PC ANNOYANCES
SECOND EDITION

How to Fix the Most ANNOYING Things About Your Personal Computer, Windows, and more

Conquer Windows XP SP2
Master Office
Beat back spam
Get the goods on Gmail
Make your wireless network hum
Bend iTunes to your will

Steve Bass
Contents

Introduction xv

EMAIL ANNOYANCES

2 General Email Annoyances
  2 Hide the Recipients List
  2 Display Email Headers
  2 Stop Your Mailbox from Filling Up
  3 Endless Loop Vacations
  4 Spam Zappers Extraordinaire
  5 Alternative Medicine for PC Viruses
  5 Clean Up Forwarded Email
  7 Share Big Files Without the Attachments
  7 Return to Sender, Address Unknown
  8 Undecipherable Attachments
  9 Turn Off Return Receipt
  9 IMHO You’ll Be ROTFLOL
  10 Check Yahoo! Mail from Your Email Program
  10 Embed Images in Email
  10 Fix Those Broken Links
  11 Stop Including Messages in Replies
  11 Pre-Address Your Email
  12 Keep a Copy
  12 Sending Shorter URLs

12 Outlook and Outlook Express 5 and 6
  12 Disable the Preview Pane
  13 Give Outlook Express a Makeover
  13 Choose Your Message View
  14 Use Folders

15 Multiple Email Accounts on One Computer
16 One Email Account on Multiple Computers
16 Save Keystrokes via Signatures
16 Back Up Email
17 Back Up Your Address Book
17 Where Did That Attachment Go?
18 Create File Attachments
19 Automatic Zip Attachments in Outlook

19 AOL Annoyances
  19 Muzzle AOL
  19 Giving AOL’s Companion the Boot
  20 Hold On to Your AOL Mail
  20 AOL’s Hidden Toll-Free Support
  20 Dump AOL’s Email
  20 Leaving AOL—and Taking Your Favorites
  21 Keep Images Sharp in AOL

22 Eudora Annoyances
  22 Managing Eudora’s Alphabetical Mailboxes
  22 Slimming Down Eudora’s Headers
  23 Find Mail Faster with Filters
  23 Filter Out Viruses and Worms
  24 Smart Sorting
  24 Filtering Spam
  25 Eudora’s Toolbar: Dumb as Dirt
27  Hotmail Annoyances
27  Bookmark Your Hotmail Inbox
27  Use Outlook Express to Excise Hotmail Spam
29  Hide Hotmail’s Spam
30  Make Hotmail Your Default Email Program
30  Import Your Address Book via Outlook Express

31  Gmail Annoyances
31  Get Gmail
31  Import Address Books
31  Gmail Says: “You’ve Got Mail”
32  Gmail Nixes EXEs and ZIPS
32  Breaking the 10 MB Limit

36  General Windows Annoyances
36  Windows XP Is the Cure for Me (and 98, and 95)
37  Help That’s Actually Helpful
38  A Most Annoy ing Annoyance: Windows Product Activation
39  Speed Up Menus by Skipping Transitions
39  Screen Resolution: I Can See Clearly Now
40  Old DOS Games Make It to the Big Screen
40  Take Charge of Your Start Menu and System Tray
41  Program Filenames That Make Sense
41  Keep Your Folder Names Short and Sweet
41  One-Click XP Shutdowns
43  All Hail the Windows Key!
44  Open Closed Startup Programs Without Restarting
44  Laptop Network Switches Made Easy
44  Set the Windows Clock
45  A Cure for Cock-Eyed Calendars
46  A Quick Fix for Missing Quick Launch Toolbars
46  Restore MIA Quick Launch Shortcuts
47  Prevent Accidental File Deletions

47  Phone Reboots
47  Printing Faxes, No Wizard Required
48  Faster Access to Your Control Panel
49  The Case of the Missing Icons
50  Crush Intrusive Desktop Web Items
51  Pump Up Your Icons
51  Internet Explorer Has Shrunken Menus
52  Big Icons in the Quick Launch
52  Button Up Your Overcrowded Taskbar
53  Eudora Defaults to Taskbar
53  Rearrange the Taskbar
53  Taskbar, System Tray, and Quick Launch Woes
54  Save Disk Space by Ditching Old Restore Points
55  Don’t Restore That Virus!
56  System Restore on Your Desktop
56  Quick Access to Device Manager
56  Faster Disk Cleanups
58  Defragus Interruptus
58  Use NTFS for a Boost
59  Work Around Scheduled Tasks’ Limitations
59  Windows Updates You Can Share
60  Add Service Packs to Your Windows CD
61  Remedia l Acrobat Reader
61  Protect Your System from Dumb Installations
62  Customize Windows Update
62  Save Disk Space by Tossing Old Uninstall Files
63  I Can’t Install Anything
63  I Can’t Install Anything, Part 2
63  I Can’t Install Anything Easily
64  Lock Numbers Out, Arrow Keys In
64  Bring Back Your Task Pane
66  Dialog Boxes That Work Your Way
67  Where’s Task Manager’s Toolbar?
67  Stop Annoying Crash Reports
67 Stop Quick Launch Pop-ups
68 Ban Annoying Boot Logos
68 Service Pack 2 Annoyances
68 The Annoying Upgrade You Really Need
69 Interrupted SP2 Downloads
70 Bothersome Upgrade Alert
70 SP2’s Alerts Are So, So Annoying
70 Automatic Update Dumbness
71 Automatic Update Errors
71 Blocked Images in Outlook Express
71 Distressed About Attachments in Outlook Express
72 SP2 Blocks Skype

INTERNET ANNOYANCES

76 Browsing Annoyances
76 Go Flashless to Save Tired Eyes
76 Make Your PC an Ad-Free Zone
77 Counterespionage for Sneaky Spyware
79 Open New Browser Windows Your Way
80 Outsmart Outlook’s Browser Choice
80 Pictureless Pages Predicament
81 A Shorter Path to Microsoft’s Knowledge
82 All Your Favorites, All the Time
82 Clear Dead Links from Your Favorites Menu
83 Get the Big Picture the First Time
84 Boot Boring IE Icons
84 Disable IE’s Image Toolbar
85 What You See Is Not What You Get
86 Quick Fix for Multipage Articles
86 Get Rid of IE’s Automatic “Your files are attached”
87 Revive IE’s Disabled Back Button
87 Force IE to Refresh the Page
88 The Case of the Disappearing Status Bar
89 Make Netscape Block Those Pop-ups!
89 Netscape Can Google, Too

90 Give Me Back Internet Explorer
90 Pull the Plug on Net2Phone
91 Vexing AOL Connections
92 Vanishing Form Data
92 Skip the Registration
93 Buying Online? Play it Safe
94 Zap Microsoft’s Passport
94 Boost Internet Speed
95 Download More Than Two Files
95 The Password Behind the Asterisks
95 Fix Your Browser’s Font Size
96 Open Acrobat Reader Separately

96 Google Annoyances
96 Get Back Where You Started with Google
97 Track Down Search Terms in Google
97 Get Better Results with the Google Directory
98 Go Monolingual with Your Google Searches
98 Google News Your Way

99 Instant Messaging Annoyances
99 Make AOL Instant Messenger an Ad-Free Zone
100 Block Instant Messaging Chat Invitations
101 When AIM Overstays Its Welcome
101 Remove Unwanted Entries from Your Screen-Name List
101 Yahoo! Messenger Comes with Unwanted Extras
103 Dump Windows Messenger

MICROSOFT OFFICE ANNOYANCES

106 Word Annoyances
106 A Favorites Menu for Word
107 When Word’s Find Feature Can’t Spell
108 Take Control of Your Formatting
108 Remove Weird Lines in Word
109 Paste Email Text, Not Whitespace
109 Spellcheck One Word at a Time (and Turn Off the Red Squiggles)
110 Back Up Your AutoCorrects
111 Outfox Word’s AutoCorrect
113 Get There Sooner With Bookmarks
114 Remembering Word Shortcuts
114 Fast Jumps to Favorite Folders in Office
115 Open Word Files—All in a Row
116 Revealing Codes
117 Paste the Text, Not the Formatting
118 Find Faster Without the Dialog Box
118 Turn Off Automatic Hyperlinks
120 Avoid Inadvertent Browsing
120 Smarter Printing with Macros
120 See All Your Menu Options
121 Set Preferred View Once and for All
122 Zoom in Word and Excel
123 Make Office Docs Private
123 Something Abnormal About Normal.dot
124 A Better View of Your Print Layout
125 When AutoCorrect Gets Carried Away
126 Delete Text Without the Confirmation
126 A Fix For Word’s Wacky List Numbering
127 Three Ways to Give Tables the Boot
128 Give Clippy His Walking Papers (Really)

129 Excel Annoyances
129 Tables Paste Better in Excel
129 Automate Tedious Data Entry
131 Let Me Count the Days
131 Protect Formulas from Accidental Deletion
132 Protect Yourself from Yourself

133 The Fast Way to Figure Partial Sums
135 Columns and Rows Do a Flip-Flop
135 Excel Hyperlink Hell
136 Type a List in Excel
136 Excel’s Enter Alternatives
136 The Worksheet Conservation Society

137 PowerPoint Annoyances
137 Looking Good in Black and White
137 When AutoFormatting Mucks Things Up
138 Put Your Presentations on a Diet
138 Pay Attention to PowerPoint
139 Fix PowerPoint’s Open Dialog Box
139 View PowerPoint Files Without PowerPoint
140 Precise Image Movements in PowerPoint

140 Outlook and Outlook Express Annoyances
140 Make Outlook a Word-Free Zone
141 Outlook Express’s Hidden One-Click Encryption Option
141 Reattach Your Detached Attachments
142 Two Email Clients, One Contact List
143 Email Is for Email
143 A Nifty Outlook Organizer
144 Outlook’s Add-in Won’t Leave
145 Outlook Autocomplete Puzzler
145 Lickety-Split Outlook Searches
146 Remind Me to Set a Reminder
146 I Like My Dates Bold
147 A Better Home for Your Documents

WINDOWS EXPLORER ANNOYANCES

150 Search Animations Begone
150 A Shortcut to More Recent Documents
150 Quick Access to My Recent Documents
151 One Folder, Many Places
151 When One Explorer Shortcut Is Not Enough
152 Disconnect Your Saved Web Pages
155 A Better Way to Navigate
155 When You Can’t Delete a File
157 Make Explorer Crash-Proof
157 Look What I Found! But Don’t Touch…
157 Copying File Paths
157 Broaden Windows’ Search Horizons
158 Search Faster by Excluding Zipped Files
159 Manage Zipped Files
160 Beyond WinZip Self-Extractor
161 Rename Multiple Files
161 Gimme Back My File Associations
162 Right-Click for Quick Prints
163 Quick Notes in Windows
163 Encrypt Files for Security
165 Share Big Files the Easy Way
165 A Thumbnail View for File Attachments
166 All Thumbs.db

MUSIC, VIDEO, AND CD ANNOYANCES

168 Music and Video Annoyances
168 Keep All Your Music the Same Volume
168 Play Sound Files Quickly and Easily
168 iPod ♡ the PC
168 Turn Off RealOne’s Message Center Ad
169 Good Riddance to RealPlayer
169 RealOne’s Icons Are a Real Pain
171 Stop RealPlayer From Auto-Starting
171 Take Your Music Anywhere
172 Make Winamp Jumbo Size
172 The Missing Volume Icon
172 Too Much/Not Enough Volume
174 Automatically Fix MP3 Tags

175 Stream MP3s to Your Stereo Wirelessly
175 Record Audio from Any Source
176 Capture and Save Video Streams
177 Split ‘em and Join ‘em
177 Capture and Save Video Streams, Part II

178 iTunes Annoyances
178 iTunes Bankruptcy
178 Move iTunes Collection to a New PC
179 Back Up Your iTunes!
179 Stop iTunes from Popping and Clicking
180 Can’t Share Music Between Computers with iTunes
180 Scrambled iTunes Song Titles

180 Windows Media Player Annoyances
180 Windows Media Player Won’t Copy Music to MP3 Player
180 Windows Media Player’s Vanishing Toolbars
181 Why Doesn’t My Video Play?
181 Play Videos Without the Web Browser
182 Add Ripping to Windows Media Player
182 Start Your Player Where You Left Off
182 Bring Your Player’s Menu Out in the Open
183 An Old Look for a New Player

183 QuickTime Annoyances
183 Kill the QuickTime Icon
184 Nonstop QuickTime Error Message
184 QuickTime Won’t Play Nice with Browser
184 QuickTime, Stop Nagging!
185 Music Sounds Like an Old 78
185 Play QuickTime Movies Without QuickTime

185 CD and DVD Annoyances
185 Remove CDs When the Power’s Off
185 Use 74-Minute CDs When Sharing Discs
186 Burn CDs, but Hold the Labels
187 CD Burner Runs Hot and Cold
188  CD Content Without the CD
188  Check That Disc Before You Burn
189  Read and Write Read-Only Files
190  Quick Audio File Conversions
190  Create Quick MP3 Lists
190  Preserve Long Filenames
191  Burn Usable CDs from ISO Files
192  Peek Inside ISO Files
192  Find Invisible .BIN Files
193  AutoPlay, Go Away (or Come Back)
193  No, I Don’t Want to Burn the CD Right Now...
194  DVD+R Versus DVD-R?
194  Organizing DVDs and Music CDs
195  Is PC Friendly Necessary?

HARDWARE ANNOYANCES

198  The Wonders of a Modem Reset
199  Bring the Zing Back to DSL
199  Uninterruptible Power to the PC
200  Manage Multiple Bulky AC Adapters
201  Lighten Your Power Load
201  Clear and Sharp LCD Fonts
202  Tune Up Your Monitor
203  Hush...Hush, Sweet Monitor
203  Straighten Up and Display Right
204  Simple Ways to Reduce PC Noise
204  Lost Screw, Big Problems
205  Extra Power for Digital Cameras
205  Windows Setting Blocks DVD Upgrade
206  Check for Loose Cables
206  5 Cables in 1
206  Safely Remove a USB Flash Drive
207  Lock Down Your USB Flash Drive
207  USB-to-PS/2 Mouse Adapter
207  Give Your Laser Printer a Memory Boost
208  Save Big With Low-Resolution Prints
208  Paper-Saving Print Utility
210  Keep the Paper Flowing
211  Move Your Sound Connectors to the Front
211  Dock Your Notebook
212  Use Your Notebook at Home
212  Connect Your Flash Memory Drive
212  with a USB Cable
213  No-Fuss Network Backups
213  Big Hard Drive Corruption
213  Unwire Your Printer
214  Go Wireless with a Wall Socket
214  Stifle Ambitious WiFi Pop-ups
214  Emergency Power for Palms
215  Pocket PC File and Battery Woes
215  Boost Your Cell’s Battery
215  Red Skies and Blue Roses
215  Framed Digital Photos
216  Curling Pictures
216  Remove Shadows from the Other Side
217  Grinding, Not Scanning
217  Skewed Scans
217  Make Scanners Read Better
217  Transfer Phone Numbers to Your Digital Phone

Index  219