

Questions & Answers

Handy Tips, Solutions and Answers to Common PC Questions

Do you have a question about an article, or need help with a computing problem? If you do, just drop us a line by email to editorial@pcforseniors.co.uk or editorial@windowsadvisor.co.uk and we'll do our level best to help!

When you write, please remember to include your customer number, your postcode, and the version of Windows you use (Windows 10, Windows 8.1, Windows 7, Windows Vista or Windows XP). Give us as much detail as you can about the problem to help us understand what's happening, and feel free to attach a screenshot or document if you think it would help to illustrate the problem or error.

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1. Why are My Desktop Icons Stuck?

Icon stuck at the left of the desktop?

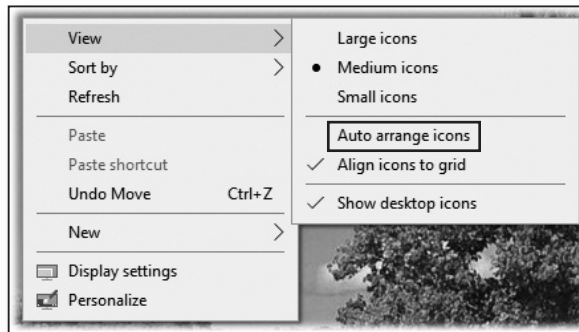
Question: *I'm trying to rearrange the icons on my desktop by dragging them around, but they seem to be stuck in columns at the left of the screen. What am I doing wrong?*

Lucas Ware

Answer: You're probably not doing anything wrong as such – just using the left mouse button to drag an icon certainly should allow you to move it to wherever you like. If it doesn't, it will be because Windows is set to 'auto arrange' your icons for you.

Tell Windows not to 'auto arrange' them

To correct that, right-click a blank space on the desktop and move the mouse to **View** on the menu that opens. You'll probably find there's a tick beside **Auto arrange icons**: click that item to remove the tick and you'll now find that you can drag icons around your desktop freely.



2. Is it Possible to Add Music in the Background of my Presentation?

Music to accompany a slideshow

Question: *For a wedding anniversary, I've put together a slideshow of photos from the last 50 years in Microsoft PowerPoint. I'd like to add background music*

to the presentation that plays from the beginning to the final slide. How can I do that?

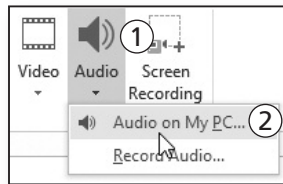
Bonnie Windham

Answer: One of the handy things about using PowerPoint to create picture slideshows is that adding background music is a straightforward job. The steps below explain how to do it in PowerPoint 2010 onwards:

1. Start Microsoft PowerPoint and open your presentation. The first slide of the presentation is displayed automatically, and that's the slide you need, since you want your background music to start as soon as the presentation begins.



2. Switch to the **Insert** tab on the Ribbon. In the 'Media' group at the far right, click the **Audio** button ① and then click on **Audio on My PC** ② (in PowerPoint 2013 or later) or **Audio from File** (in PowerPoint 2010).



Add your audio file to the presentation

3. This will open a dialog in which you navigate to the folder containing your audio files, select the file you want to use as your background music and click **Insert**.

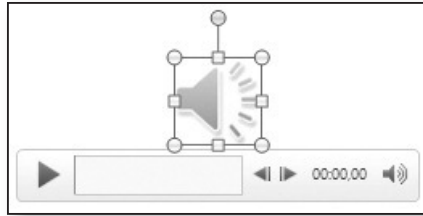
4. Now you'll see a loudspeaker icon in the middle of your slide with a control bar beneath it, pictured on the next page. (If you want to check that you really have inserted the correct music file, you can click the 'Play' button at the far-left of the control bar to hear it, and the same button again to stop it.)

It appears as a loudspeaker icon

It doesn't matter that this icon and control bar have appeared right in the middle of your slide because, in a moment, we'll hide it to ensure it can't be seen when you show the presentation. However, if it



offends you, or it's covering a part of the slide you want to see and work on, you can move it: just move the mouse into the centre of the icon and drag it to wherever you want it on the slide.

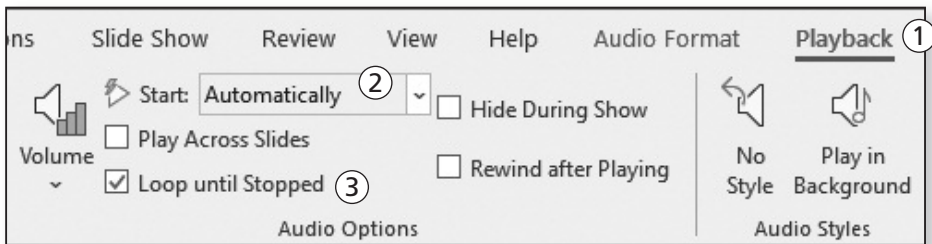


Select this
loudspeaker icon

Make the
music start
automatically...

... and repeat
if necessary

5. Make sure this loudspeaker icon is selected, so that you can see a box with eight little blobs around it and the control bar below it: if you can't, click the loudspeaker once to select it. When it's selected, you'll also see two additional tabs on the Ribbon: switch to the **Playback** tab ①.
6. In the 'Audio Options' group, open the drop-down list beside **Start** and choose **Automatically** ②. This ensures that your background music will start automatically when the first slide appears.
7. In the same group, tick the box beside **Loop until Stopped** ③. This ensures that, if the music file is shorter than your presentation, the music will repeat automatically when finished.



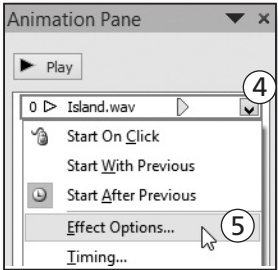
8. Now we need to specify that you want the music to continue playing as you switch from slide to slide in your presentation.

Keep it playing throughout the slideshow

- In PowerPoint 2013 onwards, this is easy: in the 'Audio Styles' group, click on **Play in Background**. This makes all the necessary changes for you, and you can ignore all the remaining steps below.
- In PowerPoint 2010, there's a little more involved: switch to the **Animations** tab on the Ribbon and continue following these steps.

Extra steps in PowerPoint 2010

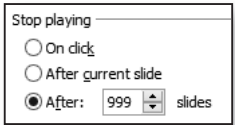
9. In the 'Advanced Animation' group, click the **Animation Pane** button. This opens the Animation Pane at the right of the PowerPoint window, and you'll see a drop-down list containing the name of your audio file. Click the downward-pointing arrow



④ to open the drop-down list and click on **Effect Options** ⑤.

10. In the 'Stop playing' section of the dialog that opens, click on **After** and then type the number **999** into the box beside it. This tells PowerPoint to stop playing your music after **999** slides. You obviously won't have this many slides, so it's equivalent to specifying that it should continue to the final slide.

Keep the music playing through 999 slides



11. Click **OK** in this dialog, and click the **x** in the top-right of the Animation Pane to close that and get it out of the way.

Finished That's it – whichever version of PowerPoint you're using, you've successfully added background music to your presentation. If you start the presentation now (by pressing **F5**) and step through the slides, your music will start playing automatically at the beginning and continue until the end.

3. Automatic Switching Tabs: How to in Google Chrome

Chrome doesn't switch to new tabs when they open

Question: *I've started using Google Chrome as my web browser, and there's just one thing that bothers me about it. When I want a link to open in a new tab, Chrome doesn't switch to that tab. It leaves me at the web page I started from and I have to click the new tab at the top of the screen to see it. Is there a setting I can change to make Chrome show the new tab immediately?*

Ronald Walters

Answer: Very oddly, the answer is No. Google clearly feels that this is the behaviour everyone should want, and the company has ignored years of requests to do it your way, even as an optional setting.

You need an 'extension' to do this

Fortunately, all is not lost. Google Chrome has a system of 'extensions' (the kind of thing some browsers refer to as 'add-ons'), which allow other companies and individuals to write their own new features for Chrome, and a worthwhile step is always to see whether there's an extension that does what you want.

Install the free 'Tab Activate'

I can save you the trouble of doing that in this case: there is, and it's called Tab Activate. Refreshingly, it does exactly what you want – switching to new tabs as soon as they open – without trying to offer any other features and without needing anything to be set up or changed.

You simply install the Tab Activate extension and forget about it.

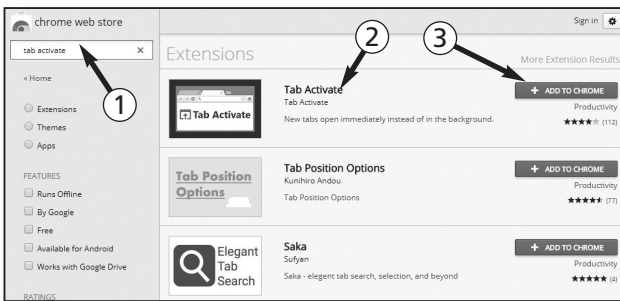
Here's how to do that:

1. Start Google Chrome, if it's not already running, and click the menu button (three vertical dots) are the far-right of its toolbar.
2. On the menu, move the mouse down to **More tools** and click on **Extensions**.
3. This open Chrome's built-in Extensions page in a new tab (which, you'll notice, it switches to straight away: it can do it when it really wants to!). Open the **Extensions** menu at the top-left of the page and choose **Open Chrome Web Store**.
4. Another new tab will open to take you to the Chrome Web Store (and Chrome will switch to this one itself, too). At the top-left you'll see a 'Search the store' box with the text cursor flashing inside it. Type the words **tab activate** ① and press **Enter**.
5. You should see Tab Activate at the top of the list of results ②. To its right, click on **Add To Chrome** ③.



Find Tab Activate in the store...

... and install it



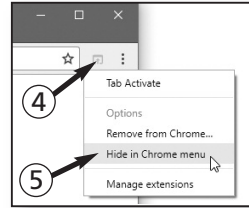
6. You'll see a white pop-up panel headed **Add "Tab Activate"**? Click the **Add extension** button. Next you'll see another little panel confirming that Tab Activate has been added to Chrome: you can click

Close the two tabs that opened

the little **x** in the top-right corner of this panel to close it, and you can close the two tabs that opened along the way.

Remove the unnecessary toolbar button

7. There's one final thing you might like to do. Tab Activate has added a button to Chrome's toolbar (which the second panel I mentioned in step 6 was drawing your attention to), and you really don't need that button – it doesn't offer anything useful. Therefore, I recommend right-clicking it ④ and choosing **Hide in Chrome menu** ⑤ to get rid of it.



Not keen? You can disable or remove Tab Activate

That's it – from now onwards, whenever you open a link in a new tab in Chrome, that tab will come to the front to show you the new web page straight away. If you ever want to stop that happening (which is unlikely!), you can repeat steps 1 and 2 to return to the Extensions page and either remove the tick in Tab Activate's **Enabled** checkbox or click the rubbish-bin icon to its right to remove Tab Activate from Chrome.

4. What are the Different Ways to Paste?

What does 'Paste shortcut' do?

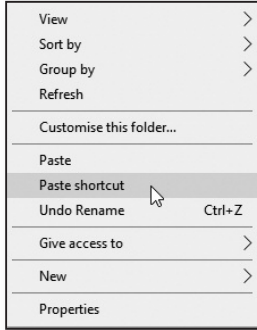
Question: *When I move a file from one place to another on my computer, I right-click it and choose **Cut** then go to the new folder, right-click again and choose **Paste**. I've noticed there's also a **Paste shortcut** option on the menu – what does that do?*

Anthony Manning

Cut or Copy a file...

Answer: When you've added something to the clipboard – a file, a folder, or any combination of files

and folders – you go to a different folder, right-click a blank white space, and you see the menu pictured to the right.



In most cases, the item you want here is **Paste**:

- If you right-clicked that file earlier and chose **Cut**, the file will now be moved into this folder.
- If you right-clicked that file earlier and chose **Copy**,

... and then choose Paste

The file is moved...

... or copied

If you choose **Paste shortcut** instead, the file will stay exactly where it is – nothing will be moved or copied. Instead, you'll end up with a shortcut to the file in this folder. To ensure you're aware it's a shortcut, it will have the same name as the original file, with - **Shortcut** added to the end, and a curly arrow in its bottom-left corner.



Paste shortcut creates a shortcut to the file instead

Shortcuts give you a way to open a particular item more easily while leaving that item where it is. A good example is that you might have a folder where you've been keeping a separate spreadsheet for each year's household accounts. Since you need to add new entries to the current year's file frequently, you create a shortcut to that file on your desktop: you find and right-click that accounts file and choose **Copy**, then right-click a blank space on your desktop and choose **Paste shortcut**. Now, whenever you need to check that spreadsheet or add something to it, a quick double-click of that handy shortcut opens it, and you don't have to go ferreting around in your filing system to find the file itself.

A quick way to open the file without moving or copying it elsewhere



The crucial thing to remember is that **Paste shortcut** doesn't give you another copy of the file. If that's what you wanted, you use **Copy** and then **Paste**. If you use **Paste shortcut**, you've still got only one copy of the file, but you've gained an additional way to open that file.

5. Why Can't I Use the Arrow Keys in Excel?

Arrow keys just scroll the page!

Question: *I'm working on a spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel and an odd thing has happened. When I try to use the arrow keys on the keyboard to move from cell to cell, the spreadsheet just scrolls a little way instead.*

Giles Whittaker

They should move the selection box

Answer: Normally, of course, pressing the arrow keys in Excel should move the selection box in the direction of the arrow. So if cell A1 is selected and you press the down-arrow key, the selection moves down to cell A2.

You've switched on Scroll Lock

If you find that you're still stuck in cell A1, but the page has scrolled downwards a little way, it means you've accidentally pressed the **Scroll Lock** key on your keyboard.

The what? Yes, it's not a widely-used key, and Microsoft Excel is one of very few programs to take any notice of it, but this is the effect it has. You might have pressed it while using Excel, or at any time before you started Excel. Just like **Caps Lock**, when switched on it stays on until you switch it off again or restart the computer.

You should find the **Scroll Lock** key at the top-right of your keyboard, near the **Print Screen** and **Pause|Break** keys. Press it once to turn it off, and you'll find that the arrow keys now work as expected again in Excel.