

User Friendly

LACS
A Computer and
Technology
User Group

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MEETING TIME CHANGE

Beginning on January 12, the LACS General Meetings will start at **7:00 PM**. Members may enter the Zoom meeting any time after 6:00.

LACS IS A MEMBER OF APCUG

www.apcug2.org
www.facebook.com/APCUG
www.twitter.com/apcug
www.youtube.com/apcugvideos



An International
Association of Technology
and Computer User Groups

JANUARY 12 GENERAL MEETING

MEETING TIME: 7:00 – 9 PM – Via Zoom

6:00 to 7:00: Socializing and Questions & Answers

Topic: **Start 2021 by Decluttering Your Digital Life**

Speaker: **Judy Taylour**, APCUG Speakers Bureau, President Santa Clarita Valley, CA Computer Club, and APCUG Region 10 advisor.

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to declutter all things digital? You spend a lot of money on your devices – take care of them, and they will last longer. Digital clutter slows down your devices, your computer runs slow, and it takes you too long to find a document. You are overloaded with emails, and your phone has a gazillion apps; you can't find anything. Judy's presentation will show you how you can declutter your digital life and be more organized to work faster and smarter.



Meet Our Presenter

Judy Taylour is a 32-year member of the Santa Clarita Valley (SCV) Computer Club where she serves as President, Editor, and Webmaster. She is chair of several APCUG (an international organization of technology and computer user groups) committees. She is also co-facilitator for the Southern California Regional User Group Summit (SCRUGS), a group of computer clubs in Southern California that have met quarterly for over 20 years to share ideas and presenter information, solve problems, etc. Judy taught adult education computer classes for 22 years for her local high school district. She is a member of the Pierce College Computer Applications and Office Technologies Advisory Committee that meets annually to suggest courses and hardware for the next school year. A firm believer in life-long learning, Judy has spoken to us on The Cloud, Ergonomics, Digital Asset Estate Planning and other topics.

Tuesday, January 12, 7:00 - 9:00 PM

This meeting will be conducted via Zoom

6:00 - 7:00 Social Time and informal Q & A

More info: 310-780-3302

Guests may apply for the link by email to

leahjc@sbcglobal.net

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR**LACS Members May Give
Gift Memberships**

To enhance our membership numbers and encourage current members to communicate their enjoyment of LACS benefits, the Board is offering a new category of membership: **Gift Membership**.

Current members may purchase a one-time, one-year gift membership for anyone who has never been a member.

The cost for the gift membership is \$20, half the regular annual membership. At the end of the gift membership, it is hoped that the recipient will want to join LACS as a full-fledged member. If they do join, gift purchasers will receive a three-month extension to their memberships. The gift recipients will be informed that you have purchased a membership for them and will be entitled to these membership benefits:

- Receive the LACS monthly newsletter, *User Friendly*, by postal mail.
- Attend our monthly General Meetings, currently held via Zoom.
- Call or e-mail other members when computer-related problems arise.
- Surf the LACS website, www.lacspc.org, for LACS information and activities.
- Listen to the general meeting podcasts, watch recordings of Zoom meetings, and read previous issues of *User Friendly*.
- Receive notices of important developments, webinars, product discounts, and special offers.

Replying to LACS Group Email

With some new setting changes, when receiving an email sent to a LACS group list, you should now be able to click on "Reply to Sender" or on "Reply to All" as desired.

**Updates for Joining the LACS
Mail Lists**

There are some updates for joining the LACS Groups.IO mail lists on **page 8** of this issue. Please review them. We want all our members to be on the lists to receive all the benefits of membership.

Openings for LACS Directorships

If you would like to have your voice heard about how LACS is managed, or if you want to give back for the benefits you have received as a member, you should become a director. No experience needed. The directors attend one Zoom meeting a month on the first Monday. They have the opportunity to make suggestions and to vote on proposals. We have openings for both a one-year term and a two-year term. Contact me, Leah Clark, at leahjc@sbcglobal.net if you think you can do this. Thank you so much.

Publicity for LACS

Beginning in January 2021, Stanley Johnson will no longer be doing the Flyers and Social Media Posts to publicize LACS meetings. LACS is grateful for the years he has done this for us.

So now, we need someone else to take over. The same person doesn't need to do both the flyer and the media (MeetUp and Twitter) notices. This can be done from your home, with no meetings to attend. The person creating the flyer won't need to distribute it. You will be most appreciated.

Stanley will assist anyone who's taking over with the transition. Please let Leah Clark or Stanley Johnson know if you think you can help LACS in this way, or to ask about what the job requires.

GENERAL MEETING REPORT

December 7, 2020

By Leah Clark, LACS Editor and President

We had a friendly holiday and year-end celebration at our December general meeting. First, I announced that starting in January 2021, the LACS general meetings will go back to starting at 7:00 PM, and we will have two openings for directors. Members will now be able to give a one-year, one-time gift LACS membership to someone who has never been a member for \$20.00. There was discussion about using PayPal or Venmo for members to make payments to LACS.

LACS member, Carol Johnson, presented a program on **Christmas Traditions in Norway**. Her parents came from Norway, near the Arctic Circle. Like Santa Claus, elves, and reindeer, many of our Christmas traditions came from the Arctic.

She showed pictures of legendary characters like trolls, elves, and nisses, mythological characters.

From ancient times, there was an arctic

winter festival. When other nations set Christmas on December 25, Norway joined it with the Winter Festival. Gifts, which were usually hand made, were opened on Christmas eve. Some still use live candles on trees. Sheaths of grain were put out for the birds.

Carol showed pictures and described beautiful Norwegian arts and crafts from her family heirlooms, including cooking, weaving, spinning, wood carving and inlay work, tatting, and embroidery.

LACS director, Paula Van Berkomp, talked about Christmas traditions in the Netherlands. She told us about Sinterklass and his helpers called black Piets. St. Nicholas was born in Russia and became a bishop in Turkey, where he gave food and toys to poor children.



He comes to the Netherlands every year in a big steamboat from Spain. Sinterklass may come from Spain because, in 1087, Saint Nicholas relics were transported to Bari, Italy, which later formed part of the Spanish kingdom of Naples.

The big feast is on December 5, the eve of his birthday, the feast of St. Nicholas on December 6. At night children put their shoes in front of the fireplace with carrots for his horse and sometimes cookies and milk for Sinterklass. Children make wish lists that they put in their shoes. Sinterklass records them in a big book with notes if they have been bad or good. The next morning they find goodies and small gifts in their shoes.

Sinterklass and his helpers, black Piets, arrive in the harbor, get on a white horse, and ride through town. At night they ride on the rooftops and put toys through the chimneys. Today's politics and discrimination concerns have spoiled the tradition of the beautiful black Piets. Ginger cookies and chocolate initials are shared at Christmas.



LACS director, Mark Presky, told about the origin of the major holidays celebrated by every society worldwide. They all derive from winter festivals, spring planting festivals, midsummer holidays, and fall harvest festivals. Every culture needs to socialize and celebrate.

I showed a poster with names of the volunteers who contributed to LACS's success throughout 2020. This has been a year of challenges, and we appreciate everyone's help. Thanks to all.

I then shared some holiday jokes and trivia questions, which brought some laughter and discussion. We had a good time and now look forward to a productive 2021. ❖

HELPFUL MEMORY BYTES

By **Jim Cerny**, Help Desk Host,
The Saratoga Users Group
STUG Monitor, July 2020
www.thestug.org
jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

Let's review and explore what we really need to know about basic computer storage (bits and bytes) and how it helps us get an idea of the data space required to save and backup our stuff.

Suppose you landed on a planet and the aliens there only had one hand and only one finger on it (not ten fingers like we do). All they could do is flash a single digit or none at all (hence, zero or one). How high could they count? Could they do basic math?

All computers use the binary system (a single digit of 1 or 0) – that is, they store and work with data saved in memory as zeros and ones. But there is NO LIMIT to how high you can count – you just keep adding on more zeros and ones. For example, the digits we know in our numbering system such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16, 31, 32, 33, etc. would be the following in binary = 1, 10, 11, 100, 101, 110, 111, 1000, 1111, 10000, 11111, 100000, 100001, etc. So, adding a new digit to the left doubles the size of the memory or number. Believe it or not, math gets a lot simpler with only two digits.

A single binary digit is called a BIT. Eight bits together form a BYTE of data. Eight bits allow for 256 different combinations, enough to cover not only our 26-character alphabet but special characters and more. Every keystroke on your keyboard enters one byte into memory!

I love the old science fiction movies – where the spacecraft command center was filled with gauges and dials! To read a value on a dial, you had to look closely and see where the arrow was. It showed measurement on a scale of lines, and it was up to you and your

eye sight to see the amount or “reading.” But with binary digits, you don't care about “how much”, you only need to know if it is there or not there, a one or a zero. To get more accuracy, you add more binary digits. So, you will need a lot of them, but they are cheap and much easier for use in electronics.

One KILO-byte of memory is 1024 bytes, but when we start dealing with vast amounts of computer storage, we round it off and call it a thousand.

One MEGA-byte of data is one million bytes or one-thousand kilobytes. Those old 3.5-inch computer disks (remember them?) held about one and a half megabytes or about 220 pages of text. A CD-ROM (computer disk) could hold about 700 mega-bytes; that's over 400 of those old floppy disks and approximately 90,000 pages of text. It is good to remember that photos, depending upon the number of pixels in them, can be from 10 or 20 kilobytes up to 2, 12, 24, or more megabytes each! So, is a picture worth a thousand words? Yes, and more!

One GIGA-byte is one trillion bytes or one-thousand megabytes. Now we are talking about serious (and very inexpensive) memory! You can buy a small portable USB drive (called a “thumb” drive or “flash” drive) in various gigabyte sizes – I tend to like the 32 or 64-gigabyte size because it can easily hold all my photos and documents as my backup. Just one gigabyte can hold almost 700,000 pages of text. That's a den full of books. One HD (high definition) movie can take 2 to 5 gigabytes of memory. Movies and videos are moving pictures with several images (or “frames”) per second. Fortunately, the data used to store photos and movies are “compressed” or coded to take up much less space than you would expect.

One TERA-byte is one thousand gigabytes. For us ordinary people, this is a HUGE amount of memory! You can get a one-terabyte drive for about \$50. It can hold

300,000 photos or about 500 hours of movies. And, unlike my memory, it will never forget anything.

The next memory size up is the PETA-byte -- yup, one-thousand terabytes! And, no, they are not going to run out of prefixes. All just to store ones and zeros.

I use a nice little thumb drive to back up my memory, but I seem to forget where I put it! ❖



TECHNOLOGY TRIVIA

By Leah Clark, LACS

The Xerox 914 was the first commercially successful plain paper copy machine. It came with a fire extinguisher! There was one downside to this machine. If the paper jammed, it tended to jam near the fuser. If it wasn't cleared quickly enough, it could catch fire. The small extinguisher included with each model was referred to as a "scorch eliminator."

From <https://www.Mindbounce.com>

WHY LINUX?

By Jim Quinn, Vice President
Under the Computer Hood User Group
Drive Light, November 2020

www.uchug.org

vicepresident (at) uchug.org

In 2008 we (my wife and I) decided to do the 5-year plan to retire in 2012. We calculated our retirement income and expenses (including taxes) to ensure we could live satisfactory on that amount.

This forced me to think about technology for us and our two daughters, and how to support them with hardware, software (Win 7), tech support, and what it would cost. I was always helping my daughters with problems fixing Windows 7 and computer hardware. So, I built two new computers for myself, specifications listed below, one was for Linux and one for Windows 7 (hardware to replace current Win 7 machine).

I also had to face the issue of software. A problem with propriety software is that updates to the Operating System (OS) and applications may prevent them from running on your current hardware. Also, propriety applications may no longer be supported by the OS (security updates) or abandoned.

Linux offers free software (the OS and the applications) with many OS choices (distributions aka distros) and applications. That way, if either becomes unavailable or unsupported, there are many other alternatives available.

Linux distros vary from the highly technical (you choose what is included and you compile your own) to ready to use distros (Linux Mint and many others, aka many flavors).

You also have a choice of desktops; you can use a distro that looks like Windows, Mac, or any other desktop style. The good thing about Linux is you have many choices of distros, desktops, and applications.

In 2010 I found Linux Mint 9 and started my quest to see if it would work for my daughters and me, as I'm the tech support for them. I finally settled on Mint 9 Maté as the replacement for Win 7 as it seemed to have all the software applications the daughters would need and hopefully would also meet my needs. The Linux Mint 9 Maté interface was easy to learn, and I really liked the multiple workspaces.

Within about a year, the daughters' computers started having Win 7 problems and hardware issues.

So, I started looking around for replacement computers and ordered a refurbished computer to test out Mint 9. *TigerDirect* and *Newegg* seemed to have reasonable prices for prior models, so I ordered one. The testing went great, so I added a second hard drive (for automated backups) and a USB drive backup for the daughter to use.

Since moving my daughters' computers to Linux, my support calls have gone to almost nil. Most of the questions are related to how to accomplish a task with the applications. Linux is a multiuser system.

My daughters and I have been using the long-term support (LTS) releases (around five years) of Linux Mint. The current release of Mint (LTS) is v. 20. The only time-consuming support with my daughters' computers is when I upgrade to a new release of the long-term support distro. This is due to both my daughters having multiple users. It requires backing up their home folders, creating users with the same id, restoring their home folders, and changing back the ownership of their respective files because my backup is done with admin rights. I'm seriously considering creating an application to perform this automatically or finding a backup program that will do this.

SO WHY LINUX?

Windows 7 is no longer supported; this re-

quires the possibility of purchasing a new computer as it wouldn't update my machine and definitely not my daughter's computers. This would also require buying new versions of the programs we need as they are not supported under Windows 7.

Now that Windows 10 is in full swing, there have been many problems when installing updates. Also, Microsoft states this is the last version of Windows. It appears that most commercial programs are going to a monthly subscription or yearly subscription, which benefits them but not the user. For most of us, this means you cannot continue to use a program for years even if you do not need the updated features (lack of choice forced upgrades). Windows feature updates are only supported for two years. Does that indicate that you'll need to update your computer, or are they preparing to implement a Windows subscription service?

I'll step down from my soapbox now.

Specifications for Each of My Two New Computers

Corsair Case Black, 300R

Motherboard: ASUS P8Z77-V Deluxe

CPU: Intel i7-3770K

Memory: G.Skill, F3-1866C10D-16GSR – total 32GB

Asus DRW-24B1ST

Pioneer DVD BDR-207UBK

Western Digital, WD1003FZEX (2 each) for Windows RAID 1 and 1 for Linux Computer



KEYBOARD REFRESHER QUIZ

By **Jim Cerny**, Help Desk Host
The Saratoga Users Group
STUG Monitor, June 2020
www.thestug.org
jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

Most of us have been using a computer keyboard for years, so you are probably comfortable using it. But a good review of these helpful keyboard keys can make your texting much easier.

There are keyboards for computers, laptops, on-screen touch keyboards for tablets and phones. They may look a bit different and have some different keys, but they all will (basically) do the same thing (well, with very few exceptions). How many of these do you remember? Answers are provided at the end of the article, but don't peek!

Questions

1. How do you repeat a letter or symbol?
2. What do you call that vertical line that appears BETWEEN letters to allow you to insert or delete text?
3. How do you enter all capital (uppercase) letters?
4. What does the "delete" key do when you are editing text NOT highlighted?
5. How do you highlight or select the text you want to delete, move, or copy?
6. What is the difference between "cut" and "copy"?
7. What does the "tab" key do?
8. What are "function" keys (the "f"-keys)?
9. Can you use a keyboard to enter a menu option?
10. What do the arrow keys do?
11. What does the ESCAPE key (Esc) do?
12. Can you find these controls on your keyboard? Volume up or down, insert, page up or down, or "call a 10-year-old for help"?

Answers:

1. Hold down the key.
2. The insertion point (also known as the cursor).
3. Hit the "caps lock" key or double touch the capital (uppercase) key.
4. It will delete the character to the RIGHT of the insertion point.
5. Drag your mouse or finger over the text to highlight it.
6. "Cut" will remove the text you have highlighted, but "copy" will not. But either one will place your selection on the clipboard.
7. It moves the insertion point a few spaces to the right. Actually you are entering a "tab" character and you may be able to change the size (length) of the tab spacing.
8. They will execute a command depending upon the app you are running. For example, the F3 key in a game app could mean "jump". Usually, the F1 key is used for getting help.
9. Yes, usually with a two (or at most three) key combination with the "Alt," "Ctrl," or "Windows" keys.
10. They move your cursor or insertion point in that direction on the screen.
11. It will try to "escape" out of (or stop running) the app you are using.
12. Keep looking! ❖



LACS NOTICES

WELCOME ALL

Gavin Faught, LACS Treasurer

New Members (0)

Renewals (5)

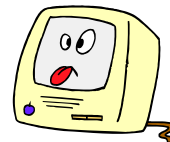
Guy Clark
Leah Clark
Melvin Gaines
Ron LeBlanc
Freda Sanders
Anne Uski
Jonas Williams



FIX YOUR PC FOR FREE?

LACS Member and presenter,

Jim McKnight has an open offer to LACS members to diagnose, repair, disinfect, or upgrade members' PC's for free.



There are certain limitations to Jim's offer, so see the details by clicking the "Fix my PC for Free?" link at www.jimopi.net.

Non-members can wisely invest in a one-year new regular LACS membership (\$40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too. Contact Jim for specific considerations.

JOIN OUR MAIL LISTS

LACS members can join one, or both, of the lists shown by putting just their name in the message body of an e-mail to each of the lists they wish to join from the e-mail address they wish LACS to use. It's highly recommended to join both lists.

- **PC@LACS+subscribe (at) groups.io**
- **LACSLIST@LACS+subscribe (at) groups.io**

PC is for official LACS business only.

Lacslist is for any other computer or technology – related messages and questions.

New members will no longer be automatically added to the mail lists. They will receive one invitation to join each list; they must respond quickly.

If you have any problems or questions regarding joining the lists, please contact Stephanie Nordlinger at nordlacs@aol.com.

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to www.lacspc.org. Click on **Member Forms** in the bar under the picture. Under **Membership Update**, select **Click Here** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out, email your changes to **membership (at) lacspc.org**, or mail it to LACS, 11664 National Blvd. #343, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802.

LACS IS ON TWITTER

On **Twitter**, follow us at:

https://twitter.com/LA_CompSoc or right-click on this



icon to see what's there.

MEETUP

Our Meetup group is called:

"Los Angeles Computer Society and Technology Meetup."

Please join and **RSVP** for our general meetings - it's free.



Click on this icon or go to <http://www.meetup.com/Los-Angeles-Computer-Society-and-Technology-Meetup/> to see our Meetup Page. Then click on **"Join Us."**

Hyperlinks

Note that underlined text (blue in the colored editions) in User Friendly usually indicates it's a hyperlink to a website.

LACS CALENDAR



LACS Board Meeting

Date: Monday, January 4, 2020 via Zoom

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Where: At your home via Zoom

General Meeting

Start 2021 by Decluttering Your Digital Life

Date: Tuesday, January 12, 2020 via Zoom

Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:00 P.M.)

January 1: New Year's Day

January 4: **LACS Board Meeting**

January 6: 12th Day of Christmas, 3 Kings Day

January 12: **LACS General Meeting**

January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 28: Data Privacy Day



VISIT OTHER USER GROUPS

Check out this URL for information for visiting other user groups' Zoom meetings, and for a lot more ideas for using Zoom and managing dealing with the stay-at-home restrictions.

<https://apcug2.org/tech-things-to-learn-while-sheltering-in-place/>

GENERAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS VIA ZOOM

December 8: Virtual Holiday Celebration

January 12: Start 2021 by Decluttering Your Digital Life

Due to the pandemic, our future presentations may be uncertain. Check email and *User Friendly* for updates.

ZOOM MEETINGS

To join an Zoom meeting, click on the URL on the invitation you will receive via email before the meeting and follow the prompts.

Contact Leah Clark, leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net, if you have any questions, or if you don't receive the link by the morning of the meeting day. Try to enter at least five to ten minutes before the meeting's start time to avoid interrupting the meeting.

PODCASTS & ZOOM RECORDINGS

To listen to the podcasts of most of our past in-person general meetings, go to <https://www.lacspc.org/category/audio-files/>.

Click on the session you want to hear. **LACS members will receive links to the recordings of Zoom meetings via email.**

USER FRIENDLY BACK ISSUES AND INDEXES

To see back issues of *User Friendly*, go to <http://www.lacspc.org/category/user-friendly/>.

For indexes to past issues go to <https://www.lacspc.org/category/uf-index/>

To find a specific article or topic, use the search box on the right below the picture.

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone during the hours listed below. Select the topic from the list and then call a person whose number is listed next to it. Or you may use a Helper's e-mail address, found in your LACS Roster. We hope that you find this free service useful. **If you are experienced using a particular program or know a topic, please volunteer to be a consultant. You don't have to be an expert.** To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please email Leah Clark at <Leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net> or call her at 310-677-2792. More Quick Consultants, and more categories are always needed. You may decline or postpone a call if it comes at an inconvenient time.

Adobe Creative Suite: PDF,
InDesign, PhotoShop, etc. - 10
Android Smartphones - 8
Apple devices - 12
Anti Malware and Backup - 7, 8
Digital Imaging, Editing - 11
Digital Photography - 11
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 3
Genealogy - 8
Groups.IO - 8

Hardware - 7
Linux - 4
Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 7
Mozilla Firefox - 7
MS Excel - 8, 12, 13
MS Word - 1, 3, 13
MS Outlook - 8, 1, 10
MS PowerPoint - 12
MS Publisher - 2

Open Office - 6
Photoshop - 10
Quicken - 8, 13
Thunderbird - 7
Utilities - 7, 8
Visual Basic - 5
Websites - 5
Windows - 6, 7, 8
WordPerfect - 8
Zoom - 2, 9

Number	Name	Preferred Phone for Calls	From	To
1	Beckman, Loling	310-471-7893	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
2	Clark, Leah	310-677-2792	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
3	Hershman, Irv	310-397-9453	11:00 AM	11:00 PM
4	Hughes, Bill	424-259-1818	Any	Any
5	Ialongo, Gilbert	310-641-7906	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
6	Johnson, Carol	310-372-8535	10:00 AM	9:00 PM
7	McKnight, Jim	310-823-7829	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
8	Nordlinger, Stephanie	323-299-3244	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
9	Presky, Mark	310-780-3302	Any Time	Any Time
10	Rozek, E. J.	310-823-3811	Noon	8:00 PM
11	Silverstein, Elliot	310-670-1544	10:00 AM	10:00 PM
12	Van Berkorn, Paula	310-398-6734	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
13	Wilder, Joan	310-472-8445	9:00 AM	9:00 PM

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

Title	Name	Term	Telephone
President	Leah Clark	2021	310-677-2792
Past President	Stanley Johnson	2021	424-216-6984
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2021	323-299-3244
Secretary	Marcia Jacobs	2021	310-838-1409
Treasurer	Gavin Faught	2021	310-346-2637
Director	Newton Bernstein	2021	310-945-9111
Director	Open	2021	
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2021	310-398-6734
Director	Howard Krivoy	2022	310-717-7465
Director	Mark Presky	2022	310-780-3302
Director	E. J. Rozek	2022	310-823-3811
Director	Open	2022	
APCUG Rep.	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Car Pool Coordinator	Freda Sanders		323-230-3278
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
CCSC Computer Lab	Loling Beckman		310-471-7893
Database Manager	Sylvia Davis		323-293-5004
Greeter	Freda Sanders		323-230-3278
Assistant Greeter	Penny McKnight		310-823-7829
Groups.IO Lists	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
Hospitality Chair	Sylvia Davis		323-293-5004
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
Publicity – Press	Mark Presky		310-780-3302
Publicity – Online Media	Stanley Johnson		424-216-6984
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkom		310-398-6734

Mailing Address 11664 National Blvd., #343, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802

Website www.lacspc.org

Newsletter Editor editor (at) lacspc.org

Voice Mail 1-310-398-0366

Webmaster sitemaster (at) lacspc.org

E-mail ContactUs (at) lacspc.org **Change of Address** membership (at) lacspc.org

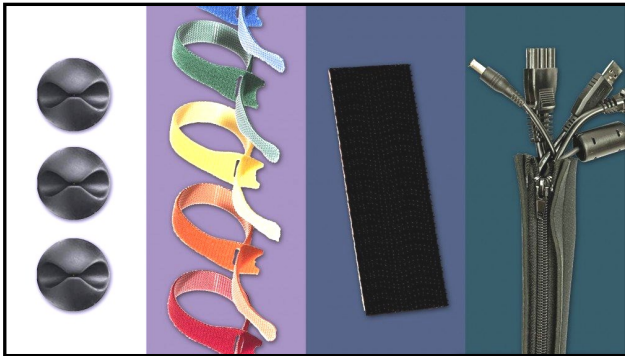
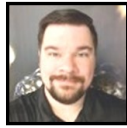
The **ContactUs (at) lacspc.org** address goes to our president and vice president.

If the message is for another officer or member, they will forward it to the correct person.

To contact other officers, directors, leaders, or members directly, members are encouraged to use our roster for phone numbers and email addresses.

THE BEST TOOLS FOR BEAUTIFUL CABLE MANAGEMENT FOR YOUR DESK OR TV

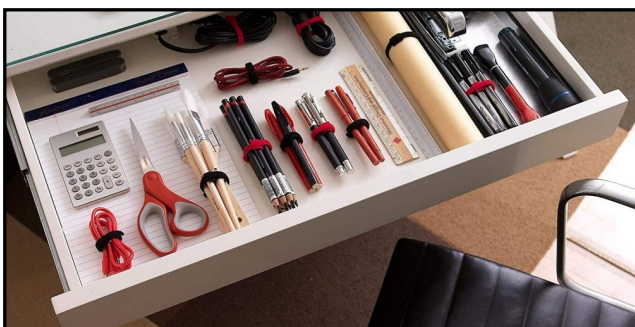
By Michael Crider [@michaelcrider](https://twitter.com/michaelcrider)
Review Geek, [December 9, 2020](#)



If you've spent a lot of time and effort to get your computer desk or entertainment center set up, you might be shocked at how many cables you have to manage ... and what a mess they can be in almost no time at all. Don't worry: With a few simple cable organizers, you can route and hide all those cables to make your home office setup clean and beautiful.

My favorite cable management solutions are listed below, roughly in order of importance. There are plenty of alternative options for just about every item, so feel free to treat these as general suggestions—something slightly different might be more applicable to your customized setup.

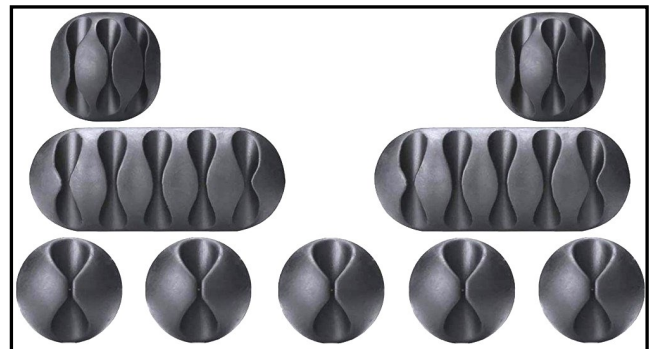
Velcro Strips



Velcro

Velcro strips are the number one tool for keeping cables tidy in almost any situation. They're super-cheap, they're easy to use and reuse, and you can use multiple strips in sequence for bigger bundles. I prefer these cable ties to zip ties because they're easy to apply and remove without any extra tools. Go with a set of black strips if you want something subtle, or get multicolored ones for a particularly complex job where color coding might be helpful.

Adhesive Cable Clips



OHill

A close second in your toolbox, these cheap "pinchers" come in a variety of sizes and some with multiple grooves. They're handy little cable holders for when individual cables and wires need to go in very specific places and occasionally need to come out again. Note that the 3M adhesive used on the back is safe for most furniture with a little care. I find these especially handy in the car, for keeping my phone charger cable out of the way as it gets to the dashboard mount.

Zipper Clips

Rustark

These plastic alternatives to the rubber-like clips are for slightly more permanent cable routing because they "lock in" and can handle more than one cable in a loop.



They're less flexible and forgiving than the above clips, so save them for jobs where you're reasonably sure you won't be moving anything more than once a year or so.

Cable Sleeves



Blue Key

Between a desktop PC and a monitor, or an entertainment center shelf and the TV itself, you're almost certainly going to have a big thick bundle of wires. These zip-up tubes are great for keeping them organized and tidy. They're available in multiple lengths—if you're unsure, measure the distance you need, then add another foot of slack. You can even cut holes in the side to make exits for single cables. Combine this tube with a few well-placed velcro strips to keep the bundle permanently hidden behind a TV or monitor mount.

Heavy-Duty Velcro Pads



Scotch

I like to keep several items mounted beneath the flat surface of my standing desk, like a battery-powered taplight, a charging cable coil, and a small power strip. These super-sticky velcro pads are great for that, enabling me to remove the components when I want to but never coming off accidentally. The hard plastic hooks will let them "lock" into place more securely than standard Velcro. They need about 10 pounds of force—a very solid tug!—to release. They work great on TVs, too, getting small power supplies out of the way. Just be aware that the powerful adhesive on these will not be kind to furniture finish, so don't use them anywhere that shows.

A Flexible Surge Protector



Belkin

Speaking of surge protectors: if you want tidy wiring, you need one that's flexible. I love this eight-outlet version from Belkin, because it enables six of those outlets to rotate 180 degrees, letting you accommodate large "wall wart" power supplies with ease. Whichever surge protector you use, make sure it's rated for your equipment—loading up a TV and multiple game consoles onto a single one might require an upgrade.

Mini Power Strip



Belkin

No matter how complete your setup, eventually you're going to have to plug something in temporarily. A small 2- or 3-outlet power strip is perfect for that. I use a Belkin travel surge protector on the underside of my desk, but there are [top-mounted options](#) as well. For a TV setup, a handy "[power cube](#)" is easy to grab and use.

Under-Desk Cable Trays



Keeping cable bundles elevated and accessible is one of the most important elements of a tidy desk. These cord management trays mount under the rear of a desk and hold a surge protector or two, and enable easy routing of power cords. As a bonus, that means that you need far less slack for your other cables once you're all set up.

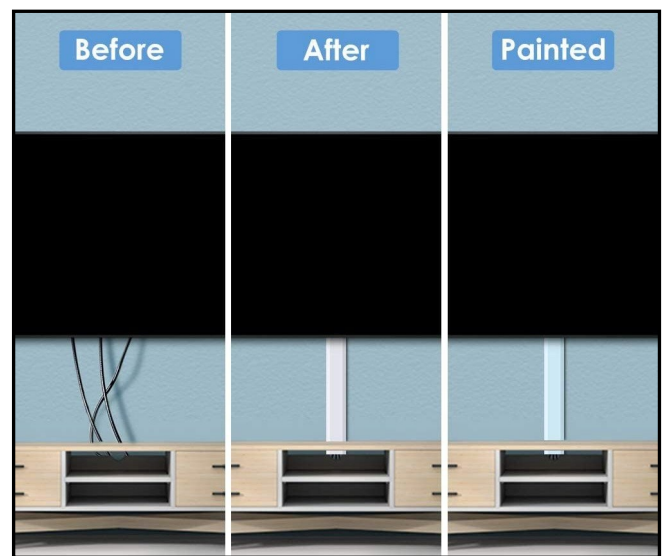
CPU Holder



3M

A "CPU holder" is a leftover term, and kind of a misnomer—it holds a full desktop computer, mounted to the underside of a desk. This is good for a lot of situations, particularly if you're lacking in space, but it's excellent for standing desks. That's because you can set it up with the under-desk cable trays above to move your entire setup with just one or two power cables going to an outlet.

Cable Concealer



Assuming that you can't drill into your wall and route cables behind it, a "concealer" is the next best option for getting cables up to a mounted TV or monitor without exposing them. These reusable adhesive-backed tubes come in a variety of colors and sizes. For the truly dedicated, you can paint them to match the paint of the wall to make them almost invisible.

Michael Crider has been writing about computers, phones, video games, and general nerdy things on the internet for ten years. He's never happier than when he's tinkering with his home-built desktop or soldering a new keyboard.

Learn more about these products or order them at [The Best Cable Management Tools - Review Geek](#) . ❖

THE ORIGIN OF THE WINDOWS KEY

<https://HowToGeek.com>, December 5, 2020
newsletter@howtogeek.com

It might seem like the Windows key has always been with us, but it hasn't. It first appeared in September 1994 on the [Microsoft Natural Keyboard](#). This ergonomic keyboard was in the same vein as the earlier [Apple Adjustable Keyboard](#), which split the standard QWERTY keyboard in half. Unlike Apple's keyboard, though, Microsoft's tilted each half at gentle angles to reduce wrist strain.

By this point, Microsoft had already created other hardware products, including its widely acclaimed mice. When it was time to create its first keyboard, Microsoft had the brilliant idea of including a permanent piece of Windows branding on it. This resulted in two Windows keys, located between the Control and Alt keys to the left and right of the space bar.



The original Microsoft Natural Keyboard Box, c. 1994
Microsoft

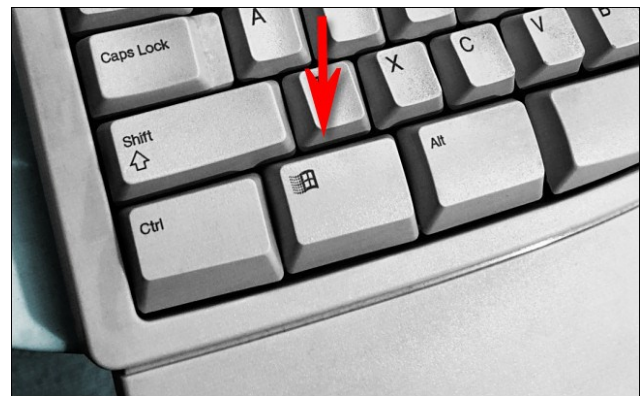
These new keys would justify themselves by becoming the new meta-keys for enhanced Windows shortcuts, similar to the Command key on the Mac. When pressed once, the Windows key opened the Start menu in Microsoft Windows 95 which was released almost a year after the keyboard.

When used in combination with other keys, the Windows key could perform other Windows-related tasks, like opening File Explorer (Windows+E.)

In addition to the Windows keys, the Natural Keyboard had a menu key designed to open

the right-click context menu on Windows 95.

Soon after its release, the Natural Keyboard became a runaway success, selling 600,000 units a month at the height of its popularity. (In February 1996, Byte Magazine reported "nearly 1 million" units had been sold during its first year on the market). This success spawned a long-running ergonomic keyboard series at Microsoft that continues to this day.



The Windows Key on a Microsoft Natural Keyboard
Benj Edwards

The Windows key wasn't limited to only ergonomic keyboards, though. Microsoft created a new 104-key standard (an extension of the 101-key Model M layout) that other keyboard manufacturers soon licensed. With the marketing blitz of Windows 95, hardware manufacturers didn't want to be left out of any new features promised by the much-hyped OS. So, suddenly, the Windows key was everywhere.

More recently, as part of the Windows hardware compatibility program, all keyboards with more than 50 keys must include a Windows key (also called the "Hardware Start Button" in some Microsoft documents) to be certified as Windows compatible. The certification allows vendors to use the Windows logo as part of their marketing.

Through these initiatives, Microsoft found a clever way to put its branding on every PC keyboard, further cementing its dominance in the PC market. Even if you run Linux on

generic PC hardware, chances are you'll see a tiny Windows logo on your keyboard.

Windows Key Pushback

Not everyone was a fan of the new Windows and Menu keys, however. Gamers, in particular, soon discovered the Windows key got in the way when playing many of the thousands of MS-DOS games that used the Control and Alt keys as action buttons, like *Doom*.



Additionally, if you played an MS-DOS game on Windows, or even just a full-screen Windows game, pressing the Windows key often launched the Start menu. This not only jolted players out of their game, but, in some cases, it also crashed the game.

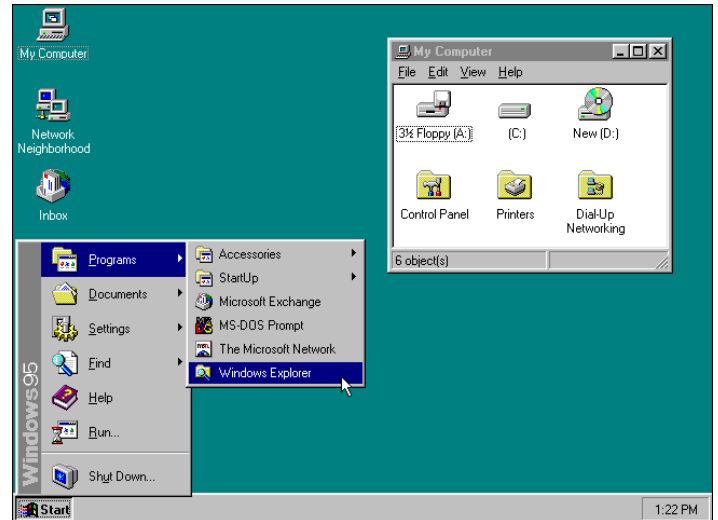
Remedies included physically removing the Windows key from a keyboard with a screwdriver or running a utility like [WinKey Killer](#) that disabled the key via software. Today, you can [disable the Windows key with a utility like Microsoft PowerToys](#).

Related: [How to Disable the Windows Key on Windows 10](#)

Beyond gaming, not everyone needed or appreciated having to use an extra modifier key. Even Brad Silverberg, former senior vice president of Microsoft's Personal Systems Division and one of Windows 95's main architects, doesn't use it.

"I just never got in the habit of using the Windows key," Silverberg told How To Geek. "I

don't use many keyboard shortcuts in general. It's just how my brain and fingers work."



Still, Silverberg understands why people enjoy the Windows key and chalks it up to personal taste.

"Some people are keyboard shortcut diehards," Silverberg said. "They know them all and use them extensively. I use a few; they just don't stick in my brain."

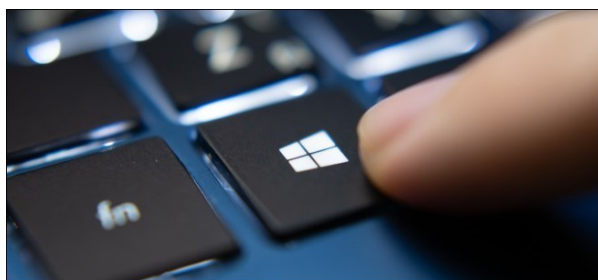
Silverberg also noted, though, that the ability to use powerful keyboard shortcuts in addition to the more obvious, mouse-based menus was a key design aspect of Windows 95. It was important to him that keyboard shortcuts would be "accelerators, not the only way to do something."

And so it remains to this day.

Of course, some diehards, including those who prefer the classic IBM Model M keyboard, have never upgraded to a keyboard with a Windows key. If that's you, and you've found that you occasionally need a Windows key, you can [simulate it via PowerToys](#) or just press Ctrl+Esc to open the Start menu.

Related: [How to Create a Windows Key If You Don't Have One](#) (Click on the link.)

What Does the Windows Key Do Today?



Wachiwit/Shutterstock

As we mentioned above, a single press of the Windows key opens the Start Menu. It's no coincidence the Start button is *also* the Windows logo.

When used in combination with other keys, the Windows key [can launch dozens of tasks in Windows 10](#), including the following:

- **Windows+I:** Opens Settings.
- **Windows+E:** Opens File Explorer.
- **Windows+D:** Shows/hides the desktop.
- **Windows+F:** Opens the Search box.
- **Windows+M:** Minimizes all open Windows.
- **Windows+Tab:** Shows Task View.
- **Windows+L:** Locks the screen.
- **Windows+A:** Opens Action Center.
- **Windows+Period:** Opens the Emoji panel.

There are dozens more. If you memorize them, they come in handy to quickly do all kinds of things in Windows, including [managing virtual desktops](#) or [rearranging windows](#).

The Windows key was—and is still—a monumental marketing victory for Microsoft. But even so, 26 years after its introduction, the Windows key remains incredibly useful in the Windows ecosystem. ❖

Editors note: Two more that I like:

- **Windows+V:** Opens the clipboard
- **Windows+Shift+S:** Opens the Snipping Tool

ZOOM KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

By Leah Clark, LACS President/Editor
editor@lacs.org

As I have been attending and hosting more meetings via Zoom, I have been looking for easier ways to accomplish some functions. I started looking into keyboard shortcuts. Here I am sharing some that I found that may be helpful; there are more. In the time before a LACS general meeting, we could practice some of them.

- **Page Up:** View the Previous Page of Video Participants in Gallery View
- **Page Down:** View the Next Page of Video Participants in Gallery View
- **Alt:** Always Show Meeting Controls
- **Alt+F1:** Switch to Speaker View
- **Alt+F2:** Switch to Gallery View
- **Alt+F:** Enter or Exit Full Screen
- **Alt+V:** Start/Stop Video
- **Alt+A:** Mute/Unmute My Audio
- **Alt+M:** Mute/Unmute Audio for Every one Except Host
 Note: For the meeting host only
- **Alt+S:** Launch/Stop Share Screen
- **Alt+Shift+S:** Start/Stop New Screen Share
- **Alt+T:** Pause or Resume Screen Share
- **Alt+R:** Start/Stop Local Recording
- **Alt+P:** Pause or Resume Recording
- **Alt+H:** Display/Hide in-meeting Chat Panel
- **Alt+U:** Display/Hide Participants Panel
- **Alt+Y:** Raise/Lower Hand
- **Alt+Shift+T:** Screenshot ❖

JERE'S TECH TIPS

For many helpful tips and tricks for all aspects of computing, see *Jere's Tech Tips* at <https://apcug2.org/jerestips/>.

TECHBOOMERS.COM

teaches how to use various websites and internet-based applications.

- <https://TechBoomers.com>
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SPECIAL OFFERS

Go to the APCUG website <https://apcug2.org/discounts-special-offers-for-user-groups/> for discounts and special offers for Members of User Groups. Avast Anti-virus and Acronis True Image, and several book, media and training sites offer discounts including the two mentioned below.

- Members can save at the **Pearson Technology** websites: InformIT, Cisco Press, Pearson IT Certification, Que Publishing, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.
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- See the latest books on digital imaging and photography, gaming, animation, film and video, post-production, audio, music technology, broadcast and theatre from [Routledge | Focal Press](#) today! They offer discounts to User Group members.



NOTICE

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LAUGHING OUT LOUD



- A computer is only as smart as the person using it.
- He who laughs last, probably has a back-up.
- If you make the letters in your Word document bigger and then you print it out, you'll have everything on the first page and only one line on the second.
- For any given software, the moment you manage to master it, a new version appears.

FINANCIAL REPORT

A LACS member who wishes to see or has questions about our financial reports may contact our treasurer.

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Annual Membership Dues:

Regular New and Renewal,	
Printed Newsletter	\$ 40
Electronic Newsletter	30
Family-Associate	12
Students	18
Contributor	50
Supporter	75
Benefactor	100
Gift Membership	20

A subscription to *User Friendly* is included with membership.

Associate members live in the same household or work at the same address as a regular member; they do not receive their own subscriptions to *User Friendly*, but may read it on the LACS website. **Students** must prove full-time status. A member may give a one-year, one-time gift to a non-member.

Monthly general meetings will be via Zoom during the pandemic stay-at-home orders. Members also enjoy these special benefits:

— **Monthly Newsletter**
User Friendly. We publish your article submissions or free classified ads to buy or sell your computer items.

— **Get FREE help** by phone from knowledgeable members who are Quick Consultants listed in *User Friendly*.

— **Get help by email** by using our LACSLIST Group Mail List. Send your questions by e-mail to lacslist (at) lacs.groups.io

— **Receive important news** and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's Group e-mail lists.

— **Free APCUG** (International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups) **Webinars**.

— **Free quarterly Virtual Technology Conferences (VTCs)**
— **Information** on training and technical education.

— Occasional **free software and computer books**, if you review them for *User Friendly*.

— **Rewards** for recruiting; LACS will extend your membership for three months for each new regular member you recruit.

— **Annual Holiday Party**

— **Social Interacting** with others who have like interests in computers and technology.

— **Special Interest Groups** (SIGs) on various topics may be created by members.

Date: _____

Check # _____

LACS

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Please mail your dues and this form to:

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Please PRINT Clearly

[] New [] Renewal

[] New / Renewal with printed newsletter - \$40.00 [] Associate - \$12.00 [] Student - \$18.00

[] New / Renewal with electronic, no paper, newsletter - \$30.00 [] Gift Membership - \$20.00

[] Contributor - \$50.00 [] Supporter - \$75.00 [] Benefactor - \$100.00 [] Other

Name: First

Last

Name of Associate: First

Last

(Same address as primary member)

Address:

City, State, Zip + 4

E-mail Address:

E-mail of Associate

Preferred Phone:

Publish Contact Info in Roster [] Yes [] No

Did a member of LACS invite you to join? If so, who? If not, how did you hear about LACS?



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Los Angeles Computer Society

GENERAL MEETINGS WILL BE ON ZOOM UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Before each meeting, members and invited guests will receive an email with the URL link to the meeting. If you haven't received it by the morning of the meeting, let Leah Clark know. When you click on the link, you will enter a waiting room. Then the host or a co-host will admit you to the meeting.

Please try to arrive at least a few minutes before the meeting start-time so you don't interrupt the meeting and any problems can be solved. If you need to take a break during a meeting, do not click on Leave or End. If you do, the meeting will be interrupted for someone to re-admit you from the waiting room. You may turn off your video when you are gone.