Computer Bytes – January 2022 – Windows 10 Tricks & Tips

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Windows 10 is a strong operating system with many features. It's user-friendly and most users are familiar with the common functions we use day-to-day. There are also a number of 'hidden' features that can be used for ease of use and more savvy users to get to other functions more easily. Let's share this time about some of these "hidden tricks"!   For testing and playing with them we recommend you print this portion out so you can follow along…

RIGHT CLICK TASKBAR - Right clicking the taskbar brings up tons of awesome functions. OK – for our less experienced friends; the task bar is the bar at the BOTTOM of the screen. The one that has the start button/icon on the left, some consistent icons on the right side, and icons of activities you're working on in the center. I always like to refresh on the common terms so when we visit them we're on the same page. This is not being condescending and experienced users should not scoff – we're all learning all the time! Don't be afraid to try it out! Some Cortana functionalities are controlled through here, you can mess with Windows schemes, and more! This one is simple but helpful. A lot of users don't even know this menu is there!

OLD-SCHOOL DESKTOP - If you like the more old-school look, try right-clicking the Windows button (in the lower left of the screen). This pulls up a set of controls that are familiar to long-time users. You'll see familiar functions and a quick/easy ways to access them. For some, if you're having trouble navigating the Windows 10, this trick helps you find some common/familiar features.

GOD MODE, ENABLED – You might also call this a Windows "cheat code," but it's super useful. To start, go to your desktop, right click, and make a new folder. Then, rename the folder "GodMode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}". Use the EXACT text that is inside the quotes in the previous line. Congratulations, you've now enabled God Mode. Not sure who came up with the name but the functionality is 'empowering'. NOTE: There are some fairly enhanced functions so be very careful when using them or you'll be causing more problems than resolving!

CUSTOMIZE TILES - For those of you that did in fact use and work through the Windows 8 version of the "tile format", you'll understand tiles and realize the newer version downsizing of them. Microsoft realized most users did not like that and returned to the more familiar menu look, however, they did keep some tile use. Tiles for those of you not familiar are the 'pictures' you see on the right when you click the start button that shows functions by text. If you want to customize your tiles, right click on the specific tile you want to address. Now you can unpin, resize, pin to taskbar and more. Make it your own, get rid of features you don't use, put your most common functions there, whatever - and have it show all the info you want at a glance! Remember, Windows 10 was made to be a great computer tool and a great tablet interface in one – that's what the tile feature is looking to achieve.

SHOW DESKTOP BUTTON - That tiny little 'vertical bar' down there in the VERY bottom-right corner of your task bar is the show desktop button. If you have a bunch of windows open and want to see the desktop and minimize your open programs ALL AT ONCE, this is a great shortcut. Clicking in the bottom right corner is much easier than having to minimize four or five windows one after the other!   Keep in mind this also keeps the application(s) open so you simply click on them in the taskbar to pop them open again (see how knowing the term Taskbar helps?!). HOC Comment: I LOVE this feature – use it all the time.

PINNING WINDOWS - If you drag a window to one side of the screen, it'll get pinned there as exactly half the screen. If you drag it to a corner, it will become a quarter of the screen. You have to "drag it hard" as I always advise – move it WAY TO THE RIGHT then let go of your mouse. You'll see that the window 'auto sizes'. This is an extremely helpful feature for viewing two programs, functions, features, side by side. The bigger the screen you have of course the better it is. HOC Note: We use THIS feature all the time!

FOCUS ASSIST - Sick of notifications throwing you off when you're trying to work? Try Focus Assist. Go to settings and at the top type: Focus Assist. This mode lets you set hours you'd like to silence notifications, and even lets you customize which notifications are high-priority. This functionality is similar to smartphones' Do Not Disturb mode. It isn't frequently used, though, as many people don't even know that it's there!

Did you know all of these helpful Windows 10 tricks, or did you learn something new? Check them out to see how they might assist in your computer operations.

NOTE: Our sharing of information within articles includes suggestions and tips. USE AND/OR APPLY AT YOUR OWN RISK. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our offices for professional service/guidance.

Until next time, don't forget your backups! For more information, contact Harv Oliver, HANDS-ON Consultations, (805) 524-5278, www.hocsupport.com