

When we look for something we visualise the object rather than the word for it. When we flip through a book we notice illustrations or white space at the end of a chapter. Every departure from a page of plain text is more easily found. The old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words still applies. In a document of few or many pages.



At the recent meeting of the Penarth Computer Club, Howard set out how to use this to advantage.

Attaching pictures to emails is familiar to most users, but far fewer routinely grab a bit of the screen and turn it into a picture to illustrate a point; yet it is so easy to do.

If you need to copy a computer error message to a friend looking for help, it is safer to send an image rather than try to type the whole message precisely.

If you press the Print screen key ('Prnt Scrn') an image of the screen is sent to the clipboard. From there it can be pasted into a document by opening the document, putting the cursor where you want it and pressing "Ctrl"+V. The image can be adjusted for size by clicking on it to select it and grabbing one of the resultant little black grab handles around the edges and dragging it.

If you just want a window rather than the whole screen, hold down the "Alt" key when you press "Prnt Scrn" and you will get a neat 'snip' of the active window and can treat it as above.

Should you wish to edit the snip in any way, paste it into whatever picture-editing program you use and edit to suit. The result can be saved with an appropriate name to any folder and from there imported into an open document by selecting Insert>Picture>From file... ; navigate to where you have saved it; select it and say 'OK'. Adjust it within the document to suit.

For more control of the insert within the document, click on it to select it, then right-click and select 'Format Picture' from the menu. Here you can tweak several properties, but most conveniently (on the Layout tab) choose how it relates to the surrounding text.

All this allows you to make the page more informative and more visually interesting. It turns the whole page into a more easily remembered 'picture' itself. The effect is increased if the insert is tilted a little by grabbing the green handle to rotate it.

All the above applies in windows XP and Windows 7, but Windows 7 includes a special "Snipping Tool" to make it easier still.

You will find it by clicking Start>All Programs >Accessories >Snipping Tool.

Try it. It's fun. Here's its icon.

