



*Stump the PC Club is a free tech-advice column written by members of the **North Orange County Computer Club**, which has been in existence since 1976. Visit the club's site at noccc.org.*

QUESTION: How come when I click a link on a Web page that sometimes a new window opens and sometimes it does not. Can I control this? Also, when I type Internet addresses into Microsoft Word some turn into links and some do not.

PC CLUB: When a Web page is created it's up to the author as to whether or not links or hyperlinks as they are formally named open in a new page or replace the current page. In fact, there are more than just those two choices but I'll let you read about those at <http://bit.ly/hyperlinks>.

There are pluses and minuses to having links open in a new window. When they open in a new window, the original page remains open so you can always go back to it. If they replace the current page or window, you'll end up with fewer windows open and hence, less clutter.

There are several ways to control what happens when you click a link. One way is to press the Shift key on your keyboard when clicking a link. This forces a new window to open. Another way is to right click a link which gives you several choices. These choices in Internet Explorer include Open, Open in New Tab and Open in New Window. Firefox is essentially the same but lacks an Open option. Be sure to look closely at all of the other choices you get when right clicking including Add to Favorites.

One way to figure out if you opened a new window or not is to check your Back button. If it is not enabled you opened a new windows. You can always close this new window to reveal the original window.

If you stumble onto a link you want to share, one way is to click File, Send, Link by Email. Another way to share the link is to highlight everything in the Browser Address Bar and use Control-C on your keyboard to copy it to the Windows Clipboard. Next open an Email and use Control-V to paste it into your email.

Once you have copied the address you can also open Microsoft Word and paste it into the document. Links cannot be just clicked on in Word by default; you have to hold your

Control key down while clicking. In fact, if you hover over a link in Word, a tip will open instructing you to do just that. To change this behavior in Word 2007, click the Office button and select Word Options, then select the Advanced tab and remove the check in the box labeled Use Control + Click to follow hyperlink. In Word 2003 click Tools, Options and click the Edit tab and remove the check from the box labeled Use Control + Click to follow hyperlink. It is more convenient to leave this feature turned on since you don't accidentally go on the Internet. The easiest way to remove a link is to right click it and select Remove Hyperlink.

As far as typing Internet addresses into Word is concerned, here's why some don't turn into links. If you type something such as www.pcworld.com it will turn into a link. However, if you type bit.ly, for example it will not. Here's what to do – enter a link like bit.ly as <http://bit.ly> and it will work. The prefix <http://> is a signal to most programs that a link follows.

Also, the feature to convert Internet addresses to hyperlinks may be switched off. Here's how to check:

Office 2007 – click the office button, select Word Options, select Proofing, select the AutoCorrect Options button, select the AutoFormat as You Type tab and look for Internet and Network paths and hyperlinks. If it's checked, the option is on.

Office 2003 – click Insert, AutoText, AutoText and select the AutoFormat as you type tab and look for Internet and Network paths and hyperlinks. If it's checked, the option is on.

This has been covered in previous Register articles but it's worth repeating. If the link you are copying from the address bar is quite long, it can be shortened by using one of several online services such as bit.ly at <http://bit.ly> or TinyUrl <http://tinyurl.com>. You can read a previous article at <http://bit.ly/8ZWs8D>.

Anytime you click a link in an email there is some risk associated. In fact, there is no foolproof way to avoid all risks. You can read more about this topic at the sites below but don't become overly alarmed. Once you venture onto cyberspace there is always a small risk but your up-to-date antivirus software is there for a reason.

Additional resources

<http://207.46.19.190/uk/protect/yourself/phishing/prevent.msp>

<http://www.dctech.com/email/click.php>

- Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member. View his Web site at www.edwardns.com.