## ARTICLE

# Dictation in Microsoft Word *by Alan German*

Recently, at our weekly, on-line, question-and-answer sessions (https:opcug.ca/qa), we have been discussing voice dictation using Gboard (Google Keyboard) on Android devices. Using such voice-to-text capability is very convenient for things like sending E-mail messages on a smartphone where the small size of the on-screen keyboard can make it difficult to type individual characters. However, the really amazing thing about the process is the accuracy of the resulting text without any training of the system.

This got me thinking about writing entire articles for the newsletter. Now, I could dictate to a text editor on my phone, save the file, and transfer it to my computer to import into Word. However, I recalled a post in the members' forum from Micheline Johnson mentioning that recent versions of Windows 10 had built-in voice dictation capability. And, sure enough, a search on Google quickly located (see: Use dictation to talk instead of type on your PC) the magic keyboard shortcut – the Windows Key plus H (⊞-H).

The text blocks shown below were produced as a test of both systems. The same paragraph of text was read out for both Word and Writer Plus (an Android note taking app). No prior voice training was conducted; however, I did check the commands for some of the punctuation. In particular, I used "period", "comma" and "question mark". I didn't take any specific action to try to generate the capitalization or the apostrophe in "Ottawa PC Users' Group".

The text contains general items regarding the weather, specific pieces of computer equipment, plus a couple of acronyms for good measure. While this is not a comprehensive test of the two dictation systems, it may provide some indication of the level of accuracy that might be expected.

The following paragraphs are reproduced verbatim from the files captured using the speech-to-text functions of Windows 10 and Android. *Spoiler Alert – As you read the text, be aware that the Word version, at least in part, strays a little from the original!*

### Start voice dictation in Writer Plus (Android)

This text is being dictated in both Microsoft word and Android's rate of plus. a common point of discussion is the weather. This could involve either a bright sunny day or a cold winter snow storm. However, in particular, we are interested in the underlying computer software. Can it record details of desktops and laptops, tablets, laser printers and USB flash drives or will some of these items be garbled? Anyway, whatever happens, this is just an experiment for the next newsletter of the outer PC users group.

### Start voice dictation in Microsoft Word (Windows 10)

This text is being dictated in both Microsoft Word hand Android try to plus. Hey common point of discussion is the weather. this could involve I have a bright sunny day or a cold winter snow storm. however, in particular, we are interested in the underlying computer software. Can you record details of

desktops and laptops, tablets colour laser printers on usb flash drives come all well some of these items be gobbled question anyway, which ever happens, this is just an experiment for the next newsletter for the Ottawa PC users group.

If this were a competition, we would probably declare Android as the winner. The transcription isn't perfect but it's reasonably close and only requires minor edits. This is all the more remarkable since I tried to maintain a normal speech pattern and made no attempt to separate the individual words.

Neither system recognized "Android's Writer Plus", although Android did insert the apostrophe correctly. Interestingly, Android heard the period after the first sentence but didn't start the next sentence with a capital letter. It then did really well until it mistook

## Inside this issue:

## Next Meeting: WEDNESDAY, April 14th, 2021

# Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 14th, 2021

This meeting will be via Zoom video conference.

**Topic**: Sharing Photos
**Speaker**: Lynda Buske, OPCUG

This lecture will show you how to put your pictures up on line so they can be viewed by friends and family. See how to set up a shared site at Shutterfly.com with unlimited, FREE storage and how to customize your site. Learn how to add and organize both photos and albums and how to enable people to make comments. Learn why and how to reduce the resolution of images if you are emailing them, using a cloud service like Dropbox to share photos, etc.

For connection details, go to:
https://opcug.ca/events/sharing-photos/

# Coming Up…

May 12th, 2021

**Topic**: Typography
**Speaker**: Chris Taylor, OPCUG

Typography—the art and technique of arranging type—has been around for thousands of years and is constantly evolving. Good typography makes it easy to read and can be eye-catching. Bad typography can be distracting and hard to read.

Chris will outline the somewhat arcane terminology used. He will discuss some of the historical significances of type. Then he will delve into the subjective nature of choosing typefaces: what makes a typeface more or less readable, how and when to combine multiple typefaces, what emotions are evoked in readers, and how to avoid common faux pas.

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### Membership extension

As you may recall, due to a reduction in member services as a result of COVID-19 in 2020, all memberships were extended one year from their then-current expiry date. Since the situation hasn't yet changed appreciably and, in particular, because of our use of relatively-inexpensive video-conferencing technology, the club's Board of Directors decided to extend the period of the membership extensions. In consequence, as noted at this year's annual general meeting, **all memberships in good standing as of March 31, 2021 will be extended an additional year**. Furthermore, if you have friends or relatives who would benefit from joining the club, let them, know that if they pay their membership prior to March 31, they will effectively purchase a two-year membership for the single-year fee of $20.00.

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*All scheduled events, including regular monthly meetings, weekly Q&A sessions, and OPCUG@OPL presentations, are posted on our website at https://opcug.ca/. All events are via video conference until further notice.*

## 2021 CALENDAR

| Meetings | Date | Time and Venue |
|---|---|---|
| Regular Monthly Meeting | Wednesday, April 14th | 7:30 pm via Zoom video conference: **https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting** To see all scheduled events, visit https://opcug.ca/. |
| Q&A Session | Wednesday, April 14th | Immediately following the Regular Monthly Meeting. (approx. 9 pm) on the same video conference. |
| Beer BOF (Wing SIG East) | Wednesday, April 14th | Enjoy a cold brew or other beverage in the comfort of your home during the video conference. |

## CLUB LIFE

# Speakers Wanted!

The club's meeting programme has been set until the end of the current "season" (June, 2021). We are now looking to the fall and the cupboard is bare. Topics on any aspect of computing are required – and speakers to give presentation on those topics!

What sorts of issues would you like to hear about this fall at our regular monthly meetings and the weekly Q&A sessions? The club's Board of Directors welcomes all your suggestions.

Also, do you know of any individual or group who would be prepared to make a presentation to our club? Identifying speakers is challenging for the small team of individuals who work to bring the meeting programme to you. Any assistance that you can offer in this regard would be doubly welcome.

Perhaps you have a specific computing interest that other club members would find informative, useful, and/or entertaining. Do you run a local area network on your home system? Does it include a NAS component? These are two topics that have been suggested previously but ones for which the Board has been unable to identify a speaker. Have you undertaken any on-line learning? Have you found an on-line course or a source of useful tutorials on any interesting subject?

LAN, NAS, and on-line learning are all examples of the types of presentations that members would like to see, and which many members are capable of providing. But, we are also interested in your specific ideas and contributions. So, why not volunteer your ideas, your contacts, your knowledge and expertise, and assist the Board in developing a fabulous fall meeting programme?

Your contribution can be a suggestion for a specific topic, the offer of a full presentation at a monthly meeting; a 15-30 minute presentation at a Q&A session or members' favourites night (**see *My favourite whatchamacallit* below**); or simply speaking to a couple of slides at Q&A.

To provide your suggestions and offers of presentations, or to ask for any further information that you may require, send a message to SuggestionBox@opcug.ca

## My favourite whatchamacallit

Have you noticed that presentations at Members' Favourites' nights are almost exclusively given by Board members? We want to change this by re-activating an idea from a year ago - with a twist! We have scheduled a Members' Favourites' night for September, 2021. At this meeting we will offer a 2TB portable USB drive as the prize for the member giving the best presentation. (Current members of the Board of Directors will not be eligible for the prize.) A real-time poll over Zoom will allow all those present to cast their vote for **the** members' favourite!

You have lots of time to consider your topic of choice, sharpen your thesis on the issues involved, and create your presentation masterpiece with which to wow the crowd. So start planning your presentation today. September 8 - and a possible external USB drive - beckon!

# ARTICLE

# Ways to access Windows 10's Recycle Bin
*by Chris Taylor*

I rarely use the Recycle Bin in Windows. To me, it just means I am wasting disk space with files I said I didn't want. I normally hit the shift key when deleting files so they are immediately and permanently deleted.

While working on *The Ultimate Guide to Saving Disk Space* discussion at Q&A, I discovered that, in spite of my best efforts to not use the Recycle Bin, I actually had over a gigabyte of files there.

I thought I should keep a closer eye on the Recycle Bin. Some time ago, the Recycle Bin disappeared from my desktop. I probably did that on purpose. I used to see Recycle Bin in File Explorer, but it was not showing there. I decided to find all the ways of accessing the Recycle Bin.

1. If it is not showing on your desktop, first make sure desktop icons are showing: right-click a blank area of the desktop and choose *View | Show desktop icons*. If it still isn't showing, go to *Settings | Personalization | Themes | Desktop icon settings*. Put a check in the box "*Recycle Bin*".

2. Click the Start button or the search box on the Taskbar and type *recycle bin* (1). When it appears in the search results (2), click it.
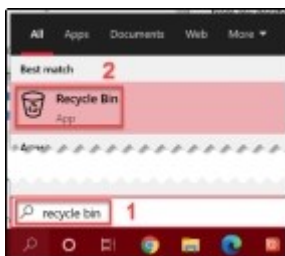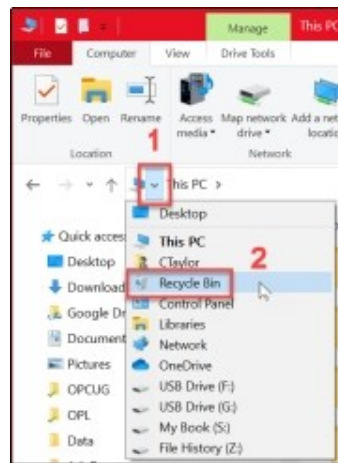
3. If you have a Recycle Bin icon anywhere, you can pin it to your Start menu by right-clicking it and choose *Pin to Start*. Click Start and drag the Recycle Bin icon to wherever you want it on the Start menu.

4. In File Explorer, click in the address bar, type *recycle bin* and hit Enter.
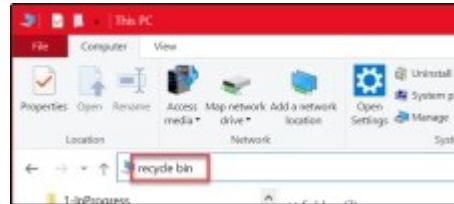
5. In File Explorer's address bar, click the left-most > (1) and in the pop-up menu, choose *Recycle Bin* (2).

6. Press ⊞ +R to open the Run dialog box and type *shell:recyclebinfolder*

7. Drag the Recycle Bin from the desktop and drop it on File Explorer on the Taskbar (you need to run File Explorer first if you don't have it already pinned to the taskbar). Release the mouse button when *Pin to File Explorer* appears.

You can then right-click File Explorer on the Taskbar (1) and choose Recycle Bin (2) from the jump list.

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**Quick Tip 22: Editing quick actions**
**by Chris Taylor**

Click the *Action Centre* icon in the bottom-right corner of the Windows 10 Taskbar to bring up the buttons for *quick actions* that permit easy access to some functions in Windows, such as *Settings*, *Airplane mode*, and *Night light*. If you see a single row of four icons, click *Expand* to show more.

To re-arrange the icons, go to *Settings | System | Notifications & actions.* Click *Edit your quick actions.* The action centre will come up in edit mode. Drag and drop icons to different positions, click a push-pin to remove an icon from the panel, or click *+Add* to add available quick actions that are not showing.
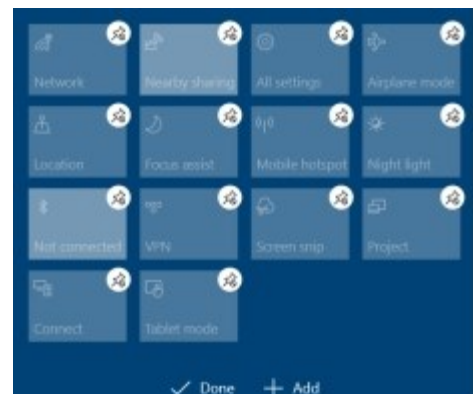
# Reducing the attack surface
*by Chris Taylor*

When protecting your computing environment, you are generally looking to maintain secure configurations—by running a firewall, keeping antimalware up-to-date, not exposing a router's configuration interface to the Internet, protecting accounts with unique, strong passwords, etc.

### Unknown vulnerability

However, even secure configurations can fail when it comes to a *zero-day* vulnerability. For example, what if an attacker finds an unknown vulnerability in Adobe Reader? They craft a malicious PDF file that exploits the vulnerability and distribute it to the world. Opening the PDF results in a compromised computer. It's hard to defend against this. Adobe has not fixed the vulnerability because they don't know about it. Antimalware programs won't block it because they have never seen this malicious PDF. Your firewall won't block it. You may open the PDF file if you don't suspect it is malicious.

The likelihood of a zero-day in Adobe Reader might not be as low as you hope. Secunia (now Flexera) found there were 43 Adobe Reader security vulnerabilities in 2015. Sophos reported in their *Naked Security* blog in 2018 that Adobe fixed 85 serious flaws in Acrobat and Reader *in a single update!* The Register reported in 2019 that Adobe released a patch to a patch when they discovered the original patch didn't correctly fix a vulnerability.

Just as heuristics in an anti-malware program can protect you from some new, unknown malware, reducing the attack surface can help you mitigate some other unknown threats. The attack surface is defined as the different points where an attacker can try to gain access. In the example of an attack on Adobe Reader, you can mitigate the risk by reducing the attack surface: don't have Adobe Reader on your computer. If a vulnerable program isn't there, it can't be exploited.

### But I need to read PDF files!

So much of the information we consume is in PDF files; in 2018, the PDF Association estimated there were trillions of PDF files in existence. The solution is to find a *replacement* PDF reader. There are many free PDF readers. Attackers are less likely to look for security vulnerabilities in these replacement readers for two reasons. First, they seem to have far fewer vulnerabilities. Second, even if an attacker was to find a vulnerability, the number of potential victims is so much smaller because they have a much lower market share. An attacker would rather go after Adobe Reader, which has a history of far more security vulnerabilities and a much larger pool of potential victims.



*Secunia Vulnerability Review 2015*

### Reducing the attack surface further

Another program banned from my computers is Java, which also has a history of numerous security vulnerabilities. I believe the majority of computer users have no need for Java. By uninstalling it, you reduce your attack surface. You remove the possibility of an attacker exploiting it and compromising your computer. I removed Java from all my computers years ago and have never run into a program that needed it. If you ever need Java in order to run a particular program, you will get a message indicating it is required. At that point, you can browse to https://java.com and install it. And then keep it up-to-date!

The concept of reducing the attack surface extends to more than Adobe Reader and Java. Any software you have on your computer *could* have security vulnerabilities. I recommend that everyone periodically reviews the software on their computer. Consider uninstalling any programs you no longer use. Remember, it can't be exploited if it isn't there.

♦♦♦

**Quick Tip 23: Sound by device**
**by Chris Taylor**

Did you ever want sound from one program to go to your speakers and from another program to go to your headset? An example might be to have soft music playing in the background while on a video conference.

Start by running all programs over which you want control. Then go to *Settings | System | Sound*.

Scroll down and click on *App volume and device preferences*. Choose the program you want to control and select the *Output* device.

# THROUGH THE LENS

*A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts. After the click of your camera, you're only half done!*

## Shooting with three legs!

*by Lynda Buske*

As with any photography gear, tripods come in a large variety of sizes, weights and features. Selecting the best fit for you and your photographic activities requires a bit of thought and planning.

So, let's first think about when you would use your tripod. The following are some common scenarios:

1. You have a long telephoto lens for nature photography and want the extra stability offered by a tripod.

2. You are shooting in low light such as dawn or dusk and your shot requires a long shutter speed. It is difficult to hand-hold a camera steadily with the use of telephoto lens so using a tripod ensures a steady platform with no shake. For sure, you could adjust your ISO to get a faster speed but it will increase graininess or "noise".

3. You specifically want a long exposure to obtain a certain effect like a silky waterfall or elongated fireworks.

4. You want to avoid getting your body's shadow in a shot. You can either use a remote trigger or set a delay on your shutter mechanism and then step aside.

5. You are taking portraits and you either want to draw the poser's attention away from the camera lens or you need your hands free to distract a child with a toy. A remote trigger would be essential in this situation.

Some people simply enjoy the discipline required when using a tripod to think about their shot a bit before setting it up rather than just thoughtlessly clicking away.

As with cameras, the tripod characteristics that are most important to you may well differ from others. Typically, the heavier the tripod, the steadier it is in windy situations, sand, etc. However, as a woman, I prefer to trade off steadiness for a lighter load when hiking to a locale. But a lighter weight tripod does not necessarily have to be flimsy if you ensure it is made with carbon fibre or aluminum rather than plastic which will most certainly bend at the longer extensions. Travel tripods that tend to be lighter weight may have issues with flimsiness and maximum height, all due to the aim of keeping weight to a minimum.

As with everything, prices will vary depending on the brand and quality. As a minimum, I recommend spending at least $150 on a tripod to get sufficient sturdiness. You can, however, easily spend over $500 for top brand names and high quality.

Other features that can be very handy are: the ability to take vertical shots; being able to pan smoothly; loosening, readjusting and tightening quickly (e.g., pistol grip); having a level bubble, etc. You may also want to purchase an extra small tripod (see below) with flexible legs for gripping onto objects or for getting shots very low to the ground.

Make sure the tripod comes with a practical carrying bag, preferably one that can go across your body. As a rule, when operating the tripod, extend the legs out starting from the top end and resort to the last extensions only if necessary since they are smaller and therefore introduce greater chance of movement.

If you are unsure if you need a tripod, you may wish to initially purchase (or borrow) a unipod for just a bit more steadiness in low light situations. Especially if you can brace it against another object like a wall or fence. However, it may not provide enough stability for your lighting situation and the degree of zoom (focal length).



*Lynda regularly gives presentations for the OPCUG at the **Ottawa Public Library** (https://opcug.ca/opl-presentations/).*
*This article is also in PDF format on the OPCUG website (https://opcug.ca/digital-photography/).*

## Dictation *(Continued from page 1)*

"outer" for "Ottawa". Android correctly identified both acronyms (USB and PC). The lack of capitalization for OPCUG's name is probably understandable as this feature may need special commands to be used as part of the dictation process.

For its part, Windows 10 was much less accurate, and struggled with the punctuation commands. I particularly liked the almost-appropriate "colour laser printers" when this should have been ", laser printers". But, it did get the capitalization of Microsoft Word correct!

However, the good news is that Android in particular did a creditable job, considering that no special work had gone into preparing the dictation. Perhaps a little research into how to make best use of such speech-to-text applications is called for and the next article that I dictate will be letter perfect!

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## Recycle Bin *(Continued from page 4)*

8. Once you go to the Recycle Bin in File Explorer, right-click on *Quick Access* (1) in the left panel and choose *Pin current folder to Quick access* (2). From then on it will display in the *Quick access* section of File Explorer.
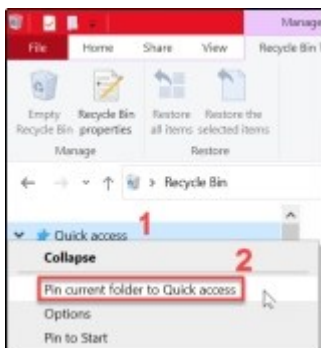


There are a few additional ways of accessing the Recycle Bin, but they are rather convoluted, so I didn't include them here. I think the above should provide enough means of accessing it for most people.

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## Quick Tip 24: Running Settings
### by Chris Taylor

The Windows 10 *Settings* app is the hub for many configuration changes in Windows. Most users have a need to at least occasionally use *Settings*. There are many ways of getting there.

- Press *Win+i* (my personal favourite)

- Click the Start button and choose the gear icon in the left panel

- Click the *Action centre* icon at the right end of the Taskbar. Click *All settings* in the *quick action* tiles

- Press the Start key and scroll the program list to find *Settings*

- Right-click the Start button and choose *Settings*

- Click in the search box on the Taskbar, type in *Settings* and hit Enter

- Click the Start button, click any single letter heading a section of the program list, click *S* in the pop-up alphabet, and click *Settings*.

- Press the Start key, start typing *settings* and hit Enter when the results show *Settings*

- If you have pinned *Settings* to the Start menu, desktop, or Taskbar, access it from there

- Press *Win+r*, type in *ms-settings:* and hit enter

  ◊ You can also run *ms-settings:* and have it load *Settings* to a specific area by following it with a keyword. For example, *ms-settings:lockscreen* will load *Settings* to where you can make changes to the Lock screen. If you frequently access a certain section of *Settings*, you can create shortcuts to them. For a list of keywords, see https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/uwp/launch-resume/launch-settings-app
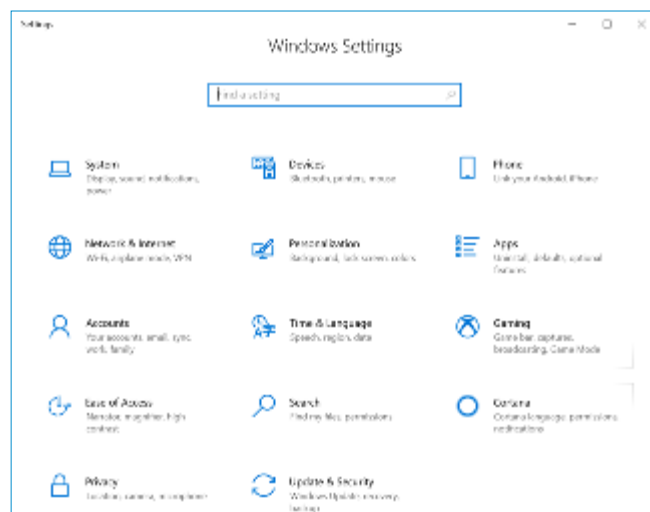
# OTTAWA PC NEWS

**Ottawa PC News** is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Member participation is encouraged. If you would like to contribute an article to Ottawa PC News, please submit it to the newsletter editor (contact info below). Deadline for submissions is three Sundays before the next General Meeting.

**To receive the monthly newsletter by email, send an email to:**
opcug-newsletter+subscribe@googlegroups.com  (leave subject and body fields blank)
You do **not** need to create a Gmail or Google Groups account.

To subscribe to other OPCUG Google Groups member services, go to:
https://opcug.ca/google-groups-how-to/

## Group Meetings

OPCUG meets on the second Wednesday in the month, except July and August, at the Riverside United Church, 3191 Riverside Drive, Ottawa. Parking is free at the church. OCTranspo bus #90 stops nearby. Details at https://opcug.ca/venue/.
**(NOTE: Due to COVID-19 safety guidelines, all our events are via video conference until further notice. Details at https://opcug.ca/venue/)**

Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. followed by a Q&A Session until 10 p.m.

| | |
|---|---|
| **OPCUG Membership Fees:** | $20 per year |
| **Mailing Address:** | 3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ontario, K2G 1S6 |
| **Web address:** | **https://opcug.ca** |
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    **(Mr.) Jocelyn Doire**        **jocelyn.doire@opcug.ca**

## Q&A HAS GONE ON-LINE!

Because of the pandemic, the OPCUG is holding weekly Q&A sessions in Zoom video-conferences.

Join us every Wednesday at 7:30 pm to discuss computer issues. Questions (and answers) on any computer-related issue are welcome.  Or, do you have a favourite computer program or topic that you would like to share with the group? Send your questions, answers, or the details of what you would like to share to:  SuggestionBox@opcug.ca.

Everyone is welcome to attend Q&A sessions and to ask questions about their specific computer-related problems.  Join us at: https://tinyurl.com/opcug-meeting (if you use the Zoom client, the meeting ID is **924 9556 0898** and the password is **opcug**).

Visit https://opcug.ca/qa/ for details.