

The Best Windows Keyboard Shortcuts in 2024

The best Windows keyboard shortcuts save time because they let you avoid having to reach for your mouse or look through a menu just to accomplish something basic. Below is a cheat sheet for all the essential Windows keyboard shortcuts you should be using, plus others that are useful for some specific situations.

Best Windows Shortcuts on Your Keyboard

This first set is the best keyboard shortcuts you'll likely use most frequently. These could be the more universal shortcuts because they work not only within the Windows operating system but also in most software programs.

- **Ctrl+C**: Copy selected content. (Ctrl+C can also abort commands)
- **Ctrl+V**: Paste copied content.
- **Ctrl+Shift + V**: Paste unformatted content.
- **Ctrl+X**: Delete and copy selected content. (good for moving text, files, etc.)
- **Ctrl+A**: Select all available content in focus.
- **Ctrl+Z**: Undo the previous action.
- **Ctrl+Y**: Redo the previous action.
- **Ctrl+S**: Save what you're working on.
- **Ctrl+O**: Open a new file.
- **Ctrl+P**: Open the print dialog box.
- **Ctrl+F**: Open the search tool to find something on the page.
- **Ctrl+R**: Refresh the contents on the screen. (only **F5** works in some cases)
- **Alt+F4**: Close the active program.
- **F11**: Enter full-screen mode.
- **Esc**: Stop or close a prompt or process.
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Keyboard Shortcuts for Screenshots

You can use the print screen (PrtScn) button to take a full screenshot of everything on your screen(s) or use these keyboard shortcuts for more control.

- Alt+PrtScn**: Screenshot just the active window.
- Win+PrtScn**: Auto-save full-screen screenshot to **Pictures > Screenshots**.
- Win+Shift+S**: Choose a part of the screen to make a screenshot.

Keyboard Shortcuts for Special Characters

Some symbols aren't on the keyboard but are instead activated only through a special tool or keyboard combination. This is the case for many [alt codes that work in Windows](#).

- Alt+0169**: Type ©, the copyright symbol.
- Alt+168**: Type ¿, an inverted question mark.
- Alt+0176**: Type °, the degree symbol.
- Alt+0162**: Type ¢, the cent symbol.
- Alt+0128**: Type €, the euro sign.
- Alt+0153**: Type ™, the trademark symbol.
- Alt+251**: Type √, the radical sign (square root symbol).
- Win+.** (period): Access the built-in emoji tool.

Keyboard Shortcuts for Text Manipulation

Most text input fields, including word processors like MS Word, accept a handful of formatting, navigation, and selection-related keyboard shortcuts.

- **Ctrl+B**: Bold the selected text.
- **Ctrl+i**: Italicize the selected text.
- **Ctrl+U**: Underline the selected text.
- **Ctrl+K**: Insert a hyperlink into the selected text.
- **Ctrl+H**: Open the Find and Replace tool. (confirmed in MS Word and Google Docs)
- **Shift+Ctrl+[Arrow]**: Pick an arrow key with this shortcut to quickly highlight a whole word or paragraph.
- **Shift+[Home or End]**: Highlight everything from the cursor to the beginning or end of the line.
- **Ctrl+Del**: Delete the word to the right of the cursor.

Keyboard Shortcuts for Navigating Windows

opening advanced tools or moving through folders, the Windows operating system itself.

- **Win+L**: Lock your user account.
- **Win+E**: Open File Explorer.
- **Win+i**: Open Windows' Settings.
- **Alt+D**: Move focus to the navigation bar to edit or copy the folder path.
- **Alt+Up**: Go to the folder the current folder is stored in.
- **Alt+F8**: Show your password on the sign-in screen.
- **Ctrl+Shift+Esc**: Open Task Manager. (Ctrl+Alt+Del works, too)
- **Win+R**: Open the Run dialog box to run commands.
- **Win+D**: Quickly switch to the desktop.
- **Alt+[Enter or double-click]**: Open the selected item's Properties window.
- **Win+Ctrl+D**: Add a virtual desktop.
- **Win+Ctrl+[Left or Right]**: Switch to the virtual desktop on the left or right.
- **Ctrl+Click**: Select noncontiguous items. (like files or folders)
- **Win+Ctrl+Shift+B**: A possible fix for when your screen is black.
- **Shift+Click**: Select every item between the first and last select items.
- **Shift+Del**: Permanently delete a file or folder. (it skips the Recycle Bin)
- **Alt+Tab**: Switch to the last used window.
- **Win+[Arrow]**: Snap the active window to one side of the screen.
- **F2**: Rename the selected file or folder.
- **Win+X**: Open the Power User Menu.
- **Shift+Click Taskbar Icon**: Open a new instance of that app.
- **Win+[number]**: Launch that item from the taskbar.
- **Ctrl+Shift+N**: Make a new folder.
- **Win+Pause**: Open the Windows About page.

Keyboard Shortcuts for Web Browsers

If you spend most of your time in a web browser, you'll appreciate these keyboard shortcuts that help speed up your overall web browsing experience.

- **Ctrl+T**: Open a new tab.
- **Ctrl+Shift+T**: Reopen the most recently closed tab.
- **Ctrl+W**: Close the active tab.
- **Ctrl+[Link]**: Open the link in a new tab.
- **Ctrl+H**: View your web browsing history.
- **Ctrl+J**: View recent or active downloads.
- **Ctrl+E**: Start a search using the default search engine.
- **Ctrl+[number]**: Jump to the tab in that position from the left. (e.g., **Ctrl+4**)
- **Ctrl+Shift+Del**: Open the options to delete browsing data.
- **Alt+[Left or Right]**: Go back or forward a page.
- **Ctrl+[Zoom]**: Adjust the size of the text. (scroll up with the mouse to increase the size)
- **Ctrl+Enter**: Add .com to the end of the text in the address bar, and then visit the page.
- **Ctrl+F5**: Refresh the page, but skip the cache.
- **Ctrl+Shift+Alt+Win+L**: Open LinkedIn. (or Teams, Word Online)