

Issue #24

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Welcome once again to a brand new issue of *ComputerFAQs Weekly*. First, we would just like to remind everyone that the holiday season is upon us all, and with the increased traffic at all of the malls, please be sure to drive carefully and remember to wear your seatbelt. In addition, make sure you don't get ripped off buying a computer from a "superstore" that's only interested in pushing boxes out the door. Remember, the best price isn't always the lowest price. Take into account the *service* you get with your investment.

UPDATE: In our last issue, we listed several ways to try to undelete lost files. One thing we should have stressed, however, is that you should *never* do anything that will cause the hard drive to *write* because you could accidentally write over the files you're trying to recover. Thanks to Bob M. for pointing this out.

Q: I have all of my computer's devices (CPU, monitor, printer, etc.) on a power strip, and boot them all up with the flick of one switch. A friend of mine says that's not a good idea. What do you suggest? > Warren P., Grand Island NY

A: Warren, while it may be convenient for you, it's certainly not very good for your peripherals, especially your printers, to be on the same power strip as your CPU. Inkjet printers must perform a power-down when you press the power switch. They actually return their print heads to a "home" position to prevent the jets from blocking up. Laser printers can give unusual power spikes that some power strips are not rated for, and can cause damage to your other devices (especially your CPU). We recommend keeping printers on a separate circuit altogether. We have, however, heard conflicting reports from different magazines as to whether or not it's harmful to power up your CPU and monitor with a strip. Some sources say it's not good to simply "cold start" your computer with a power strip, and that you should use the on/off button - like the system was designed. It is our practice to use the intended power switches (not a power strip) on all of our devices. Why gamble?

HURRY! There is still time this holiday season to advertise your products and services in front of 20,000 readers with our fax broadcasting service. Call 716-668-0838 for more information. Also, ask about listing your company in our *free* Business Resource Guide.

CFW ALERT: If you are planning to upgrade your computer with more memory, be careful of what you buy. Some SIMM manufacturers are trying to cut costs by coating their chips with tin instead of gold. If you put tinned SIMM chips in slots that are coated with gold, corrosion may occur. Find out whether your motherboard has gold- or tin-coated SIMM slots, and be sure to ask your vendor what type of memory they sell. Don't mix the two types!

TIP: never plug any cables into your computer when it's ON!

Q: I did something stupid. I forgot the password to my Windows screen saver. What do I do? > Adam K., Williamsville NY

A: That's not stupid, Adam. We get lots of calls from people who have done this. Here's what you do: first, you're going to have to reset your computer. Any data that you're currently working on will be lost. Reboot your system and go to your WINDOWS subdirectory. Edit your CONTROL.INI file and change *PWProtected=1* to *PWProtected=0*. Next, delete the line that says *Password=*. Now, when you go back into Windows and set a new screen saver password, be sure to write it down in your wallet!

TIP: If you are left-handed, or have recently hurt your right hand (ehem... Dan...) you can make your life a little easier by switching the mouse buttons in Windows' Control Panel. Just click on "swap left/right mouse buttons."

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Q: I have a bunch of files on my hard drive ending in .TMP. I'm assuming they are *temp* files. Can I delete them? > Joe, Akron NY

A: Yes, but make sure you're not still running Windows. If you shut down Windows improperly (i.e. by *not* closing the Program Manager, but rather instead just shutting off the computer - a big no-no) then Windows may leave junk, or *temporary* files laying around. It's generally safe to delete them, but make a backup of your drive first.

Considering the purchase of a new computer system this holiday season? Call 716-668-0838 for more information on our *Winter Specials*. We have 486 and Pentium systems affordably priced for both personal and business use. Most importantly, our systems are bundled with something no other vendor can offer: our service.

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newsletter, please call. Also be sure to ask about the PC user group we're forming!