

Making Everything Easier!™

Windows 7 Edition

PCs FOR DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Make your PC safer for your children
- Store your files on memory cards and flash drives
- Share photos online and explore new digital options
- Use all the new features of Windows 7

Dan Gookin

*Author of Troubleshooting Your PC
For Dummies®, 3rd Edition*



PCs for Dummies® Windows

7®

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by Dan Gookin



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About the Author

Dan Gookin has been writing about technology for over 20 years. He combines his love of writing with his gizmo fascination to create books that are informative and entertaining and not boring. Having written more than 115 titles with 12 million copies in print translated into more than 30 languages, Dan can attest that his method of crafting computer tomes seems to work.

Perhaps his most famous title is the original DOS For Dummies, published in 1991. It became the world's fastest-selling computer book, at one time moving more copies per week than the New York Times number-one best seller (though as a reference, his book couldn't be listed on the NYT Best Seller list). That book spawned the entire line of For Dummies books, which remains a publishing phenomenon to this day.

Dan's most popular titles include Word For Dummies, Laptops For Dummies, and Troubleshooting Your PC For Dummies. He also maintains the vast and helpful Web page www.wambooli.com.

Dan holds a degree in communications/visual arts from the University of California, San Diego. He lives in the Pacific Northwest, where he enjoys spending time with his sons and playing video games inside while they watch the gentle woods of Idaho.



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Some of the people who helped bring this book to market
include the following:

Acquisitions and Editorial

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Introduction

Say hello to the nearly all-new 12th edition of *PCs For Dummies!*

This book was written just for you, someone who doesn't want to turn into a computer nerd or fall in love with computers or technology. No, this book was written because something complex and mysterious, like a computer, can make a smart person like you feel like a dummy.

Computers are now commodity items, tossed into a big-box store along with the toaster ovens and plasma TVs. The PC is a commodity, yet it's not any easier to use than it was a decade ago. The cheerful person in the store can't help you. There's no computer manual. And that toll-free phone number they gave you connects you with a foreigner who reads you a script in heavily accented English. Obviously, a book like this one is more than needed — it's a necessity.

This book helps restore your confidence by explaining how computers work in a manner that's simple, easy to understand, and, often, entertaining. Between this book's yellow-and-black covers, you'll find quick, helpful information about using your computer. This book uses friendly and human — and often irreverent — terms. Nothing is sacred here, and you'll find no painful jargon or condescending tone. You and your needs are the focus.

The result is that, after reading this book, the computer, while still a technological marvel, will no longer intimidate you.

What's New in This Edition?

There have been one dozen editions of this book, and you're lucky enough to be holding in your hands the most recent, best edition. As is my tradition, I thoroughly update each edition of this book, adding information on new technology, removing obsolete stuff, and giving the text a gentle massage to keep the material light and fresh.

Specifically, this book has been updated to cover the Windows 7 operating system. Additionally, you'll also find these new topics:

- The latest information on the new computer designs, including the popular One PC

- The latest on expansion options, including eSATA, plus tips on adding external storage to your PC

- Updated and complete information on media cards, which provide the latest in removable storage for your computer

- New information on computer security, which jibes well with the new Action Center in Windows 7

- Lots of new material about your online life, including social networking sites and sharing photos and video on the Internet

- Information on setting up your PC for your children, including ways to limit their computing time and restrict access to games and other software

The Cheat Sheet, which once appeared just inside this book's front cover, is now available online: www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/pcs.

General up-to-date and current information on all aspects of PC technology, hardware, and software — tidbits too numerous to mention here

As in years past, I present all the information in this book in a sane, soothing, and gentle tone that calms even the most panicked computerphobe.

Where to Start

This book is a reference. You can start reading at any point. Use the index or table of contents to see what interests you. After you read the information, feel free to close the book and perform whatever task you need; there's no need to read any further.

Each of this book's 31 chapters covers a specific aspect of the computer — turning it on, using a printer, using software, or heaving the computer out a window in the best possible manner, for example. Each chapter is divided into self-contained nuggets of information — sections — all relating to the major theme of the chapter. Sample sections you may find include

- Turn the darn thing off
- Using the Internet to set the clock
- Eject a media card or thumb drive
- Stopping a printer run amok
- Downloading a program

Burning a DVD from recorded TV

Dealing with a cyberbully

You don't have to memorize anything in this book. Nothing about a computer is memorable. Each section is designed so that you can read the information quickly, digest what you have read, and then put down the book and get on with using the computer. If anything technical crops up, you're alerted to its presence so that you can cleanly avoid it.

Conventions Used in This Book

Menu items, links, and other controls on the screen are written using initial cap text. So if the option is named "Turn off the computer," you see Turn Off the Computer (without quotes or commas) shown in this book, whether it appears that way onscreen or not.

Whenever I describe a message or information on the screen, it looks like this:

This is a message onscreen.

If you have to type something, it looks like this:

Type me

You type the text *Type me* as shown. You're told when and whether to press the Enter key. You're also told whether to type a period; periods end sentences written in

English, but not always when you type text on a computer.

Windows menu commands are shown like this:

Choose File⇒Exit.

This line directs you to choose the File menu and then choose the Exit command.

Key combinations you may have to type are shown like this:

Ctrl+S

This line says to press and hold the Ctrl (Control) key, type an *S*, and then release the Ctrl key. It works the same as pressing Shift+S on the keyboard produces an uppercase *S*. Same deal, different shift key.

What You Don't Need to Read

It's a given that computers are technical, but you can avoid reading the technical stuff. To assist you, I've put some of the more obnoxious technical stuff into sidebars clearly marked as technical information. Read that information at your own peril. Often, it's just a complex explanation of stuff already discussed in the chapter. Reading that information only tells you something substantial about your computer, which is not my goal here.

Foolish Assumptions

I make some admittedly foolish assumptions about you: You have a computer, and you use it somehow to do something. You use a PC (or are planning on it) and will use Windows as that computer's operating system.

This book was written directly to support Windows 7. Even so, notes in the text apply to Windows Vista. I even tossed in some stuff about Windows XP when I was feeling rather saucy.

Windows comes in different flavors, such as Ultimate, Business, and Home versions. Differences between them are noted in the text.

When this book refers to Windows without a specific edition or version, the information applies generically to both Windows 7 and Windows Vista.

This book refers to the menu that appears when you click or activate the Start button as the *Start button menu*. The All Programs menu on the Start panel is referred to as *All Programs*, though it may say only *Programs*.

normals Used in This Book



This normal alerts you to needless technical information — drivel I added because even though I can't help but unleash the nerd in me, I can successfully flag that type of material. Feel free to skip over anything tagged with this little picture.