



Mrs. Wizard's CompuQuickTips

For the Rest of Us

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*Do you have a friend
who is struggling
with a particular
Windows problem or task?
Visit compuquicktips.com
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all the newsletters since 1999.
Each year has the issues
indexed for your convenience.
You are sure to find
just the right tutorial
to help your friend.
Better yet, forward your issue
to them and tell them
to subscribe!*

Composer II ... Layout & Code

Creating a web page remotely resembling anything you would produce with a desktop publishing program doesn't happen by accident. You can't just place blocks of text or graphics anywhere you want. All web browsers are different, and the *html* code is what allows them all to see web pages consistently.

When I created pages with MSWord, I was able to use it just like any other word processor. When the document was saved as a web page, it was transformed into html files, with very fancy code going on behind the scenes to make it work. Unfortunately, it might only look the way you intend in the newest Microsoft browsers. To peek at the nightmare code behind those pages, go to <http://mrswizard.com/wordpage/>. Right click anywhere and choose *View Source* to see what I mean. MS Word is not what I would choose to seriously create or maintain a web site. Look at the code on the Netscape *Composer* page (<http://mrswizard.com/composer/>) and you will see it is a lot easier to wade through.

With *Composer*, everything is much simpler. You may not have all the bells and whistles, but with a little imagination, you can place graphics and text creatively on a web page. It will allow you to begin to see the basics of *html* while you work in a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) environment. The idea is to start small, with something simple, and if the bug bites, *then* you can move on to learning more about fancier code and bigger and better web editors and other helper applications.

Peeking at the code ... A web page is nothing more than a text file. The *html* code is what tells the browser what to "show" you. *Tags* are what your browser looks to process so your pages will appear. `<html>` is always at the top of any web page. If you scroll to the bottom, you should see `</html>`. The brackets enclose each *Tag*. There is always a beginning (`<html>`) and an end (`</html>`) tag. The / is used to indicate the end of a section (or tag). `<html>` is the page itself and everything between `<html>` and `</html>` is what makes up the page.

The code is *everything* in a web page. One missing bracket (`<` or `>`), or even an extra one floating around (`<<` or `>>`) can cause part of your page to look odd. As you create your own simple pages with *Composer*, make an effort to peek at the code. It won't necessarily make you an expert on all the different tags, but it will familiarize you more quickly than trying to read a dry, dull manual on html. Some people are so "proud" that they "only" use Notepad to create web pages. I believe in helper applications, as many as I can get my hands on. There is so much more you can do when you have the proper tools. You can do it much faster, and with much less fuss! Watch the tags appear when you are creating your page with *Composer*. You will see a definite pattern.

Take a look at <http://boogiejack.com/intro2html.html> to get a better idea of how a web page is put together. When you are creating a web page in *Composer*, be sure to click the `<HTML>` Source tab at the bottom periodically to peek at the code. Don't worry if it doesn't make much sense at first. It will. Most of your work will be done using the *Normal* tab, where you should be more comfortable.



Continued on page 2

Composer II Layout and Code ... Continued from page 1

Creating Text Links ... *Hyperlinks* are the way you navigate from one page to another, or to other websites. To make a bit of text a link with *Composer*, highlight the text, then click the *Link* button at the top of the *Composer* window. If the link is to another page on the web, type the file name. If it is to another website, type the full web address (<http://yadayada.com>). Click the OK button, and you should see the text underlined and colored, indicating it is a *hyperlink*. Click the *Source* tab and find your bit of text. You should see the link code:

```
<a href="index.html">your actual text</a>
```

Notice how "index.html" is in quotes. You can add a little code right after that bit to make the link open in a new window. Here is what it would look like: `your actual text`

This is only one of the many ways you can add little snippets you collect right into the code to make your pages less plain and more professional looking. The trick is making sure you know *exactly* where to put your additions so they work properly and don't mess up the existing html code.

Using Tables for Layout ... The same reason you should be using *Tables* to keep things nice and neat in word processing documents is why you should use them on web pages. Each cell is a world onto itself, and you have total control over how it acts and what it will contain. Your text will line up perfectly and your graphics can be placed and arranged with minimum fuss. The best part is you can choose to have the table and cell borders show or not. Use it (sort of) as a layout grid.



My brain has never been able to register tables in code view. I have always relied on a WYSIWYG web editor for table columns and rows. It doesn't seem necessary to waste precious brain cells doing it the "hard" way. When you are looking at the html code within a web page, everything is in pure text. It is easy to pick out a bit of

paragraph text, but quite different picturing table rows and columns in pure text form.

Begin with a new blank page if you want to use a table to help with layout. Click the word *Table* at the top of the main *Composer* window. Then click the words *Insert* and *Table*. When the table dialog box appears, type in the number of rows and columns you want. You can also specify the width. If you keep the width at 100%, the table will "grow" or "shrink," depending on

the browser size of your visitors. This could be a good thing or a bad thing, depending on what you have on your pages. I prefer to specify 720 pixels wide so the pages are nice

and stable. If you choose 0 for the border, you will be able to see the outline of your table while you are working on the web page, but it won't show when viewing the page with a browser. You can even click in any cell (so you see a blinking cursor) and insert a table *within a table* for extra control.

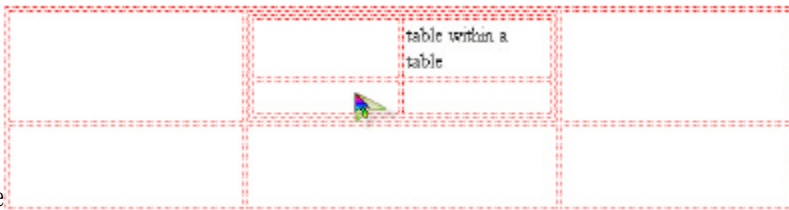
Use your right mouse button in different areas of the table for additional options. *Composer* will not let you simply drag the edges of cells in or out to make them wider or narrower. You need to right click and choose *Table Cell Properties* to bring up the *Properties* window so you can fine tune your table or individual cells.

REMEMBER ... *Composer* can't do it all for you. File management skills are most important. Make sure you have everything you need for your web in an easy to find folder.

EXPERIMENT ... You will never know what is possible unless you try! Once you understand the basics, give some of the more powerful web editors a try. HotDog is a great one, and not too expensive. You can download a trial version at <http://sausage.com>. Dreamweaver is my personal favorite, but can be pricey. Still, you can download a trial version at <http://macromedia.com> and give it a whirl too. If you decide to jump in with both feet, it is certainly worth the \$\$.



**Time to turn off
the computer
when ...
Tech support
calls YOU
for support!**



Personalize Your EMail Sounds ...

“You’ve got Mail!” is a familiar refrain for many AOL users. Outlook Express and other email programs have their own special sounds when new email arrives. You don’t need to settle for the same old thing. Find something new and exciting. Make your friends sit up and take notice when your email arrives. *Personalize it!*

The first thing to do is jump on the Internet and find some neat new replacement for your “You’ve got Mail” sound. Make sure you save it where you can find it. A good idea is to create a special *sounds* folder in your *My Documents* folder. You can use this folder to store all your special sounds. The types of sound files you need for this little project are *.wav* files.

**Time to turn off
the computer
when ...
You see something
funny and scream,
LOL! LOL!**

Outlook and Outlook Express ... (XP users) Click the *Start* button. Click the *Control Panel* to open. Click where it says *Switch to Classic View* to make it easy to find the *Sounds and Audio Devices* icon. Click it to open it. Click the *Sounds* tab at the top. Scroll down until you see *New Mail Notification* and click it once to select. You should see the name of the current file being used below. Click the little arrow to the right of the white *sounds* box to preview the sound. When you are satisfied that is the sound you want to change, click the *Browse* button to the right and navigate to your *Sounds* folder. Click the file you want to use so it is highlighted, then click the *OK* button to close that window. You will be returned to the *Sounds and Audio Devices Properties* window. Click the little arrow again to make sure you have the correct sound. Click *OK* to lock in your changes and close the window. The key is in the *Browse* button. Make sure you know where your *.wav* files are stored before you even try changing anything.

If you are not using XP, your *Sounds* window will look a little different. You won’t have all the tabs at the top, but you should have no trouble recognizing the sounds and the little preview/play arrow to test the sounds. You can reach your *Control Panel* by clicking the *Start* button, then *Settings*, then *Control Panel*.

AOL New Mail Notification ... AOL email sounds are separate from regular Windows sounds, but the place to change them is in the same *Control Panel*. Click the *Sounds* icon and the *Sounds* tab at the top. Scroll past the Windows sounds and you should see a separate area for AOL sounds. Look for *You’ve Got Mail* and click it to select. Then click the *Browse* button and find your special treasure. Oh ... By the way... Notice all the *other* sounds you can change? Have fun!

Where to find new sounds ...

<http://wavcentral.com>
<http://www.a1freesoundeffects.com>
<http://dailywav.com>



Incredimail ... A lot of us are breaking away from plain old Outlook and Outlook Express and switching to an exciting new way to send and receive email. If you are using Incredimail, you are probably already spoiled by all the visual effects. You don’t just change the sound, you change the *Notifier*, an animated graphic that appears when you have new email. Each one has its own unique personality, including a special sound. You can even choose a separate notifier for email arriving from a specific person. To change your notifier, click the word *Tools*, then *Select Notifier*. If you don’t have very many to choose from, click *Get More Notifiers* and download all you want.

Use the *Smart Notifier* if you want separate notifications for different email accounts, specific persons, or when email arrives with a certain priority. Be careful though. You wouldn’t want folks to know you are actually having *fun* with your email!



Gems ... WinAmp

WinAmp has been around a long time. It is one of the first FREEWARE programs I ever tested and fell in love with. It is perfect for playing your music CDs and MP3 files you glean from the Internet.

WinAmp contains NO spyware or adware and when it is running, it doesn't suck resources like the Windows Media Player or REALAudio player does. Download size is just a little over 3 Mb for the full version with all the bells and whistles. Installation is very easy. Just download the .exe file to your desktop and click it to begin the installation process.

Aside from being a terrific music player, fiddling around with all the controls can introduce you to a whole new world of safe tweaking. There are sound controls to delight the most avid fiddler and tweaker. Everything you change about WinAmp will only affect WinAmp. You won't need to worry about messing anything system related. If you haven't discovered "skinning" yet, you are in for a treat! There are hundreds of free "skins" to download and install that will change the whole look and feel of your little WinAmp machine. Spend some time browsing through everything from ultra modern-outer space to 50's jukebox styles.

When you have "skinning" out of your system, and you have satisfied yourself that you have downloaded everything possible, spend some time in the WinAmp Radio section of the website. You will find any music style you could wish for. I spent an afternoon (in the talk section) listening to *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. WOW! I felt as though a gold mine had dropped into my lap! There are also some wonderful Old Time Radio links on the WinAmp web site in the Spoken Word area under *Talk* and *Comedy*.

A Gem is a little bigger than a Tiny Treasure. Gems are Mrs. Wizard approved, tested, and recommended highly.



<http://winamp.com>

Messenger Service SPAM

When you think of spam, you normally think about those annoying unsolicited email messages you receive. Well that ain't all folks! If you have Window XP, 2000 or NT, spammers have a whole new way to make you miserable. It is in the form of mysterious pop up windows that appear out of nowhere when you are on the Internet. It doesn't matter if you are connecting with AOL or have a nice fast cable or DSL connection. You are wide open to these SPAM attacks.

Messenger Service should not be confused with MSN Messenger. Messenger is a totally different annoyance. You can block undesirables with MSN Messenger, while anyone with a connection to the Internet and a freeware scanning tool can find you via your Messenger Service. That is, if you are *not* protected. If you are receiving those crazy popups, you can pretty well bet you have been found and are being exploited. There is no need for the spammers to know anything about your computer and your computer does not care who does it. Less than savory individuals may pop up messages on your screen to try to fool you into taking actions or visiting web sites that may not be in your best interest. And that is putting it mildly!

There are two ways to nip this little pain in the bud.

Windows XP users can turn off the messenger service.

1. Click *Start, Settings, Control Panel*.
2. Click *Administrative Tools* (You may need to switch to *Classic View* to find it).
3. Click *Services*.
4. Scroll down and highlight *Messenger*.
5. Right click the highlighted line and choose *Properties*.
6. Click the *Stop* button.
7. You may want to permanently disable it by clicking the little arrow to the right of the *Startup Type* scroll bar and selecting *Disable*.
8. Click *OK*.

The best way to eliminate this problem is to install and use a good *Firewall*. ZoneAlarm is my personal favorite. The FREE version is fine for most users and will certainly take care of Messenger Service Spammers. Another good thing about ZoneAlarm is that it will also protect you from other intrusions and threats you may never be aware of. Get it and use it.

<http://zonelabs.com>



Time to turn off the computer when ...
A friend calls and says, "How are you? Your phones have been busy for a year!"



Mrs. Wizard QuickTips ...



Outlook Express won't let me open attachments ... This note was from a brand new subscriber. "Your attached issue leads directly to a current problem. I am suddenly unable to open attachments that I used to be able to open. When I open the clip, the file is not 'clickable.' I have suspected maybe something in a security setting or some 'Microsoft critical update' that I've installed is preventing the files from being opened, but don't have a clue about how to sniff it out. I do have Acrobat Reader. It's just that I can't get that far. Any suggestions? Mucho grateful in advance, Carolyn."

Dear Carolyn,

I believe I know bezackly what you are referring to. You are using Outlook Express... One of the latest security updates tried to "idiot proof" our email and ended up treating us like kids. There are much better ways to protect your email (check out the last few issues of CompuQuickTips for details at <http://compuquicktips.com>). Anyhow ... to make Outlook Express treat you like an adult again, click the word *Tools*, then *Options*. Click the *Security* tab and uncheck where it won't let you receive attached files. You should be fine then.

Watch Your Taskbar ... Your *Taskbar* can be found at the bottom of your main screen. It houses much more than just the *Start* button. Every window you have opened has its own little button in the middle of the *Taskbar*. If you lose a window, chances are it is just hidden by another window. You can cause your hidden window to pop back to the



front by clicking its button on the *Taskbar*. It's *MAGIC!*

Internet Explorer Resizes Images ... IE 6 has a new feature that automatically resizes large images to fit in your browser window. If you let your mouse pointer linger over the image, you should see a large button appear in the lower right corner. Click it once to view the image full sized. If this new "feature" is driving you bonkers, turn it off by clicking the word *Tools* at the top of the main IE window. In the next window that appears, click the *Advanced* tab. Scroll down until you see *Multimedia options* and uncheck *Enable Automatic Image Resizing*.

The Image Toolbar ... When you let your mouse linger over an image in Internet Explorer 6, a little toolbar will pop up in the top left corner of the image. You will see little buttons to click that will save, print, email the image, or open your *My Pictures* folder. The toolbar has another interesting use. You may have noticed that some sites won't let you right-click an image and save it. Now, I would NEVER suggest bootlegging images, but you might like to know that the *Image Toolbar's Save* button isn't disabled on these sites. (hehehe)

Create your own MSWord Template ... You only need to set up a letter once in Microsoft Word. Do it the way you want, with any graphics at the top and the layout you prefer. Then save it as a *Template*. Click the word *File*, then *Save As*, and choose *Document Template* from the *Save As Type* option. The file extension will be *.dot* instead of *.doc* to indicate it as a template. Whenever you want to type a new letter, click *File*, then *new from Template*. Choose your template and fill in the blanks!

Don't like the looks of XP? ... Not to worry! You can easily go back to the Windows 98 look and feel. Right click the *Start* button and choose *Properties*. Select *Classic Start menu*. Then right click any empty area of your Desktop and choose *Properties*. Click the *Themes* tab and choose *Windows Classic*.

Spell Checker doesn't work in Outlook Express? ... Outlook Express does not have its own spell checker. It "hooks to" or uses the spell checker included in Microsoft Office. If you don't have MS Word (at least) installed, you will see a spell checker button in your Outlook Express, but it will be totally useless. You will need to use an alternative spell checking solution. If you don't want to install a third party freeware or shareware spell checker, you can always type your special emails in your word processor first. Then, when you are satisfied it is according to Hoyle, highlight your text and use Copy (CTRL+C) and Paste (CTRL+V) to put your corrected text into a new email.

ScanDisk is GONE in XP ... The old ScanDisk we have all come to know and love/hate was a DOS program. The last Windows version that used ScanDisk was Windows ME. You can still check your hard drives for errors in XP with a similar program called *Check Disk*. You can find it by clicking *Start*, then *My Computer*. Right click the drive you want to check, then click *Properties*. Click *Tools*. Under *Error Checking*, click *Check Now*. It can check for errors while Windows is running, but to fix errors, Windows cannot be running. *Check Disk* will prompt you to let it run the next time you start your computer. Click *Yes* and restart. This can take quite a while, so don't run *Check Disk* if you need the computer right away.

**Stack Overflow:
Too many
pancakes...**

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Editor's Desk

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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 website. A very small (one time) donation will get you access to a growing number of Members Only goodies.

Sincerely,

Cindy O'Neal



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In June ...

Photo Touch Ups

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