

Tiny Treasures ... Alt-Tab Replacement

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.msp>

TaskSwitcher PowerToy is a nifty little FREEBIE from Microsoft that lets you preview your programs before you switch to them. It is part of the new PowerToys family of utilities for Windows XP.

Normally, when you press *Alt+Tab* at the same time, Windows displays a box with all your open programs and windows. To switch from one program to another, hold down the *Alt* key and keep tabbing until you've highlighted the one you want. Keyboard devotees consider this a huge click-saver.

The only problem with *Alt+Tab* is you're flying blind. You can't preview a window before switching to it. You only have a small icon representation of the program itself.

The *PowerToy* called *Alt-Tab Replacement* fixes all that. After you install it, whenever you use *Alt+Tab*, you will get a preview of the window you want to switch to. You can also read its title bar.

Download *taskswitch.exe* and click it to install. At 534 Kb, it is certainly small enough to qualify as a *Tiny Treasure*, and if you are a keyboard person, you will LOVE it!



To err
is human;
to forgive,
beyond the scope
of the
Operating System.

Image Resizer ...

If you can right click a file, you can *resize* it with this little *PowerToy*. Download *ImageResizer.exe* (only 521 Kb) and click to install. What this little goodie does is add a special *right click option* to your image files. Right click any image file and choose *Resize Pictures*, then follow the prompts in the next window. What you will end up with is a smaller copy of your original, suitable for sending via email. This does not replace your favorite image editor, but it is great when you need something quick and simple.



More PowerToys for Windows XP ...

There are a quite a few *Tiny Treasure* type goodies on the *PowerToys for XP* page. Spend some time reading about each one before you decide to download and install. Make sure it is something you can really use. A google search on specific *PowerToys* is a great way to learn more and discover if anyone has had any problems. Any extra information you find can only help you make a better informed decision.



There are special instructions for folks who installed *PowerToys* prior to April 23, 2002. Remember, these are not officially part of Windows XP and *not* supported by Microsoft. There are certainly some *Treasures* here, and in most instances, so simple to install and use, tech support really isn't needed.



Mrs. Wizard's QuickTips ...



Upgrade and Clean Install on New Computer ... If you purchase a new computer, you certainly want the latest versions of your favorite software installed. That old machine has had its day, but the old version of MS Office is dated and has no place on your new rocket. You don't necessarily need to run out and purchase the newest versions as though you never had them before. Check into the *Upgrade* version instead. If you are a legal owner of an older version, you qualify for the *upgrade price*, which can be substantially lower than a first time purchase. You do not need to install that old software on your new computer, but you may need to *prove* to "the computer" you are eligible for the upgrade by removing the new CD during the installation process (when prompted). Replace it with your older version installation CD. It only needs to be in long enough for your computer to verify, then you can remove it, insert the new CD again and continue with your fresh clean installation. You may see the *auto run* installation window for the old program when you put in that old CD. Make sure you close that window to avoid actually installing it. You only need to work with the new software installation window.

By doing a clean installation whenever possible, you can be sure your computer will only have the files it needs to run the newer software properly. You won't be cluttering your new computer with dated software and useless files.

Naming Files and Folders ... Stick with letters and numbers and you will be fine. While you can use long file and folder names with Windows XP, special characters in a file or folder name can cause you to get an error message telling you it is invalid.

Tool Tips ... If you can't remember what the little toolbar buttons are for, pretend your mouse pointer is lost and let it linger over each one. A special little popup will appear to let you know.



The computer is mightier than the pen, the sword, and usually, the programmer.

Miss the old Start Menu? ... New XP users can sometimes be a little overwhelmed by the *XP Start Menu*. You can end the suffering any time you want by changing it to the *Classic Menu*. Right click the *Start* button and choose *Properties*. Then click the little circle to the left of *Classic Start Menu*. Click *OK* to finish.

Instant Mute ... At the bottom right of your main computer screen, there is an area called the *System Tray*. Look for a little icon that looks like a tiny speaker. Left click it once and your volume control will appear. You can adjust the volume by left clicking and dragging the slider up or down. To *mute* the sound completely, click once in the little box next to the word *mute*. This should be the first place to look if you suddenly find yourself *without* any sound.

Password Safety Rules ...

- * Use at least seven characters in your password, and make sure they are a mix of numbers, uppercase letters and lowercase letters.
- * Don't use the names of your spouse, children, or anything obviously associated with you.
- * Don't have your password spell out a word. Make the letters and numbers random.
- * Change your password once a month.
- * Don't use the same password for everything.



Editor's Desk

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Sincerely,

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