76 keyboard shortcuts for moving faster in Windows Vista

By Scott Lowe

As is normal with Windows, Microsoft has provided a huge number of keyboard shortcuts to make interaction with the product easier for those who enjoy the productivity that almost 100 percent keyboard use can supply. I've provided a list of Vista keyboard shortcuts that are available when you're working on the Vista desktop, in Windows Explorer (not Internet Explorer), in the Vista Sidebar, in dialog boxes, and in Vista Help.

Vista Desktop

Shortcut	Function
Windows key	Opens or closes the Start menu
Windows + D	Displays your desktop
Windows + E	Opens the Computer window
Windows + F	Opens the Search window
Ctrl + Windows + F	Searches for computers (if you're on a network)
Windows + L	Locks your computer or switches users
Windows + M	Minimizes all windows
Shift + Windows + M	Restores minimized windows
Windows + R	Opens the Run dialog box
Windows + T	Cycles through programs on the Taskbar
Windows + U	Opens the Ease of Access Center
Ctrl + A	Selects everything in a window
Ctrl + C	Copies selected items
Ctrl + X	Cuts selected items
Ctrl + V	Pastes cut or copied items
Ctrl + Y	Redoes an action
Ctrl + Z	Undoes an action
F1	Displays Help
F2	Highlights the label of a selected item for editing

F3	Opens the Search window
Ctrl + F4	Closes the current document
Alt + F4	Closes the current item or program
F5	Refreshes a window
F6	Cycles through elements in a window or on the desktop
F10	Activates a program's menu bar
Shift + Windows + F10	Displays the shortcut menu for a selected item
Delete	Deletes selected items to the Recycle Bin
Shift + Delete	Deletes selected items permanently
Alt + Enter	Displays the properties of a selected item
Ctrl + Esc	Opens the Start menu
Alt + Esc	Cycles through items in the order you opened them
Ctrl + Shift + Esc	Opens the Windows Task Manager
Left Alt + Left Shift + Num Lock	Turns the Mouse Keys feature on or off
Hold for five seconds + Num Lock	Turns the Toggle Keys feature on or off
Windows + Pause	Displays the System Properties dialog box
Left Alt + Left Shift + Print Screen	Turns the High Contrast feature on or off
Right Shift for 8 seconds	Turns the Filter Keys feature on and off
Press Shift five times	Turns the Sticky Keys feature on or off
Alt + Spacebar	Opens the shortcut menu for the current window
Alt + Tab	Switches between open items
Windows + Tab	Cycles through open items with Flip 3-D
Ctrl + Alt + Tab	Displays open items (use the arrow keys to switch between them)
Ctrl + Windows + Tab	Displays open items with Flip 3-D (use the arrow keys to cycle through them)

In Windows Explorer

Shortcut	Function
Alt + D	Moves to the Address bar
F4	Displays the Address bar drop-down list
Ctrl + N	Opens a new window
F11	Maximizes/minimizes the current window
Left arrow	Collapses a selection or selects its parent folder
Alt + Left arrow	Shows the previous folder
Right arrow	Displays the current selection or selects its first subfolder
Alt + Right arrow	Shows the next folder
Asterisk (keypad)	Displays subfolders within a selected folder
End	Displays the bottom of the current window
Home	Displays the top of the current window
Minus Sign (keypad)	Collapses the selected folder
Plus Sign (keypad)	Displays the contents of the selected folder

In the Vista Sidebar

Shortcut	Function
Windows + G	Cycles through gadgets
Windows + Spacebar	Brings all gadgets to the front; selects Sidebar
Tab	Cycles through Sidebar controls

In a dialog box

Shortcut	Function
F1	Displays Help
F4	Displays items in a drop-down list

Backspace	In Save As or Open dialog, opens a folder one level up from a selected folder
Enter	Works like a mouse click for some selected options
Spacebar	Selects or deselects an active check box
Tab	Moves forward through dialog box options
Ctrl + Tab	Hops from tab to tab
Shift + Tab	Moves backward through dialog box options
Ctrl + Shift + Tab	Hops backward from tab to tab

In Vista Help

Shortcut	Function
Alt + A	Displays the customer support page
Alt + C	Displays the Help And Support Contents
Ctrl + F	Opens Find dialog box for the current topic
Alt + N	Displays the connection settings menu
Ctrl + P	Prints a help topic
F3	Moves to the Search box
F10	Displays Options menu
Alt + Home	Displays the Help And Support home page

Additional resources

- TechRepublic's Downloads RSS Feed XML
- Sign up for TechRepublic's Downloads Weekly Update newsletter
- Sign up for our Windows Vista Report newsletter
- Check out all of TechRepublic's free newsletters
- 50+ keyboard shortcuts to move faster in Windows XP
- 60 keyboard shortcuts to move faster in Microsoft Internet Explorer 7
- Microsoft Word 2003 keyboard shortcuts

Version history

Version: 1.0
Published: October 25, 2007

Tell us what you think

TechRepublic downloads are designed to help you get your job done as painlessly and effectively as possible. Because we're continually looking for ways to improve the usefulness of these tools, we need your feedback. Please take a minute to drop us a line and tell us how well this download worked for you and offer your suggestions for improvement.

Thanks!

—The TechRepublic Downloads Team