



# Mrs. Wizard's CompuQuickTips For the Rest of Us

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## In This Issue...

More on Plugins .....	1
ClipArt Tips .....	3
Gem .. CompuPic Pro .....	4
Gem .. Avant Browser .....	5
Tiny Treasure .. MyUninstaller .....	6
Tiny Treasure .. WordZap .....	6
Mrs. Wizard Quick Tips .....	7

Learn more about how plugins can make you look like a pro! You can even download the PaintShop Pro (version 8) file I created while writing the tutorial.

Make the most of your holiday ClipArt with these special tips and tricks.

There are two outstanding Gems in this issue. CompuPic Pro has a new version of their great image viewer and Avant Browser is a FREE alternative to Internet Explorer.

And...

The Tiny Treasure for December is very simple, useful and FREE!

Many thanks to all my wonderful readers. Without you, I'm just a frustrated computer jockey! I hope this holiday season is your best ever!



## More on Plugins ...

Here are a few of my favorites and the nitty gritty details on how I use them!

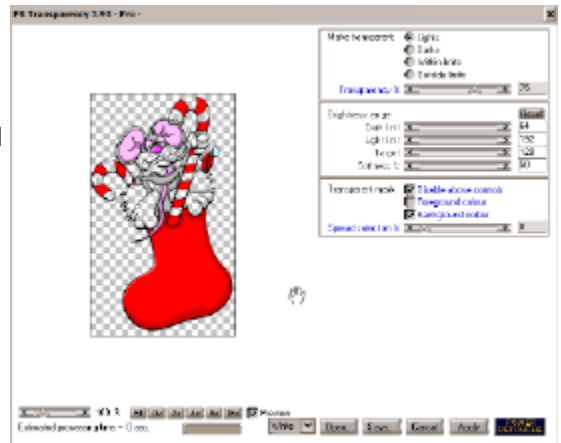
**Buttonize with PaintShop Pro ...** One of my absolutely favorite plugins is built into PaintShop Pro. You will find it in version 8 under *Effects*, then *3D Effects* and *Buttonize*.

Begin with a plain photo and "frame" it with the *Buttonize* plugin. Build and enhance the frame by applying it several times. Use the *Selection tool* to draw different sized outlines inside the image, buttonizing each time with different settings. I can promise you no two will be alike.



**When something is selected ...** you can do anything you want to that selected area. This includes applying filter and plugin effects. While working on a new Christmas wallpaper for the website, I fiddled a bit with the Power Retouche Transparency too. WOW! I'm so used to limitations when it comes to making parts of an image transparent. This tool made it so easy to hone in on just what I needed to achieve the effect I wanted. It doesn't matter what file type you are working with. If it is selected (has the little marching ants around it), you should have access to the plugins. In this section, I opened a clipart image with *ThumbsPlus* and just copied it (*CTRL+C*) to the clipboard. Then, in *PaintShop Pro*,

created a new layer and pasted the clipboard contents into that layer as a new selection (click *Edit*, then *Paste*, then *Paste as New Selection*). The selection was actually rectangular with a white background. I just wanted the image to play with. While it was still selected (highlighted), I clicked the word *Effects*, then *Plugins*, then down to the *Power Retouche* area to choose the *PR Transparency* tool. After a little slider manipulation with absolutely no clue to what I wanted, I was satisfied enough to hit the *Apply* button. One of the nicest things about experimenting with computer graphics is the ability to *Undo* any time you want. With *PaintShop Pro* you can go back as far as you want by using the keyboard command *CTRL+Z*.



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**Working with Plugins on a Layer ...** In the Christmas wallpaper I put together for you, there are several different layers of snowflakes. I used the Power Retouche Color Correction plugin on each layer, experimenting with random settings and very interesting results. It came in very handy when I decided the red frame wasn't quite red enough.

When applying a plugin or special filter effect to a layer, make sure you have the layer selected properly. It isn't the same as selecting one object in your graphic using the *Selection tool*. You can have many different objects on a *layer*. Learn to *think* in layers. Use the *layer*

## More on Plugins ...

*palette* to always know where you are and control what you want to work with. Create as many new layers as you want. Turn "off" layers you don't need (but might want later) by clicking the little eye

to the right of the layer name. The active layer (the one you can do something with or to) is always going to be highlighted. Click any other layer's name to make it the active layer. It really is that easy.

**Saving Your Files ...** You spend a lot of time on a design. Always save your file in your program's native format. PaintShop Pro files need to be saved as PaintShop Pro files. This is the only way all your layers will be saved for you to use again. If you want to save a copy as a .jpg file to share with friends, do a *Save As*, or (with PaintShop Pro) *Save Copy As* and save an additional copy in any other format you choose. Always keep your original intact.

**Drop Shadow ...** A nice drop shadow can give your images a nice 3D effect. In PaintShop Pro, you can find it under *Effects/3D Effects*. A drop shadow is very striking with text. It can also be overused, so be careful.

**Texture Effects ...** These can be amazing and there are many different places and ways they can be applied. I applied an interesting texture to the *white swoosh* layer in the Christmas Wallpaper image. With the layer selected in PaintShop Pro, click the word *Effects* at the top of the main screen, then *Texture Effects* and *Texture* (note all the other choices to fiddle with while you are there). Choose the texture you want to apply to the selected area.

Create your own textures and save

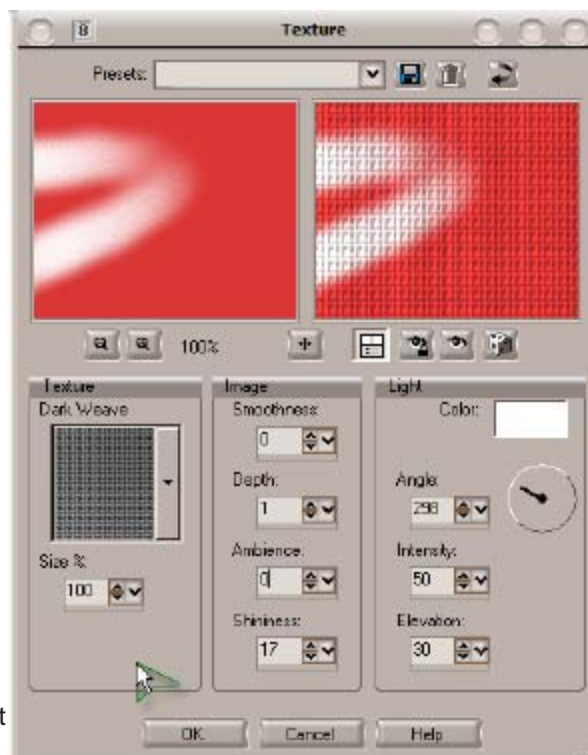
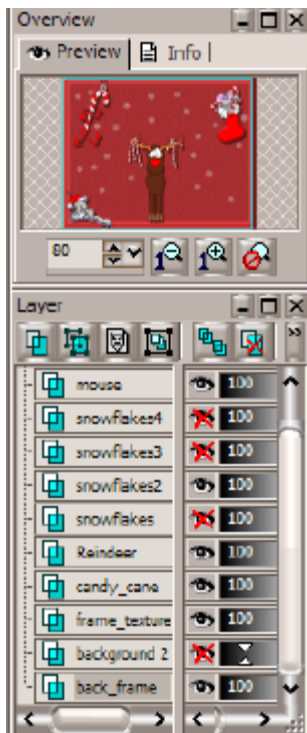
them in the special PSP files folder for textures. For PaintShop Pro, textures need to be greyscale .bmp files. Find an image you like and remove the color by clicking the word *Image*, then *Greyscale*. Save it as a .bmp file and leave the original intact. You can build a very impressive texture collection in no time. A scanner can produce very original textures. I have scanned everything from hair clippings to peacock feathers. If you can make it flat enough to sandwich between the bed and the top of a scanner, it is definitely texture potential! Try to stay away from anything gooey though. Scanners don't like gooey things!

**Have Fun! ...** I hope you enjoy playing with my little *Christmas.psp* file. I had a wonderful time putting it together and paid special attention to making sure there were plenty of layers for you to play with. Take it apart and put it back together again. Create your own additional layers and play with all the built in plugins available in PaintShop Pro. It is the best way to learn, and my gift to you!



**Alpha Geek:**  
The most knowledgeable, technically proficient person in an office or work group.

"Ask Larry, he's the alpha geek around here."



Visit the Power Retouche Website  
<http://powerretouche.com>

If you don't have it already,  
pick up the latest version of PaintShop Pro at  
<http://jasc.com>

Download the PSP file used during  
the writing of this tutorial.  
<http://mrswizard.com/christmas.pspimage>

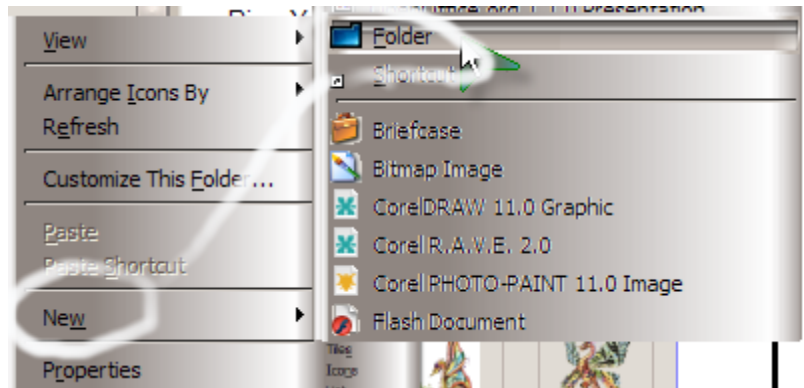
# Clipart Tips ...



**Cobweb Site:**  
A World Wide  
Web Site that  
hasn't been  
updated for  
a long time.  
A dead  
web page.



**Create your own special image folders ...** Use the *My Pictures* folder if you already have one, but you can also create subfolders within that *My Pictures* folder for additional organizing. With the folder open, right click anywhere in a white area and choose *New*. Move the mouse up to the word *Folder*. Type a name for your new folder, then click once (with the left mouse button) anywhere to lock in your new folder's name.



**Use the Internet to your advantage ...** When you see an image you like, save it right to your special image folder. Right click any image in your browser window and choose *Save image as*. When the mini file manager appears, make sure your image folder is showing in the *Save In* box at the top. Feel free to rename the image to suit your liking, but do *not* change the file extension at the end of the file name. If it is *.jpg* or *.gif*, make sure the extension is still part of the file name or you won't be able to open it.

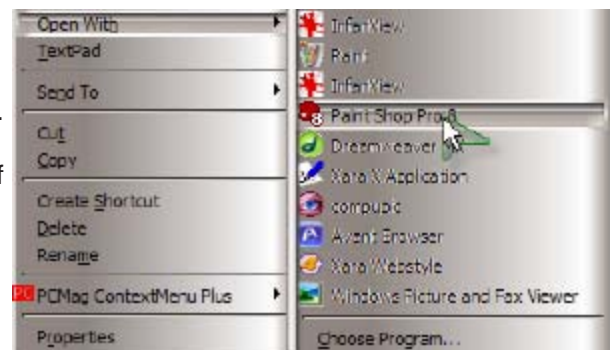
**Use Copy and Paste ...** The computer you have today is *much* faster than the computers of just a few years ago. It is meant to *multi task*. It is a lot easier to browse through your image folders with a special image viewer like CompuPic. You can easily see the images rather than guess at file names. Have your word processing program open and an image browser open at the same time. Use the buttons at the bottom of your main screen (in the *Taskbar*) to quickly move between the two. When you see an image you want to use, double click to open it. Press *CTRL+C* to copy the image to the clipboard. Close the full view window and go to your word processor document or desktop publishing document. Click anywhere in the document so it becomes the focus. Press *CTRL+V* to paste your image.

**Drag and Drop with Windows Explorer ...** If you are using Windows XP, you have the ability to view *Thumbnail previews* of any images Windows can naturally read. Now, this is just basic, but it may be all you need sometimes. Right click your *My Pictures* folder and choose *Explore*. Look for (and click once) the little *Views* button at the top of the window. Click the little arrow to the right of it to see your choices. Make sure there is a little check mark next to *Thumbnails* by clicking the word once. If you are really good at moving windows around by their title bars, you can left click and drag any image directly into your document. If you are uncomfortable moving windows around, double click the image so it will open in the image editor associated with it, and copy it to the clipboard from there for a little *Copy and Paste* action.



**Open With ...** XP users have an additional advantage with graphics built right into the operating system. If double clicking an image doesn't cause the image to open with the editing software you

prefer or need, right click the file and see what else is available in the *Open With* area. Sometimes the default program associated with an image is not what you really need. If you want to add text to a photo, or do other changes, the *Open With* right click option will show all the other programs Windows knows will open your image.



## CompuPic Pro ...

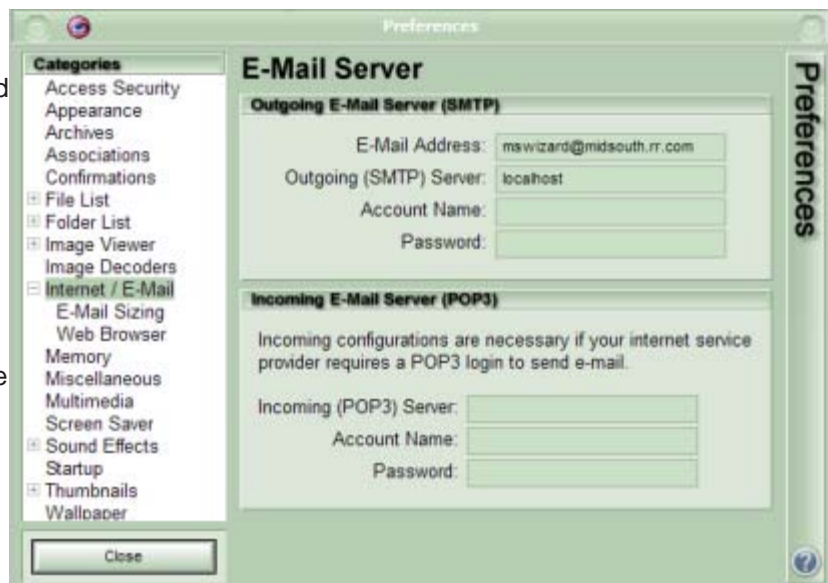
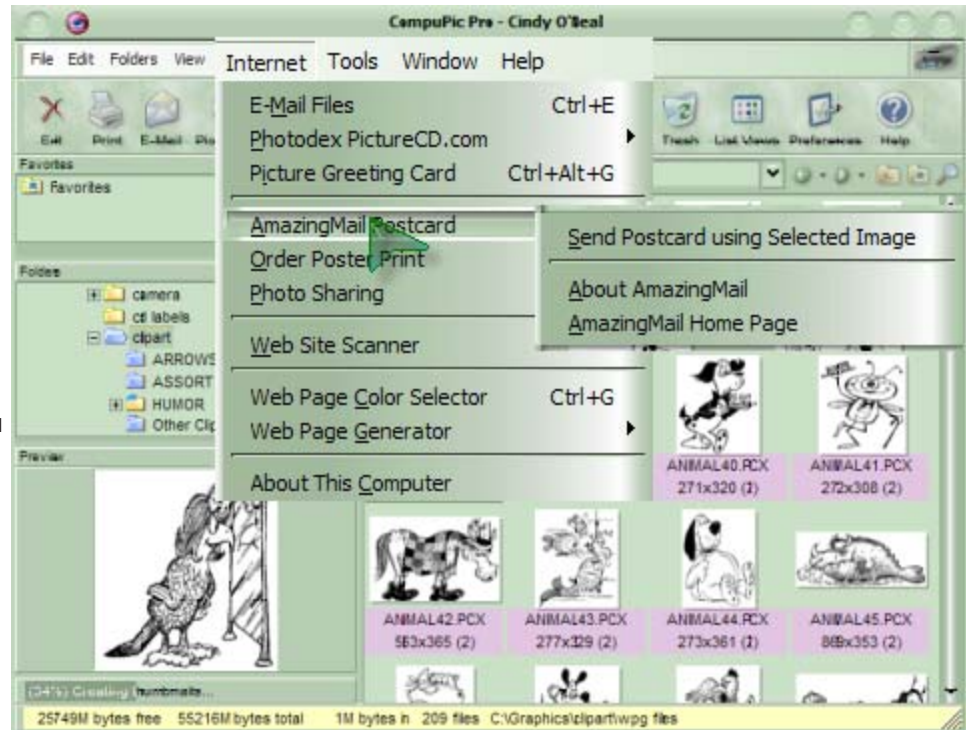
If you have been using CompuPic a while, you will love this newest version of one of the best image thumbnailer and viewers available today. It is faster than ever and loaded with extra goodies and special effects you won't find anywhere else. If you have never used it, now is the time!

It is very integrated with the Internet, and if you are connected, there are options to send a *real* postcard using one of your own photos. Click the word *Internet* at the top of the main CompuPic Pro window and choose anything from emailing one of your images (If you can see it, you can email it), to sending a picture greeting card. [Photodex](http://Photodex.com) makes it easy for you to create a free [PictureCD.com](http://PictureCD.com) account so you can send lots of photos up into cyberspace. Create albums to share with friends and family all over. If *snail mail* is your favorite mode of communication, you can even have a *real* postcard printed, with *your* favorite photos and a personal message. For a very small fee, you can have it sent anywhere you choose. How's that for getting back to basics??

Emailing your favorite images is a seamless procedure. Make sure you are connected, use CompuPic Pro to find the image you want to send. Click the word *Internet* at the top of the main CompuPic window, then click the words *E-Mail Files*. It really is that easy. Send any type of file as an email attachment ... not just picture files. During installation, it found my email information, probably from Outlook, and it was already set up when I tested it. To check, click the word *Edit*, then *Preferences*. Click *Internet/E-Mail* in the Categories area on the left. Fill in your email information in the area on the right. The only bad news about this nifty little feature is that you must have an Internet Service Provider that uses SMTP for your outgoing email. AOL'ers are pretty much out of luck, but they may address that issue in a later version. If you can use Outlook or Outlook Express for your email, you should have no trouble using the *E-Mail Files* feature in CompuPic Pro.

Create *Picture CDs* with CompuPic Pro. Like it doesn't do enough already! If you have a recordable CD, just plop in a *blankie* and go for it. Of course you need to make sure all the images you want to use are in a folder you can find. CompuPic Pro is good, but some things you have to organize yourself.

CompuPic Pro has a nice Slide Show utility built right in. Select your images in any folder, click the word *Tools*, then the words *Slide Show* from the Slide Show menu. Click *Configure Slide show* to choose from over 100 very nice transitions. You can even add music to the mix if you want. Once a slide show is running, just hit the ESC key on your keyboard to make it stop.





If you really love slide shows, and have a lot of images to share, you might like to give **ProShow** a go. It is a stand alone utility and is totally dedicated to making your slide show creations easy. If you have a cherished collection of images, or love to take photos, this is the perfect way to share them with friends and family. There are more transitions available and you can add sound tracks captions to your images, control the timing, create video files and autorun CDs. Build your own screen savers to sell or give away. It is definitely a program that will turn your creativity loose! Download it and see for yourself how easy it is to use.

Visit <http://photodex.com> to read more about what **CompuPic Pro** and **ProShow** can do and download a fully functional 15-day trial copy. You will LOVE it!

**CompuPic Pro:** FREE to try (15 days unrestricted) \$79.95 to purchase (used to be \$99)  
6.4 Mb download size

**ProShow:** FREE to try (15 days unrestricted) \$59.95 to purchase  
5.2 Mb download size

## Avant Browser ...

An amazing **2.7 Mb** (FREEWARE) program that somehow merges with your Internet Explorer to give you *Tabbed Browsing* and a whole lot more. If you like the idea of tabbed browsing but



thought you had to use Netscape to get it, this is the answer for you. It is a much smaller download than the full version of Netscape and doesn't make you change your life by creating an additional identity or signing on to a new email address. There is no advertising, no spyware involved; it just works! You don't have to make it your default browser, but you will probably want to after using it a while.

It is described as an *upgrade* to Internet Explorer. It sure makes it better! All my Internet Explorer special toolbars are still available. I wouldn't want to do without my magical Google toolbar, with its popup stopper and AutoFill options. When you click the word *Tools* and *Internet Options* at the top of the main window, the Internet Explorer options are just below the special Avant Browser options.

Clicking a link with the middle mouse wheel will cause that link to automatically open a new window/tab. You won't be getting lost on

the Internet Superhighway any more with this little goodie. If you have several website favorites, save them as a group so they will all rise and shine when you open the Avant Browser.

Visit <http://www.avantbrowser.com/> to read more and download the latest version.  
You *deserve the best!*

## Tiny Treasures ... MyUninstaller

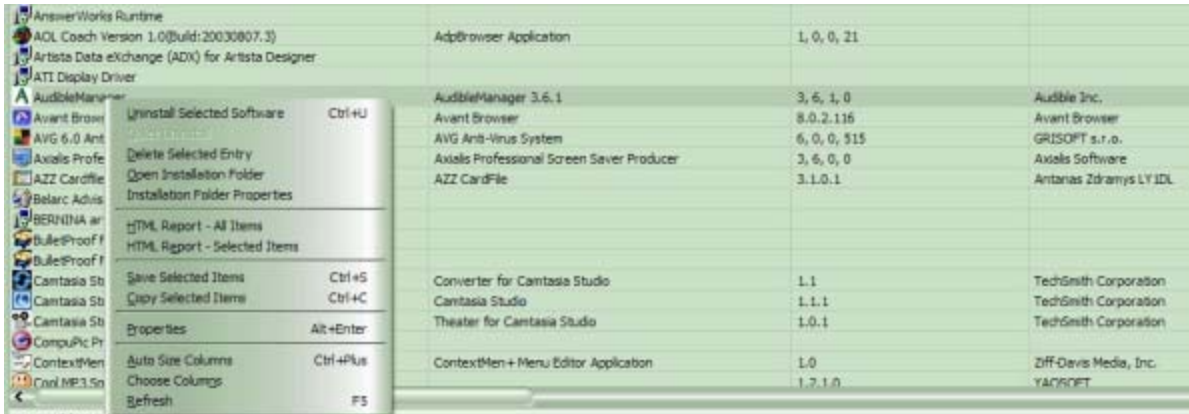
This little utility is all a *Tiny Treasure* should be. It is very tiny (only 27Kb), very useful, very easy to use and very FREE!

MyUninstaller is an alternative to the standard *Add/Remove* area of the Control Panel in Windows. It displays the list of all installed applications, and with a single right click, lets you choose to *uninstall* and much more. Some software, even when uninstalled properly, can linger in the *Add/Remove Programs* area. It doesn't really hurt anything, but if you are on the fussy end of the personality spectrum, it can make you crazy. This little program will let you remove those errant entries with a single click. Just right click and choose *Delete Selected Entry*.

You will also notice a lot more information about the software you have installed on your computer; stuff you won't see in the *Add/Remove Programs* section.

*MyUninstaller* won't make you rich or cause

your mother in law to behave. Heck! You don't even have to install it. Just download it, unzip it to any folder you want and double click the .exe file to use it. It just works! And you will learn more about the software you have installed.



<http://nirsoft.mirrorz.com>

## WordZap ...

When was the last time you played a *really* good word game? The WordZap website describes this little *Treasure* as an "addictionary" game. It certainly is! It's a wonderfully refreshing brain cell workout! I purchased unlimited upgrades several years ago and must say this is one game that never grows old. I can see myself playing this thing when I'm *really* old and gray, with my teeth in a glass, hands all gnarly, drooling over the keyboard... get the picture?

You can play it over the net, with other humans or against your computer. If you play your computer it "learns" the way you play, so you will always have a challenge.

**Egosurfing:  
Scanning the net,  
databases,  
print media, or  
research papers  
looking for the  
mention of  
your name.**

1.1 Mb download

Free to try, \$20 - \$40 to purchase (depends on upgrade options you choose)



<http://wordzap.com>





# Mrs. Wizard

## QuickTips ...



**Start Up Faster ...** Periodically check your *Startup* folder to make sure nothing new has sneaked in. Many software applications think they are so *important* they need to crank up automatically when you start your computer. **WRONG!** Click the *Start* button on your computer, move the mouse pointer to *Programs*, then to the *Startup* folder. Every *right click and delete* action on your part in this folder will help your computer start faster and run more efficiently. If you see anything you *think* you may want to keep in the *Startup* folder, right click and drag it to the *Desktop* temporarily. Choose *Move*. Restart your computer and see if you can live without it running constantly in the background.

**Dorito Syndrome: What's the hole for? ...** You have to really dig to find *this* in your owner's manual. It's that tiny hole in the front of your CD drive on your computer. In case of a power outage, or the total demise of your computer, it is a non-technical way to remove any CD you may have stuck inside. Straighten a normal sized paper clip and push the end of it (very carefully) into the hole. When you feel it stop, press a little harder and the CD tray will open. Neat huh?

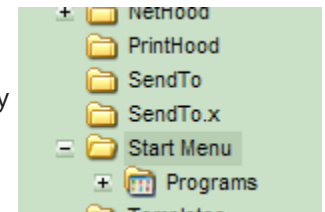
**"I just spent six hours surfing the web, and now I've got a bad case of Dorito Syndrome."**

**Print Screen Key ...** is a bit of a misnomer. On older computers (like back in the *DOS* daze), pressing this key would literally print the contents of whatever screen you could see at the time. Now, with multi tasking a general rule, the key really means, "take a snapshot of your current screen." The snapshot is loaded into your computer's memory and can be *pasted* into any application you can paste an image. It is a handy tool to remember. I like to paste screenshots into PaintShop Pro, then use the selection tool to outline just the area I need. Then it is a simple matter to *CTRL+C* (copy), then *CTRL+V* (paste). This will paste the outlined area as a brand new image.

**Housebreak your mouse ...** Customize all sorts of mouse habits. You can slow it down, speed it up, adjust double click speed and (depending on your mouse model) assign special tasks to buttons. Click *Start*, open the *Control Panel* and double click your *Mouse* icon. Click the different tabs at the top of the *Mouse Properties* window to see all the neat ways you can adjust that little critter to suit *your* needs.



**Send To - Wherever ...** Take total control of your *Send To* options when you right click on a file. If you have any special folders you would like to see as a choice in the *Send To* menu, add them easily by right clicking the *Start* button and choosing *Explore*. Click once on the *Send To* folder in the left window pane so the contents appear in the right pane. Move this window to a convenient area on your desktop. You will be dragging to it shortly.



Right click and choose *Explore* on the *My Documents* folder so it opens as a separate window. Create a new folder within the *My Documents* folder so it will be easy to find. *Right click and drag* your new folder into the *Send To* folder (contents area). When you let go of the right mouse button, choose *Create Shortcut here*.

**Find Missing Toolbars ...** It has happened to all of us at one time or another. Open Internet Explorer and something is missing at the top. It may be the *Address Bar* that is so handy at the top of Internet Explorer for typing in web site addresses. Here's how to fix it. Click the word *View* at the top and look to see what is checked. If you don't see a check next to the word *Address*, you have found your problem. Click it once so a check appears to the left and you should see the return of your *Address Bar*.

**Arrange and Lock Toolbars ...** Nothing is set in stone with Windows. Arrange your Toolbars to suit by left clicking and dragging them to a new position. Unfortunately, this is also a good way to crowd a perfectly good one out to the point where it is virtually invisible. If you can't find a toolbar and you know there is a check next to it in the *View* menu, you might want to poke around, dragging others out of the way until you find it. Once you have your toolbar exactly the way you like, right click any empty area on it and choose *Lock the Toolbars* to prevent future mishaps. This also works in other applications. Try right clicking on your favorite word processing toolbar to see what your options are.

## Editor's Desk

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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 email 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 email 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 help support CompuQuickTips by ordering Mrs. Wizard's CD Essentials when you visit <http://mrswizard.com>. Look in the *Special Offer* section for more information and other ways to help. Due to popular demand, the latest version of the CD has *ALL* the past newsletter issues (since 1995). Acrobat Reader (the latest version) is on the CD for you to install with one click of your mouse, as well as lots of Mrs. Wizard's favorite graphic shareware programs. This is a terrific learning tool! Just pop in the CD and have fun!

If you want *ALL* the daily tips in one place, as well as lots and lots of custom wallpapers for your desktop, think about joining the Happy Dragon Club at the [mrswizard.com](http://mrswizard.com) website. A very small (one time) donation will get you access to a growing number of Members Only goodies.

Sincerely,

*Cindy O'Neal*



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

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[mwizard@midsouth.rr.com](mailto:mwizard@midsouth.rr.com)

In January ...

Zooming and Resizing  
 Simple Cleanups



Your Personal  
 Computer Tutor

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