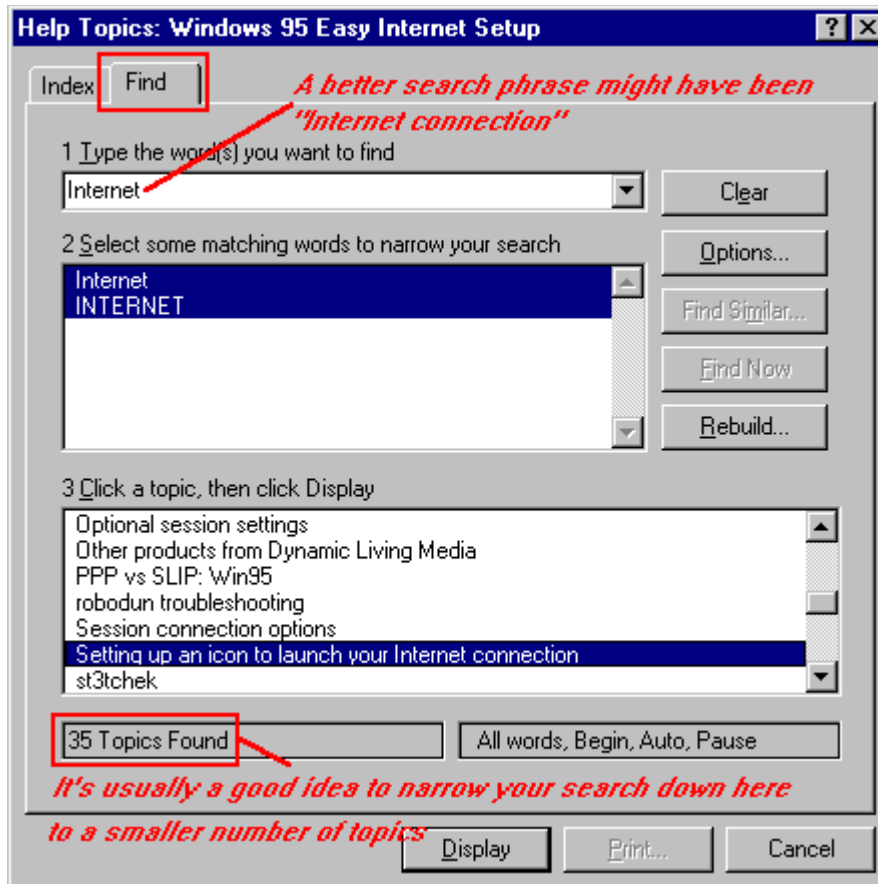
2. Youll have to wait while Windows 95 creates a word list for its database. This is a one-time-only job, so the list will not have to be rebuilt the next time you do a search. *BUT...*if you choose an option other than **Minimize database size** at some other time, youll have to wait while Windows rebuilds the database, and youll sit staring at this screen again until the job is done.

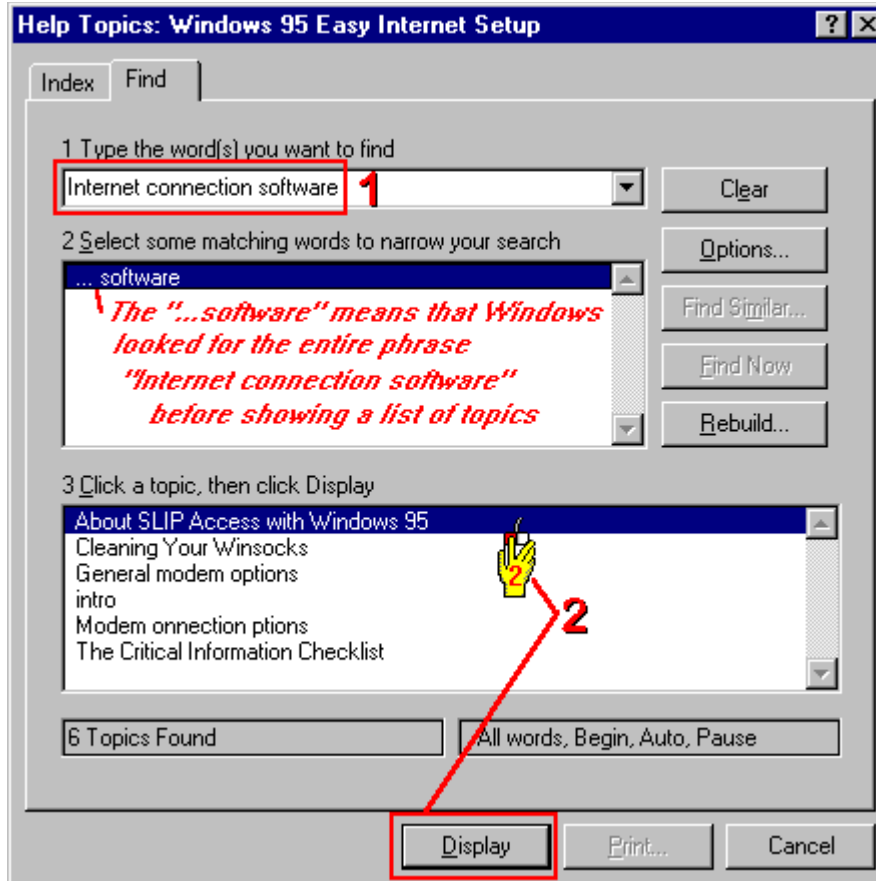
3. Once the word list has been built, youll get an option screen similar to this one. This sample screen shows what happens when you enter *Internet* into the text entry box at the top. Down near the bottom of the screen you see that 35 topics have been found, which hardly narrows down your search, especially since the whole helpfile has only 64 topics!

4. This screen shows a better search. This time, *Internet connection software* was entered **(1)** and Windows found only six topics which contain that phrase. One of them will probably have the information youre looking for. From here, its simply a matter of either *double*-clicking on the topic title you want to browse, or clicking on the topic title and then clicking **Display (2)**.

Unfortunately, you cant keep returning to this list to select topics you havent seen yet. Youll have to go through the **Search** screens each time you want to try a different topic.







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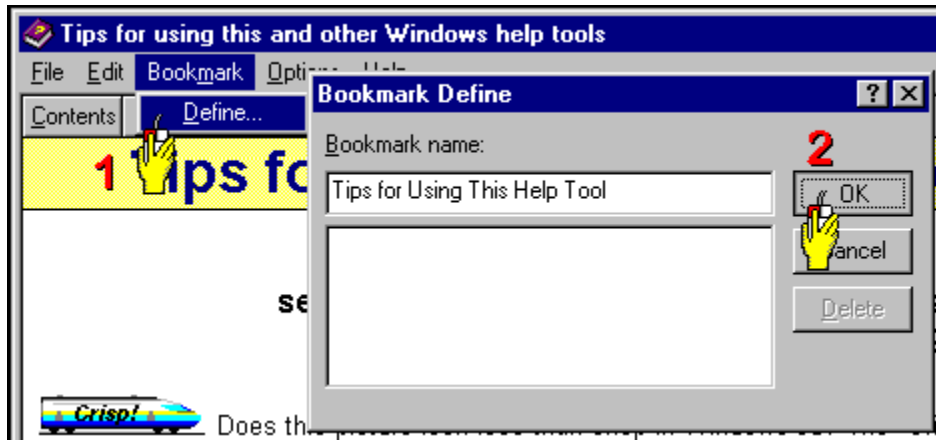
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Bookmarks, quite simply, are pointers to specific locations or topics in a help tool. Annotations are help topics *you* create. Many Windows 95 helpfiles simply show you a list of topics and allow you to hunt for the topic you want. But if you don't know precisely what you're looking for, and a search hasn't helped, bookmarks are the only way to go. A bookmark lets *you* define what was important to *you* in a particular help topic and lets you jump to that topic instantly.

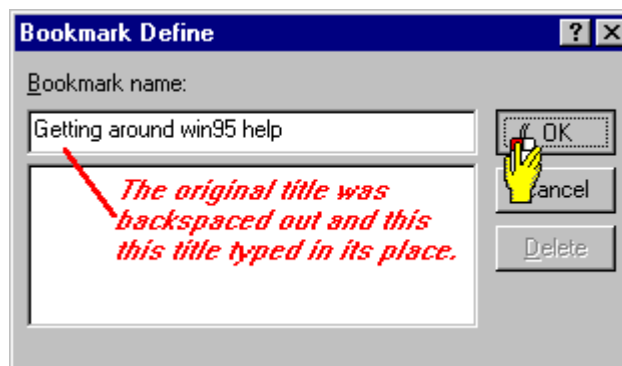
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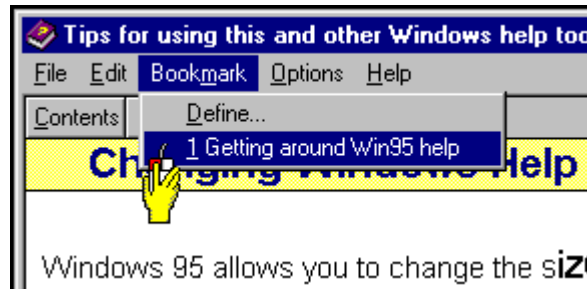
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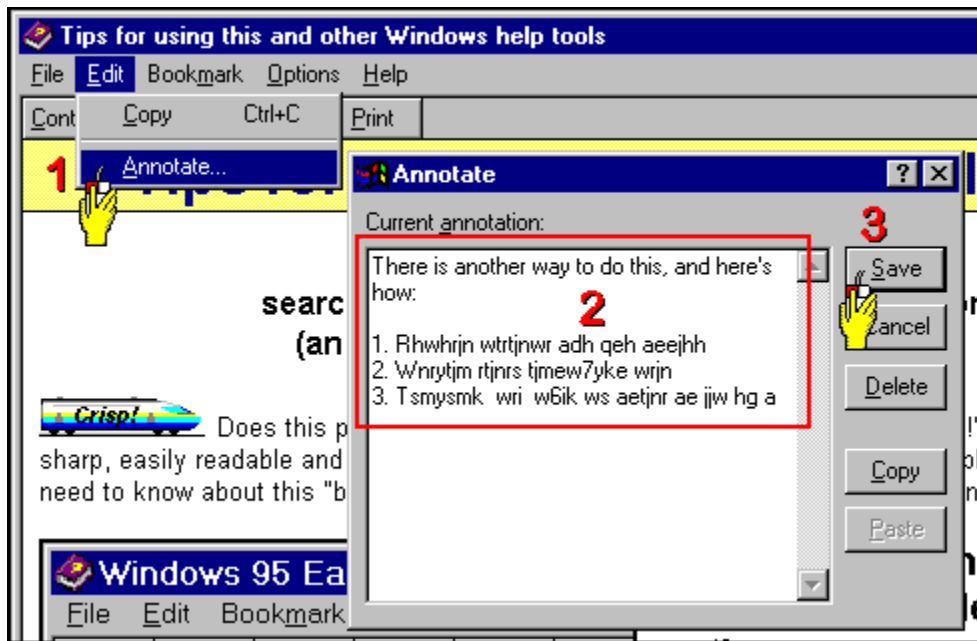


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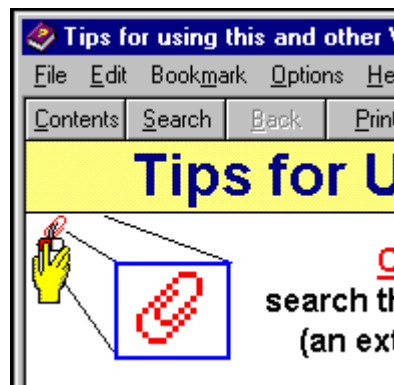
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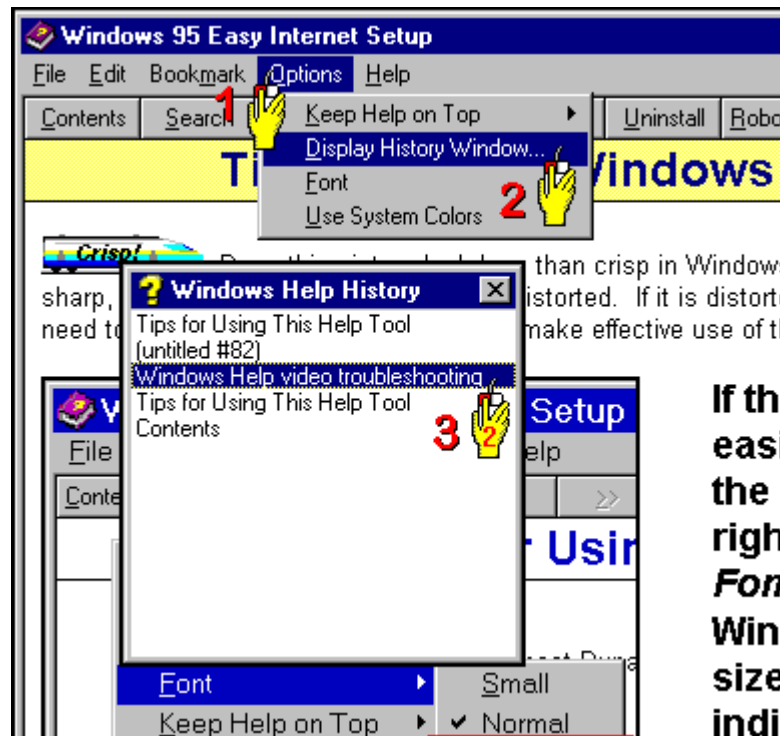


Windows Help history

Some help tools have a **History** button at the top, which is especially handy if you are trying to follow a certain procedure and have to switch back and forth between screens.

Most helpfiles in Windows 95 force you to open the **History** option manually. First, click **Options** from the top menu bar of Help (1), and select the **Display History Window...** option. A window will appear on your screen such as the one shown here (3) which lists all the topics you have already browsed in this session. You can jump to any of the topics shown in the history list simply by clicking them.

This allows you to quickly move back and forth between topics without having to remember how you got from Point A to Point P and then to Point W.



Getting more out of Windows Help



[Tips for Windows 3.1/3.11/
Windows for Workgroups](#)



[Tips for Windows 95](#)



[Customizing Windows Help](#)

