

Working unnecessarily hard on your computer? For most people the answer is 'yes' – because we've ceased learning. For example, do we make sufficient use of shortcuts?

As the name implies they shorten the routes to the destinations sought, whether programmes, folders or files. They save time and effort: the effort being the number of keystrokes or mouse clicks and work for your memory.

Best practice is to have only shortcuts on your desktop. That way you are less likely accidentally to delete a programme or a file.

A shortcut icon is identified by a small arrow at its bottom left corner. (This doesn't apply to system shortcuts such as Recycle Bin, My Computer and a few others, but they are nevertheless shortcuts.)

To put an application shortcut icon on the desktop, navigate to the application (**Start/All Programs/**) right-click on the application icon and select **Create Shortcut** from the short drop-down menu that appears. A shortcut should appear on the Desktop. If instead a second icon appears at the end of the list it is because the original icon is itself a shortcut. In that case, the second shortcut can be dragged and dropped onto the desktop.

Alternatively, hold down the Control Key and drag and drop the programme icon onto the desktop. The Control Key is needed in this instance to convert what would have been a 'Move' operation to a 'Copy' one and the icon will be copied to the desktop.

To use a file, it is not necessary to start an application in order to ask for the file to be opened (and then have to navigate to the file).

Instead use, say, Windows Explorer, to browse to the file and double-click on the filename. Windows will recognise the type of file and automatically fire up the appropriate application and open the file ready for use.

This facility is even more useful if you intend working on a file over several sessions. Put a shortcut on the desktop. Navigate to the file using Windows Explorer; right click on the filename and select 'Create Shortcut'. A shortcut will appear. **Drag and drop** it onto the desktop.

Now to open the file, simply double click the shortcut. Windows will open the application and load the file as above. When the shortcut is no longer needed, simply drag and drop it into the Recycling Bin.

If you have your printer's shortcut icon on your desktop you can drag a document from, say, Windows Explorer, and drop it onto the printer's icon. It will be printed without opening its original application.

If you want a tidier desktop, create a folder [My Shortcuts?] on the desktop and drop all your shortcuts into it. Opening the folder will give access to your shortcuts.

*The next meeting is on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November at All Saints Lesser Hall, Victoria Square, Penarth 7.30 for 8.00pm. Chris will talk about home networks for those with more than one computer. Visitors welcome. For more information ring Howard on 029 20708439.*



## In Brief

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