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Hyperlinks Are Cool

By Jim Cerny, Help Desk Host, The Saratoga Users Group

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jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

One of the really fun and easy things technology has brought us is hyperlinks. You probably use them all the time and don’t even realize how cool they really are. Click on a hyperlink and PRESTO you are instantly somewhere else – tele-transported like Star Trek to another planet.

You may know hyperlinks by other names such as “hotlinks”, “hypertext”, or simply as a “link”. Most often a hyperlink text is in blue and underlined, but not always. Let’s see how they work when we are using our web browser (Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Safari, or whatever internet browser you use) to explore the internet. On almost every web page you will see some words underlined and in blue – if you click on them with your mouse (or touch them on a touchscreen) you will go to another web page. (The web page address will change in the address bar at the top of your web browser window). This is real magic. The people who have created that first web page put in a hyperlink that will take you someplace else. On your web browser, if you click on the backward arrow at the top you will return to the previous web page where you started. As you explore the web you are creating a “chain” of web pages you have viewed in this session one web-page link after another. You can go backward or forwards along this chain by clicking the left or right arrows at the top.

Here are some helpful things about hyperlinks:

A hyperlink can be text, an icon, or a photo. It can be indicated as a link by a different color (such as blue), underline, highlight, or by nothing at all. If you “hover” your mouse over a hyperlink without clicking on it, it may change color or be highlighted, and your mouse pointer may change to a hand.

Hyperlinks are used to instantly take you to another web page but they also have many other uses. They can, for example, take you to a different place on the same web page, document, or spreadsheet. Or they may just open a small box or window on your screen, such as when using menus. It is up to the person who created the web page to put in any hyperlinks and to determine what happens when you click on them. Almost anything is possible.

Sometimes clicking on a hyperlink will create a new “tab” on your web browser and keep your previous web page on a previous “tab.” Each “tab” may have its own chain of web pages you have visited.

Yes, you can create your own “hyperlinks” in your documents or spreadsheets. Ask Google how to do this and watch some good videos on how to do it. It is not difficult. It is, basically, assigning a web page address to a word or photo in your document.

If a web page (or any file such as a document or spreadsheet) contains hyperlinks and you COPY it, the hyperlinks will go with it. Sometimes you may get a text box asking if you want the active hyperlinks to be there or to copy “just the text” without any links associated with them.

But most of the time we don’t care how hyperlinks work or who put them in there – we just explore all we want by just clicking on whatever strikes our fancy. Think of a hyperlink as a free ticket to someplace else! Enjoy your surfin’ safari, dude!





