

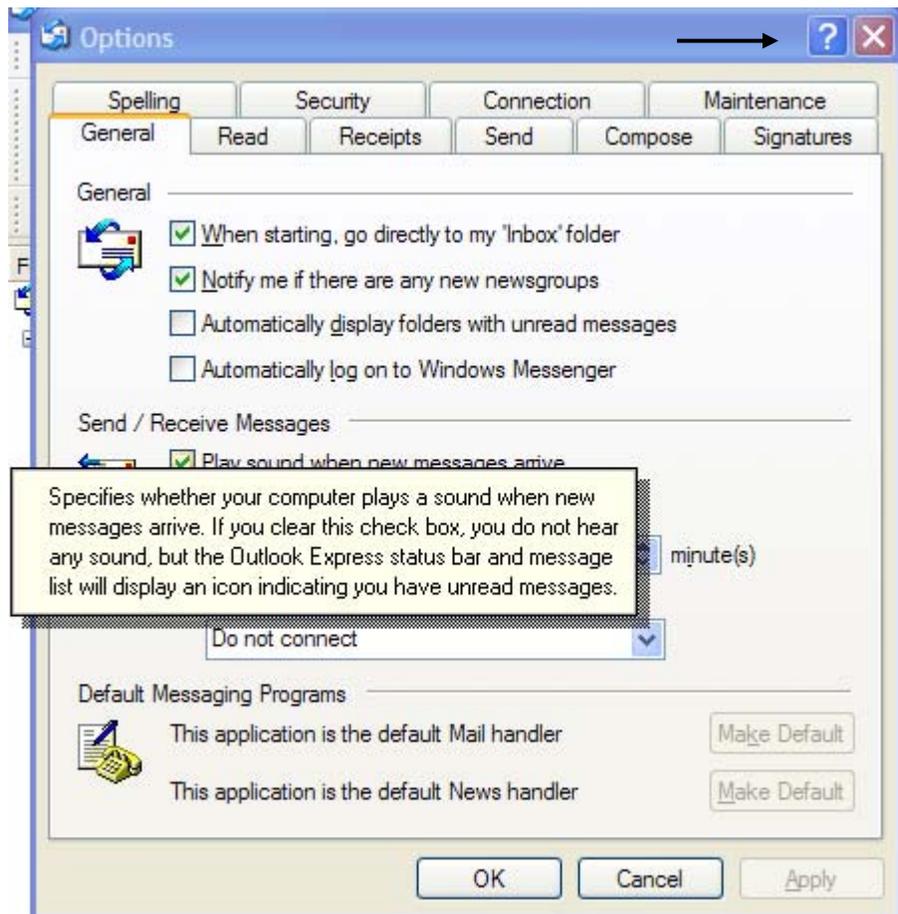
## Basics Lesson Nine - Obtaining Computer Help

### Obtaining Help for the Computer or for a Program within

- Obtaining help for your computer or a program is often as close as your computer itself.
- A multitude of help files are contained within your computer.
- Getting help for Windows itself is dependent on your version.
- Windows 8 and 10 offer help primarily in the form of Troubleshooters.
  - Windows 10, just open the Start menu and type (nowhere in particular, just type) **troubleshooting**. By the time you have trouble typed, Troubleshooting should appear at the top of the list. Click on it.
    - Windows 8, just start typing on the Start screen.
  - Windows now provides you several options for help solving a problem.
  - Or look on the left-hand column for other options for help, including Help and Support near the bottom. You will need an Internet connection for that however.
  - Windows XP through 7 also has troubleshooters.
    - Use the Search box, and type “trouble”. Vista will display various troubleshooting topics. XP will list troubleshooters. Select the item you are having trouble with.
- Windows 7 and earlier had “Help and Support” right in the right side of the Start menu.
  - There are categories of help
- All Windows versions also have the ability to ask others for assistance. Remote Assistance is available via the Help and Support, or by typing **Remote Assistance** in the Start menu, Start screen, or search line in earlier versions of the Start menu.
- Obtaining help on how to use, or learning about a program:
  - Almost every program has a Help menu.
  - Modern "ribbon" programs have a small Question Mark icon at the top far right.
  - Programs with Menu bars have the “Help” menu (at the top, usually the farthest menu option to the right of a menu bar), then choose “Help Topics”.
    - Do not choose the “About” option. The “About...” option just informs you what version you are using, or lets you get a product ID or serial number for that program.
    - The product ID or serial number is often needed to obtain support.
  - Striking the F1 key, while working within most programs, brings up the appropriate help function.
    - It brings up the same Help function you obtain by the using the Help menu.
  - If not working in a program, it brings up Windows Help and Support prior to Windows 8.
    - Now, striking the F1 key, Windows 8 and 10 take you to a web page, so again, Internet connection is necessary.
  - “Help” can walk you through (provide you help on) most major topics.
- Once in the Help for a program, obtaining help is achieved by using one of three “tools”, Contents, Index, and Search. See the next page for more detailed description. Just know:
  - Right-clicking on an object (such as a choice, some feature in a window, or on a toolbar) may bring up a What’s This? box (or display information about the item immediately). Clicking on “What’s This” (with the left mouse button) displays information on the item.
  - All items do not have this “What’s This” information, or function.
    - You can “Bookmark” (Add to Favorites) Interesting Help Topics you want to come back to at a later time, such as Topics help for which you need often.

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- Once in the Help for a program, obtaining help is achieved by using one of three “tools”.
  - The CONTENTS tab contains a list of topics, thus allowing help by subject, similar to the table of contents in a book.
  - The INDEX tab allows you to search for help by typing a single word in a dialog box. The Index immediately searches for articles with the term (or first few letters) requested at the beginning of a topic title. Below that, topics then appear alphabetically similar or matching the word (or characters) you typed. Double-clicking on a listed word below displays that information. Thus, you may not know precisely what subject the help you require would be found under, but by using the Index tab, you need know only a single word involved in the topic title for which help is desired to display the topic.
  - The **SEARCH** tab (or Search box with Help and Support for Windows) is a lot like the Index tab. But instead of needing one word (or term) of the topic title, you can type any word or phrase, and it looks for **any** article the text of which contains (regardless of the topic) that word or phrase typed.
    - Thus, as example, it main not be information specifically about the printer, but the article contains the word “printer”. And thereby lead to the information you want. It may provide a hint as to what topic, or keyword is needed to obtain the desired information.
- If you see a question mark next to (usually to the left of) the “x” for closing the program, this indicates help is available for specific objects on that screen. Clicking on the question mark attaches a question mark to your pointer. When the question mark accompanies the pointer, clicking on an item in question brings up a box with information about that item (see figure to the right. This is only with Windows XP primarily.



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### Getting Help (or more help) Online

- If the help contained within your computer is not sufficient, think of going online to obtain additional information.
- For Microsoft Products (including Windows, Word, Works, Office, etc.)
  - Use Microsoft's Knowledge Base, found under "Support"
    - Find it at: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us> , or just go to <http://microsoft.com> and then hover over "Support" and type in a descriptive term(s), or error messages, or terms into the box labeled "Search".
    - If you wish to choose a specific Microsoft product or version of Windows, choose it toward the page bottom. When typing terms, if possible, type the exact error message.
    - If you were given a specific knowledge base article number, type the Article ID in the Search box. Type for example: kb 824684.
  - Go to <http://support.microsoft.com> for a selection of help alternatives
- For help, or support on a particular program, go to software manufacturer's web site
  - Try the manufacturer name (or the software title) without any spaces, followed by a .com and hit the ENTER key. With most browsers (Microsoft Edge, Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox for example), you can skip adding the .com, and just hold down CTRL and hit ENTER (remember to hold down the CTRL key while hitting the ENTER key). Again, this works only for .com. Examples: <http://www.sony.com>, <http://www.toshiba.com>, or <http://www.printshop.com>
    - If this is unsuccessful to obtain the manufacturer page, use Google.com, or your favorite search engine (Yahoo, Bing, etc.) to search for it.
  - Look for a reference to support, patches, downloads, FAQ, Knowledge Base, or help.
  - **This is good not just for Computer Support.**
    - Many manufacturers have help, manuals, parts ordering, and tips on using their product available online. (Examples: Camera manuals are easier to read and keep your place when read on the computer screen. Lost that universal remote manual and codes for setup? Find it online.)
    - These manufacturers also often have similar Knowledge Bases, FAQ, user manuals, describe common problems, and etc.

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### Getting Help Online (cont'd)

- Explanation of the types of support often available:
  - FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)
    - This supplies answers to the most commonly asked questions (those which come up most frequently).
  - User Manuals or Parts ordering
    - This is obvious.
  - E-mail access for direct support
    - Ask a question, or look for the fix for an error message.
    - There may be a charge for out of warranty items, or software support. This is called “fee for service” or “fee-based” support.
  - Live Chat sessions with technicians
    - Actually communicate with a live support technician via instant messaging. Ask questions, troubleshoot difficulties, etc.
  - The site may supply telephone support contact information (telephone numbers).
    - Be aware, phone support often may incur a charge. Support which entails a fee requires a credit card number. Do not be worried you will incur a charge unknowingly. Unless you have provided a credit card number, there can be nothing charged.
- If the manufacturer can't offer sufficient help (or wants a fee), try using google.com.
  - Search specific help topics by entering descriptive words (recalled word in an error message for example).
  - If possible, type exact error messages, perhaps in quotes.

**HINT:** Use the **PRINT SCREEN** key to take a snapshot of any Windows or program errors, or problem screens. Find a step-by-step description of how to take a screen snapshot at the computer group's web site. [http://www.cvlcfl.org/computers//PDF\\_instruction\\_files/print\\_error\\_messages.pdf](http://www.cvlcfl.org/computers//PDF_instruction_files/print_error_messages.pdf)

- Then Paste into Paint (or Word or Works), and save.
- If you want to send it as an attachment, use Paint and save it as a .JPG (JPEG) or a .PNG file type.