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screen shot

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screen shot

A screen shot (sometimes called a screen capture) is a copy of the screen's contents that can be saved as a graphics file or copied into a document or graphics editor. Various programs are available for creating screen shots, but it is easy to do without any special program.

To take a screen shot on a Windows platform, you press the Print Screen button (usually on the top row of the keyboard) to get a shot of the entire screen. To get a shot of the active window only, you press the Alt key and the Print Screen key at the same time. The screen shot is copied to the clipboard (the memory area that temporarily stores information to be copied to another location) and can then be pasted into a document in a word processing program such as Word or WordPerfect, or into an image editor, such as Adobe Photo Shop, Paint Shop Pro, or Microsoft Paint if you want to alter the image.

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On a Macintosh platform, you press the Command, Shift, and 3 keys to create an image file (called a PICT file). If you press 4 instead of 3, the cursor changes to allow you to select an area of the screen to save. Command, Shift, and 4 with the Caps Lock pressed allows you to create a circular image. Any of the commands with the Control key pressed copies the image to the clipboard.

On a Unix platform, there are different methods for the various interfaces. A common one is the command xwd -out filename.xwd, which allows you to click a screen to make an image file.

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