

# CompuQuickTips



The For the Best of Us  
O'Neal  
Solution

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## In This Issue...

System Necessities .....	1
Music Music Music! .....	3
Tiny Treasures .....	4
xxx .....	4
Mrs. Wizard .....	5



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!**

*I hope everyone  
is ready!*

*This month  
you can learn  
how, why, and when  
to use ScanDisk  
and Defrag.*

*Make that computer  
sound system  
earn its keep  
with a little  
holiday music.*

*And....*

*Merry Christmas  
from Mrs. Wizard!  
CompuQuickTips  
is now FREEWARE!*

*Just Subscribe on the website  
and ENJOY!*



## System Necessities...

Sometimes things just don't work right! You can have good days, bad days, in between days, and days you would rather stay in bed with the covers pulled over your head. Windows has built-in utilities that can help make some of those days better for your computer. *Utilities* are small programs that add extra capabilities to your operating system. Some can be quite useful. Others are absolute necessities.

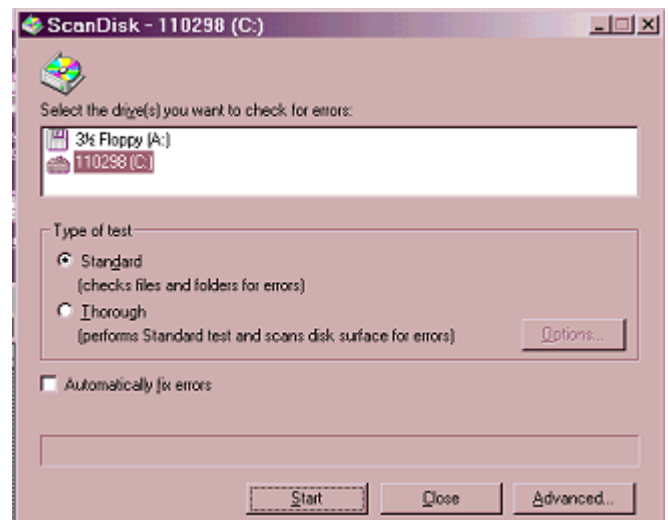
**ScanDisk** is a Windows utility that can be used to check your hard disk drive, which is where all your good stuff is stored, for errors. When your computer locks up and you have no choice but to use the power button to shut it down, interesting things can happen to your hard drive. Errors can appear that, when left unchecked, can only cause more problems as time goes by. *ScanDisk* can find and correct these little glitches that often occur when Windows locks up and you need to do a *rude* shutdown.

Most computer geeks and gurus will recommend that you certainly need to run ScanDisk when your computer develops a habit of locking up, but once a month on a perfectly healthy computer is a pretty good idea and can contribute to keeping things running nice and smoothly. In the later versions of Windows 95 and in Windows 98, ScanDisk automatically runs and checks your hard drive for you after a rude shutdown. It is *that* important!

To run ScanDisk, click the *Start* button, select *Programs*, then *Accessories*, then *System Tools*, and then *ScanDisk*. At the top of the window that appears, you should see your main hard drive highlighted. There should be another section where you can choose the *Type of test* you want to run. *Standard* will only check files and folders for errors. *Thorough* will check all your files and folders, as well as your actual hard drive for errors. You should also see a box next to

*Automatically fix errors.*

This is good to check if you aren't really sure of what you are doing. When you click the *Start* button, it will scan your hard drive, fix any problems it finds, and you can just sit back and relax. For you advanced utility junkies, there is an *Advanced* button with several extra options to choose from. The existing settings are perfectly acceptable for normal computer users.



*Continued on page 2*

## System Necessities... Continued from page 1

**Disk Defragmenter** (affectionately known as *Defrag*) is another of the more important Windows utilities. During the course of a normal day, your computer, files are constantly being updated, replaced, deleted, and moved from one place to another. This happens in the background, without any special effort on your part. If you use a word processor, temporary files are created, then deleted when you are finished. Surfing the Internet causes all sorts of files to pile up in your *Temporary Internet Files* folder. When you perform that periodic *deleting* ritual, the files are moved to your recycle bin. Once the recycle bin is emptied the files are gone for good. Or are they?

Every time a file is moved or deleted, the space previously occupied becomes an empty space on your hard drive. It just sits there, like a hole. For some reason (unknown to Mrs. Wizard), new files and moved files want to go to nice fresh spots on the hard drive. They don't like to go to gappy spots unless they don't have any other choice. Imagine that after a while, it can take longer and longer to find nice clean places on your hard drive to put stuff.

Any files that are too large to fit in one spot are *fragmented*. A little goes here, a bit more will go there. And "there" could be just about anywhere on your hard drive. Your computer can still use them but it might take a while.

This is where *Defrag* shines! *Defrag* literally rearranges files and unused space on your computer's hard drive so it will work more efficiently. Your most often used programs and files are moved to the fastest part of the disk. The end result is that your programs will run noticeably faster.

Many have reported their *Defrag* utility taking forever or never being able to quite finish. Large hard drives can take much longer to defragment. If your defrag utility seems to hang, or keep restarting itself, here are a few things you can do that should help:

Ö Before you run *Defrag*, use the old "three finger salute" to close any extra Windows programs that may be running in the background. While holding down the CTRL and ALT keys, press the DELETE key once. This will bring up your *Task Manager*. Click

Ö *Shut Down that Screensaver!* Screensavers can be the biggest resource hog. When a screensaver kicks in, *Defrag* has to start all over. It won't show up in the *Task Manager* and needs to be shut down separately.

Ö Run *ScanDisk* first. Sometimes *Defrag* will let you know that there are errors on your hard drive and that

you need to run *ScanDisk* to correct these errors first. If you know you are having problems, it wouldn't hurt to run *ScanDisk* before beginning your *Defrag* and head this message off at the pass.



**"Burning  
computers  
can be  
hazardous to  
your software"**

**Power users and total Geeks** can make an evening truly special with *ScanDisk* and *Defrag* utilities. In fact, they have a tendency to scoff at the basic functions of the utilities included with Windows and opt for more bells and whistles. *Norton Utilities* is the choice at the Wizard household. It's like *ScanDisk* and *Defrag* on steroids, with a lot of other helpful tools thrown into the bargain. When Mr. Wizard watches a *defrag* in progress, it is a joy to behold, almost a religious experience. Mrs. Wizard could give a flying flip. As long as the computer doesn't choke, roll over, or go up in flames, she is perfectly content. Some of the older versions of Norton caused more problems than they cured. That got under Mrs. Wizard's wings a bit, but she is perfectly content with their latest offerings. All is right with the world!



## Music Music Music!

The sound quality on today's computers is amazing. Most are equipped with external speakers and complete sound systems built right into them. Listening to mp3 music on a computer today is very much like listening to the same music on a high end stereo system. MP3 files are digital, CD quality sound files. Talk about getting double duty out of your computer system!

The first place to go is <http://winamp.com> and download the latest *FREE WinAmp* mp3 player for your computer. You owe it to yourself to have the latest and greatest.

**WinAmp** is fun and easy to use. Its looks are very much like a nice stereo system. The buttons for playing, stopping, fast forwarding, etc. are pretty intuitive. If you click the top left corner, more choices will appear for you to peruse. You can have it either play the contents of your music folder, or you can just open the music folder and double click each song file you want to hear. You can also use it to play regular audio CDs!

**MP3.com** is a great place to begin to browse for downloadable music. Click in the *Search* box (so you see a blinking cursor), type *Christmas*, hit the *Enter* key on your keyboard and see what comes up. You should see plenty of interesting links. If you want to check one or two out without losing your place, right click the link in question and choose *Open in New Window*. Before you will be allowed to download anything, you will have to give your email address and zip code, and they will try to sell you a LOT of stuff, but you will be surprised at what you can come up with without spending a dime. Don't worry about *accidentally* purchasing anything. This simply can't happen unless your credit card number manages to jump up on your keyboard and types itself, along with all the other confirmation information that would be needed for a purchase transaction.

**Napster Napster Napster!** It is simply the easiest way to find just the music you want for the holidays, or any other days. Napster is a software program that connects you to a community of millions of other music lovers. It allows you to search and browse for MP3 music files and to chat with any other member of the Napster community. Visit <http://napster.com> to read all about it. Just click the *Help* button on the left of the mail web page. When you are

<http://www.myspace.com>  
user id: mrswizard  
password: music



satisfied that it is for you, download the thing and be prepared for the time of your life! Setup for Napster is pretty automatic. Just follow the instructions and enjoy! When you start Napster for the first time, you will create a new account and be asked for some basic required information. You will also be prompted to choose which folders on your hard drive that you want to make available for sharing and saving your music files.

Click the *Search* button at the top of the Napster window to begin. Type in an artist name or song title in the search boxes and click *Find it*. If any music files currently by other Napster users online match your search words, you will get a list of results. Double click on the ones you want to download. It's that easy!

Since Napster does give access to your music folder when you have it running and are connected to the Internet, don't be surprised to see music files you have downloaded being *uploaded* to some other Napster user's computer. Isn't sharing fun? It is a good idea to make sure you right click on the little Napster icon at the bottom right of your taskbar and choose *Exit* when you are finished using it for the day. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to visit Mrs. Wizard's web and click the *Human Click* button at the top. If she is online, you can ask her using *Live Chat*. If you can't catch her online, just leave her a quick message and she will get back to you as quickly as possible.

Visit [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com) and access a small sampling from Mrs. Wizard's collection by using *mrswizard* for the user id and *music* as the password. You will still need to download them, but at least you will have a few to play with. Have fun!



"The Computer  
made me  
do it."

Computer Hacker  
Wanted.  
Must have  
own axe.

## Tiny Treasures...

This month's *Tiny Treasure* is a beauty! It should particularly appeal to all the older typists out there in CyberSpace. Remember that old Olympia typewriter? Mrs. Wizard is in LOVE with this one!

KClick is a novelty program that makes a click sound each time you press a key on your keyboard. There really isn't anything to install. Just unzip the KClick.zip file and put the contents into another folder. Then just double click KClick.exe and have a ball!

The main window contains 5 sound choices, a checkbox (to turn your sounds on) and a test edit box. Clicking in the circles to the left of the sound choices will let you hear those sounds. To use your sound click the Active checkbox to enable the keyboard click. Use the test area to hear the results.

When KClick's active box is checked you will hear your selected sound when you're using the keyboard with other applications. When KClick is minimized it disappears from the screen. To restore it, double click on the keyboard icon in the system tray. Double clicking again will return it to the system tray.

<http://www.primesoft.greatxscape.net/>

This is soooooo much fun!



Check out the *Tiny Treasures* area on Mrs. Wizard's Web for lots more Christmas fun for your computer. WinSnow and Twinklebulbs are classics!

*"It's ME  
or THAT computer,"  
he said.  
I'll really miss him..."*

## Holiday Goodies...

Christmas shopping on the Internet gives new meaning to the expression, "Let your fingers do the walking!" Here are a few of my personal favorites...



**Want the best price? Visit mySimon!**

<http://www.mysimon.com/index.jhtml>

**Need a new COMPUTER SEAT?  
See what Mrs. Wizard uses!**

<http://www.bodytrends.com/bldgymar.htm>



**Let your fingers do the clicking!**

<http://sfmusicbox.com/>



**A little bit of this. A little bit of that!**

<http://shop.com/x/kw/home2>



**"Homemade" doesn't have to look  
that way any more!**

**FREE sample  
from specially-yours.com!**

<http://www.specially-yours.com/>



# Mrs. Wizard

# QuickTips..

*Merry Christmas  
from Mrs. Wizard!  
From now on  
CompuQuickTips  
Newsletter is  
FREE!  
Share it with your  
friends and family!  
Forward your  
subscription with  
a note telling  
your email buddies  
how they can subscribe  
so they won't miss a  
single issue!*

*It's time for  
Mrs. Wizard  
to go PRIME TIME!  
So please...  
help spread  
the word!  
Signup directions can  
be found on the  
Special Offer page  
on Mrs. Wizard's Web.  
Make your friends  
get their OWN  
subscription!*



**Microsoft Word, Bullets ...** When you want to create a bulleted list, click the little bullet button at the top of your Microsoft Word window. Once it is turned on, every time you hit the *enter* key on your keyboard, a new bullet will be created for the new line. To return to normal typing, hit the *enter* key twice. You can do this without ever touching the bullet button. Just type a \* and a space, then start typing. When you press the *enter* key, the \* will be converted to a bullet and you can continue with your next point.

**Microsoft Word, Numbered Lists ...** Numbered lists are created automatically when you type the first number, then type a period, space, and start typing. When you hit the *enter* key, the next number will appear and you can continue typing. It's automatic! When you want to return to normal, just hit the *enter* key twice.

**When you want more choices (Microsoft Word) ...** Make sure your blinking cursor is where you want to begin. Click the word *Format*, then *Bullets and Numbering*. You won't believe all the choices! In the bullets area you can even choose special pictures to use for bullets instead of the usual fare.

**Speeding up the Scroller ...** Those little up and down arrows to the right, or at the bottom of any window mean there is more to view. These scrollbars can be used in different ways, allowing you to choose the one you are most comfortable with.

■ Move up or down a line at a time: Single left click on the single arrow at the top or bottom.

■ Move up or down a screen at a time: Single left click above or below the slider inside the scrollbar (this is called the *thumb*).

■ You can also click and hold the left mouse button down in any or these areas to repeat these moves many times (continuous scrolling). And you can left click and *drag* the thumb to move quickly to any position in the document or web page. When you let go of the left mouse button, you are *there*!

**Right Click with the Keyboard ...** Did you know that you can *right click* a folder, file, whatever is selected without ever lifting your fingers off the keyboard? Hold down the *Shift* key and press the F10 key. Use the keyboard's up and down arrows to select the command you want, then press the *Enter* key.

**Open a NEW Web Window ...** When you are browsing around the Web and want to do a little extra exploring, open a new web browser window so you won't lose your place. Hold down the *CTRL* key and press the *N* key once to open a duplicate of the current browser window. Use the title bars to arrange the two different browser windows, then explore all you want without worry. To return to the original window, just click on its title bar.

**Microsoft Word, Easy Symbols ...** Trademark, copyright and registration symbols are important protections for a company's hard-earned ideas. They are also a pain to produce in most word processors and desktop publishing programs. You have to know or find the proper keystroke combination or go through all sorts of other hoops to get them to appear. In Microsoft products (Word, Excel, Publisher) you don't have to leave these important symbols out because of sheer frustration.

To create a trademark <sup>TM</sup> symbol, type (tm).

To type a registered ® symbol, type (r).

To create a copyright © symbol, type (c).

It's just that easy!

**Less Web Typing ...** Most of you with newer versions of Internet Explorer or Netscape have discovered that it isn't necessary any more to type in *http://* at the beginning of a web site address. You can simply type *www.mrswizard.com* and your browser will fill in the rest for you and take you to *http://mrswizard.com*. What you may not know is that in most instances, you don't even need to type in *www*. Just type the domain name and press the *enter* key on your keyboard. Sit back and relax while your browser takes you there. If you have Internet Explorer 4 or higher, you don't even need to type in *.com*. Just type in *mrswizard* in the address area and press *CTRL+ENTER* and the rest will be filled in for you.

*Special NOTE:* This only works for .com sites. If you want to go to .net or .org sites, you will have to type in the whole name (*www.wherever.net*). If you use *CTRL+ENTER*, Internet Explorer will look for *wherever.net.com*. Go figure!

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## Editor's Desk

This FREE newsletter is dedicated to taking the mystery out of computers in an entertaining, informative way. If you have any questions or comments, please, drop me a line, give me a call or e-mail me and let me know what you think and would like to see addressed in future issues. I really enjoy hearing from you and am happy to help all I can. You can subscribe to the electronic version of CompuQuickTips by visiting Mrs. Wizard's Web listed below. You will receive a full-color, information-packed subscription delivered straight to your e-mail each month as an Adobe Acrobat PDF file. Download the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader for FREE at <http://www.adobe.com>.

You can order Mrs. Wizard's CD Essentials by visiting [mrswizard.com](http://mrswizard.com). Look in the *Special Offer* section. It has 3 years of CompuQuickTips Newsletter, as well as CompuQuickTips (the book). Acrobat Reader (the latest version) is on the CD for you to install with one click of your mouse, as well as lots of other Mrs. Wizard's favorite graphic shareware. This is a terrific learning tool! Just pop in the CD and have fun!

Sincerely,

*Cindy O'Neal*



Mrs. Wizard's Web  
<http://mrswizard.com>

Hosted by **Internet Solutions**  
<http://www.internetsolutions.com>  
901/767-5023

In January ...  
System Tools...Backup

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