



# Pop the question

Our **team of experts** put their heads together to help make your computing life that bit easier.

## Windows

**Q** Is it possible to 'add to favourites' without running Internet Explorer or connecting to the Internet?

Hiram Morgan via email

**A** That's actually two questions: first, when not connected to the Internet but running Internet Explorer offline, you can right-click on an item in your History list and add it to the favourites. Without running Internet Explorer, you can right-click in the favourites folder, and select New, Shortcut. Type or paste in the URL (you don't need to supply the http:// bit), and give it a name just like creating a local shortcut. You can also copy shortcuts made elsewhere in this way into Favourites as usual.

**Q** I used to be able to start up Windows 98 without typing anything at the c:\ prompt, but now I have to type in 'win'. Are there any tips to get back to going into Windows without fussing around in DOS?

Also, my PC is becoming increasingly slow at starting Windows – what needs to be done to sort this? Is it something to do with the addition/removal of software, or are there other causes too?

Asif Naqvi via email

**A** Right-click on the file MSDOS.SYS in the root of C:\ and select properties. Untick the Read-only box. Open MSDOS.SYS in Notepad, and change the line BootGUI=0 to BootGUI=1. Save, exit Notepad and re-apply the Read-only attribute.

With regard to the slowness, run MSCONFIG.EXE, go to the Startup tab, and you will be able to see everything that loads at Startup, whether it's from the Registry, Startup folder or elsewhere. Better still you can 'undo-ably' disable items.

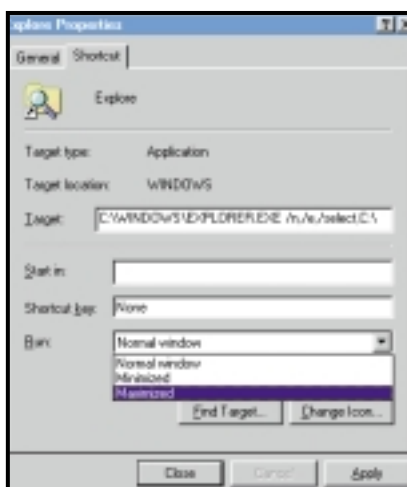
**Q** Suddenly, my PC has started making a loud rattling noise and pausing for several seconds. It appears to be trying to read the (empty) A: drive for no apparent reason.

Tom Wilkin via email

**A** The most likely cause of this is that you have recently accessed a file on a floppy disk, and there's still a shortcut to it lurking in the Documents section of the Start menu. To correct this problem, open the Windows\Recent folder and you will be able to delete the shortcut.

**Q** When I load up Explorer, it only comes up in a window – I like it maximised, but I can't get it to stay like that. When I open it again later, it still comes up in a window. How can I get it to start maximised automatically?

Nicholas Bearman via email



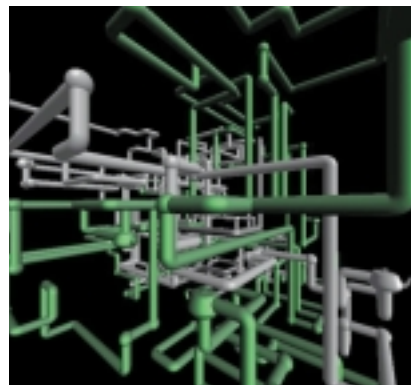
**Starting things in a big way – use the shortcut properties**

**A** Open the Properties dialog of the shortcut you are using to start Explorer. Depending on the version of Windows you are using, you might be able to do this by right-clicking on the Start menu entry or Quicklaunch bar.

Alternatively, you may have to open the Start menu by right-clicking on the Start button. Either way, turn to the Shortcut tab of the Properties dialog, and in the box titled Run, select Maximised from the list.

**Q** Further to your shot in March's issue, of the teapot that appeared in a screensaver, here are four. Is this a record?

Stewart Hamray via email



**Tea break – this screensaver proves that four pots are better than one**

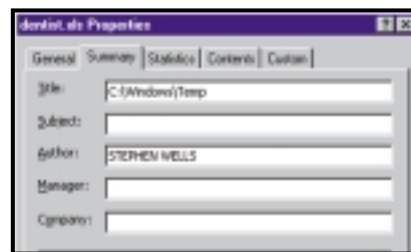
**A** Undoubtedly. We are truly in awe. But is it real or Photoshopped?

## Spreadsheets

**Q** How do you put a field in an Excel footer for the file path name? In Custom Footer, you have the option to select the file name, but not the path.

Iggy O'Kane via email

**A** Choose File, Properties, and copy and paste the path (using Ctrl & C and Ctrl & V) from 'Location' under the General tab, to 'Title' under the Summary tab. Then choose View, Header and Footers, drop down the Footer list, and select the path.



**The properties window in Microsoft Excel is the key to putting a field in a footer for the file path name**

Alternatively, you can use the top of the sheet itself. Enter the function =INFO("directory") in the top row. Choose File, Page Setup, Sheet and enter \$1:\$1 in the 'Rows to repeat at top' box.

**Q** How can I compare two columns of figures to see if they are identical, say in columns A and B in Excel?

Michael Garrett via email

**A** Drag over both column label letters, A and B. Press F5 and click on Special, then select Row differences. The numbers which are different in column B from those adjacent to them in column A will be highlighted. Click elsewhere on the worksheet to clear the highlights.

**Q** I have the formula `DSUM('H:\Negligence\[Costs.xls]Boden,S'!$A$7:$I$22,"Nett",Yr9900Disb)` in my Excel spreadsheet. This works fine while 'Costs' is open, but once this is shut, and the formula recalculated, it comes up with a #VALUE error.

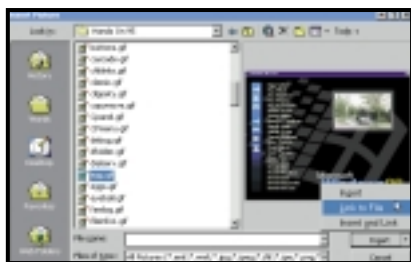
John Fairhurst via email

**A** If Costs.xls is open, then you can recalculate the formula, but once the link to that file is broken (by closing the file) you can't. You could try choosing Tools, Options, Calculation, and check the 'Save external link values' box. But it creates a bigger file if you do.

## Word processing

**Q** Where has the 'link to file' option gone, when inserting a picture in Word 2000? I just seem to get a standard File Open dialog.

Graham Morgan via email



The missing link in Word 2000

**A** Look carefully at the Insert button in this dialog – you'll see a little down arrow beside it. Click on this and the missing options will be revealed.

**Q** Since upgrading to Word 2000, all my custom spelling additions have disappeared – it now queries my name, address, and all the other words I have spent the past few years adding. I know my

CUSTOM.DIC file is intact as I can load it into Notepad.

Jack Walton via email

**A** Word is looking at the wrong CUSTOM.DIC. By default it looks at C:\Windows\Application Data\Microsoft\Proof\Custom.dic. You can either move your own CUSTOM.DIC here, or better still educate Word as to where you want it to look. Go to Tools, Options, Spelling & Grammar, and hit the Dictionaries... button. Remove the existing CUSTOM.DIC, then hit Add and browse to your personal one.

## Hardware

**Q** Is it possible to overclock a pair of new Socket 370 Pentium IIIs using a 133MHz FSB on the Abit BP6 motherboard?

Michael Barker via email

**A** Sadly the Abit BP6 motherboard will not handle the new Socket 370 FC/PGA Pentium III processors, although we wouldn't be surprised to see a new sneaky dual-socket solution from the company in the near future; for independent news on the Abit BP6, check out [www.bp6.com](http://www.bp6.com).

The new Coppermine processor, however, appears to be ideal for overclocking, and many of the hardware websites have reported speeds up to 1GHz. The best CPUs to use are the new enhanced E versions, designed for the 100MHz FSB – not the B versions designed for the 133MHz bus. In theory, overclocking the 100MHz bus to 133MHz would drive, say, a 600E CPU at 800MHz. You would need a motherboard that supported a 0.5-times FSB setting, to ensure the AGP bus ran correctly at 66MHz. New motherboards support this, but legacy ones do not. Depending on your motherboard and chipset, you may also need memory rated at 133MHz.

**Q** Are the various versions of the Pentium III electrically interchangeable? Will an 'E' version of a Pentium III work in a motherboard which was designed for a standard 512KB cache version?

Alan Bracewell via email

**A** Enhanced Slot 1 Pentium IIIs will physically fit in an existing Slot 1 motherboard, but they feature a different



Only newer motherboards are likely to support the Enhanced Slot 1 Pentium IIIs

type of Level 2 cache and more crucially, run at lower voltages. If your motherboard is unaware of the new chips and their requirements, then we wouldn't recommend taking the risk.

Anyone considering popping in a new CPU should always check their motherboard manufacturer's website for details on chip compatibility. You will almost certainly need to download an update to your BIOS, but even then you may be out of luck. We have an Asus P2B Slot 1 motherboard that can handle 100MHz FSB and clock multipliers up to 8-times, but according to the Asus website, we would need Revision 1.12 of the board in order to handle Coppermine chips. Sadly our board is Revision 1.10, so despite flashing it with the latest BIOS update, it remains forever Coppermine-unfriendly.

If the yearning for a new CPU was to boost your gaming performance, then consider upgrading your 3D graphics card instead – while no longer top of the range, nVidia TNT2 Ultra-based cards are still darned quick and relatively cheap these days.

**Q** I have a DVD-ROM drive in my PC, but it won't play DVD-RAM discs that my friend has made. What's going on?

Neil Mossey via email

**A** This is the trouble with the constantly evolving DVD format. First-generation DVD-ROM drives (and most current domestic players) don't even want to read CD-Rs! For DVD-RAM compatibility, you'll need a fourth-generation DVD-ROM drive, which is one typically labelled as being faster than six-speed. Creative Labs' eight-speed and AOpen's 10-speed DVD-ROM drives both read uncaddied DVD-RAM discs – but only the 2.6GB variety – we can't vouch for the upcoming 4.7GB versions.



# hands on

## question time

### Databases

**Q** I have developed a simple database using Access 97 and wish to achieve the following. For simplicity, suppose I have a table containing the numeric fields A, B and C. I now place A and B 'bound' fields onto a form. I now wish to do the following sum:  $A + B = C$ . Then show the result 'C' in a report.

Dave Moore via email

**A** If the value of C is always equal to  $A + B$ , then it is probably unwise to store C in the table at all. Try creating a query on the table. In the query you should have the fields A and B. They create a third field in the query, which is equal to  $A + B$ . The answer table now has three fields which should contain the values you need. Any report based on the query should show the three fields.

### Unix

**Q** I'm using Linux a lot more now, but I still need to run Windows applications to be compatible with colleagues at work. Currently I have a dual-boot setup, but isn't there an easier way of mixing Linux and Windows?

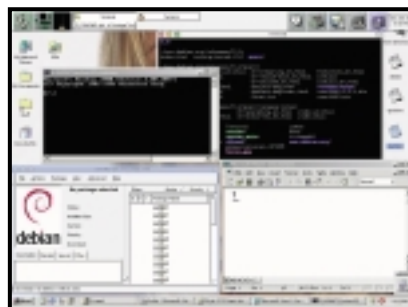
Michael Summers via email

**A** We can think of two ways to achieve this. The first one was actually suggested by another reader. James Reed ([james.reed@iname.com](mailto:james.reed@iname.com)) tells us he's come up with a system that's 'as close as you can get to a dual-OS situation, with no dual booting, etc to worry about'. He's running Hummingbird's Exceed X Window server on his Windows machine, which has a network connection to a 'dumb' box (just a motherboard, memory, hard disk drive and network interface card) which runs Linux all the time. Exceed can mix and match Windows windows and X windows on the same desktop – you can even use Microsoft Windows as your X window manager, if you want total interoperability.

As it stands, James has his Gnome bar at the top of the screen, and his Windows bar at the bottom, and the appropriate desktop icons either side. You can get an evaluation CD from Hummingbird at [www2.hcl.com/html/forms/nc/exceed/request.html](http://www2.hcl.com/html/forms/nc/exceed/request.html).

Another method, which we use ourselves, is running Linux on a workstation – with Windows making the

occasional appearance as necessary. This is made possible thanks to Citrix Metaframe ([www.citrix.com](http://www.citrix.com)). However, this is a fairly expensive solution, and the free alternative, Virtual Network Computing (VNC) is somewhat sluggish and less flexible. Information on VNC can be found at: [www.uk.research.att.com/software.html](http://www.uk.research.att.com/software.html).



**James Reed's university sells Exceed for £20 a shot, and – together with his 'dumb' Linux box – this gives him an economical way of mixing Windows and Unix**

### PDA's

**Q** The Sega Dreamcast uses WinCE as its operating system, but does not use the WinCE desktop or applications. The question I have is, is it possible to load the WinCE desktop and other WinCE Applications onto the Dreamcast?

Peter Barnett via email

**A** We spoke to Sega and the word is that no, you can't use Windows CE software with the Dreamcast. Sorry.

**Q** I use the Agenda in the Psion but it lacks some information, such as the dates of the new moon (don't ask why I want this!). Does Psion offer an upgrade?

Brian Cleeves via email

**A** Not that we are aware of, but try eCalender from On Board Info ([www.onboardinfo.com](http://www.onboardinfo.com)). For £24.99 it offers more information than you can possibly imagine. You select the info you want and the install program adds it to your existing Agenda file. You can update the info as the year progresses from On Board's website for free.

### Windows 2000

**Q** I'm having problems installing the applications which came with my USB video camera. The camera is supported under

Windows 2000 but the applications won't install, despite the fact that friends have the same apps running on their Win2K PCs.

Emma Needham via email

**A** This may become a common problem. It's an install issue – some apps refuse to install on Windows 2000 because they are looking for the Windows 9x or NT operating systems. Sometimes the application needs a specific feature introduced in a Windows NT service pack – and because it doesn't see the service pack, it refuses to install.

Someone else, however, may have no problem running the application because they upgraded to Windows 2000 from a previous version of Windows. The application was running on the previous OS and it continues to run on the upgraded system.

Fortunately, help is at hand in the shape of ATCOMPAT.EXE, which can be found in the Support folder on the Windows 2000 CD. Simply copy this file to your local drive and use it to convince the application installation utility that it's running under a different version of Windows. Note that APCOMPAT won't help with Windows 9x applications, which require direct hardware access or virtual device drivers, its only function is to convince the installation utility that it's OK to install.

### Graphics

**Q** Where can I find information on Illustrator plug-ins?

D Milne via email

**A** Macromedia's Flash Writer allows you to create static Flash files direct from Illustrator. For more details see [www.macromedia.com/software/flash/flwdownload](http://www.macromedia.com/software/flash/flwdownload). For information on Metacreations KPT Vector Effects check out: [www.metacreations.com/products/vectoreffects](http://www.metacreations.com/products/vectoreffects).

Vertigo produces two Illustrator plug-ins: 3-D Popart and 3-D words, both of which can be found at: [www.vertigo.com/products/vertigo\\_3d\\_products.html](http://www.vertigo.com/products/vertigo_3d_products.html).

### CONTACTS

All of our experts welcome your queries, simply respond to the appropriate address at the end of their Hands On columns.