

THE COMPUTER CORNER

No. 172: Run Commands

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Ed (AA9W) says: "How about a listing of the possible RUN commands for XP and what they could do and which should not be tried?"

Well, Ed, it is not possible for me to give you a complete list of the RUN commands because there are around 175 of them, and our ORC Newsletter Editor, W9IPR, would not like it if I tried to publish a six page list. However, I can show you a link where you can read (and print) your own complete copy:

<http://www.pcruneasy.com/run-commands.php>

By the way, many of these run commands (but not all) will work in Windows 7 as well as in XP. If you have Windows 7, just try one of interest to you to see if it will run.

For the sake of illustration, let us suppose you wish to create a printable character unlike any of the letters or numbers or symbols that are available on your computer. To do this, you need to run the Private Characters Editor that is built in to XP. You can get to it by messing around with search or help, but a much quicker and easier method is to use a RUN command.

As suggested in the link above, to bring up the RUN dialog box where you can type a RUN command, hold down the Windows key on your keyboard and press the letter R (upper or lower case). Or you can click the START button in your tray and then select RUN. Once the RUN dialog box is present, just type in the command. In this example, to bring up the Private Characters Editor, just type in **eudcedit** in the run command window and press return. Try it. Now you have a tool to create a new character, even by modifying an existing one. You can spend hours playing with this new tool that you did not even know existed.

Try this one: **magnify**. Or this one: **write**. Or this: **pinball**. Or: **control mouse**. As you can see, some of the run commands bring up items you can also access through the Control Panel. Others, however, bring up functions that are well hidden from casual view by Microsoft.

Insofar as I am aware, there are no RUN commands that you should not explore by typing them in the RUN dialog box. That is, simply invoking a command is not dangerous in any way. The only exceptions are those that have a slash after the command with another word, such as **sfc /scannow** which starts the System File Checker immediately (that might not be what you wanted). So feel free to try them. However, what you do with some of them after you call up the basic command might change things you did not intend, so if you wish to explore where you have not explored before, be sure to write down what you did so that you can reverse it, if necessary. That is always a good policy.

Explore! Have fun! That is what computing is all about. As always, Happy Computing!

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." Ken Olson, President, Chairman and Founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, 1977.