



Keyboard Shortcuts and Other Handy Tricks

One of the benefits of using Microsoft Office software is that there are certain commands and functions that can be accomplished more quickly or efficiently if you know the “secret” ways to access them. They work the same way across all of the applications we’ve been looking at, so it is very worthwhile for you to take some time to learn them.

A great way to save time and mental energy when you are working with office applications is to use **keyboard shortcuts**, which allow you to accomplish many of the tasks that are usually accessible only through the toolbar menus just by using the keys on your keyboard. Here is a list of some of the most common ones:

Cut	Ctrl + X
Copy	Ctrl + C
Paste	Ctrl + V
Repeat last action	Ctrl + Y
Select all	Ctrl + A
Save	Ctrl + S
Bold (on/off)	Ctrl + B
Italics (on/off)	Ctrl + I
Underline (on/off)	Ctrl + U
Select consecutive list items, paragraphs, or words in a sentence	(1) Click on first item, (2) Press and hold “Shift” key, (3) Click on last item, (4) Release “Shift” key.
Select non-consecutive list items or words in a sentence	(1) Press and hold “Ctrl” key, (2) Click on each item as needed, (3) Release “Ctrl” key. <i>To unselect an item, just click on it a second time.</i>

Format Painter

One great feature to know about when using Microsoft Office software is the “Format Painter.” This is the button that looks like a small paintbrush, located to the left of the “undo” button in the standard toolbars in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. This button allows you to copy and paste the format of selected text, without going through all the steps it would take to format the new text from scratch. To use it, select (highlight) the text you want to use as a model, and then click on the Format Painter button. Next, select (highlight) the text you want to reformat to look like the model, and the Format Painter will convert it automatically!

Right-Click Menus (PC only)

If you are using a PC computer, you can take advantage of the right-click feature, which provides direct access to certain menus, depending on whether or not text is selected. This can be a more efficient way to access key features of Microsoft Office applications than using the toolbar menus, so it is worth experimenting with to see how it works in different situations.

Help Menus

One often-overlooked feature of all Microsoft Office applications is the Help menu, which is located at the far right side of the standard toolbar. Most questions you might have about how to accomplish certain tasks in a given application can be found by searching the “Help” documentation that you will find here, so it’s always worth a look if you get confused.