



## Websites of Interest

[www.graphjam.com/](http://www.graphjam.com/)  
all of life, explained in graphs

[library.albany.edu/reference/](http://library.albany.edu/reference/)  
directory of online reference tools

[www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov)  
see what's in the stimulus package



This is the time of year when camera makers unveil their new models.

Prices on point-and-shoot cameras are already low, but look for model closeout sales in the coming couple of months.

Generally, at equivalent price points, the new cameras will offer slightly higher resolution, in-lens anti-shake, and, most importantly, somewhat better low-light performance.

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## Security Breaches

Recently, a security firm that tracks bad guys on the Web, found the entire blueprints and schematics for the avionics of Marine One—the president's helicopter—on an Iranian file sharing site.

It seems that a staff member at a military contractor had downloaded and installed file sharing software on his office computer. This is the kind of stuff you or your kids might use to swap music and video files: LimeWire, Kazaa, Morpheus, any number of BitTorrent clients, etc.

By default, because this is file *sharing* software, the programs share everything on the hard drive on the computer they are loaded on. As soon as this stuff is installed, it offers the contents of your hard drive to the world. And there are people and governments who are looking for this kind of stuff all the time.

No firewall will protect you from this, they protect from intrusions. A program loaded on your computer, that you allow to access the Internet, isn't viewed as an intruder.

A study by Indiana University showed that 68% of all non-media downloads via LimeWire were infected with malware. Infected music/film/video downloads use a different type of attack that this study didn't address. But other studies have shown a high percentage of infected media files.

A good, updated antivirus program and antispysware program can offer protection against almost all of these threats, except the very new ones. But there are people out there deliberately trying to spread certain viruses. Indeed, in the Indiana study, 67% of the files with the most popular virus came from the same hosting site. That's no accident.

## Floppy Disks?

You know those LPs gathering dust in the cellar? The ones you can't play any more because the turntable needs a new cartridge and your new receiver doesn't have a phono-level input?

You've got data that's in the same boat. Those floppies sitting in your drawer have data that may be unusable soon, for many reasons.

One: you may not have a floppy drive in your next computer (or even your current one), two: the media the data is stored on is deteriorating, three: the data may be in a format that's no longer supported.

While you still can, copy those floppies to your hard drive and then to a CD. That's a good project for a cold, wet winter weekend.

Check the data after you copy it. If it's good, save it, but save it in a modern format. Old

Word documents should be opened in the newest version of Word that will support them, then saved in that format (open a Word 6 or Word 97 document in the new version of Word and save it in the current format).

While you're at it, save a copy in Rich Text Format. You'll lose any fancy internal tools, but you'll preserve the look and format.

For any files you can't open properly, use Word's *Recover text from any file* feature in the File, Open dialog box.

Do the same with Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, etc.

For graphics files, open them and save outdated graphics formats as TIFF (best quality), JPG, and BMP.


If you can't open an old graphic file, check the sidebar on page 2 for more information.

# How Do I...

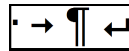
## Use More Than Basic Features

Each software program has a wealth of options available to help you work more easily. Some of them are staring you in the face—the icons in the toolbars—but you may never have clicked on them.

Here are a few handy ones mostly on the Standard and Formatting Toolbars in Word that may need a little explanation.

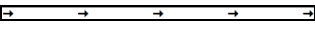
The first icon is the . It's not "that backwards P thingy." It's a *Pilcrow*, or an *Alinea*. Its use? It can help you troubleshoot a document in which the text is behaving oddly. Click on it, and what you see displayed are:

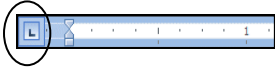
The dot marks each space.



The right-pointing arrow represents tabs.

The Pilcrow marks the end of a paragraph ('carriage return' in typewriter parlance). The left-pointing bent arrow marks a line advance or soft carriage return (It starts a new line without starting a new paragraph, so it doesn't apply an indent or spacing automatically. Hold down the Shift key while hitting Enter to do this).

So if you have words hopping around on a line as you edit, it may be because of this: . You pressed the Tab key 5 times (using the .5" presets) to move to 2.5" rather than setting the tab correctly and pressing it once. Shame.

Setting tabs is a snap if you use the tab  selector to the left of the ruler above your document. Yeah, it's the L-shaped thingy—click it a few times to watch it cycle through left-aligned tabs, right-aligned tabs, centered tabs, decimal tabs (handy for columns of figures with cents), bar tabs (handy on a Saturday night), and first line indents. When

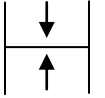
you get the one you want, just click with your mouse on the ruler and that tab will be set.


You can also set tabs to have leaders:


Small widget..... 2.65  
Large widget ..... 3.11

Now you don't have to hit the period key a zillion times.

One handy icon is *fleeting*. You only see it when you move your pointer across the top or bottom of the image of the page. The pointer turns momentarily into a double arrow on what appear to be two pages. Double-clicking at that time will cause Word to hide the top and bottom margins—handy if you are scrolling up and down through a long document. The document will print normally; this is just for ease of navigating a long document. Double-click again at the top or bottom of the page to bring the margins into view.



 That's not a whisk broom; it's the *Format Painter*—a real timesaver. When you set a format that you like in one paragraph (or a heading, etc.), you can copy that format to all the other places you'd like to use it in the document. You don't have to manually set the style each time; this icon copies the style for you. Click in the text whose style you want to copy. Click the *Format Painter* icon. Now click in the next place that you want to look just like the original. Presto! If you click the icon once, you can use it to make one copy of the style; then it turns off. If you double-click it, that locks it on, and you can go through your document and keep pasting the style everywhere you want it. When you're done, click the icon to turn it off. If you forget and hit some text in error, and you will, just click *Undo*.

 Graphic files are perhaps the most numerous and likely to be proprietary. Old graphics programs created a multitude of formats that have disappeared as the companies folded and were bought out.

The most popular universal reader/converter is *Irfanview* ([www.irfanview.net](http://www.irfanview.net)). It's freeware. If *Irfanview* can't read it, give up.

It's also a graphics editor, with a pretty good set of features although it's no *Photoshop*. The interface is plain, but it will let you do batch conversions, slide shows, and more.

You can download this small, free program from many sites. The easiest are probably: [www.download.com](http://www.download.com) or [www.tucows.com](http://www.tucows.com).

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