

Bits and Bytes

APRIL 2013

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club

Bella Vista Computer Club - John Ruehle Center

Highlands Crossing Center, 1801 Forest Hills Blvd, Suite 208, Bella Vista, AR 72715

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Don Hood, Newsletter Editor

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| James Moore | Dean Schaefer |
| Jim Kelly | Patty Martin |
| Cal Meider | Addie Fry |
| Jack Woods | Bella Vista POA |

Invite your friends and neighbors to attend our monthly meetings and learn about the Computer Club.

REMEMBER: To check for classes offered by the Bella Vista Computer Club, go to our web site posted in the title block (shown above) and check the calendars for April, May, and June. Call Marie Herr (273-2558) for more information and to pre-register.

Open house for Computer Repair & Help for club members at the Computer Club:

April 17 (10 am—1 pm) (Wednesday)

May 1st (1—4 pm) (Wednesday)

May 4th (10 am —1 pm) (Saturday)

GENEALOGY INTEREST GROUP meets at 10 a.m., April 20th (Saturday) at the John Ruhle Center.

WHAT IS A ROOTKIT?

A rootkit is a set of software tools frequently used by a third party (usually an intruder) after gaining access to a computer system. These tools are intended to conceal running processes, files or system data, which helps an intruder maintain access to a system without the user's knowledge. Rootkits are known to exist for a variety of operating systems such as Linux, Solaris and versions of Microsoft Windows. Rootkits are not new, they've been around for many years, but recently have been rediscovered by hackers and malicious programmers seeking to gain access to personal computers for nefarious reasons.

A rootkit typically hides logins, processes, files, and logs and may include software to intercept data from terminals, network connections, and the keyboard. In many instances, rootkits are often used to hide utilities used to abuse a compromised system. Backdoors and Trojans are examples. A Trojan may be a rootkit but not all rootkits are Trojans. A rootkit is not a virus..

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Note: Protect yourself from rootkits by keeping your anti-virus software updated, making sure that your firewall is always on and that you install all updates for your operating system and other software programs as, most of the time, rootkits actually attach themselves to other viruses to invade your system

HOW SAFE ARE YOUR PASSWORDS?

<https://www.grc.com/haystack.htm>

LOS ANGELES (KABC) -- Remembering several complicated passwords can make it hard logging into your accounts. But make those passwords too easy and you could become a victim of computer hackers. Here are some tips for keeping your information secure.

Here are two passwords. Try to figure out which one is harder for a hacker to crack.

- First, one with a combination of letters and symbols: "%\$#@{8ks98"
- Another starts with the word "dog," but with a capital "D," the numeral zero for the "o," and several periods after the "g": "D0g....."

Believe it or not, the second is more difficult, and here's why.

"Making the password longer slows down their ability to figure out what the password is, and length matters more than complexity," says Steve Gibson, a computer-hacking expert. Because every password is like a needle in a haystack, Gibson came up with something he calls a "haystack calculator." It's a website that can show you immediately how easy or how hard it is to crack your password.

Unfortunately people like to use simple passwords so they can remember them. The most-common password is "123456." The word "password" is also near the top of the list, and so is the phrase "iloveyou." They are so common that hackers put them into a dictionary of passwords.

So Gibson says you need to make the haystack as big as possible to really hide the needle.

Gibson's calculator shows how longer passwords make the haystack bigger. Go to this site <https://www.grc.com/haystack.htm> and check your passwords

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He demonstrates by adding one character at a time. "We can see that the length of time required is increasing very quickly, to the point that in the worst case: 38 centuries," said Gibson. Before the password is hacked. In other words you don't have to make the password so complicated you can't remember it. Just add more characters. "And it doesn't matter what they are. They could just be colons. Or come up with something like your own personal secret, and you add that to your password and it makes it vastly stronger," said Gibson.

But the safest passwords will have:

- At least one letter in upper case
- Another one in lower case
- There will be at least one digit
- And one symbol
- 12 characters long is optimum

Ric Romaro (Copyright ©2013 KABC-TV/DT. All Rights Reserved.)

DOES MY DESKTOP COMPUTER HAVE A BATTERY?

Yes it does have a battery. The battery is located on the mainboard - or motherboard - of your computer. It rarely needs replacing. We have had many desktop computers, including several we've kept for 4 or 5 years - and we've only had to replace one of them. It looks like a silver watch battery - i.e. a small silver disk. It's pretty easy to find if you're looking for it, and pretty easy to miss if you're not.

The battery provides power to a chip called Real Time Clock (RTC). The RTC runs all the time, whether or not your computer is off or on. The battery powers this clock. During the boot process Windows checks the RTC to get the correct date and time. The RTC will run for 5 to 7 years on the original battery. If you notice your computer clock is not keeping accurate time anymore, either synchronize it with an Internet time server, or other accurate time source. If your clock continually runs fast or slow, or the date is constantly wrong, it's probably time to change the battery. You can find them at your local discount store or buy them online.

What are the F1 through F12 keys?

Answer

commonly known as "function keys", F1 through F12 may have a variety of different uses or no use at all. Depending on the installed operating system and the software program currently open will change how each of these keys operate. A program is capable of not only using each of the function keys, but also combining the function keys with the ALT or CTRL key, for example, Microsoft Windows users can press ALT + F4 to close the program currently active.

Below is a short-listing of some of the common functions of the functions keys on computers running Microsoft Windows. As mentioned above not all programs support function keys and may perform different tasks than those mentioned below.

F1 — Almost always used as the help key, almost every program will open the help screen when this key is pressed. Windows Key + F1 would open the Microsoft Windows help and support center.

F2 — In Windows renames a highlighted icon, file, or folder in all versions of Windows. Alt + Ctrl + F2 opens document window in Microsoft Word. Ctrl + F2 displays the print preview window in Microsoft Word. Quickly rename a selected file or folder.

F3 — Often opens a search feature for many programs including Microsoft Windows when at the Windows Desktop.

- In MS-DOS or Windows command line F3 will repeat the last command.
- Shift + F3 will change the text in Microsoft Word from upper to lower case or a capital letter at the beginning of every word. Windows Key + F3 opens the Advanced find window in Microsoft Outlook.

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F4 — Open find window in Windows 95 to XP. Open the address bar in Windows Explorer and Internet Explorer.

- Repeat the last action performed (Word 2000+)
- Alt + F4 will close the program window currently active in Microsoft Windows.
- Ctrl + F4 will close the open window within the current active window in Microsoft Windows.

F5 — In all modern Internet browsers pressing F5 will refresh or reload the page or document window.

- Open the find, replace, and go to window in Microsoft Word.
- Starts a slideshow in PowerPoint.

F6 — Move the cursor to the Address bar in Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and most other Internet browsers.

- Ctrl + Shift + F6 opens to another open Microsoft Word document.

F7 — Commonly used to spell check and grammar check a document in Microsoft programs such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, etc.

- Shift + F7 runs a Thesaurus check on the word highlighted.
- Turns on Caret browsing in Mozilla Firefox.

F8 — Function key used to enter the Windows startup menu, commonly used to access Windows Safe Mode.

F9 — Opens the Measurements toolbar in Quark 5.0.

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F10 — In Microsoft Windows activates the menu bar of an open application. Shift + F10 is the same as right-clicking on a highlighted icon, file, or Internet link.

Access the hidden recovery partition on HP and Sony computers.

F11 — Full-screen mode in all modern Internet browsers. Ctrl + F11 as computer is starting to access the hidden recovery partition on many Dell computers. Access the hidden recovery partition on eMachines, Gateway, and Lenovo computers.

F12 — Open the Save as window in Microsoft Word.

- Shift + F12 save the Microsoft Word document.
- Ctrl + Shift + F12 prints a document in Microsoft Word.
- Preview a page in Microsoft Expression Web Open Firebug.

FIREWALLS?

We do not recommend any third-party firewalls. We do recommend you use the Windows Firewall and leave it turned on.

Always keep your common sense with you when you're on the Internet. Don't be lured into installing free software or signing up for a free service if it seems too good to be true. Research it - Google it! Read the privacy policy and/or Terms of Service or License Agreement of any free software or free service you're considering. As a rule of thumb, free products and free services which have extremely long, difficult-to-understand agreements are most often deceptive in nature. Be careful and stay informed - you'll be just fine. The internet is the greatest source of information ever - and it's all right at your fingertips. And despite all the nonsense the Web is a wonderful place. Play it safe, use common sense, and enjoy all the internet has to offer.

WINDOWS 8 DESKTOP ICONS

In Windows XP and some versions of Vista and Windows 7, there were default icons on your desktop. Things like Computer, Recycle Bin, etc. But in Windows 8 the desktop is barren. If you're using Windows 8 and would like to put the icons you're familiar with on your desktop, it's easy to do:

--Open the Desktop

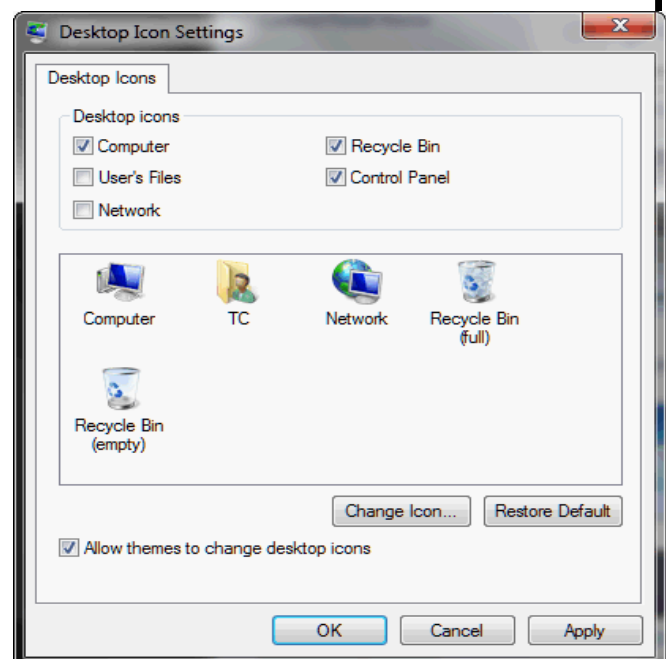
--Right-click an empty area

--Select "Personalize"

--On the upper left of the Personalize dialog, click "Change desktop icons"

--In the next dialog (see image below) put a check by the icons you want displayed on the desktop. Control Panel is extremely handy to have on your desktop in Windows 8

--Click "Apply" and "OK" and close the Personalize dialog.



And that's all there is to it! *The above article is copyright 2008 by Cloudeight Internet, <http://thundercloud.net/infoave/index.html>*