

Internet Explorer Tips

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Table of Contents

1 GETTING STARTED	4
1.1 Download internet explorer	4
1.2 Install IE	4
1.3 Setting up proxy server	4
1.4 Save disk space	4
1.5 Set up your profile	5
1.6 Set a new home page	5
1.7 Add and remove toolbar buttons	5
1.8 Change text size	5
1.9 To change your background and font colors	5
2 ACCESSORIES	6
2.1 Change default programs	6
2.2 Faster browsing	6
2.3 Disable animated gifs	6
2.4 Cut down on multimedia	6
2.5 Use a blank home page	7
2.6 Increase your cache	7
2.7 Stop long downloads	7
2.8 Navigate with just one word	7
3 FAVORITES	7
3.1 Save your favorite sites	7
3.2 Organize your favorites	8
3.3 Print your favorites	8
3.4 Export your favorites	8
3.5 Import netscape bookmarks	8
4 NAVIGATION	9
4.1 Take giant steps back and forth	9
4.2 Browse with hot keys	9
4.3 Add buttons to the links toolbar	9
4.4 Open multiple windows	9
5 SEARCHING	10
5.1 Use IEs search assistant	10
5.2 Fine tune your searches	10
5.3 Type keywords into the url box	10
5.4 Find related links	10
5.5 Search your history	10
5.6 Sift through long pages	11
5.7 Work offline	11
5.8 Organize your hard drive	11
5.9 Launch programs from your browser	11
5.10 Read a web page offline	11
5.11 Save a web page for offline viewing	11
5.12 Mail a web page	12
5.13 Use IE as your ftp client	12
5.14 Add address toolbars to the windows taskbar	12

6 TROUBLESHOOTING	12
6.1 Repair internet explorer	12
6.2 Stop jerky browsing	13
6.3 Limit cache size	13
6.4 Reset default settings	13
6.5 Resume your download after a disconnection	13
6.6 Get new updates and add-ons	13

1 Getting Started

If you're running Windows 95 or later, chances are you already have some version of IE on your system. But just in case you don't or you want to upgrade to Microsoft's latest browser (IE 5.5) you'll need to download and install a copy.

1.1 Download Internet Explorer

First, you must download a copy of Internet Explorer. You should find the most recent version, 5.5, stored on the server at your site. Alternatively download from "www.microsoft.com/downloads". Keep in mind that when you download the Internet Explorer file, you aren't actually getting the application itself. Instead, you're accepting a small program (ie5setup.exe approx. 500k) that automates the download and set-up process for you. After you've downloaded this file, stay connected to the Internet, navigate using Explorer to the downloaded file and double-click the file's icon, then let the installer application complete the process. The full version of IE 5.5 can be over 50MB and take some time to download.

1.2 Install IE

After you launch the IE set-up file (ie5setup.exe), a dialog box appears asking you which components you want to install. Check the boxes next to each component and hit Enter. Once the application has finished installing, it prompts you to restart your computer. When you reboot your machine, IE automatically finishes installing it.

1.3 Setting up Proxy Server

For use on a LAN within CSC you will have to configure the browser to use a proxy server. The settings will vary according to the CSC site on which you are working. Goto Tools – Internet Options – Connections and select LAN Settings. This may be set-up either using the IP address and port of the proxy server or using a proxy automatic configuration (pac) script that runs on the proxy. For Drakes Court the settings are 20.9.8.104 & 3128 or http://proxy.eu.csc.com/www/csc20_9_181.pac. Enter these details on the required boxes and click OK. Beware if you install third party dial up software these settings can be altered without prompting. If you have trouble connecting then check these settings first.

1.4 Save Disk Space

If hard drive space is at a premium on your system the IE installation process lets you limit the amount of room the program consumes. To customise your installation, run the set-up file select Customise Your Browser, then click Next. Choose the components you want to install; for your convenience, the installer lets you select Minimal, Typical, or Full from the pull-down menu. Keep an eye on the download size number at the bottom of the window to see how much space your installation requires.

1.5 Set Up Your Profile

Although you may not want to share personal information (such your name or email address) with the rest of the Web, it's sometimes convenient to have easy access to it when, say, you're filling out lots of Internet shopping forms and don't want to type your stats every time. That's why Internet Explorer's My Profile feature conveniently stores your demographic info. Select Internet Options from the Tools menu and select the Content tab. Click the My Profile button under Personal Information and then either create a new address book entry or select a current one to use for your profile.

1.6 Set a New Home Page

When you boot up any browser for the first time, its home page--the page your browser automatically loads when you hit the Home button--is already set to Microsoft's manufacturer's URL. To change your home page, find the page you want to view at start-up, pull down the Tools menu, and choose Internet Options. Click the General tab. In the Home Page area, select Use Current to use the page you're currently viewing, or type any site's URL into the text box. To start each session with a blank page, click the Use Blank button. Or, even simpler, drag and drop any URL from your address field onto the Home button in your toolbars.

1.7 Add and Remove Toolbar Buttons

If you want quick, one-click access to IE's search or cut/paste functions, just add shortcut buttons to IE's toolbar. Right-click the toolbar, then click Customise. A dialog box pops up showing all the buttons available. With a few clicks, you can add the buttons to your toolbar. Just select the button you want, hit Add, and click Reset. IE immediately puts the button in your toolbar.

1.8 Change Text Size

Don't like the way certain sites display text on your browser? Are online fonts too small for you to read? IE 5 offers a simple remedy. First, set your browser to override Web page settings. Select Tools/Internet Options, click the General tab, then click Accessibility. In the resulting dialog box, check each of these top three check boxes: "Ignore colours specified on Web pages," "Ignore font styles specified on Web pages," and "Ignore font sizes specified on Web pages." Click OK to return to the Internet Options dialog box. Next, choose the View menu option and select Text Size (Largest, Larger, Medium, Smaller, or Smallest). These changes won't affect all text on every page, but they should work for most standard pages.

1.9 To Change Your Background and Font Colors

And suppose you hate the background or font colours on some Web sites. Turns out you can change these too. Once again, set your browser to override Web pages' settings (see the previous tip). Then, on the General tab of the Internet Options dialog box, click Colours. Deselect the Use Windows Colours check box. Click the boxes beside your

preferred Text and Background options and select the colours you want to use. (Keep in mind that choosing the same or similar colours for the background and text will make it impossible to see the text.) You can even change the colours of visited, unvisited, and rollover hyperlinks.

2 Accessories

Think Internet Explorer itself looks a bit blase? Give your browser a face-lift with Microsoft's Web Accessories. You can add downloadable Explorer bars, customisable wallpapers, toolbar buttons, menu items, and other snazzy [add-ons](#). IE doesn't offer skins yet, (for now, that's Netscape 6's domain), but who knows what IE developers have in store. Get Organised

2.1 Change Default Programs

When you click the Edit or Mail button in IE 5, Windows launches a word processor or an email client, respectively. To view and modify which program IE automatically launches click Tools and select Internet Options. In the Internet Options window, click the Programs tab. Use the pull-down menus after each category, such as HTML Editor, Email (you will want to change this to Lotus Notes), Newsgroups, and so on, to change which program will open when you click the corresponding button.

2.2 Faster Browsing

Few Internet experiences are more annoying than a slow-loading Web page. That's why we've rounded up a few performance tweaks and browsing tricks to get the fastest possible performance out of your browser.

2.3 Disable Animated GIFs

Animated gifs may make your browsing experience seem more like TV, but they can also bring your browser to a virtual standstill. So, if you're sick of constant distractions and slow downloads, stop them from loading altogether. Head to Tools/Internet Options and click the Advanced tab. Scroll down to the Multimedia section, deselect the Play Animations option, and click OK. From now on, you'll see only the first frame of each animated GIF that loads.

2.4 Cut Down on Multimedia

Likewise, do away with bandwidth-eating streaming video and audio. Select Internet Options from the Tools menu and click the Advanced tab. Scroll down to the Multimedia segment and uncheck the boxes in front of Play Animations, Play Sounds, Play Video, and Show Pictures. To restore these settings, just recheck the boxes. To turn off Java, select Internet Options and the Security tab, then click the Custom Level button. Check the Disable box to turn off ActiveX Controls and Java applets, or check Prompt to have IE warn you when an applet tries to load.

2.5 Use a Blank Home Page

Every time you boot up IE, the browser takes you straight to whatever home page you set. But it takes time to load any Web page--time you might not want to waste. So, eliminate a home page altogether and start up on a blank page. Here's how: Pull down the Tools menu and choose Internet Options, then click the General tab. In the Home Page area, click the Use Blank button, et voila, no more home page.

2.6 Increase Your Cache

If you often revisit one site several times per surfing session, this tip will save you lots of time. When you visit Web pages, your browser stores HTML code and graphics from those sites in a folder called a cache. The cache helps you get files fast when you hit the Back button because they're coming from your hard disk, not over your Net connection. For best surfing speeds, we recommend you allocate at least 10MB of your drive to the browser. From the Tools menu, select Internet Options and choose the General tab. In the Temporary Internet Files section, click Settings. Under "Amount of disk space to use," drag the slider to the right; you should choose about 5 percent of your hard disk.

2.7 Stop Long Downloads

This tip may be obvious, but it's also highly effective. If you're waiting for a page to load and it's taking forever, push the Stop button. Then hit Refresh to start over. Sometimes the path the page takes to get to your PC contains Net burps that slow it down, and refreshing will send it back to you via a new, clear route.

2.8 Navigate With Just One Word

Don't bother typing entire domain names (for example, www.csc.com) into your browser. Instead, simply type the site's name (csc) in the Address bar and press Ctrl-Enter to automatically add <http://www> and .com on each side of the word--a real time-saver.

3 Favourites

Like an address book, a well-kept Favourites folder is your best friend. It stores links to all of the Web sites you want to revisit so that you don't have to hunt them down and type in their URLs every time. Here are a few tips to help you build up and organise your Favourites list.

3.1 Save Your Favorite Sites

Here's the scenario: every morning, you go online to get your business news from the Wall Street Journal and check the weather at the Weather Channel. So, rather than

type www.csc.com every time you visit the site, save the URL into your list of favourite sites, called Favourites in IE. Pressing Ctrl-D is the fastest way to create a Favourite, but that shortcut doesn't let you specify where to store the link. To add a Web page to a specific folder in your list, click Favourites in the menu bar, select Add To Favourites, and choose the appropriate folder.

3.2 Organise Your Favourites

It's not enough to stuff random links into your Favourites list. You'll need to be able to find them later, which means organising them into the right folders. From the menu bar, select Favourites/Organise Favourites. You'll see a dialog box listing your current bookmarks and offering several button options. From there, you can create new folders and rename, move, or delete folders and bookmarks.

3.3 Print Your Favourites

Now that your list is in order, it's easy to print one of the Web pages in your Favourites folder without visiting the site itself. Just rightclick the page from the Favourites menu and select Print from the pop-up [menu](#). IE will send the site's page directly to your printer.

3.4 Export Your Favourites

If you have access to more than one computer (for example, one at work and another at home) and you'd like the same Favourites list on both of them, you can export your Favourites list as an HTML file and copy it to your second computer. To do this, pull down the File menu and choose Import And Export, step through the wizard and select Export, then pick the Favorites file you want to export to and the file where you want it to go. You can send it to any drive on your system (including a floppy) or to any computer on your network.

3.5 Import Netscape Bookmarks

If you're migrating from Netscape Navigator to Internet Explorer (or if you use both browsers interchangeably) you'll want to import Navigator's Bookmarks into IE's Favourites folder. Select Import And Export from the File menu to start the Import/Export Wizard. Click Next, make sure Import Favourites is highlighted, and click Next again. Select Netscape Navigator under "Import from an application" or browse to the bookmark.htm file under "Import from a file or address" and click Next. Finally, select the folder where you want to store the new bookmarks, click Next, and click Finish.

4 Navigation

Your browser's main purpose is to help you travel from one Web page to another with minimal fuss. Internet Explorer provides you with all the standard surfing tools, Back and Forward buttons, and a URL address field, but there's lots more power under the hood. Check out some of these slick navigation tricks.

4.1 Take Giant Steps Back and Forth

While it's easy to move back and forth between Web pages one at a time with IE's Back and Forward buttons, you can also leap ahead or back several pages at a time. Right-click either button (or click the tiny down arrows next to each button), and a pop-up menu displays the last ten sites you've visited. Then, simply select the page you'd like to jump to from the pop-up menu that appears.

4.2 Browse With Hot Keys

Keyboard shortcuts save loads of time because they let you execute certain commands without digging through menus to find [them](#). IE makes use of many standard Windows shortcuts, plus a few browser-specific ones. For example, to move back and forth between Web pages without clicking the Back and Forward buttons, hold down the Alt key, then hit the left arrow to move back and the right arrow to move forward.

4.3 Add Buttons to the Links Toolbar

The Links toolbar is a quick and easy way to access your favourite Web pages without entering the Favourites menu. First, turn on your Links toolbar (if you haven't already) by right-clicking any toolbar and selecting Links from the pop-up menu. To add a new button to the toolbar, drag any URL link from the address field to the toolbar and drop it creating an instant link to any site.

4.4 Open Multiple Windows

Ever need to open a second Web page but don't want to close the one you're on? Internet Explorer lets you open more than one browser window simultaneously. Click File in the main menu, select New, and then Window. To close a browser window, click the X in the top right corner or select Close from the File menu. You can also open a new browser window with Ctrl-N.

5 Searching

It's one thing to know how to navigate the Web, but finding the information you need is another matter entirely. A ton of info is available, but without the right search tools and techniques, it's easy to get lost. Internet Explorer tries to trawl through the sea of Internet information with several built-in features and functions.

5.1 Use IE's Search Assistant

One of IE 5's handiest and most effective tools, the Search Assistant, helps locate sites, places, and people on the Web by accessing several different search engines, including Yahoo, AltaVista, and Go.com. To display the Search Assistant, click the Search button in the toolbar. A new pane opens on the left side of your browser window. Pick the kind of search you want to perform, either for a Web page, an address, a business, a map, or results from one of your previous searches. Enter the text you want to find, then click Search. By default, IE 5 uses Go.com to run Web site searches. To run the search using a different search engine, click the Next button in the Search Assistant pane, and a drop-down menu displays the services you can choose from.

5.2 Fine Tune Your Searches

It's also possible to fine-tune the Search Assistant. Click the Search button on the toolbar and select Customise. Now you can specify which types of searches you want to appear in the Search Assistant window and which site the assistant will use for those searches.

5.3 Type Keywords Into the URL Box

In addition to the handy Search Assistant, IE 5 also lets you type search terms directly into the URL address field. So rather than typing, say, www.msn.com into the URL field, just type msn directly into the URL box, and IE will automatically perform an MSN search of the Web.

5.4 Find Related Links

If you're interested in a site you're currently viewing and would like to check out similar sites, select the Show Related Links from the Tools [menu](#). IE uses the interest-matching service Alexa to search for Web pages on similar topics, then displays them in the browser's normal Search window.

5.5 Search Your History

Suppose you need to find some information you recently saw on a Web site, but you can't remember where or when you saw it. Provided you haven't erased your History in a while, IE will search your previously visited sites for keywords. Just click the History button, select Search from within the Explorer bar, and hunt away.

5.6 Sift Through Long Pages

Say you've performed a Web search for a specific word or phrase, but the resulting page of links is so long that you can't find the site you need. Just search for keywords on the currently open page. Choose the Edit menu option and select Find (on This Page) or hit Ctrl-F. Enter the word you're looking for into resulting the dialog box and hit Enter. As with other Windows-type searches, you can limit your search by clicking the Match Whole Word Only or Match Case boxes.

5.7 Work Offline

Internet Explorer's not just for surfing the Web. Sure, we have plenty of complaints about version 5's tight Windows integration, but it does allow you to use your browser to search your hard drive, send email, and launch programs right from your desktop.

5.8 Organise Your Hard Drive

Case in point: IE 5 can also operate as a file management tool similar to Windows Explorer. To view your hard drive from within your browser window, type C: in the Address bar; the window will display the drive's contents. The toolbar buttons will change, and you can use them as you would those in Windows Explorer. For example, you can copy files from one folder to another using Copy and Paste, and double-click a document to open it in its related application.

5.9 Launch Programs From Your Browser

IE also lets you open any program on your system from your browser, provided the program has a desktop shortcut. Just type the name of your shortcut in IE's address bar, and the program will launch. For instance, if you have a desktop shortcut to Microsoft Word, type Microsoft Word in the address bar, and the program will automatically launch. Keep in mind that you must enter the exact name of the shortcut as it appears on your desktop.

5.10 Read a Web Page Offline

Don't have time to finish reading your online newspaper before you have to log off the Web? With Internet Explorer, you can take it with you. To read a Favourites or Links bar item offline, right-click it, then click Make Available Offline. IE stores the Web page, complete with graphics, into a temporary folder. Then you're free to read it on your own time.

5.11 Save a Web Page for Offline Viewing

Here's another way to make a Web page available offline: Select File/Save As; choose a folder for the file; alter the filename (if required); from the Save As Type drop-down list,

select "Web page, complete (*.htm,*.html)"; then click Save. Anytime you want to view the page again, simply open the file; it will appear as you saw it on the Web, with all of its images, sound files, and so on. Or if you'd rather not waste disk space on graphics files, you can opt to save the page as a text-only file instead.

5.12 Mail a Web Page

If you want to pass along an online article or a cool Web page to a friend, there's no need to copy and paste it into an email. Just click the Mail button and choose either Send A Link to fire off the URL or Send A Page to transmit the entire HTML page. Note: Your recipient will need to have an HTML-capable mail reader to view the page. You can also select Send and choose Page By E-mail or Link By E-mail from the File menu to perform the same actions.

5.13 Use IE As Your FTP Client

In addition to viewing standard HTTP Web pages, IE also operates as an FTP client--an app that lets you download files directly from another online computer. Type the URL of an FTP site into the address bar (be sure to type [ftp://](#) instead of [http://](#) before the URL) and click Go or press Enter. If you need to enter a username and a password, select Login As from the File menu and enter your name and password. Once you're connected to the site, you can drag and drop files from your hard drive to the site to upload them, or download files from the site to your hard drive.

5.14 Add Address Toolbars to the Windows Taskbar

Have you ever wanted to open a specific Web page without launching your browser first? If you're running Windows 98, there's a simple way to do it: Just add IE 5's Address toolbar to your Windows 98 Taskbar (located at the bottom of your screen to the right of the Start menu). Here's how: Right-click an open spot on the Taskbar, choose Toolbars, and select Address from the pop-up menu. To remove the Address toolbar, right-click the taskbar again and uncheck Address under Toolbars in the same menu.

6 Troubleshooting

You've mastered your browser, but that doesn't guarantee problem-free surfing. Next time you run into problems that you can't fix with the Refresh button, see if one of these tips does the trick.

6.1 Repair Internet Explorer

If IE 5's on the blink and you can't locate an obvious cause, try the Repair button. In the Start Menu, go to Settings/Control Panel. Then double-click Add/Remove Programs and select Microsoft Internet Explorer 5 and Internet Tools. Click the Add/Remove button. A pop-up window asks you whether you want to add a component, repair

Internet Explorer, or restore the previous Windows configuration. Select Repair Internet Explorer. This self-repair tool fixes any IE components that may have installed incorrectly. After the process is finished, restart Windows.

6.2 Stop Jerky Browsing

Occasionally, long Web pages load slowly or jerkily. To iron out your browsing, simply select Internet Options from the Tools menu. From the Advanced tab listed under Browsing options, select the box labelled Use Smooth Scrolling. Click OK to save changes. Now your pages should scroll without hitches or hiccups.

6.3 Limit Cache Size

If you don't have a large hard drive, increasing your cache to improve performance may not be a viable option because it will eat up space. So, to limit the amount of space IE uses, select Internet Options from the Tools menu and click the Settings button under Temporary Internet Files. Slide the bar under "Amount of disk space to use" to the left or enter a smaller number of megabytes in the field to the right.

6.4 Reset Default Settings

Sometimes, your IE problems are entirely your own fault. After you've made a lot of changes to IE's preferences or customised your home page, IE may start to misbehave. If you have no idea which tweak caused the problem, back up to square one and start over. To restore IE's default settings, select Internet Options from the Tools menu, then click the Programs tab and the Reset Web Settings button.

6.5 Resume Your Download After a Disconnection

If you are connected via a modem and your connection breaks during a download or if a download times out, sometimes the download window will remain open. If you leave that window open, reconnect to the Internet, and start downloading the file again, IE will resume the download where it left off.

6.6 Get New Updates and Add-Ons

Like all other software, IE is constantly changing and improving. To find Microsoft's latest updates and add-ons for Internet Explorer (including security patches), check out Microsoft's Windows Update page by selecting Windows Update from IE's Tools menu or from the Windows Start menu. (Make sure you're already connected to the Internet.) Windows Update prompts you to accept the Active Set-up installation, which you must do to view the Updates page. Active Set-up then checks your system to find which of the latest add-ons and updates you need, then lets you choose the ones you want to install from a list.