**AutoHotkey Demo**

*Note: you can just follow the “steps” to learn it by hand-on activities.*

**Introduction – general information**

Autohotkey is a free and open source scripting language used to create keyboard and mouse macros or shortcuts. You can use it to automate tasks and be more productive

And while You can do so many things with it, you don’t have to know a lot for it to be useful, so it’s kind of like a easy to learn, difficult to master sort of thing

Extract it, run the installer, shouldn’t take long

***Warmup Activity***

**Workflow of AutoHotkey**

How to create an AutoHotkey function?

In this section, we are going to write a very simple task, so we can understand how AutoHotkey works. We will build a Autohotkey auto correct (hotstrings) function that computer will rewrite the abbreviation (eg. tmr) as the word (eg. tomorrow).

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| **Create an Autohotkey script and run it** |
| Step1: Create a folder named “hockey” on the desktop  Step2: Make a script named “abbrevationList.ahk” by notepad. Or you can just right click and go to new > autohotkey script.  Step3: Copy and past the following code and save it. Ahk is not case censitive  ^k:: - everything to the left of the two colons is the hotkey. the caret refers to the control button. the k can be anything, you can use any combination of keys.  sendInput, my first ahk script - sendinput is used to send text. Then comma, and what you want to send  return - return stops your script  Step4: Right click and Run Script. You will see the green icon on the toolbar. So, you can open a new notepad and type “tmr” + space , see what you got? |
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That’s the basic steps to create a script for Autohotkey.

However, you may want to send this cool function key to your friends (who did not install Autohotkey) to run this cool scrip, what should you do?

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| **Create an Autohotkey application** |
| Step5: Right click and Compile Script. So, you get a .exe file that you can sent to your friends! The .exe contains everything you need to run the script, without having to install authotkey. So you would compile when you want to distribute your script to people who may not have ahk  Pro tips: Can you build an application that auto install all your personal Hotkey on BCIT lab computer by just one (or some) click? |

Here are 3 ways to stop the application. First one, Suspend, means to disable or enable the selected hotkeys. In other words, it remains on the toolbar but do not run the script. Second one, Pause, means pauses the script’s current thread. Once you uncheck it, the script will continue to run. Third one, Exit, means leave the script.

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| **Exit it** |
| Step6: Right click on the icon on your toolbar and Exit.  Pro tips: Can you build an AutoHotkey to pause it, suspend it, or even exit it? |

**On-line Resource**

Here are more useful online resource:

1/ AutoHotkey documentation <https://autohotkey.com/docs/AutoHotkey.htm>

2/ Really useful tutorial <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_9-QkD-zJ4>

**Syntax of AutoHotkey**

We will not explain the detail of syntax. When you try to create an Autohotkey, you can just google if, find the template, and modify it. Our learning objective is focused on what kind of tools that helps to modify and customize the script you download.

The basic rule is just typing “short-cut keys”, adding “::”, and Action.

For example:

#1::Run “C:\Program Files\Eclipse\Eclipse.exe” ; widows + 1 to run eclipse

**Comments**

We always need to comment our code to explain how it works, which key should be pressed, what’s the result. The scripts run line by line and the comment sign is “;”.

**Shot-cut key symbol**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | Win (Windows logo key)  apple key(command) for mac keyboard user | + | shift |
| < | use the left key of the pair.  eg. <!a is the same as !a except that only the left alt key will trigger it. | ! | Alt |
| > | Control  use the right key of the pair. | ^ | Control |
| \* | wildcard  Wildcard: Fire the hotkey even if extra modifiers are being held down. | & | combine two keys,  or mouse button. |
| % | percent signs are required to retrieve a variable's contents. |  |  |
|  | More: <https://autohotkey.com/docs/Hotkeys.htm> | | |

**Key List**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| LButton | Left mouse button  (RButton: right, MButton: middle.) | Up | Up arrow key  (Down, Left, Right) |
| Numpad0 – Numpad9 | 0 - 9 | F1 – F24 | The 12 or more function keys at the top of most keyboards. |
|  | More: <https://www.autohotkey.com/docs/KeyList.htm> | | |

***Activity***

More AutoHotkey sets for CST students!!

Please download the package that we prepared for you and open “CST\_Hotkeys\_before”.

You can also open “CST\_Hotkeys\_after” in the example folder to see the answers.