Keyboard Shortcuts

A **keyboard shortcut**, also called a **hotkey**, is a special action you can do by combining different keys together. These are meant to save time and offer extra functionality. For example, the shortcut for copying text is done by holding down the Control key and hitting the C key. This action is written out as **Ctrl + C**. This is a lot faster than right-clicking the text and selecting "copy." Getting good at keyboard shortcuts means not wasting as much time moving back and forth between the mouse and keyboard.

Windows and macOS both offer keyboard shortcuts and the most common ones are usually done the same way, with a few minor differences. **Cut**, **copy**, and **paste** are some of the most commonly used shortcuts. To copy text, select it with your cursor and hit Ctrl + C. On macOS, use Command ⌘ + C instead of Ctrl + C. Copied text is saved to your clipboard.
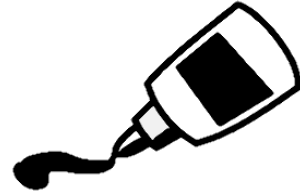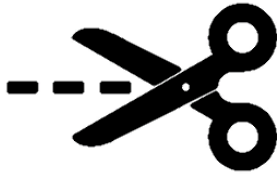
Ctrl + V will paste text from your clipboard. Ctrl + X will "cut" text, meaning it copies the text and then deletes it. Use this if you want to, for example, move a paragraph by cutting it and then pasting it somewhere else.

> **Ctrl + X** - Cut
>
> **Ctrl + C** - Copy
>
> **Ctrl + V** - Paste

Conveniently, the letters X, C, and V are right next to each other on the keyboard.

If you need help remembering these, X looks like a pair of scissors, C stands for 'copy', and V looks like the tip of a glue bottle. In addition to text, you can use these shortcuts to copy or paste files, folders, and pretty much anything else that a program allows you to select.

On Windows, using ⊞ + V will let you view the **clipboard history** along with some other useful tools. Clipboard history is helpful if you want to look at something you copied a while back, or if you want to copy multiple things at once.

(The ⊞ key is called the Windows or Win key. macOS usually has an equivalent using the ⌘ key.)

Win + V - View Clipboard History

Ctrl + Shift + V will do a **paste without formatting**. Usually when you paste text, it looks exactly like it originally did; same color, size, font, etc. But when you paste without formatting, you *only* paste the text and it will automatically look like the text around it.

Ctrl + Shift + V - Paste Without Formatting

There are also shortcuts to **bold**, *italicize*, or <u>underline</u> highlighted text.

Ctrl + B - Bold Text

Ctrl + I - Italicize Text

Ctrl + U - Underline Text

You can use Shift and the arrow keys to select letters or words without using your mouse. Ctrl + A will select all the text on a page or in a document.

Shift + arrow keys - Expand selected text (by letter)

Shift + Ctrl + arrow keys - Expand selected text (by word)

Ctrl + A - Select All

You can undo actions with Ctrl + Z, and redo them with Ctrl + Y. However, be careful because if you undo something and then type something else, you won't be able to redo it.

Ctrl + Z - Undo

Ctrl + Y - Redo

While most modern programs have auto-save features, Ctrl + S is handy for quickly saving documents in older programs. Alt + F4 can be helpful when a program is frozen and you need to close it.

Ctrl + S - Save document

Alt + F4 - Exit program or close window

Ctrl + F is helpful when you're searching for a specific term in an article, or trying to replace every instance of a word with something else.

Ctrl + F - Find

Some shortcuts are helpful when dealing with files and folders.

Ctrl + O - Open a new file or document

Ctrl + N - Open a new window

Ctrl + Shift + N - Create a new folder

Ctrl + click - Select multiple files / folders one by one

Shift + click - Select multiple files / folders in a row

F2 - Rename file or folder

Some are helpful for switching and moving around windows. This is much faster and easier than using your mouse to dig for whatever window you're looking for.

Alt + Tab - Switch windows

Win + arrow keys - Resize and organize windows

Win + M - minimize all windows

The **home** and **end** keys help quickly move the cursor. To enable them, you'll probably need to toggle the **num lock** key.

Home - Move cursor to the start of the line

Shift + Home - Select text to the start of the line

Ctrl + Home - Move cursor to the start of the page

Ctrl + Shift + Home - Select text to the start of the page

End - Move cursor to the end of the line

Shift + End - Select text to the end of the line

Ctrl + End - Move cursor to the end of the page

Ctrl + Shift + End - Select text to the end of the page

These shortcuts allow you to save screenshots. The Print Screen key (usually abbreviated PrtSc) will copy an image of the screen to the clipboard. Win + PrtSc will do the same thing, and also save a copy of the screenshot to your \Pictures\Screenshots folder.

PrtScr - Copy a screenshot

Win + PrtScr - Copy a screenshot and save to a folder

Win + Shift + S - Snipping tool

Some other helpful shortcuts:

Ctrl + K - Insert hyperlink

Win - Start menu

Win + E - Open file explorer

Win + I - Open settings

Ctrl + Shift + Esc - Open Task Manager

Shift + Del - Permanently delete a file (bypass the Recycle Bin / Trash)

F2 - Rename file or folder

F5 - Refresh current window or document

F11 - Fullscreen

In addition to all of these, any program you use might have its own built-in hotkeys and shortcuts. For example, most web browsers have a Ctrl + Shift + T shortcut which will reopen the last closed tab. Photoshop has Shift + right arrow and Shift + left arrow which rotate the brush tip by 15 degrees clockwise and counterclockwise, respectively. The idea is the same: to save time and make your life easier. If you find yourself doing a particular task often and wonder if there's a quicker way to do it, there probably is! Look it up, try it out, and practice using it. You'll thank yourself later.