Shortcuts

Microsoft

One of the biggest favours you can do for yourself if you are a Microsoft user, is learn a few basic keyboard shortcuts. These are especially powerful when using Word because you will be using your keyboard a lot. Shortcuts save you having to reach for your mouse and can speed you up. They are especially useful to know when you are on a laptop and do not have a separate mouse.

I have always used shortcuts and love it when I can help others to improve their work practices by introducing the use of them.

Common shortcuts

If you have never used shortcuts, these ones are the most useful:

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ctrl + c	copy
ctrl + v	paste
ctrl + s	save
ctrl + b	**bold** (and ctrl + b again to turn it off)
ctrl + i	*italics* (and ctrl + i again to turn it off)
fn + F12	save as (the function key will differ from keyboard to keyboard. My previous keyboard simply used F12)
ctrl + a	select all

Other helpful shortcuts

alt + tab

My favourite shortcut is alt + tab. By holding the alt button and tapping the tab button, you can cycle through all the windows you have open. This is particularly useful when you are working between two or more apps or documents. For example, referring to an Excel spreadsheet while writing a Word document. The first tap of the tab button will return you to the app you were last using so you can flip back and forward. Using alt while tapping

tab slowly will display the various apps or documents you have open and allow you to cycle through them to select the one you want.

start + tab

Start + tab is similar to alt + tab. It changes your display to show you all the windows you have open. You do not need to hold the buttons for start + tab.
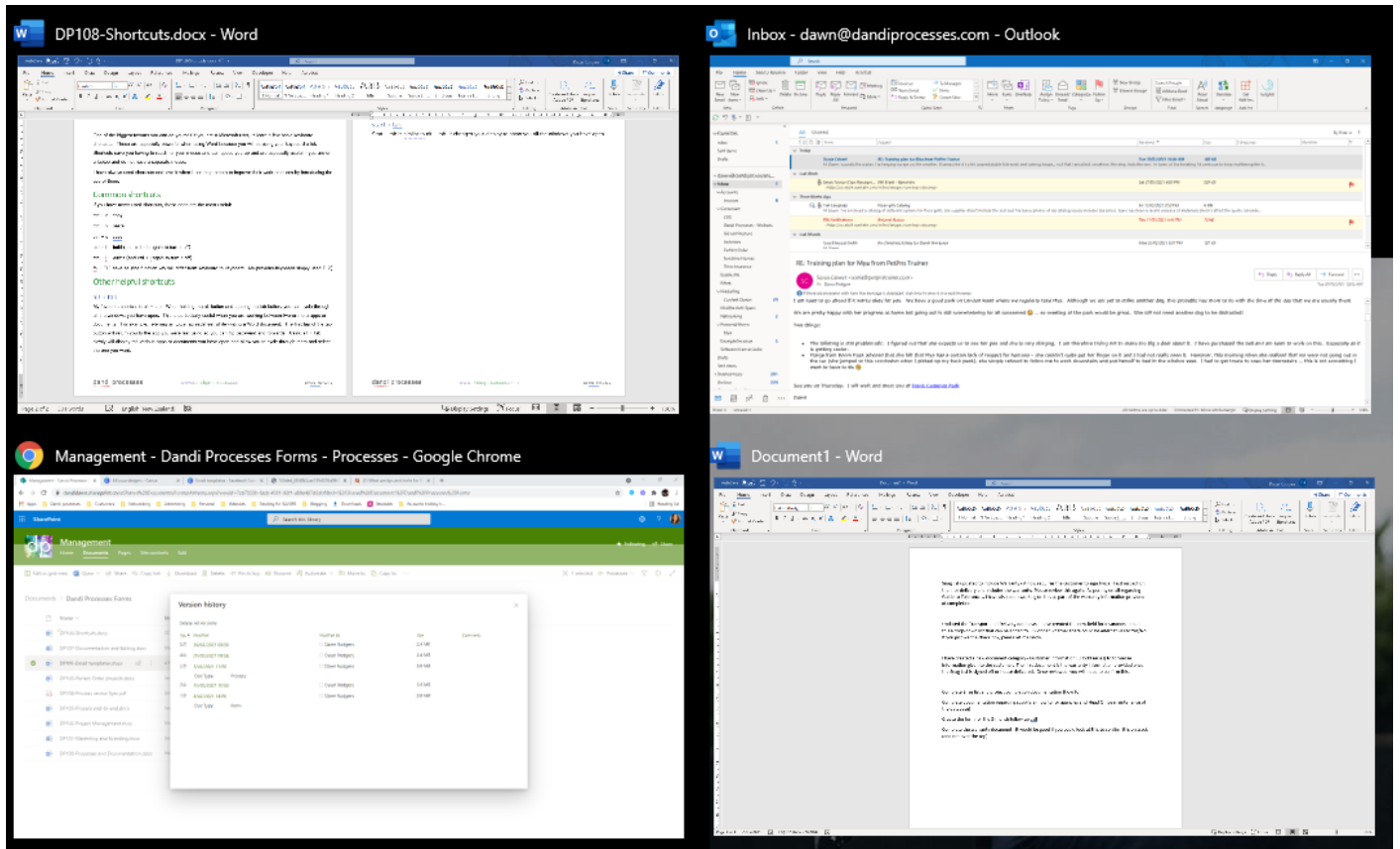
The display will remain like this until you select the window you now want. If you are using more than one screen, it is likely that your second screen will also display something useful. Mine shows documents I worked on earlier in the day so that I can select them as well.

Tables

When using tables in MS Word, extra rows and columns can easily be inserted with keyboard strokes.

To add a row above where the cursor is, select alt + a (table), the i (insert), then a (above). The same applies for inserting a row below where the cursor is, except you now select b (below). So that is, select alt + a (table), the i (insert), then b (below).

To insert columns, select r (right) or l (left) instead of above or below.

To delete a row, select alt + a, then d (delete), then r (row)

To delete a column, select alt + a, then d, then c (column)

This might seem complicated and unnecessary, but once you start using shortcuts it does become second nature and makes using a laptop so much easier. Note: most of these shortcuts apply to Excel as well – bonus!