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## Working from Home During Interesting Times



Right now, you're either working from home, have employees working from home, or you will be working from home as soon as the next Covid-19 spike hits, or as soon as you can scan the newest files in your office. But it's June; thunderstorm season has started. OK, a lightning strike on an employee's home won't affect files in the office, right? Well, no, that's not true. A power surge won't travel through the internet to the office, even if that's the premise of some movie. It's literally fiction. It will, however, damage unprotected systems at either end of the connection, and leave files open, locked, and probably not in condition to be backed up at the far end of the connection. And then Windows decides to reboot itself to apply a security update, and either the patch is blocked by the open file, or the open file is trashed by the reboot.

So the basics of power protection and backups still apply, but now, times two.

In the office: Backups must have multiple versions. If a file is damaged because it wasn't saved properly, multiple versions means that you have a little time machine. Go back to a slightly-older version, pre-power zap. A 'sync' copy of your data, like

Dropbox, is not good enough; it just overwrites older good files with newer bad files.

In homes: All systems must be plugged into battery backups or surge suppressors. Check the surge suppressors; there will be a label on the bottom, usually marked as a “Transient Voltage Surge Suppressor,” and NOT as a “Temporary Power Tap,” which is basically just an extension cord that won’t block a surge. There will not always be a joule rating directly on the device, but if that information is available, it should be 1,000 Joules or above. That’s how big a power jolt they can block. If you are providing loaner computers for home access, require that they be used only with good surge suppressors. Include them with the laptop if needed.

Finally, all remote workers should be closing all files on the computers they log into for work at the end of each session, and leaving the computers signed out. Parking on the login screen is fine. That means all files are closed, Windows can reboot itself for patching as needed, and backup software can run.

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## Feature Update: It's Time for 2004!



The newest badly-named semi-annual feature update for Windows 10 has started to show up on some computers. That’s 2004, as in 2020, April, also known as the May 2020 Feature Update. It should not be confused with the year 2004, or the year that the Opportunity Rover began exploring Mars. Both the Rover and Windows Updates are slow, and eventually get where they’re going. Be patient: The 2004 patch is not yet available for all computers. For some, it’s being offered as an optional install inside the Update Windows list. For others, it’s just not ready, based on what hardware is in each computer. There’s no rush for now; wait for it to show up and

offer to install.

There's a massive list of the feature changes here:

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-insider/at-home/whats-new-wip-at-home-20h1>

Most of those changes won't affect very many users, or they're subtle changes that won't require changes to how we work. Windows Search is supposed to work faster and quieter, using less storage space and detecting when the computer is in use better, so that it's not indexing while you work. For cellular data users on laptops, there is better reporting of data limits.

There are a few handy items: The Calculator app now has an icon to click to pin the calculator to stay on top of all other programs. Notepad has had some improvements, and can now flow text like other basic text editors have been able to do for a few decades now. They're a little late on that one.

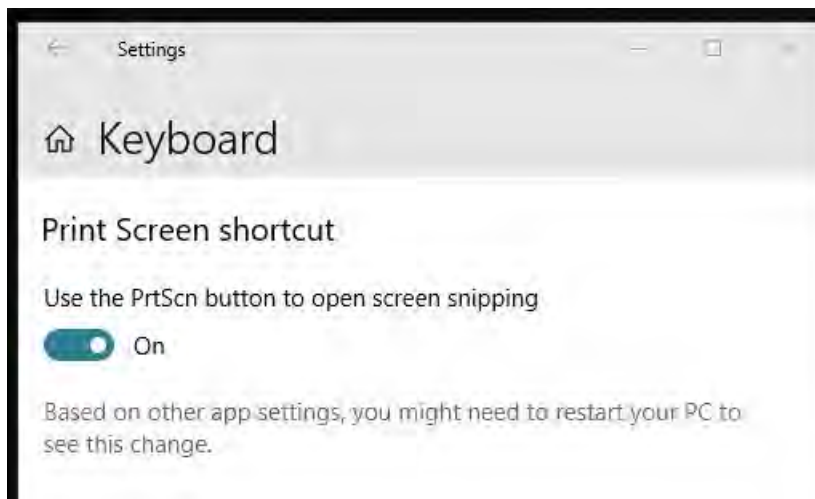
## Screen Captures

Screen Capture has been notched up again. The PrtScn button on your keyboard, sometimes labeled PrintScreen, has been mostly useless for decades, always used with Ctrl to capture the entire screen (or multiple monitors), or with Alt to capture only the active Window or the dialog box sitting open on top of all the other windows. It's not very visual; nothing happens on-screen when you use those keys, and you have to know that the screen image is sitting on the Windows clipboard waiting for you to paste it into a document.

The Snip & Sketch program, available in recent Windows versions, requires searching from the start button, and that does a nice job of capturing the screen, and adds options for adding lines and other annotations to the image. See my newsletter from July 2019 for more on Snip & Sketch:

<https://www.pc410.com/2019-07>

The new feature for screen captures, which works in Windows 1909 and 2004, is that you can use just the PrintScreen button all by itself to create a cropped image. However, first you have to turn that option on in Settings. Click Start, Settings (the gear), Ease of Access, Keyboard (scroll down the list in the left column), and then scroll down to 'Print Screen shortcut' and set it to ON.



Try it out by pressing PrintScreen. The screen will become gray, and the menu will appear:



Those icons, from the left, are:

- Draw a box to capture.
- Circle an area to capture.
- Window snip (like Ctrl-PrintScreen)
- Fullscreen snip (like Alt-PrintScreen)
- X (close Snip)

Each of the snip options places the captured image on the clipboard. Paste it (ctrl-V) into a document or an image program (Paint or Irfanview) and save it.

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## WordPerfect 2020

Corel has launched a new WordPerfect. WordPerfect 2020 can now open and save in Open Document Format (ODF), which is important for sharing files with some government offices. Features to export to PDF and EPUB (book format) have been improved. There's more information the new features here:

<https://wordperfect.com>

Graphcat Photo Cataloger will be upgraded shortly to work in all WordPerfect versions from 11 to 2020. Discounted upgrades will be available from every past version. I'll add details during June on the Graphcat.com news page:

<https://www.graphcat.com/news-updates/>

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