



In This Issue...

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| XP and Your CD Recorder III | 1 |
| E-Mail Cleanup | 3 |
| Tiny Treasures .. POW! | 4 |
| Synchromagic | 4 |
| Mrs. Wizard Quick Tips | 5 |

XP and your CD Recorder III

Your computer can be so much more than a fancy word processor or round trip ticket on the Information SuperHighway. It can be a rich source of audio and video entertainment. There's nothing like *MUSIC* to make your computer a private haven ... just for you! You know the kind. Special music that takes you back to a less stressful time in your life. You know the songs ... the ones that make you feel like a kid again.

Learn how to convert that great MP3 collection of music to files that can be used with your CD Recording software to make an audio CD that can be played on any music CD player.

Tired of those awful PopUP ads that interrupt your Internet browsing? This issue has the answer, and it's a FREEBIE!

The Internet is a rich repository of information, and music is one of the easiest things to find. All you need is a big hard drive and a little understanding of what you are looking for.

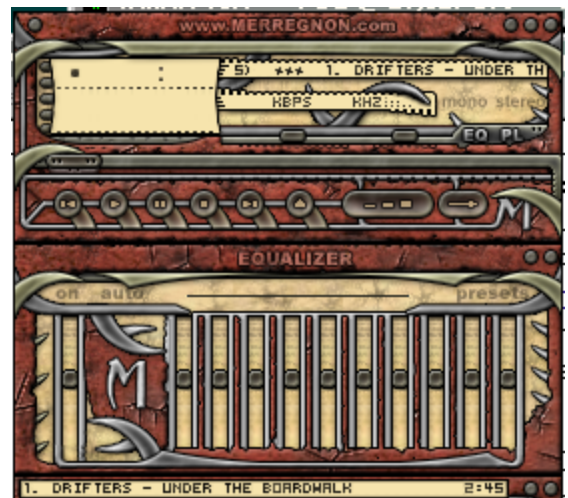
MP3 files are what makes music and the Internet such a great team. The sound is terrific and file sizes are a lot smaller than conventional music CD files. These files can only be played on computers or special players. Some newer CD players are able to play Mp3 files. Most computers come equipped with Windows Media player, a software application that plays video and audio files, including Mp3 files. WinAmp is a great player for music files too, and can be picked up for FREE at <http://www.winamp.com>. MP3 files are a great way to get double duty out of that neat sound system that came with your computer. The trick is to find, download, and store them for easy access.

<http://winmx.com>

WinMX.com is my personal favorite for gleaning MP3 files from the Internet. The special software must be downloaded (it's free) and you will need to sign up with a user name and password, but it is not *Spyware* and it is relatively easy to figure out and use. Once installed, click the search tab, type what you are looking for and see what it can find. To download a song, right click on it and choose *download*.

If you only want to listen to your music on your computer, or a special MP3 music player, you don't need to do another thing. Double clicking each MP3 file will cause WinAmp or your Windows Media Player to open and play your music. Both of these programs are FREE and can be a lot of fun to use. This screen print of WinAmp shows only one of the many different "skins" available to make the program match your particular mood or personality. The newer versions of Windows Media Player are "skinnable" too.

If you want to put your MP3 music on an audio CD so you can listen on any CD player, a couple of things need to happen. MP3 files need to be converted to special audio files, then transported to a blank CD. If everything goes all right, you will have a very personalized CD that can be played on any regular CD player.



XP and your CD Recorder III *Continued from page 1*

If you don't have Windows XP yet, you will need to convert your MP3 files to Wave files, then use your CD software (that came with your computer, usually CD Creator from Roxio) to convert the .wav files to files for an audio CD. An easy way to convert MP3 files to wav files is with a special little utility called MP3toWave. Mrs. Wizard tried others, but this little \$19.95 wonder made them all look sick. Once it is installed, you simply right click on any wav file and choose *Convert to WAV*. That's it. It will even send your converted files to a special *Converted Wave files* folder that is very easy to find. Just right click on *My Computer*, choose *Explore* and click the + to the left of your C drive. You will see your *Converted Wave files* toward the top in the left windowpane. Click once on the folder, and your newly converted gems will appear in the right pane, ready for your bidding.

Wav files take an enormous amount of room on your hard drive. These are not *keeper files*. If you want to listen to music on your computer, save the MP3 files. They don't need nearly as much room on your computer.

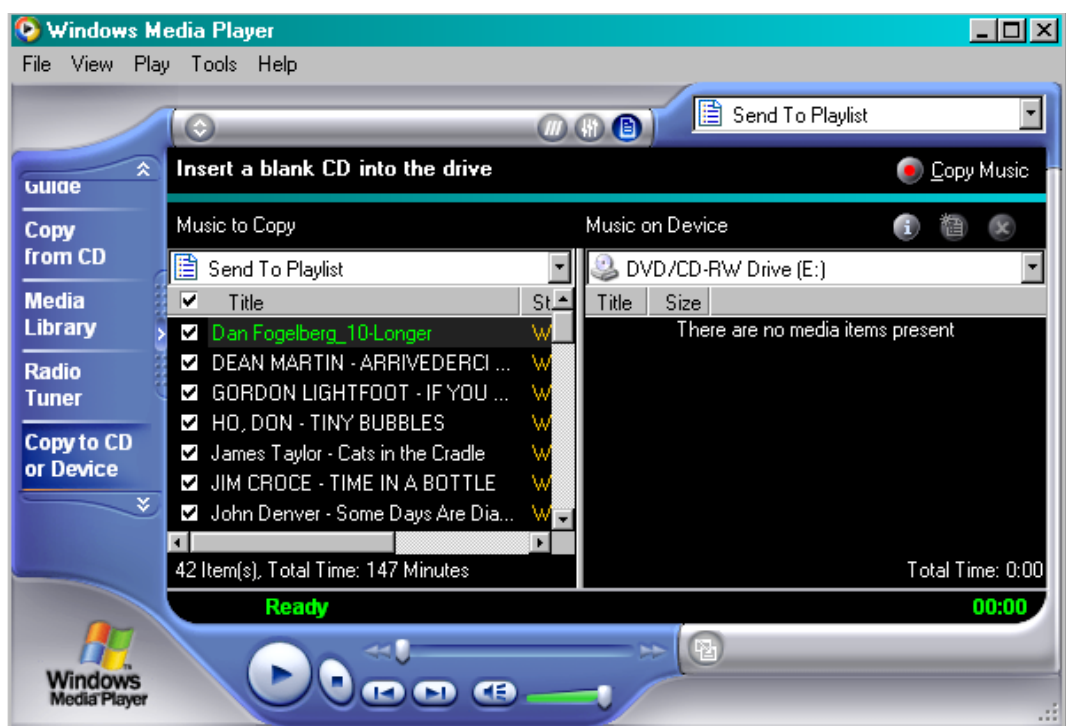
Once you have your MP3 files converted to wav files and stored in a special folder for wav files only (so they can be deleted when you are finished with them), it is time to get serious about making your audio CD. The newest Windows Media Player and **XP** make this almost sinfully easy. Go to your wav folder and highlight the music files you want to convert to audio CD format. If you hold down the CTRL key, you can skip around, left clicking and highlighting just the ones you want. Press CTRL+A to select (highlight) all. Right click anywhere in the highlighted area and choose *Send to Audio CD*. It's that simple! Windows Media Player will open with all the songs checked in the left windowpane. Below that list you will see how many minutes of music you have selected. Compare that with the number of minutes available on the blank CD (if you haven't put on in yet, now is the time) in the right windowpane. You may need to *uncheck* a few in the left pane if you are over the amount of time available on the CD. Click the

Copy Music button at the top right, sit back and watch your music CD literally create itself! First it will convert the wav files (one after another) to a special audio format for audio cds. Then it will go back to the top of the list and copy the converted files to the blank CD. When it is finished your CD will automatically eject, hot off the press, ready for you to use in your home stereo system. Ain't technology *WUNNERFUL??*

Surprise Surprise! While going through the motions of creating music CDs on an XP machine, I discovered (quite by accident) you don't need to convert your MP3 files to wav files if you are using the latest Windows Media Player... Just highlight all the MP3 files you want for your CD, then right click anywhere in the highlighted area and choose *Send to Audio CD*. Heck! Windows Media Player lets you cut to the chase and will do it all at once!

And ... if you really want to cut to the chase, even if you don't have XP on your computer, make sure you spend some quality time at <http://acoustica.com>. Their **MP3 CD Burner** program makes all these steps totally unnecessary. Their prices are quite reasonable too, especially if you want something that will do the job, is easy to install and use, and won't make you crazy. So if you aren't ready to make the jump to XP yet, check out **MP3toWave** and **MP3 CD Burner**.

**Anyone who
thinks spraying
their computer
with insecticide
will prevent
"system bugs"
NEEDS
Mrs. Wizard.**



E-Mail Cleanup ...

E-mail isn't just for sending (and receiving) interesting jokes and the latest inspirational message these days. It can be a wonderful organizational tool when used properly. Use it to keep track of business and personal correspondence, and document particularly sensitive or important information.

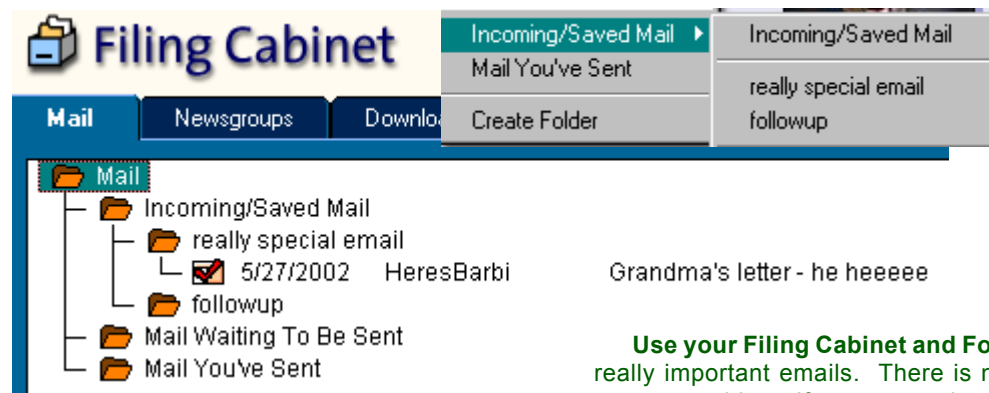
The key word here is *organization*. Organize your special emails with *Folders*, so you can quickly find what you need. If it isn't important enough to have its own folder, *Delete it!*

On **AOL**, all your organizing is done in your *Filing Cabinet*. Click the word *Mail* at the top left of your AOL window. Then click *Filing Cabinet* and set up your folders by clicking the *Add Folder* button at the bottom. To save a particular email, click the *Save to Filing Cabinet* button and choose the folder you want to save it in. Anything you save in your Filing Cabinet will be saved on your computer. You do not need to be online to read these messages.

Anyone who wonders why the Shift keys are bigger than the other keys NEEDS Mrs. Wizard.

PS... the Shift keys aren't bigger. It's an optical illusion.

Just as the moon appears much larger when it is close to the horizon, your shift keys look larger because of their proximity to other keys. To verify this, go out in a large field at night with your keyboard, place it in an upright position, and view it from a distance of 200 yards. Sure enough, the keys all look the same size!



Use your **Filing Cabinet and Folders** for really important emails. There is no need to save everything. If you are saving an email just to keep someone's email address handy, use your **Address Book** instead.

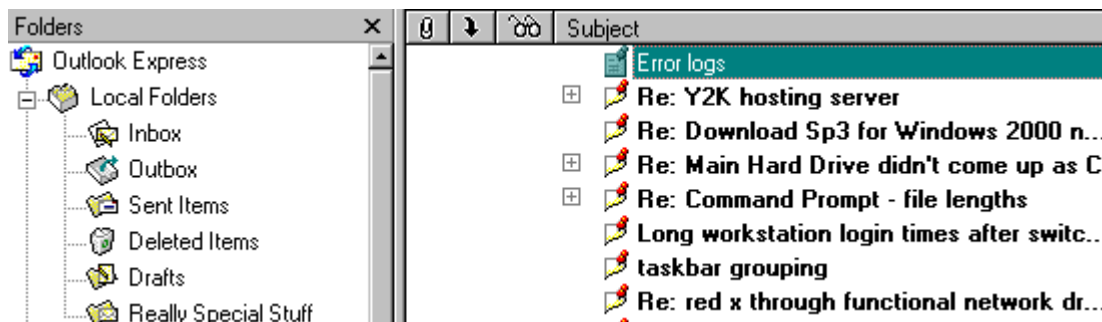
Outlook Express, right click on the person's name or email address after you have the email opened and choose *Add to Contacts*.

It is just as easy to add email addresses to your **AOL** address book. Open the email and click the *Add Address* button to the right. Fill in their real name and hit the *Save* button.

Don't let E-Mail make you crazy. YOU are the one in CONTROL. Besides, there are plenty of other *crazy makers* waiting in line to take its place.

Folders are very handy if you use **Outlook Express**. Make sure you can see them. Click the word *View* and make sure *Folder List* is checked. You should see your folders in the left windowpane, with your messages (headers) in the right pane.

To create a new folder, right click on the folder you want your new folder to be in (like the Inbox folder) and choose *New Folder*. Give your new folder a name and it will be ready to use. To move messages to your new folder, left click on the message (in the right windowpane) and (while holding down the left mouse button) *drag* the message to the new folder. That's it!



Tiny Treasures ... POW! A Handy Dandy Little Popup Punisher

POW from Analog X is a terrific little FREEWARE popup stopper. Let it run in the background when you are surfing the Internet and it will take care of those annoying advertising windows that can make an otherwise interesting site less than desirable in terms of revisiting.

Old Mrs. Wizard is pretty finicky (even with a fast computer) about which programs, and how many are running at the same time. This little darlin has become her best friend when she is checking out new sites. It helps keep her temper from flaring and is probably responsible for her blood pressure dropping a notch or two.

Installation is ridiculously easy. You won't be bombarded with advertisements or solicitations to purchase, and it works great! It just doesn't get any better than that! The *Readme* information is quite entertaining too!

At 214 Kb, it easily qualifies as this month's *Tiny Treasure*!



Synchromagic

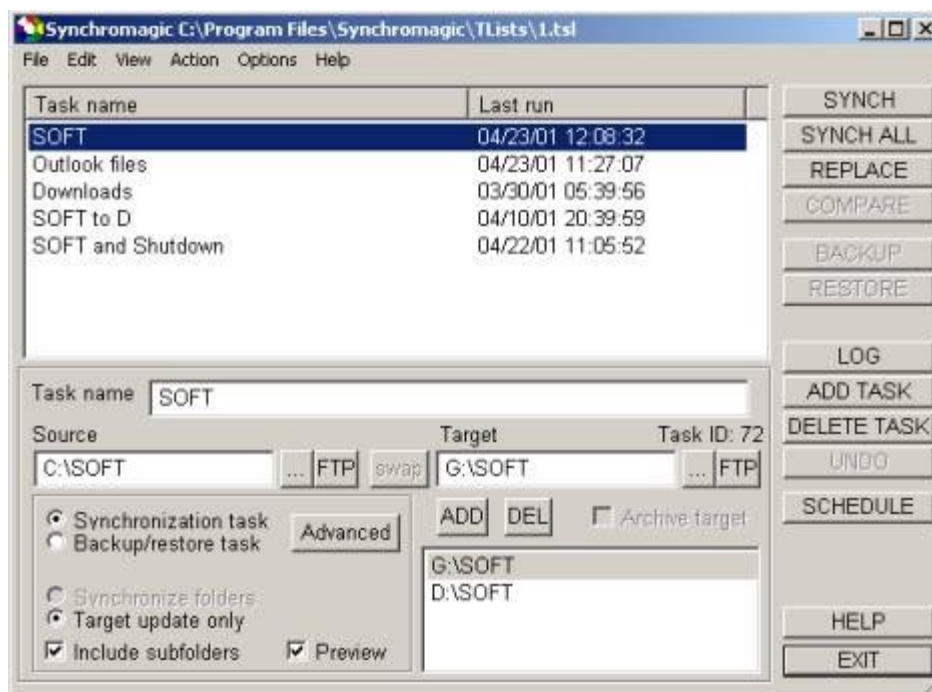
If you use two or more computers on a network, chances are you have files all over the place. It doesn't matter how organized you think you are, it is easy to forget which files are the newest. Use Synchromagic daily to make sure the freshest files will always be at your fingertips on every computer you use. Synchromagic automatically compares files, and finds any files which have an older date of modification and replaces them with the newer ones.

You might be thinking, "No problem! I'll just keep all my personal files on one computer and open them when needed on the other computer." Wrong! Can you spell Mr. Backup? What if that "special" computer goes boom boom bang bang? It would sure be nice to know the latest copy of all your personal files are safely tucked away on another computer. Networks are fine, but you NEVER want to depend on only one copy of anything. Stuff happens, and it could happen to *you*!

Only have one computer? Use Synchromagic to backup your special files to a recordable CD. Put in a blank CD, and treat it like an extra hard drive using Direct CD (comes with most computers with a built in CD recorder). Synchromagic will send your files to the CD seamlessly, covering your fanny the way a good backup should, and leaving you with more time to worry about more important things.

XP Note: I haven't been able to figure out how to get Synchromagic to backup directly to a CD on an XP computer without Roxio's Direct CD yet. If you have a

The Perfect backup tool!



computer without XP, it should work fine. I refuse to install Roxio's software on my XP machine until they (Roxio) get the kinks out of it. Right now you need to install the older version of Easy CD Creator (not good), then install the update (they would prefer you purchase the \$99 upgrade). A great workaround (until I get this figured out ... and I will) is to use Synchromagic to backup to a new folder, then periodically drag it to a blank CD or a CDRW using the (very basic) CD recording capabilities built into XP. This adds a step, but allows you to take advantage of Synchromagic's awesome ability to set backup tasks, and make your backup choices once. Set it and forget it!

<http://www.gelosoftware.com>

Save space with your backups by backing up to an archive file. Synchromagic will automatically ZIP the files for you!

Download and use Synchromagic FREE for 30 days. \$20 if you love it and decide to keep it.



Mrs. Wizard QuickTips ...



Anyone
who thinks a
hard drive
is a trip
to Disneyworld
with a
mother-in-law
in the
back seat
NEEDS
Mrs. Wizard.

Remove the New Program Installed Bubble ... Notice some highlighted items in your Start menu? Windows XP is helping you to identify newly-installed programs. It also presents you with a pop-up message about the new program(s). If you find these features annoying, turn them off. Right-click the taskbar, select Properties, and in the resulting dialog box, click the Start Menu tab. Click Customize (next to "Start menu"), then click the Advanced tab. Deselect "Highlight newly installed programs," then click OK twice.

Loud Modem ... If the screeching sound make by your modem (called *handshaking*) is too loud, you can decrease the volume. Go to the Control Panel and click the modem icon. Click the Properties button and in the general tab, slide the speaker volume as far to the left (towards off) as you want until the sound is at a level that you want. You can even turn the volume the entire way down (off) if needed.

Watch what you download ... Information files are usually single files. They may be documents, or text files, or web page files, or even Acrobat Reader files. If you have the proper software installed on your computer, double clicking on these files should cause them to open for you to view and print. These files will have .doc, .txt, .pdf, .htm, or .html at the end of their file names. With a little experience, you should be able to look at these extensions and know what software your computer will use to open them for you. If you see an unfamiliar file extension, double click on it and a strange window opens asking you what you want to open the file with, click the Cancel button and do a little research. That window usually means you do not have the proper software to open the file. Some word processors can convert files created with other word processors, but you need to know exactly what type of file you are trying to open before you attempt to open it with something it wasn't created with originally. If you receive a file like this in an email, hit the Reply button and ask the sender what kind of file it is. Ask them what they created it with and what they open it with. It can save you a whole lot of trouble in the long run.

Uninstall It ... Once you have a software application installed, what happens if you don't like it? It isn't reasonable to expect that you will fall in love with everything that sounds good on the Internet. This does not need to keep you from experimenting, downloading and giving new products a chance. As soon as you realize something isn't to your liking,

uninstall it. Look for an *uninstall* option in the program first. If that isn't an option, click *Start*, then *Settings*, and *Control Panel* and use *Add/Remove Programs* to remove software more safely and completely. If you have to force yourself to like something, if you aren't happy right away, get rid of it. There are so many great programs available. It isn't necessary to "make do" any more. It is after all, your time and your computer.

Right-click on everything ... You won't hurt a thing with the right mouse button in Windows. And you will learn a *lot!* The right mouse button is designed to give you *choices*. One of the choices might be *Properties* (depending where you right click). *Properties* can give you access to many other settings and extra information. Feel free to explore the possibilities.

F1 is for Help ... In most instances, pressing F1 will give you access to the *Help* area of whatever program you are using at the time. Take advantage of it to learn more.

What day is it? ... The current time isn't the only thing your computer can show at the bottom right of your taskbar. Let your mouse pointer linger over the time for more than one second and the day and date will appear.

Missing something? ... If you have ever had one of those messages that suggests something can't run because it is "missing some dll file or another," you know how irritating it can be. This windows based file archive site might just be the answer. If you know the exact file name you need, this database is searchable. If you can't get on the Internet to get to it, have a friend get the file for you.

<http://easy-files.com>

What's the difference between XP Home Edition and XP Professional? ... Both are based on the Windows 2000 operating system, and both are much more stable than anything you have seen till now. The differences are in the level of security, networking capabilities, and advanced features. XP Professional supports multiple processors, multiple monitors (up to 9), file system encryption, has a built in backup program and advanced networking capabilities. All of these features are missing from XP Home Edition. If you are a "power user" and want to make sure you have all options available, you definitely want to consider the Professional Edition.

All rights reserved. Unless otherwise indicated, articles may be reprinted in nonprofit publications without express permission, subject to the following conditions. Full acknowledgment must be given to The O'Neal Solution and the author. The article must be reproduced in its entirety, without editorial changes, deletions or additions. The information contained in this newsletter is believed to be correct and accurate. The O'Neal Solution however, cannot and will not assume responsibility for the consequences or errors contained in articles or misapplication of any information provided. The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the author. Any information used from these articles is at the user's own risk. Articles in this newsletter may contain trademarks of various companies. Any proprietary right those companies have in those names is hereby acknowledged.

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 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. Due to popular demand, the latest version has *ALL* the past newsletter issues (8 years worth), 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 Mrs. Wizard's favorite graphic shareware programs. This is a terrific learning tool! Just pop in the CD and have fun!

Sincerely,

Cindy O'Neal



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

The O'Neal Solution
 E-Mail Addresses

America OnLine
 CQTips@aol.com

JUNO
 onealsolution@juno.com

CompuServe
 cmrswizard@cs.com

mrswizard@mrswizard.com

In July ...
 Acrobat Reader Tricks
 Downloading 101
 Cleaning Up



**Your Personal
 Computer Tutor**

Cindy L. O'Neal
 1565 Wood Farms Drive
 Cordova, TN 38016

(901) 753-6990
mrswizard@mrswizard.com
 Consulting and Instruction