Mrs. Wizard's CompuQuickTips

For the Rest of Us

Letters & Envelopes...
MSWord

In This Issue...

April, 1995
The first issue of CompuQuickTips
was offered to any brand new
computer user who wanted
*to learn about Windows in a*
friendly, fun way.

This month marks the end
of 10 years with issue #1
of Volume 11 (whew!).

There's a lot of gold
for new as well as
experienced users
in those past issues!
Check out the last 5 years at
http://compuquicktips.com
and prepare yourself for
more of the same
in the months and years to come!

THANK YOU
for giving me a reason!

Typing a letter is pretty straightforward in MS Word. There are plenty of templates to help you follow the rules. All you need to do is fill in your information and you can have a pretty decent offering. To begin, click the word *File*, then *New*, and choose *New from template.* When the Template window appears, choose the type of letter you want to create and click OK. Fill in the pertinent information and you are ready to go.

What if you want to send the same letter to lots of people, and have each person's name on each individual letter? This can be done with a *Mail Merge.* Use MS Word to create a small database to use over and over.

Click the word *Tools* at the top of the main window. Click where it says *Letters and Mailings*, then *Mail Merge Wizard*. In the newer versions of MS Word and other programs, you will see your wizards and other helpers appear to the side of your main document.
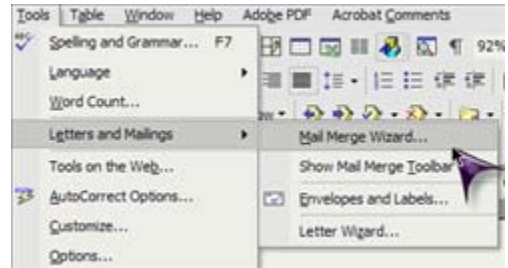
In the first panel, choose *Letters.* Click the link at the bottom of the panel to continue and see other choices. In the second panel, choose *Use the current document*. Click *Next to Select Recipients*. In the next panel, choose *Type a new list* to create a small database from scratch. Once you choose *Type a new list*, you will see the word *Create* just below. Click this to bring up a new Address List dialog box. Enter each person's information in the various fields. Use the Tab key on your keyboard to advance to the next field. When you are finished with one, click the *New Entry* button to advance to the next person's information box. Repeat the process until you have everyone entered. When you are finished, click the *Close* button. This will cause the most important dialog window to appear. This is where you give your little database a name and decide where you want to put it. In the *Save as type* box, pay attention. It will be a *.mdb* file. This means it will be a database file and it is important you do not change this file type. Give your file a name and make sure you know where it will be by paying special attention to the *Saved In* box at the top of this dialog window. Give your file a name by typing it in the *File Name* box. Click
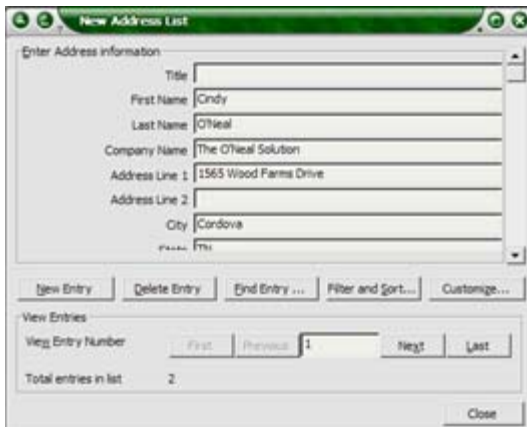
Letters & Envelopes ... MSWord

the *Save* button and a new window will appear with your *Mail Merge Recipients* listed. Edit this list, add and delete people, any time you want by clicking the words *Edit recipient list* in the wizard panel. Click the *OK* button to make the list go away temporarily. You will be able to use this little database in future letters by choosing *Use an existing list.*

Click the *Next: Write your letter* link at the bottom of the wizard panel to continue. This panel is where you decide how you want the names to appear in your letter. Click *Address block* and *Greeting line* and make your choices. Replace the placeholder text in the main body of the letter with your own.

Click *Next: Preview your letters* to see how it will look. You can always go back if you need to, and if you get totally confused, close the whole thing out and start all over. Your database will be intact and you can use it as an existing database for any new documents.

The final step is to *Complete the merge.* You can edit each individual letter and make any corrections if needed. Printing will be very straightforward. Click where it says *Edit individual letters.* You will see a *Merge to New Document* box. Choose *All* to see all your letters. Click *OK.* Your final output will be a multi page document, with each letter on a separate page. Print the letters first, then go back and print the envelopes.

Later on, when you begin a new document and want to use your database, you don't need to go through all these steps. Click the word *View* at the top of the main window, then *Toolbars* and *Mail Merge.* Use the *Mail Merge Toolbar* to access and edit your existing database. It can also be used to insert selected fields into any document. When you have it the way you want, click the *Merge to new document* button and watch the magic happen! To get acquainted, let your mouse linger over each button. A little popup will appear to let you know what each will do.
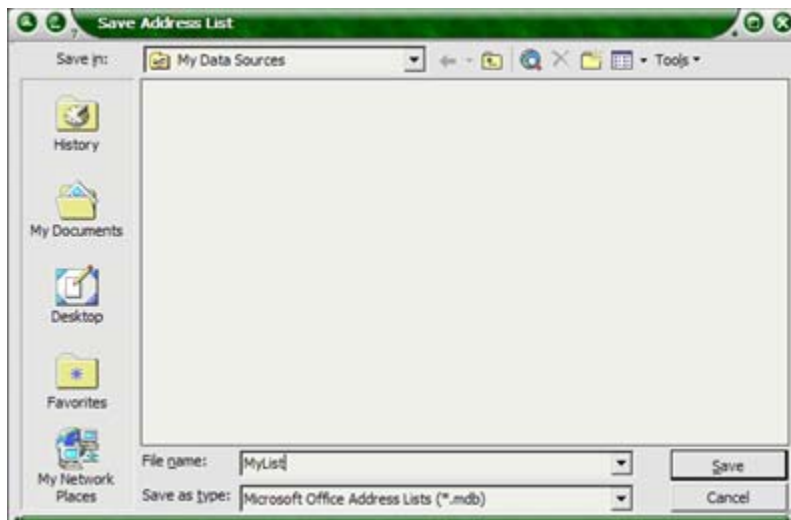
A user will find any interface intuitive ... with enough practice.

Printing Envelopes ... You don't have to be using a mail merge to print a quick envelope. Open or begin any document and click the word *Tools* at the top of the main window, then *Letters and Mailings*, and *Envelopes and Labels*. Type the delivery address in the top box and the return address in the bottom box. Click *Add to document* if you are working on a letter and want to save it for future use. Your envelope will become a separate page in your main document. You will be able to print it any time you want. Click the *Options* button to choose the envelope size. You can even have a barcode printed on the envelope to help with US deliveries. The *Printing Options* tab in the *Envelope Options* window will give you an idea of how to place your envelope in the printer. Word is pretty good at guessing, but there is no substitute for printing a test envelope (on plain paper) to give you visual clues on how to place a *real* envelope into your printer feed.   Printing a test envelope will certainly make you feel better!

The key to printing envelopes correctly is to *know your printer.* Print test envelopes on plain paper so you can see exactly where the addresses will print. This will let you know in no uncertain terms where to place the envelopes so they will come out right. Because envelopes are so much thicker than regular paper (not to mention those pesky flaps), it is not possible to just put a stack in and hit the print button. With most home printers, you pretty much need to stack just a few at a time and keep your hands on them to make sure only one goes through at a time. It takes a little practice, but it can be done.

Letters & Envelopes ... OpenOffice.org
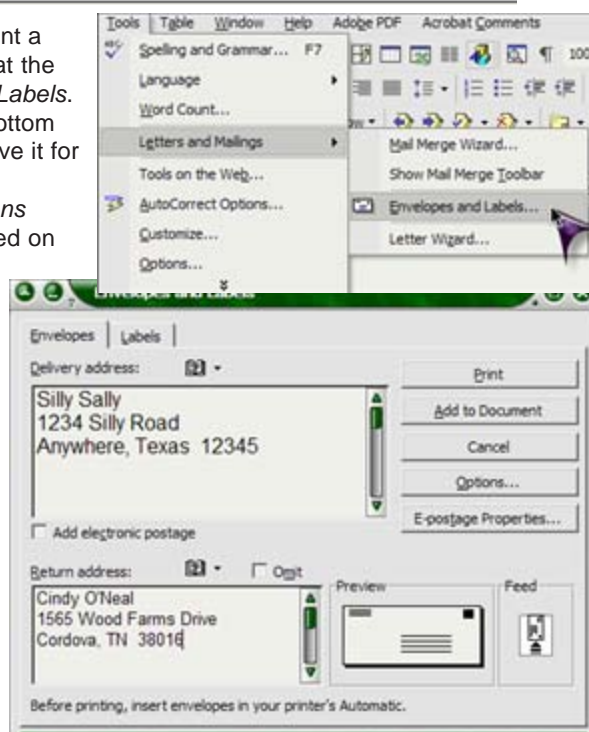
http://openoffice.org

There's a brand new offering from *OpenOffice.org* available on their website to download and install. Of course it is still free, but the new *BETA* version 2.0 is more and more like what you are used to if you have been using *MSOffice*. I usually don't fool with *BETA* testing software any more, but I didn't hesitate with this new version of *OpenOffice.org*. They have never disappointed me in the past and I was itching to see all the new features.

This newest offering includes a full database application (*Base*) as well as lots of new wizards (no longer called *Auto Pilots*) to walk you through common tasks, including a new *MailMerge wizard* so you can now easily do form letters in *OpenOffice.org*. The newest version is a very hefty download (85 Mb), but installation has improved a lot and version 2 is so much nicer, it is well worth your time to download and install. Installation will not bother your earlier version of *OpenOffice.org*, so you can keep it for nostalgia or uninstall it. It's up to you, but the instructions in this and future articles covering *OpenOffice.org* will be for the latest versions.

Beta.
Software undergoes
beta testing
shortly before
it's released.
BETA
is Latin for
"still doesn't work."

Form Letters and Mail Merges ... The first thing you need to do is begin a new *Writer* document. Click the *Start* button, move the mouse pointer to *All Programs* and the *OpenOffice.org* folder and click the link to open the *Writer* program. This will give you a blank document to start with. Click the word *Tools* at the top of the main window, then *Mail Merge Wizard*. A new dialog box will appear with step by step instructions for making this work. Most is self explanatory. Click *Next* to continue and *Back* if you want to retrace your steps. When you get to the end, there will be a *Finish* button. Here are the steps:

1. Select Starting document. Choose *Use the current document.* Click *Next.*

2. Select document type. Choose *Letter*. Click *Next.*

3. Insert address block. Click *Select Address List* button to open a new window. This is where you will create your address book/database. Once you get it started, you can go back and add to it at any time. Click the *Create* button to begin a new address database, or click an existing database and the *Edit* button to update it.

Once you are in the *Address List* box, begin adding your names and addresses by filling in the blank boxes. When one entry is finished, click the *New* button to the right to add another, etc. If you look at the bottom of this window, you will see the words *Show entry number*. You will always know how many entries you have by looking here. There are also forward and back buttons if you need to browse and find specific entries to change or delete. To delete a specific entry, make sure it is showing, then hit the *Delete* button to the right.

When all your entries are completed, click the *OK* button at the bottom of the *Address List* box. This will return you to the *Select Address List* box so you can continue. If this is a new Address List (because you clicked the *Create* button to make a new one earlier), clicking *OK* will cause a file manager window to appear. You *MUST* give your new database a name and make sure it is stored where you can find it. There is no substitute for good file management skills. When you return to the *Address List* window, your address book name should be selected. Click *OK* again to return to the *Insert address block* part of the mail merge wizard. Now it is time to begin putting your document together.

Letters & Envelopes ... OpenOffice.org

In the *Insert address block* window, put a check in the box next to *This document shall contain an address block*. Click the *More* button to fiddle with the fields you want to appear in your address block and how you want them spaced. This takes a little getting used to, but is pretty straightforward. When you are ready, click *OK* to continue. Click *Next* to *Create Salutation*.

4. Create Salutation. You don't have to use this area, but you can if you want. Click *Next*.

5. Adjust Layout. This is an easy area. Make your adjustments and click *Next*.

6. Edit document. This box will let you go through your database one person at a time and exclude any you don't want to appear. Move the window around a bit to see a live preview on your actual document. Click the *Edit Document* button to reduce the wizard and add your text.

7. Personalize Document. Click the *Edit Individual document* button to minimize the *Mail Merge Wizard* and edit each document all you want. Click the *Next* button when you are ready.

8. Save, print or send. There are several choices here. You can save the raw starting document, save the completed merged document as either a single document or as individual documents, or just print the thing. Whatever you choose, click the *Save Documents* button and give your new file a name. Click the *Finish* button and you are done!

Envelopes ... Envelopes can be printed any time, with any document open. Click the word *Insert* at the top of the main window, then *Envelope*. The *Envelope* window has three tabs. The first tab is where you fill in the information for the sender and recipient. The *Format* tab is where you choose the size for your envelope. Click the little button next to *Format* in the size area to choose. You can also make various position adjustments if you want the margins and spacing different.

The *Printer* tab can get a little confusing. Here there is nothing to do but poke around and experiment with plain paper until you learn what your particular printer wants.

When you are relatively satisfied, click the *Insert* button to make your envelope part of the original document, or the *New Doc* button to create an entirely new envelope document. Once you get it the way you want, you can use it over and over.

Computers follow your orders, not your intentions.

Picasa 2 ...

http://picasa.com
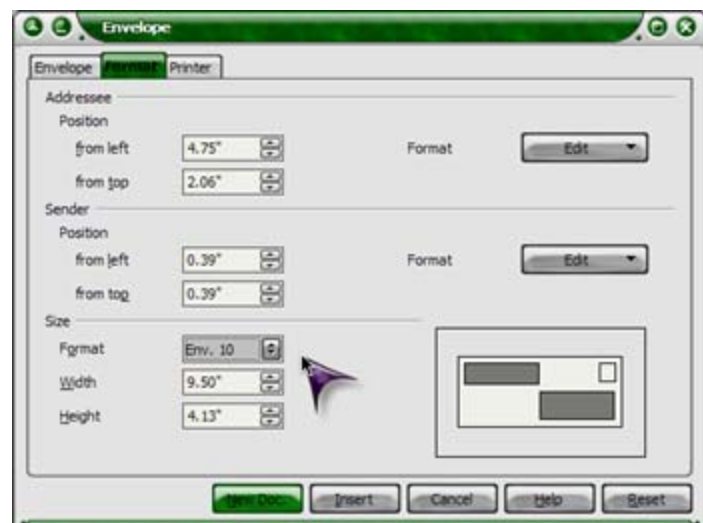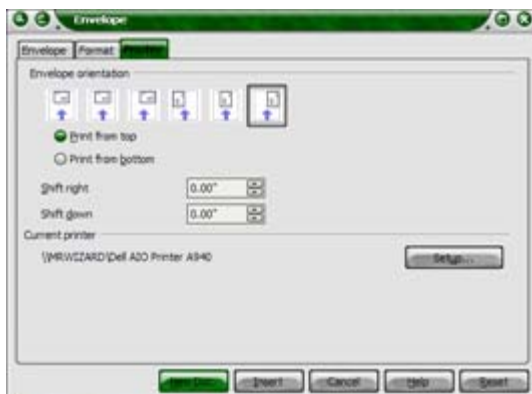
3.16 Mb download

Special thanks to Barb Ruby for stumblling onto this little goodie! After she mentioned it in an email, I began to see promotional blurbs all over the place.

It is a total FREEBIE from Google and if you have a digital camera, a great way to organize all those photos. It even has a nice little editor built in for quick fixes.

About installing... It is a very easy install and you don't need to worry about it gumming up your computer. You won't find any adware or spyware with it either, but unless you want it to scan your entire computer (no telling what it will find), make sure you check *Only scan My Documents, My Pictures, and the Desktop*. I like to have total control, and this can get away from you if you let it. You can always let it scan specific folders later.

While it doesn't really make it clear exactly where all those thumbnails came from, you can right click any picture and choose *Locate on Disk*. The folder it is located in will open and you will see the complete path in the *Address* bar.

It has great basic editing tools, as well as the ability to create slide shows, collages and web pages. There aren't a lot of templates, but for freeware it is very nice. Once you have it installed and open it the first time, be prepared to be fascinated by how easy it is to use and all the neat things you will be able to do with it. It's a picture organizer on steroids!
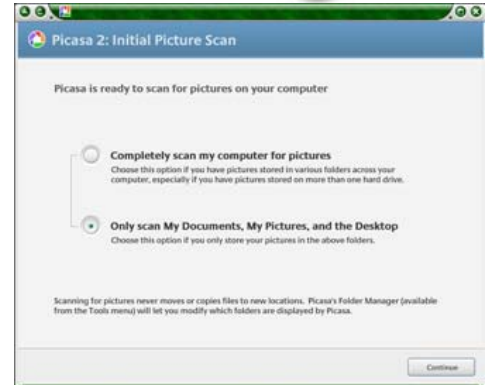
Easy Cleaner ...

Don't compute and drive; the life you save may be your own.

Special thanks to Brian Whitta for finding this little jewel. We both had a great time shaking it down together and comparing notes. This little FREEWARE utility is only slightly too large to qualify as a *Tiny Treasure*. Download size is a little over 2 Mb. Installation is very easy. Just click the install file you download and let it do its magic.

There are actually several tools (utilities) in *Easy Cleaner*. All are very straightforward and easy to use. There is even a special *Undo* button if you need to change your mind and put something back.

The Registry Cleaner found 176 invalid registry entries on my machine. I held my nose and let it clean house, rebooted my computer and all was well. Whew! It's amazing how little remnants can be left behind, even when you use the Windows Add/Remove Programs utility. Many of the useless entries it found had to do with the SP2 uninstall option I had removed several days before. The others were references to files I had moved to another drive and software I *know* I had uninstalled according to Hoyle. The Registry is probably the scariest part of a computer to fool with. So much can go wrong if you delete the wrong thing, but it can really slug up a machine if it isn't maintained properly. This little program seems to be very good at only gleaning the *safe* things (useless entries) to delete. There are deeper Registry cleaners available, but for casual use, this worked fine.

The Add/Remove utility is a great way to get rid of entries that want to linger on the list, even when you *know* you have uninstalled the software.

There's a nice little Undo button too, so if a registry cleaning operation (or anything else) goes awry, you can always put it back!

This is certainly a goodie worth installing and using regularly.

Have fun!

http://personal.inet.fi/business/toniarts/ecleane.htm

Remove the Remove Option for SP2 ...

If you upgraded your Windows XP to SP2 months ago, it is pretty well settled into your system. The option to remove it is in your *Add/Remove Programs* list. Removing SP2 after months of installing new programs and general computer updates could be ugly. Applications installed after the SP2 update might not function properly and may need to be reinstalled. Why not remove the *Remove* option and get rid of the backup files created when you installed SP2? You sure don't need them any more and you will end up freeing over 350 Mb (amount saved may vary) of disk space that could be for more useful files.

Here's how to do it:

Make sure you are logged in as Computer Administrator.

Click the *Start* button. Move the mouse pointer to *My Computer*, right click on it and choose *Explore*. Click the word *Tools, Folder Options* and select the *View* tab. Under *Advanced Settings,* make sure there is a check next to *Show Hidden Files and Folders.* Click *OK* to close this box.

Click the word *View* and *Details*.

Brows to the Windows folder under your C drive. You should see a folder named $NTServicePackUninstall$. It will be close to the top of the contents of the Windows folder. Right click this folder and choose *Delete*. If you don't see this *exact* folder name, stop immediately and do *not* delete anything. If you do find the exact folder name and delete it, you can continue.

Click the *Start* button, then *Control Panel*. Click *Add/Remove Programs* and scroll until you see *Windows XP Service Pack 2.* Click it once to select it. Click the *Remove* button.

Error:
Problem exists
between keyboard
and chair.

If Windows asks whether you really want to remove the service pack, click NO! This is bad. You do *NOT* want to remove SP2, you only want to have the listing removed from the *Add/Remove Programs* list. You may have deleted the wrong folder. Make a visit to the *Recycle Bin* to restore the boo boo folder. Find and delete the correct uninstall folder, then give it a go in the *Add/Remove Programs* list again.

You WANT to see the message *An error occurred while trying to remove Windows XP Service Pack 2 ...* If you see that, you will have the option to click *Yes* to remove the entry from the *Add/Remove Programs* list.
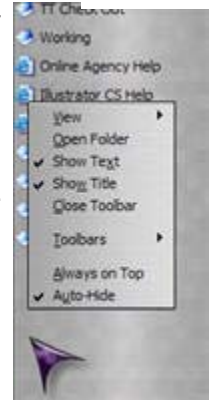
NOW you can empty the Recycle bin to free up the disk space.
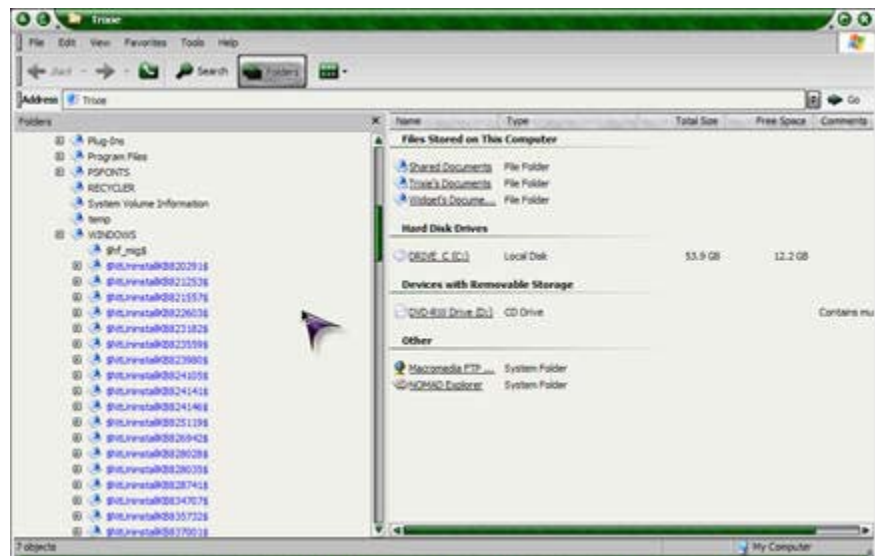
Mrs. Wizard's QuickTips ...

Create a toolbar by dragging a folder ... You can easily make a toolbar of any folder by dragging it (while holding down teh left mouse button) to the edge of the desktop and releasing it. Begin by creating a new folder in your *My Documents* folder. Name it anything you want. Then left click and drag it to either the left or right of your desktop edge. This will create the toolbar and dock it to the edge of the main screen where you dropped it.ll Right click the toolbar and choose if you want the title (folder name) or button text to appear, as well as the size of the icons. Right click and choose *Auto Hide* to make it retractable. You can treat this toolbar like a folder and drag other icons and files to it (right click and drag, and choose *Move here).* It is a great way to clear your desktop of extra icons and still keep all your neat stuff handy.

Check out Properties ... Right click any file and choose *Properties* when you want to find out more. Different files and chortcuts will yield different information. You should see a *Properties* choice on most anything you right click.

Protect Your Files with Properties ... If you have documents on your hard disk that you have no need to change or must not be changed, make them *Read Only* to give them an added layer of protection. *Read-Only* files can be opened and read, but not changed. To make a file *Read-Only*, use the *Properties* dialog box (right click the file and choose *Properties*). Under the *General* tab, place a check in the box next to *Read only*.

Failure
is not an option,
it comes bundled
with the software.

Let your Mouse Linger ... Another way to find out a little more about a file or shortcut if you are using Windows XP is to let your mouse pointer linger over it. You should see a little popup box appear with plenty of information.
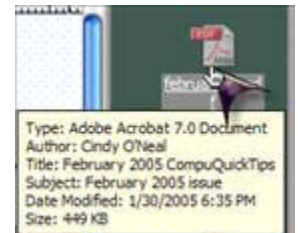
Restore a file ... If you accidentally delete a file, it can be restored easily. Click the *Recycle Bin* to open it. Find your file, then right click on it and choose *Restore.* If you keep your Recycle Bin emptied regularly, you should be able to find your file relatively quickly.
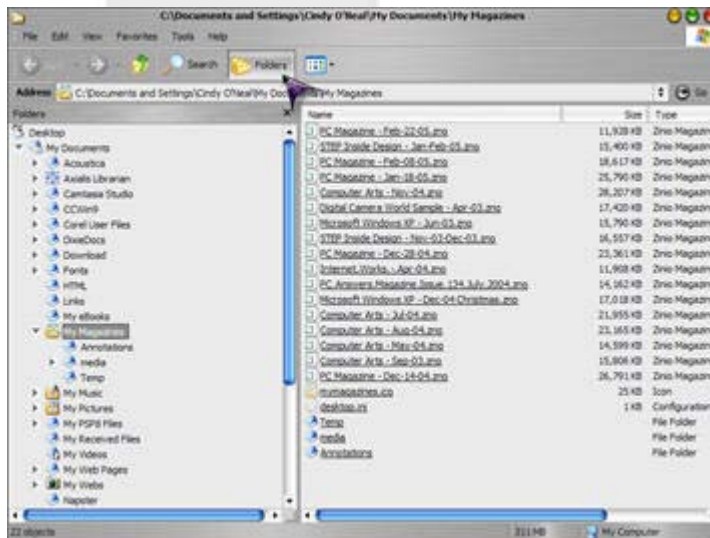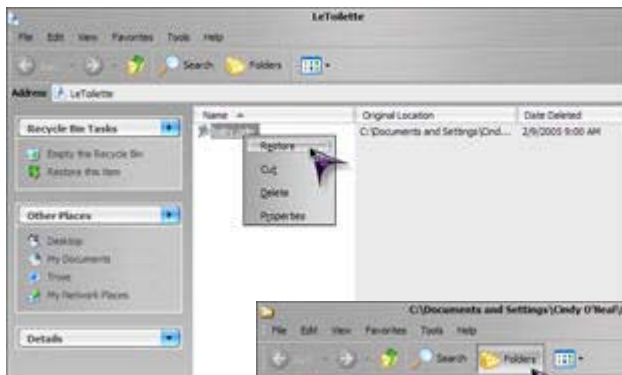
Use the Folders Button ... Use the *Folders* button to quickly switch to a more traditional Explorer view for your files and folders. The Windows XP *File and Folder Tasks* (I hate it), *Other Places* (maybe I'll find a use for it sooner or later) and *Details* (right click and choose *Properties* to accomplish the same thing) in the left window pane will be replaced by Explorer folders. Left click any folder in teh left pane and the contents will appear in the right pane.

Editor's Desk

This *FREE* newsletter is dedicated to taking the mystery out of computers in an entertaining, informative way. If you have any questions or comments, please, drop me a line, give me a call or email me and let me know what you think and would like to see addressed in future issues. I really enjoy hearing from you and am happy to help. You can receive e-mail notification when this electronic version of CompuQuickTips is ready each month by visiting Mrs. Wizard's Web listed below. You will be able to receive it as a *pdf* file in your browser or save it on your desktop. Download the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader for *FREE* at http://www.adobe.com.

Help support CompuQuickTips by ordering Mrs. Wizard's CD Essentials when you visit http://mrswizard.com. Look in the *Special Offer* section for more information and other ways to help. Due to popular demand, the latest version of the CD has ALL the past newsletter issues (since 1995). Acrobat Reader (the latest version) is on the CD for you to install with one click of your mouse, as well as lots of Mrs. Wizard's favorite graphic shareware programs. This is a terrific learning tool! Just pop in the CD and have fun!

If you want ALL the daily quick tips in one place, as well as lots and lots of custom wallpapers for your desktop, think about joining the Happy Dragon Club at the mrswizard.com website. A very small (one time) donation will get you access to a growing number of Members Only goodies.

Sincerely,

Cindy O'Neal

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Mrs. Wizard's Webs
http://mrswizard.com
http://compuquicktips.com

In May ...

Watermarks
Downloading and Installing Software
And MORE!

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