

What are the F1 through F12 keys?

Question

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Answer

Commonly known as "function keys", F1 through F12 may have a variety of different uses or no use at all. Depending on the installed operating system and the software program currently open will change how each of these keys operate. A program is capable of not only using each of the function keys, but also combining the function keys with the [ALT](#) or [CTRL](#) key, for example, Microsoft Windows users can press ALT + F4 to close the program currently active.

Below is a short-listing of some of the common functions of the functions keys on computers running Microsoft Windows. As mentioned above not all programs support function keys and may perform different tasks than those mentioned below. If you are looking for more specific shortcut keys and function key examples we suggest seeing our [shortcut key page](#).

F1

- Almost always used as the help key, almost every program will open the help screen when this key is pressed.
- Enter [CMOS Setup](#).
- [Windows Key](#) + F1 would open the Microsoft Windows help and support center.
- Open the [Task Pane](#).

F2

- In Windows commonly used to rename a highlighted icon or file.
- Alt + Ctrl + F2 opens a new document in [Microsoft Word](#).
- Ctrl + F2 displays the print preview window in Microsoft Word.
- Enter [CMOS Setup](#).

F3

- Often opens a search feature for many programs including Microsoft Windows.
- In MS-DOS or Windows command line F3 will repeat the last command.
- Shift + F3 will change the text in Microsoft Word from upper to lower case or a capital letter at the beginning of every word.

F4

- Open find window.
- Repeat the last action performed (Word 2000+)
- Alt + F4 will close the program currently active in Microsoft Windows.
- Ctrl + F4 will close the open window within the current active window in Microsoft Windows.

F5

- In all modern [Internet browsers](#) pressing F5 will [refresh](#) or reload the page or document window.
- Open the find, replace, and go to window in Microsoft Word.
- Starts a slideshow in PowerPoint.

F6

- Move the cursor to the [Address bar](#) in [Internet Explorer](#) and [Mozilla Firefox](#).
- Ctrl + Shift + F6 opens to another open Microsoft Word document.

F7

- Commonly used to spell check and grammar check a document in Microsoft programs such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, etc.
- Shift + F7 runs a Thesaurus check on the word highlighted.
- Turns on Caret browsing in Mozilla Firefox.

F8

- Function key used to enter the Windows startup menu, commonly used to access Windows [Safe Mode](#).

F9

- Opens the Measurements toolbar in Quark 5.0.

F10

- In Microsoft Windows activates the [menu bar](#) of an open application.
- Shift + F10 is the same as [right-clicking](#) on a highlighted icon, file, or Internet link.
- Access the [hidden recovery partition](#) on HP and Sony computers.
- Enter [CMOS Setup](#).

F11

- Full-screen mode in all modern Internet browsers.

- Ctrl + F11 as computer is starting to access the [hidden recovery partition](#) on many Dell computers.
- Access the [hidden recovery partition](#) on eMachines, Gateway, and Lenovo computers.

F12

- Open the Save as window in Microsoft Word.
- Shift + F12 save the Microsoft Word document.
- Ctrl + Shift + F12 prints a document in Microsoft Word.

💡 Earlier IBM computers also had F13 - F24 on the keyboards. However, because these keyboards are no longer used they are not listed on this page.

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