

What's up with all those confusing DVD formats?

(<http://reviews.cnet.com/5208-6130-0.html?forumID=7&theadID=51345&messageID=611458&tag=nl.e497>)

Question: I've finally outgrown storing my huge collection of digital photos and MP3s on CD-R and am moving toward getting a DVD burner. However, I am confused by all the DVD formats available, making my buying decision difficult. Can someone please explain to me in detail what the differences are between them all, especially the new double-layer ones?

Answer:

DVD-R and DVD+R are different competing standards for recordable DVDs. DVD-R is more compatible with older devices such as DVD-ROMs and DVD players, but DVD+R is superior on a technical level. Both of them hold 4.37GB (or thereabouts) per disc.

Then there's DVD+R DL (dual-layer), which is a higher-capacity (and significantly more expensive) version of the DVD+R spec. It holds roughly 2 times the amount of data per disc--close to 9GB per disc.

Almost all DVD burners these days can do at least DVD+/-R and probably DVD+/-RW (which are also different from the plain +/-R specs) as well. So, it probably doesn't matter what media you buy so far as it being +/-R. But it's a good idea to check your burner to see what disc types it takes, just so you don't wind up with a bunch of useless discs.

Photoshop functionality without the cost

Photoshop is unquestionably the king-daddy of all image-editing software, but it can be a bit pricey. If you want most of the functionality of the application without even reaching for your wallet, head over to www.gimp.org and download The Gimp. The Gimp, which is an acronym for GNU Image Manipulation Program, includes the standard suite of tools that you would expect in decent image-editing software and the software is free. The application was originally written for Linux but has since been ported over to Windows (with a Mac OS X version in the works).

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The courses, seminars and workshops will also be given in French should there be sufficient demand.

We are always open to suggestions on topics to cover in additional workshops. Please do not hesitate to contact the centre, should you have any questions, suggestions or comments.



The Fraser-Hickson Library Computer Centre Newsletter

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Monday, March 7th 2005

Hours:
Monday: 12:00pm- 7:30pm
Tuesday: 12:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday: Closed
Thursday: 12:00pm-7:30pm
Friday: 12:00pm- 6:00pm
Saturday: 1:00pm - 4:30pm
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Internet Explorer, Mozilla & Netscape Navigator
MSN Messenger & Yahoo Messenger

Books about computers

Computer languages
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Operating Systems
Howto & Getting started
Literature

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NEW! PhotoShop Tips: Why Calibrate?

There are differences between how an image looks on your screen and how it prints. Using color management software to calibrate your monitor and other devices like printers and scanners can minimize the differences in how images are represented. The goal is that the image looks the same on the screen as it does on the end-device.

While certain steps can be taken to improve color accuracy without calibrating, mostly likely all professional designers could benefit from the use of color management software and the generation of ICC profiles for their devices.

Here are some tips on how you can obtain more reliable color from your monitor, without calibrating.

- 1) Make sure the ambient light surrounding your workstation is even. Direct light from windows and lamps placed too close to a monitor can affect onscreen color.
- 2) Dim the lighting surrounding your monitor. You don't have to work in the dark, but your monitor should be the brightest light source in your working environment.
- 3) Adjust your monitor's settings to match your needs. A monitor's default settings may not be best for what you are trying to accomplish. Take color temperature for example. Many monitors ship at 9300K, the brightest setting, which creates a bluish white point and causes the monitor to age faster. The 6500K or sometimes 'sRGB' setting provides a better match with print because most digital camera and printer manufacturers optimize their default settings to work best for sRGB imagery.
- 4) Most printers, monitors and scanners come with ICC profiles. Use them, often times they will get you closer to accurate color. Note however that the effectiveness of these profiles will decrease or be rendered useless as your devices ages and the settings change.

While these techniques are good, to obtain the best color match across ... you will ultimately need to purchase a color management application, such as Coloreal Photo, that is capable of creating accurate ICC profiles for your equipment.

My favorite antidote for spyware is:

(http://polls.cnet.com/polls/results.php?option_id=8&poll_id=1093&action=vote&template_set=newssa&image.x=19&image.y=11)

Ad-Aware	36.5%		
Spybot Search & Destroy	30.7%		
Microsoft AntiSpyware (beta)	16.6%		
Webroot Spy Sweeper	7.8%		
Other	4.3%	Spyware Doctor	2.1%
A sledge hammer	2.0%	SpyCleaner Gold	0.1%

Office 2000 Tips & Tricks:

Two ways to quickly determine table cell dimensions in Word

As you probably know, you can change the size of a table's rows and columns by dragging its row and column borders in either direction. However, adjusting row and column dimensions to exact measurements can be tricky when you use this procedure. There are two ways you can easily determine a table's row and column dimensions as you adjust them. One way is to press [Alt] as you drag the row or column border. Another technique is to press the left and right mouse buttons simultaneously as you drag a table's row or column border. Using either technique, Word displays the exact row or column dimensions in the ruler.

Advanced Hints & Tips (WinXP)

Access the network more quickly by storing your personal information

Have you ever wanted to access a network resource for which you must use a username and password different from the one you're currently logged on with? If you're using Windows XP and you're a member of the Administrators group, you no longer have to log off and log back on again using your different credentials because you can store your alternate logon information using XP's Stored Credentials feature.

All you need to do is open Control Panel, and then double-click on the User Accounts icon. Next, in the User Account dialog box, select the Advanced tab, and then click the Manage Passwords button. In the Stored User Names And Passwords dialog box, click the Add button to open the Logon Information Properties dialog box. Enter the name of the server that contains the network resource you want to access, enter your alternate username and password in the corresponding text boxes, and then click OK. The next time you attempt to connect to the server you specified, Windows XP automatically uses the credentials you supplied here to log you on so you don't have to waste time logging off and then back on again th your alternate username and password.

Hints & Tips (WinXP):

Reduce the amount of disk space allocated to the Recycle Bin

If disk space is at a premium on your system, there's any easy way to trim the excess from areas where it may not be needed in order to provide you with more space in which to store your files. By reducing the percentage of your hard drive's space allocated to the Recycle Bin, you can free up some hard drive space quickly and easily. All you need to do is right-click on the Recycle Bin's icon on your desktop and choose Properties. On the Global property sheet, move the slider to the left to decrease the percentage of hard drive space that your system allocates to the Recycle Bin for your deleted files (the default is 10%). Keep in mind, however, that if you delete files that are larger than the amount of space available in the Recycle Bin, they'll be deleted immediately from your computer, instead of being temporarily housed in your Recycle Bin, as they normally would. Click OK to close the dialog box.

Create a Favorites backup disk

You likely have more than a few sites saved to your Favorites list that, no matter how long you spent searching, you'd never be able to find again. To keep your Favorites saved for all of eternity, it's a good idea to back up your Favorites list to a disk. This way, you can carry them with you as you change or upgrade computers or as a backup means of preservation should you ever need it.

To do so, insert a disk into your floppy drive. Next, double-click on My Computer and select your C drive. Navigate to your username folder in the Documents And Settings folder, and then right-click on your Favorites folder. Select Send To from the shortcut menu and choose the drive you want to copy to (usually your A drive for a floppy disk). A copy of your Favorites is then saved to that location, which you can now take with you wherever you go, or store away in case of a PC meltdown.