



# Mrs. Wizard's CompuQuickTips

## For the Rest of Us

### Halloweenies ... Protect Yourself

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Five GEMS this month  
in four distinctly different flavors!  
These ought to keep you busy  
while I'm wandering the highways  
and byways of Europe!



There are bums in *Cyberspace* who live to mess up your computer one way or another. *Halloweenies* is here to help you ferret them out and protect yourself with a few focused tips and tricks.

#### Common sense approach to virus protection ...

Ultimate protection is in *your* hands. It doesn't matter if you have the newest, hottest virus scanning software on the market. If you don't keep it updated it might as well not be installed at all. If you have made keeping your virus

software up to date your mission in life, old Mrs. Wizard is proud of you!

<http://grisoft.com> is the home of AVG Anti Virus. They have a FREEWARE version that works great and will update itself automatically if you have a cable or DSL (24/7) connection. It is the antivirus protection I use and recommend to my clients. To download the FREE version, go to the website, fill in the registration information and wait for a confirmation email. It will include a link to download AVG. Once you download it, a unique license number will be sent to you in another email so it can be registered and installed correctly. Save the installation file on your Desktop and make sure you have your license number handy before you double click the installation file to install. You will *never* receive junk email from these folks.

**Turn off the preview pane** in Outlook or Outlook Express by clicking *View*, then *Preview Pane* (Outlook) or *View, Layout* (Outlook Express) and making sure there is *not* a check next to *Show Preview Pane*. This will prevent any background scripts from running in any web type (html) email. Outlook and Outlook Express can read mail that is sent in *html* format. This email acts just like any web page, and while you may not be likely to accidentally stumble on a website that has intrusive java or visual basic scripts running in the background, you *are* likely to click on an email subject. Even if you are disciplined and delete all email from people you don't know or expect, some junk can manage to filter into your inbox.

The problem with keeping the preview pane opened is when you want to delete an email, you need to click the subject before you can hit the delete button. Once you click it, the message contents will appear in the preview pane. If there are hidden cooties in the email, by the time you see it in the preview pane, you will already have been bitten. Not pretty in some cases.

In Outlook Express, you can add a preview button to your toolbar. Right click any empty area of the toolbar and choose *Customize*. A window will appear with extra toolbar buttons on the left. Scroll until you find the *Preview* button and left click and drag it to the right pane. This *Preview* button will give you quick, one click access to turning your *Preview pane* off or on. You can leave the *Preview pane* off until all your suspicious email has been deleted and turn it on only for trusted emails.



With the preview pane turned off, all you will see is the list of subjects when you receive your new email. Click any in the list to highlight it. Anything highlighted can be deleted with the delete key on your keyboard or by clicking the delete button at the top of the main window. To open a particular email, double click it. A new email window will open with the entire message in view. From this window you can reply, forward, etc.

## Halloweenies ...

**Virus Hoaxes and Myths. How to tell if it is the Real Thing ...** About the time you *think* you have seen it all, another well meaning friend forwards what is usually a variation of a common email theme... Don't open any email with *whatever* in the subject line. Just *looking at it* will wipe out your hard drive, cause your spouse or significant other to break out in a rash, and generally cause havoc with your world. Delete it immediately and seek spiritual guidance from the neighborhood guru (after you have done not less than 10 Hail Marys buck naked under a full moon).

Wake up! Any time you see a scary email that has been forwarded umpteen gazillion times, be wary. Chances are it is a hoax or myth. The fact that it has been forwarded and may contain a few well known company names (like Norton, McAfee, or Microsoft) in the main message just means all those people before you were duped too. They could also have been just too lazy to check it out and had a trigger happy forwarding finger. Don't let this happen to you!

The next time you receive one of these little goodies, your homework assignment is to check it out. Put these handy dandy little websites into your *Favorite Places* or *Bookmark* them for quick and easy access in the future. You will be glad you did!

### Hoax Encyclopedia

<http://antivirus.about.com/library/blenhoax.htm>

### In the Wild Threats

<http://antivirus.about.com/cs/inthewild/>

### HoaxBusters

<http://hoaxbusters.ciac.org>

### VMyths.com

<http://vmyths.com>

### Urban Legends and Folklore

<http://urbanlegends.tqn.com>

**Keep your rage to yourself ...** Responding to an obvious junk email will only confirm your identity and encourage more sophisticated approaches in the future. I can't count the number of times I have wanted to reply to an email suggesting different ways to make a certain appendage larger with, "What part of *Mrs.* in *Mrs. Wizard* do you not understand???" Oh well. Fortunately, my spam filter has all but eliminated those types of emails. There is a permanent link to *Spam Interceptor* on *mrswizard.com*'s current issue page.

### The Bandit in your Mailbox ... Defend Yourself!

- Don't pay for a free gift.
- If the mailing asks for money or an up-front fee for a prize or contest, don't do it.
- If a solicitation looks like a government document, pitch it.
- Document your transactions. Print your receipts from online purchases.
- Never give out your credit card or bank account numbers in response to an email.

**Create a "disposable" screen name or email address for chat areas ...** Nefarious individuals *lurk* in these areas for no other reason than to *harvest* email addresses for junk listings. By the time your screen name or email address is sold down the cyber food chain a few times, you could find yourself on the receiving end of a *lot* more email than you ever expected to handle.

**Don't share passwords or other sensitive information with strangers ...** A stranger is a *stranger!* I don't care if they identify themselves as AOL (or any other online service) staff, billing department, technical department, or if they identify themselves as *GOD!* No one from *any* online service will ever ask you for your password information in an email, instant message, or any other form of communication. The only time you will *ever* need to speak to a representative about your password is if you manage to forget it. Then, it will be by phone. You need to call technical support and identify yourself as the valid account holder. They will ask you questions until they are satisfied you are who you profess to be. When you pass their test, the usual scenario is for them to delete your old password and give you a new (temporary) one. It is up to you to change it immediately when you are online again. Think about this. If someone has your password to your online account, they can log onto the service as *YOU*. You will be paying the bill while *they* are literally impersonating you online. Junk and porno email is usually from a stolen account. You don't honestly believe they would send it from a *valid* email account, do you?



From C:\\*. \* to shining C:\\*. \*

# Organize Your Favorites ...

You know you have a sincere appreciation of the Internet when you have a long list of *Favorites* lined up in the *Favorites* or *Bookmarks* area of your browser. You don't want to miss a thing and want to make sure you can easily return to any information resource quickly and easily.

*Favorites* aren't much good if you can't find them readily. If you have hundreds (and you know who you are) of *Favorites* listed, you have probably discovered the newest ones always end up on the bottom, and by the time you find the one you want, you could end up losing interest. Attention spans aren't what they used to be are they? Organize your *Favorites* into folders. Make it easy on yourself the next time you need to find something quickly.

Open your *Internet Explorer* web browser, click the word *Favorites* (at the top of the main window), then click the words *Organize Favorites*. You should see a dialog box that lists your current bookmarks (*Favorite Places*) and several button options. Use these buttons to create new folders and rename, move or delete folders and Favorites.

When you choose *Create Folder*, pay attention to what happens when you click the button. You will see a new folder with the words *New Folder* highlighted. Save yourself a few keystrokes and begin typing the name for the folder immediately. Don't click anywhere else. There is no need to click in the highlighted area, or hit the delete key to delete the text, "*New Folder*." Just begin typing and the highlighted words will be replaced with whatever you type. When you finish, click (once with the left mouse button) anywhere else in the white area to lock in your new folder name. Use this technique whenever you change anything that is highlighted. Remember to *just start typing!* Organize even more by creating folders within other folders. Click the folder you want to place a new folder in so it is highlighted. Then click the *Create Folder* button and go for it!

Decide how you want to organize your favorites and create general topic folders. Give them names and topics that make sense to you. Everyone organizes differently, and that is the beauty of creating your own. While in the *Organize Favorites* window you can drag and drop shortcuts into your new folders. If the folder you want to use is way up at the top and the shortcut you want to move is towards the bottom, it can be tricky. Use *Cut and Paste* instead. Right click on the shortcut and choose *Cut*. This will delete it from the original location only after you have safely *pasted* it in the new folder. To *Paste* it into its new home, right click on the folder you want to move it to and choose *Paste*.

Once you have your Favorites all organized, adding to it is easy. You can right click on any open web page (in an empty area) and choose *Add to Favorites*, then click the folder you want to put it in. You can create new folders on the fly. If you are not sure where you want to put it immediately, right click on the web page and choose *Create Shortcut*. This will place a shortcut on your desktop to the web site. Later you can right click and drag it to the *Start* button, then (while still holding down the right mouse button) up to the *Favorites* folder, then over to the right and to the folder you want to drop it into. When you have it where you want, let go of the mouse button and choose *Move Here*.

If you are using XP, you may not see *Favorites* listed. If you want it in your *Start* menu area, right click the *Start* button and choose *Properties*. Under the *Start Menu* tab, click the *Customize* button, then the *Advanced* tab. Scroll down the *Start Menu Items* area and make sure there is a check next to *Favorites Menu*. This will cause your *Favorites* to be listed in the same area as your *My Documents* folder. If you have an "always on" connection, this can save you a few extra steps because you don't need to open the browser first. Just click the particular *Favorite* you want to visit and the browser will open automatically.

Nostalgia:  
The good old days  
multiplied by  
a bad memory.



## FXFoto... A different graphic path

Fun! Fun! Fun! Even the Standard (FREE) version has a lot of fun to offer and if you become a collage junkie, you can always upgrade to the Deluxe or Pro Media Edition and really feed your photo fantasies.

To be honest, I was expecting tools similar to Photoshop or PaintShop Pro. While FXFoto has some very good tools for quick editing, it is more of a fun tool/addition to your arsenal. The *Remove Blemishes* tool is amazing, but FXFoto does things you will never see in a paint program. Use it to view the contents of your photo folders in a whole new way.

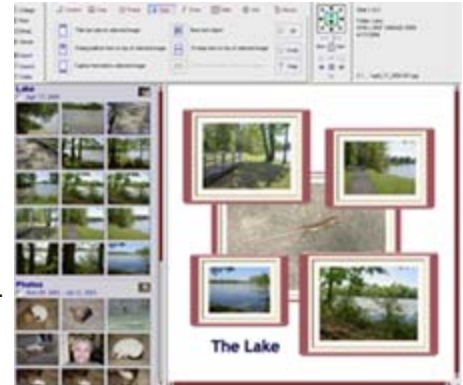
My particular favorite is a *Files Collage*. Drag, drop and arrange several photos on the screen. Frame (there are hundreds of framing effects to choose) each photo, rotate and tweak, even add text, captions or dialog balloons. Then print on 8 1/2 by 11 inch photo paper for framable photo art. I never imagined I could have this much fun printing photos. This can be great for scrapbookers too. It even works great with your digital camera. Just connect the camera and click the *Import* button. You will see all of the photos on the camera. Choose a folder to put them in and select the photos you want. You can also choose to erase the photos from the camera after they are imported. You can even add keywords for better organizing and searching.

*FXFoto* will do slide shows, presentations, animated photo tours, and much more. There are several great examples on their website and I plan to use many of the slide show features in future webs I create.

The small (1.8 Mb) download won't take long at all. Just double click the file to install. If you have a lot of graphics on your computer, you might want to pay special attention when it offers to scan your hard drive for you. Just cancel and you will be able to import only the folders you want to work with.

Have fun with it! Let me know what *your* favorite *FXFoto* fun thing to do is!

<http://fxfoto.com>



## File Backup Watcher ...

If you don't have a backup program yet, this is certainly one you need to try. *File Backup Watcher* is so easy to use. Create a profile. Pick the files and folders you want to back up. Choose where you want to back up to and go for it. You can even choose to compress the backup files if you want. The program is very intuitive and straightforward. You won't need to be a rocket scientist to use it.

One of the slickest features is the ability to send your backups directly to a recordable CD. You can do this during the backup process or just click the Recorder button at the top of the main window and drag and drop to the CD window pane. Then click the *Recorder* button and the word *Record* to begin the process. *File Backup Watcher* had no trouble recognizing my DVD burner and a blank DVD.

You only need to create your backup profiles once, but if you need to change any part of a profile, double clicking it will open it for editing. You can do a manual backup or use a built in scheduler and let *File Backup Watcher* take care of it for you automatically. You just tell it if you want your profile to run daily, weekly, monthly, and what time. It is very easy to set up. About the only thing you need to worry about is making sure your blank CD is in the drive.

This is the kind of shareware I like. It is only a little over 4 Mb to download and installing it will not gum up your system. The trial version will work totally uncrippled for 15 days, certainly long enough for you to decide if you want to give it a permanent home on your computer. The Professional Edition is \$40 and the Home Edition is \$20. Both will send your backups to a CD but the Professional Edition will also send your backups to other locations via EMail, FTP and on a network.

<http://www.dswsoft.com>



Microwave:  
Signal from a  
friendly micro.

# Firefox ... A Safer Browser?



I love *OpenSource* software, especially when it is useful and FREE.

*Firefox* does everything Internet Explorer does, without taking up a lot of extra space and memory on your computer. AND it does it all much faster, without compromising your *Security!*

You don't need to uninstall your Internet Explorer. In fact, you shouldn't. It is an integral part of your Windows operating system. But you can certainly semi retire it and opt to use *Firefox* instead. Here are a few reasons why.

**Speed and Size ...** *Firefox* is only a 4.5 Mb download (the installation file). Once installed, it is very fast because it doesn't need a lot of resources to get the job done. You can surf to your heart's content and will be spoiled very quickly. It is very customizable. Customize your toolbars to add buttons, install (FREE) new Extensions to add new features. One of my favorite extensions is *Sage*. It adds a built in *newsfeed reader* that can be activated by clicking a button. I have wondered about *RSS* feeds for a while and did a little looking around only to discover I needed a special reader for the things. Most cost money, and didn't incorporate into the

browser very well. *Sage* has made discovering *RSS* a fun (did I mention FREE) thing to do.

**You won't miss a thing ...** *Firefox* has all the things you are used to in a browser - Bookmarks, History, Full Screen, Text Zooming to make pages with small text easier to read, etc. During the installation process it will even import your bookmarks from your "old" browser for you.

**Privacy and Security ...** *Firefox* has been built from the ground up with your security in mind. It keeps your computer safe from malicious spyware by not loading harmful ActiveX controls. If you click the word *Tools*, then *Options*, you will find an entire area totally devoted to giving you easy access to your own privacy choices.

**Popup Blocking ...** It is built in and turned on automatically when you install *Firefox*. When a popup is blocked, *Firefox* displays a discreet icon in the status bar (bottom of the main window on the right). You can click this icon to easily add a web site you are viewing to an *exceptions list* if you want to allow popups just for that site. Before you say, "Why would I want to do that?" let me 'splain. Some web sites, like banking sites, use popups for important features you need to use the site properly. Many of the links on *mrswizard.com* are set up to open in a new window. These are not advertising popups, but a way for me to help you navigate through my site. Some popup blockers don't distinguish between good and bad popups very well. *Firefox* lets you allow certain sites without giving you grey hair. Just click the icon and choose *Unblock Site* to quickly add the web site to your list of allowed web sites.

**Tabbed Browsing ...** Tabbed browsing will spoil you. It allows you to view more than one page at a time in a single window. Click the tabs to view each open page. Right click any link on a page and choose *Open link in new tab*. You can browse the new page without losing the one you were on. It is so easy to get lost on the Internet. This is a great tool. Tabs keep all your pages in the same window and won't clutter up your Desktop.

**Downloading ...** Downloading can be so difficult for many people. *Firefox* downloads right to the Desktop, so things are easy to find. It even has a download tool (click the word *Tools*, then *Downloads*) to bring up a special window that shows everything you have downloaded. Use this box to run the installation programs or clean up (remove) after yourself.



Logic:  
The art of  
being wrong  
with confidence.

# More Gems ... LearnStates

With the kids back to school, these two little *FREEWARE* programs can be a fun way to help them learn a *lot* about the United States and Europe. It is colorful and a great way to learn the states and their capitals. It isn't just for kids either. There aren't many of us who won't be surprised at how many states and capitals we *don't* know. You can use this to get a head start on your kids! There is also a game to help you learn the Provinces of Canada.

<http://www.arcticowlsoftware.com/>



# LearnEurope

LearnEurope is a game that helps you learn the names and locations of the Countries of Europe. You can play against your friends or just challenge yourself to see how well you can do. All these games are less than 5 Mb downloads, easy to install, and kind to your operating system. And heck folks! They are all just plain *FUN!!*



If at first you don't succeed, call it version 1.0

## Mrs. Wizard's QuickTips ...

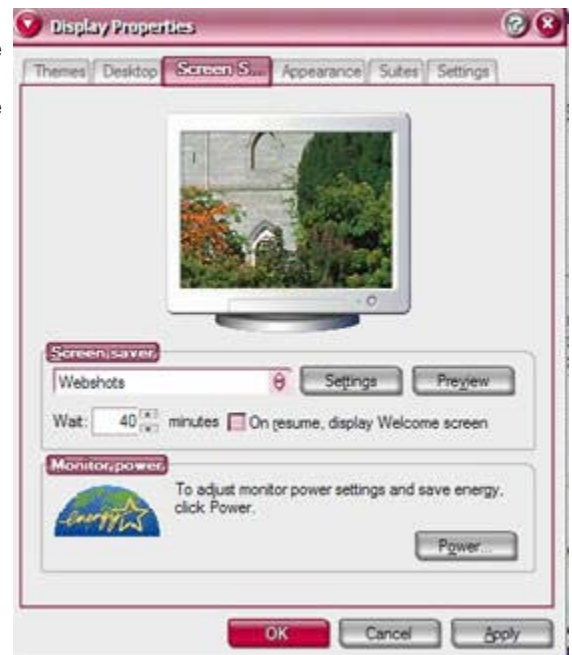


**Keyboard Bumps ...** Ever notice the little bumps on the J and F keys on your keyboard? These are little reminder bumps for your index fingers, so you can "feel" when you have your hands positioned correctly on the home keys. With these little bumps, you can find those keys and position your hands perfectly, even in the dark!



**Screensavers ...** They aren't just for fun and games. Windows screensavers can also provide password protection. If you need to walk away from your screen for a while but you want to leave your computer running, you can select a password for some screensavers. Once the screensaver begins, a user will need to enter the correct password in order to use your computer. Often, computer stores display their PCs with password-protected screensavers to keep customers from tampering with the systems.

To get to the screensaver area, right click any empty area of the desktop and choose *Properties*. Click the *Screen Saver* tab. Choose any screensaver you want, set the wait time and put a check in the box next to the words *On resume, display Welcome screen*. This will cause your Windows XP Welcome screen to appear when the mouse is moved to deactivate the screensaver. Windows will return to the account logon screen. There, you or another user will have to log on once again (and enter a password if your account is password-protected) to use the computer.

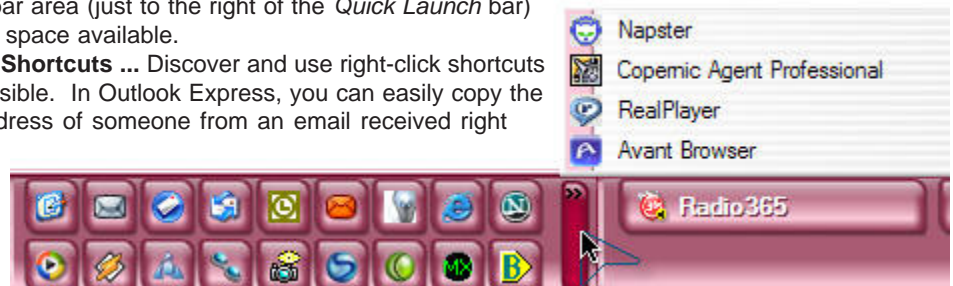


>> ... If there are too many items within the *Quick Launch* bar to be displayed, two little arrows will be displayed. This indicated that other icons are present but hidden. To see the hidden icons, click the double arrow to see a popup menu or click and drag the edge of the main toolbar area (just to the right of the *Quick Launch* bar) to expand the space available.

**Use Right Click Shortcuts ...** Discover and use right-click shortcuts whenever possible. In Outlook Express, you can easily copy the name and address of someone from an email received right into your Address Book. Right click the email header and choose *Add to Address Book*.



**Lose the Start Button? ...** It can happen, especially if you accidentally drag it to another side of the screen, or resize it to nothing. To at least see where it is, press and hold the *CTRL* key. Then press the *ESC* key. You should see the *Start* button appear. If you need to resize it, more the tip of the mouse pointer to the edge until you see double ended arrows. Left click and drag until it is the size you need. Reposition by clicking any empty part of the *Taskbar* and drag it to the edge of your choice on the screen.



May the bugs  
of many programs  
rest on your  
hard drive.

## Editor's Desk

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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 quick 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*



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In November ...  
 Holiday Desktops

*mrswizard.com*

Your Personal Computer Tutor



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