

Coding Faster: Getting More Productive with Microsoft® Visual Studio®

Covers Microsoft Visual Studio 2005, 2008, and 2010



Zain Naboulsi
Sara Ford

Coding Faster: Getting More Productive with Microsoft® Visual Studio®

Expert advice to help you work smarter and increase your productivity with Visual Studio.

Dig in—and learn practical techniques to help you work more efficiently with Visual Studio. This fully revised and expanded version of *Visual Studio Tips: 251 Ways to Improve Your Productivity* includes a comprehensive collection of tips and shortcuts for working with the code editor, visual designers, searches, debugger, and other features in Visual Studio 2005, 2008, and 2010. You'll gain valuable insights for using this IDE—no matter what your experience level.

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- Discover better ways to work with files, such as the File Tab Channel
- Use the Editor more effectively with tips on selecting and manipulating code
- Apply techniques to help reduce the time you spend debugging code
- Create Visual Studio extensions to increase your development productivity



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Zain Naboulsi
Sara Ford

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*First and foremost to God and Jesus Christ for making this all possible.
To my mom, Helen Naboulsi, for always encouraging me to go above and beyond to reach my goals,
and to Russell Chandler for being the greatest nephew anyone could ever have.*

Zain Naboulsi

Senior Developer Evangelist, Microsoft

*To my parents, Jane and Louie Smolensky, for encouraging me to program on the computer when I was
5 years old, and to Beulah Bourgeois and Annabelle Fayard for being the best babysitters a little girl
could ever hope for.*

Sara Ford

Contents at a Glance

Part I Productivity Techniques

- 1** Getting Started 3
- 2** Projects and Items 43
- 3** Getting to Know the Environment 83
- 4** Working with Documents 153
- 5** Finding Things 171
- 6** Writing Code 209
- 7** Debugging 291

Part II Extensions for Visual Studio

- 8** Visual Studio Extensions 385

Table of Contents

Foreword	xxiii
Introduction	xxvii

Part I **Productivity Techniques**

1	Getting Started	3
01.01	Running Multiple Versions of Visual Studio Side-By-Side	3
01.02	Getting Table of Contents in Visual Studio 2010 Online Help.....	4
	Online Help	4
	Using Classic View.....	5
01.03	Exporting Your Environment Settings.....	6
01.04	Remove Projects from the Recent Projects List.....	9
01.05	AutoRecover.....	10
01.06	Improving Performance by Changing the Visual Experience in Visual Studio 2010.....	12
01.07	Change Tool Window Animations	14
01.08	Importing or Changing Your Environment Settings	14
01.09	Change Your Visual Studio Color Scheme.....	17
	Seeing What You Like	18
	Getting the Goods	18
	Changing Your Colors.....	21
	Resetting the Colors.....	24
01.10	Reset All Your Development Settings	25
01.11	Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2010: Toolbars Tab	27
	Custom Toolbars	28
01.12	Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2010: Commands Tab	30
	Rearrange	32
	Controls	32
	Buttons	33
	Modify Selection.....	34
01.13	Visual Studio Logging.....	37
01.14	Visual Studio Safe Mode	38
01.15	The ResetSettings Switch.....	39
	Two Different Machines	39
	Same Machine	40

2	Projects and Items	43
02.01	Search for Project Templates in the New Project Dialog Box	43
	Good News	44
	Bad News	44
	More Good News	44
02.02	Recent Project Templates in the New Project Dialog Box	45
02.03	Using Older Frameworks with Multi-Targeting	45
02.04	Create Web Application or Virtual Directory in IIS	46
02.05	Multiple Startup Projects	48
02.06	Change the Default New Project Location	50
02.07	Track Active Item in Solution Explorer	51
02.08	Type-Ahead Selection Support in Solution Explorer	52
02.09	Using Solution Folders	54
	Adding Solution Folders	54
	Removing Solution Folders	55
02.10	Navigating Property Tabs in the Project Properties	55
02.11	Pin a Project to the Recent Projects List	55
02.12	Creating Temporary Projects	56
02.13	Create Your Own Item Template	57
02.14	Roll Your Own Project Template with the Export Template Wizard	64
02.15	Organizing Your Custom Item Templates	68
02.16	Organizing Your Custom Project Templates	71
02.17	Reorganize the Default Item Templates	74
02.18	Reorganize the Default Project Templates	77
02.19	Change the Templates that Appear in the New Project or Item Dialog Boxes	80
3	Getting to Know the Environment	83
03.01	Rearrange Windows in Visual Studio 2010 Using the Guide Diamond	83
03.02	Dock a Floating Tool Window Back to Its Previous Location	85
03.03	Cycle Through Your Open Tool Windows	86
03.04	Closing Tool Windows	87
03.05	Expand and Collapse All in the Toolbox	87
03.06	Searching in the Toolbox	88
03.07	Navigate Among Tabs in the Toolbox	89

03.08	Window Layouts: The Four Modes.....	90
	Design View	90
	Debugging View	91
	Full Screen	91
	File View	91
03.09	Window Layouts: Design, Debug, and Full Screen	91
	Design Mode	91
	Debug Mode	92
	Full Screen Mode	93
03.10	Working with Tabs in the Toolbox	93
	Creating Tabs.....	93
	Adding Items	94
	Custom Controls	95
	Renaming Tabs.....	95
	Deleting Tabs.....	95
03.11	Using Additional Browsers for Web Development	96
	Adding New Browsers	97
	Changing the Default Browser	97
	Browser Window Size	98
	Removing Browsers	98
03.12	Auto-Hide All Tool Windows.....	99
03.13	Showing Hidden Tool Windows with the Auto Hide Channel.....	100
03.14	Moving Tool Windows Around with Your Keyboard	102
03.15	Keyboard Access to a Tool Window's Toolbar	103
03.16	Command Prompt History.....	104
03.17	Command Prompt Tab Completion.....	105
	Simple Search	105
	Wildcard Search	105
	Finally	107
03.18	Undock and Dock a Single Tool Window in a Group	107
	Undock	107
	Dock	108
03.19	Understanding Commands: Simple Commands	110

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03.20	Understanding Commands: Aliases	113
	Create a New Alias	114
	Viewing Assigned Aliases	114
	Delete an Alias	115
03.21	Understanding Commands: Arguments and Switches	115
	Basic Use	116
	Arguments and Switches	116
	List Current Options	117
	Reset Options	117
	Using the Arguments and Switches	117
	Make an Alias	118
03.22	Testing a Command	119
03.23	Understanding Commands: Running Commands	121
	Shortcuts	121
	Command Window	122
	Immediate Window	122
	Find Combo Box	122
03.24	Find Keyboard Shortcuts	122
03.25	Keyboard Shortcuts: Additional Mapping Schemes	125
03.26	Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts	127
	Reset	130
03.27	Keyboard Shortcuts: Reset All Your Shortcuts	131
03.28	Understanding Commands: Logging Commands	132
	Arguments	133
	Example	133
03.29	Export Your Window Layouts	134
03.30	Stop the Toolbox from Auto-Populating from the Solution	136
03.31	Using External Tools	136
	Use Output Window	140
	Treat Output As Unicode	140
	Prompt For Arguments	140
	Close On Exit	140
03.32	Create Keyboard Accelerators for External Tools	141
03.33	Exporting Your Command Window Aliases and External Tools List. . .	143
03.34	Creating and Using a Macro	144
03.35	Visual Studio Image Library	147
	Types of Files	147
	Image Library Contents	148
	Using the Images	151

4	Working with Documents	153
04.01	Insert Documents to the Right of Existing Tabs.	153
04.02	Recent Files.	154
04.03	Working with Documents on Multiple Monitors.	155
04.04	Navigate Open Document Windows.	157
04.05	Close the Current Document Window.	158
04.06	Open a File Location from the File Tab	158
04.07	Open the File Menu Drop-Down List from Your Keyboard	159
04.08	Using the IDE Navigator.	160
	Navigator Areas.	161
04.09	Multiple Views of the Same Document.	163
	Special Note for VB Users in Visual Studio 2010	163
	Multiple Views	164
04.10	Closing Just the Selected Files You Want	164
04.11	Understanding the File Open Location	165
04.12	Show Previous Versions	166
04.13	Using Custom File Extension Associations	168
5	Finding Things.	171
05.01	Repeat Your Last Search.	171
05.02	Using Quick Find	172
	Find What.	173
	Look In	173
	Find Options.	174
	Buttons	176
05.03	Using a Simple Quick Replace.	176
05.04	Hide the Quick Find and Quick Replace Tool Window After the First Match.	178
05.05	Undo Quick Replace and Replace in Files	179
	Quick Replace (Ctrl+H)	179
	Replace in Files (Ctrl+Shift+H)	180
05.06	Using the Find Combo Box Keyboard Shortcuts	182
	Find (Ctrl+D).	182
	Run Command (Ctrl+/.).	182
	Go To Line (Ctrl+G)	183
	Go To File (Ctrl+Shift+G)	183
	Set a Breakpoint (F9)	183

05.07	Using Incremental Search	184
05.08	Search the Currently Selected String Without the Find Window	185
05.09	Find In Files: Find Options	186
	Find What	187
05.10	Find In Files: Result Options	190
	Find Results [1,2] Window	190
	Navigation	190
	Clear All	191
	Display File Names Only	191
	Keep Modified Files Open After Replace All	191
05.11	Replace In Files: Basic Options	192
	Find Options	192
	Replace With	192
	Result Options	193
	Execution	193
05.12	Go To Definition for Cascading Style Sheets	194
05.13	How to Use Navigate To	195
05.14	Understanding Find Symbol	196
	Find What	197
	Look In	197
	Find Options	199
	Search Results	199
05.15	Find Symbol Results Shortcuts	200
	Go To Definition (F12)	200
	Go To Declaration (Ctrl+F12)	201
	Go To Reference (Shift+F12)	201
	Browse Definition	202
	Copy (Ctrl+C)	203
	Clear All	203
05.16	Replace in Files: Tagged Expressions	203
	Example	204
05.17	Customize Results in Find In Files Searches	206
	Variables	207

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6	Writing Code	209
06.01	Zoom In or Out of Text in the Editor Using the Mouse Wheel	209
06.02	Zoom In or Out of Text in the Editor	210
	Combo Box	210
	Keyboard	211
	Universal Zoom	211
06.03	How to Keep from Accidentally Copying a Blank Line	211
06.04	Make IntelliSense Transparent	212
06.05	Cut or Delete the Current Line	213
	Cut	214
	Delete	214
06.06	Using the New IntelliSense: Keywords	214
06.07	Using the New IntelliSense: Pascal Case	216
06.08	Comment and Uncomment in Web Pages	217
	Comment	217
	Uncomment	218
06.09	Insert a Blank Line Above or Below the Current Line	218
06.10	Transpose Lines, Words, and Characters	219
06.11	How to Cycle Through the Clipboard Ring	220
06.12	Using the Undo and Redo Stack	221
06.13	Undo and Redo Global Actions	222
06.14	How to Use Reference Highlighting	223
	Navigation	223
	Turning it Off	224
06.15	Moving or Selecting Between Matching Braces (C++, C# Only)	224
	Moving	225
	Selecting	225
06.16	Invoke Statement Completion	225
06.17	Move Between the Common Tab and All Tab in Statement Completion (VB)	226
06.18	Using Parameter Information	227
06.19	Using Quick Info	228
06.20	Word Completion	228
06.21	Drag and Drop Code into the Toolbox	229
06.22	Using Smart Tags from the Keyboard	231

06.23	Organize Using Statements (C# Only)	232
	Remove Unused Usings	232
	Sort Usings	234
	Remove and Sort	234
06.24	Switch Between Design and Source in Web Projects	235
	Split View	235
06.25	Toggle Designer	236
06.26	Change the Default View in the HTML Editor	236
06.27	Jump Back to the Editor from Just About Anywhere	237
06.28	Replacing Text with a Box Selection	237
06.29	Pasting the Contents of One Box Selection into Another	238
06.30	Pasting a Single Selection into a Box Selection	239
06.31	Using Zero-Length Box Selection	240
06.32	View White Space	241
06.33	Collapsing Your Code with Outlining	242
	Minus Sign	243
	Vertical Line	243
	Click Anywhere in Area (Keyboard Shortcut)	243
	Click Anywhere in Area (Menu Item)	243
06.34	Using Hide Selection	244
06.35	Collapse to Definitions with Outlining	246
06.36	Cut, Copy, and Paste Collapsed Code with Outlining	247
06.37	Understanding Word Wrap	248
06.38	Properties Window Keyboard Shortcuts	249
	Working with the Tool Window	250
	Working with Categories	250
	Property Items	251
06.39	Document Outline: Web Projects	251
06.40	Inserting Code Snippets	253
	Tab	253
	Keyboard Shortcut and Context Menu	254
	Result	256
06.41	Surround with a Code Snippet	256
06.42	Using Code Snippets	258
06.43	HTML Code Snippets	259
06.44	JavaScript Code Snippets	260
06.45	Using the Code Snippets Manager	261
06.46	Insert Quotes When Typing Attribute Values	264

06.47	Format the Current Document or Selection (Web)	265
06.48	Using the Navigation Bar	266
06.49	HTML Editor Tag Navigation	267
06.50	Format HTML on Paste	267
06.51	Display HTML/CSS Warnings as Errors	268
06.52	Updating JScript IntelliSense	269
06.53	Using JScript Libraries in Other JScript Files	270
06.54	Create New Code Snippets from Existing Ones	271
06.55	Understanding the Navigation Stack	275
06.56	Navigate Backward and Navigate Forward Using Go Back Markers ..	277
06.57	Select from the Current Cursor Location to the Last Go Back Marker ..	278
06.58	Track Changes in the Editor	280
06.59	Edit Read-Only Files	281
	Edit In-Memory	283
	Make Writable	283
06.60	Choosing CSS Versions	283
	Dedicated Style Sheets	283
	Embedded Styles	284
	Finally	284
06.61	Understanding Tag Specific Options	285
	Exploring the Tag Specific Options Dialog Box	285
	Finally	289
7	Debugging	291
07.01	Setting a Breakpoint with Code	291
	Compiler Directive	292
07.02	Using Ctrl+Alt+B to Open the Breakpoints Window	293
07.03	Adding Labels to Breakpoints	293
07.04	Enable or Disable All Breakpoints	295
07.05	TODO Comments in the Task List	296
	VB	296
	C#	296
	C++	296
07.06	Create Custom Tokens for the Task List	297
	Sharing Tokens	299
07.07	Create Code Shortcuts in the Task List	300
07.08	Code Definition Window	301

07.09	Save Changes Before Building	302
	Save Changes To Open Documents Only	302
	Prompt To Save All Changes	303
	Don't Save Any Changes	303
07.10	Navigate Errors in the Error List	303
07.11	Ordering and Multicolumn Sorting in Tool Windows.	304
	Column Ordering	304
	Multicolumn Sorting	305
07.12	Pin a DataTip to Source Code	305
07.13	Create a Floating DataTip.	306
07.14	Adding Comments to a DataTip	307
07.15	Use a DataTip to Edit a Value	308
07.16	DataTip Value from the Last Debug Session.	309
07.17	Import and Export DataTips	309
07.18	Using the Call Hierarchy.	310
07.19	Searching Breakpoints	312
07.20	Breakpoint Hit Count	314
	Break When The Hit Count Is Equal To	315
	Break When The Hit Count Is A Multiple Of	315
	Break When The Hit Count Is Greater Than Or Equal To	316
07.21	Set a Breakpoint on a Function.	316
	Breakpoints Window	317
07.22	Set a Simple Breakpoint Condition	318
	Is True	319
	Has Changed	320
	Special Notes	320
07.23	Set a Complex Breakpoint Condition.	321
07.24	Setting a Breakpoint Filter.	324
07.25	Setting a Tracepoint in Source Code	325
	Setting Tracepoints.	326
	Change Default Message	329
07.26	Import and Export Breakpoints	329
07.27	Run to Cursor	330

07.28	Using the Exception Assistant.....	331
	Exception Object and Description	331
	Troubleshooting Tips	332
	Help Online	332
	Actions	333
	Turning Off the Exception Assistant	334
	Unwind The Call Stack On Unhandled Exceptions	334
07.29	Use a Specific Port for the Development Server (Web Applications) ..	335
07.30	Application and Page Level Tracing.....	336
	Application Level Tracing	336
	Attributes	337
	Trace Details	338
	Page Level Tracing	338
	Combined Tracing	339
	Finally	339
07.31	The Watch Window: Watching and Changing Values.....	340
	Watch Expressions	340
	Watch Window	340
	Creating a Watch Expression.....	341
	Changing Values	342
07.32	Understanding QuickWatch	343
	What Does It Do?	343
	Other Options	344
07.33	The Watch Window: Visualizers	345
07.34	The Watch Window: Refreshing Data	346
	Refresh Icons	347
	Turning It Off	348
07.35	The Watch Window: Adding Watches from Variable Windows	348
	Locals Window	348
	Autos Window	348
	QuickWatch	349
	Watch [1, 2, 3, 4] Window	349
	Keyboard Mapping.....	349

07.36	Create Folders in Class View	350
	Create a New Folder	351
	Putting Items into Your Folder	352
	Removing Items from Folders.....	352
	Creating Subfolders	352
	Deleting Folders	352
07.37	Search in Class View	353
	View.ClassViewSearch Command.....	354
	Use a Previous Search.....	354
	Clear Your Search	355
07.38	Synchronize Your Class View.....	355
07.39	The Misnamed and Misunderstood Object Browser.....	356
07.40	The Object Browser: Setting the Browsing Scope.....	358
	Browse	359
	Edit Custom Component Set	360
07.41	The Object Browser: Navigation and References	362
	Navigation	363
	References	363
07.42	The Exceptions Dialog Box	365
07.43	Setting a Breakpoint in the Call Stack Window	367
07.44	Setting a Tracepoint in the Call Stack Window	369
07.45	Using the WPF Tree Visualizer.....	371
07.46	Understanding Break All Processes When One Process Breaks	374
07.47	Changing Context in the Locals Window	376
	Debug Location Toolbar	377
	Process	377
	Thread.....	377
	Stack Frame	377
07.48	Understanding the Autos Window.....	378
	Changing Values	379
	Current and Previous Statement	379
	VB Shows Three Statements on Either Side	381

Part II Extensions for Visual Studio

8	Visual Studio Extensions	385
	Introducing Visual Studio Extensions	385
	Installing an Extension	385
	Installing from the Extension Manager	386
	Installing from the Visual Studio Gallery	386
	Installing Through Xcopy	387
	Inside a .vsix File	388
	Disabling an Extension	388
	Uninstalling an Extension	389
	Resources for Developing Extensions	389
08.01	Create Themes Using All Visual Studio Elements	389
	Visual Studio Color Theme Editor	389
	To Use	390
	To Customize	390
	More Information	391
08.02	Insert Images into Your Code	391
	Image Insertion	392
	To Use	393
	To Save	393
	To Customize	393
08.03	Add Visual Guidelines to Your Code	394
	Editor Guidelines	394
	To Install	394
	To Use	395
	To Customize	395
08.04	Get More IntelliSense in Your XAML Editor	395
	XAML IntelliSense Presenter	395
	To Use	396
	For More Information	396
08.05	Sync the Solution Explorer to the Current File	396
	Solution Explorer Tools	397
	To Use	397
08.06	Add PowerCommands Options to the IDE	398
	PowerCommands for Visual Studio 2010	398
	To Use	398
	For More Information	400

08.07	Use Emacs Commands in the Editor	400
	Emacs Emulation	400
	To Use	400
	To Uninstall.	401
	More Information	401
08.08	Submit to “The Daily WTF”	401
	Share Bad Code with the World	401
	To Install	402
	To Use	402
	More Information	402
08.09	Diff Files Using the Editor	402
	CodeCompare	402
	To Install	403
	To Use	403
	Features	403
	To Uninstall.	404
	More Information	404
08.10	Run Windows PowerShell Within the IDE.....	404
	To Use	404
	More Information	405
08.11	Visualize OData in a Graphical View	405
	Open Data Protocol Visualizer	405
	To Use	405
	More Information	406
08.12	Run VIM Commands in the Editor	406
	To Use	406
	More Information	406
08.13	Check Spelling in Your Code	407
	Spell Checker	407
	To Use	407
08.14	Zoom Across All Files	407
	Presentation Zoom	408
	To Use	408
	Control Zooming with a Slider Using the ZoomEditorMargin Extension.....	408

08.15	View Code Blocks Using Vertical Lines	409
	StructureAdornment	409
	To Use	409
	To Customize	410
	To Uninstall.	410
08.16	Get a Bird's-Eye View of Your Code in an Editor Margin	411
	AllMargins	411
	To Use	411
	To Uninstall.	412
08.17	Build Projects from the Windows 7 Taskbar.....	413
	Win7 Taskbar Extension.....	413
	To Install	413
	To Use	413
	To Uninstall.	414
08.18	Triple-Click to Select an Entire Line	414
	Triple Click	414
	More Information	414
08.19	Create Regular Expressions Within Your Code.....	415
	Regex Editor.....	415
	To Use	415
	More Information	415
08.20	Get More Productivity Tools in the IDE.....	416
	To Use	416
	To Customize the Document Tab Well User Interface	417
08.21	Create and Find Code Snippets.....	418
	Snippet Designer.....	418
	To Use	419
	More Information	419
08.22	Document Your Code with Three Keystrokes.....	419
	GhostDoc	419
	To Use	419
	To Customize	421
	More Information	421

08.23	Customize Visual Studio Using Windows PowerShell.....	421
	StudioShell	422
	To Use	422
	To Get Help	423
	To Customize	423
	More Information	423
A	Visual Studio Keyboard Shortcut Posters	425
	Index	427

Foreword

Visual Studio is quite possibly the most powerful and comprehensive software development suite available. No matter your discipline—developer, test, architect, etc.—Visual Studio provides the tools you need to help get your job done.

However, Visual Studio handles such a large number of development tasks for so many platforms that learning it can be an overwhelming process. Many learn just enough to solve the problem at hand but don't delve deep enough to unearth the gems that enable real productivity.

Visual Studio contains numerous features and options that can help you perform your tasks more effectively. Some are prominently advertised, but many of the real time-savers are buried in obscure dialog boxes and triggered with arcane keyboard shortcuts. While most of this information can be learned by wading through hundreds of pages of documentation, many of the more powerful features are yet undocumented. How can we possibly navigate the vast forest that is Visual Studio? A guide is needed.

Fortunately, we have two.

For several years, Sara Ford has championed productivity with her highly successful Visual Studio "Tip of the Day" blog. Between July 2007 and December 2008, Sara blogged nearly 400 Visual Studio tips and tricks that were essential for many of us (myself included) to get closer to attaining Visual Studio mastery. After Sara completed her journey with Visual Studio, Zain Naboulsi picked up the torch. Zain continues to blog Visual Studio tips and tricks, digging into features in the latest releases and covering some of the popular Visual Studio extensions that are available.

I vividly remember my first encounter with Zain. I had just joined Microsoft as a Program Manager on the Visual Basic and C# IDE experiences and received an email from Zain saying that he was taking the mantle from Sara and starting a Visual Studio tips and tricks blog. My first thought was, who is this guy? Sara was an alumnus of the Visual Studio team and had a great deal of "inside knowledge" to share. How could Zain go to the same level of depth that she had? I wasn't prepared for my initial impression to be shattered so thoroughly.

It didn't take long for me to realize that Zain really knows his stuff. After that first email, Zain kept in touch regularly with me and other members of the Visual Studio team. As he systematically pulled away the layers of Visual Studio to find the golden nuggets of productivity beneath, he would ask questions or confirm the tips that he found. Often, Zain would find features that I didn't even know existed. In some cases, he even found bugs where something had been unintentionally left in the product (e.g., the infamous `Debug.ClearTextOnFoo` command).

What you hold in your hands is the crème de la crème of the sum of Zain and Sara's Visual Studio knowledge. In these pages, you will find a sure compass to help navigate the treacherous peaks and vast oceans of Visual Studio. By putting these tips, tricks, and techniques into practice, you'll grow closer to attaining Visual Studio mastery and learn to travel in style.

*Dustin Campbell
Program Manager, Visual Studio*

It's hard to imagine but if Sara Ford had her way, there never would have been a "Visual Studio Tip of the Day" blog. Back in 2005, we were colleagues on the Visual Studio Editor team who shared an office and a passion for making developers more productive. We both became intrigued by an email with customer feedback, which was remarkable because all of its suggested features were already in Visual Studio but the customer hadn't discovered them. We realized that many of the great productivity features that we developed in Visual Studio 2005 such as Code Snippets and Smart Tags would go unnoticed by many developers who weren't looking for them. We brainstormed several different ways that we could help customers discover all of the hidden functionality in Visual Studio until we arrived at the ultimate solution: Putting a Visual Studio Tip of the Day on the Start Page.

At the time, the Start Page was being completely rewritten to include an RSS feed which would be the perfect mechanism for users to learn how to use Visual Studio better one tip at a time. We lobbied hard to have the Start Page point to a feed of Tips & Tricks for Visual Studio. Unfortunately, there was too much skepticism that there were enough tips to generate new content every day and so the idea was rejected.

Defeated but undeterred, Sara was determined to demonstrate that not only were there enough hidden gems but that there was a huge audience for a "Tip of the Day." She had recently started blogging and challenged herself to blog every workday until she ran out of tips. Initially, we wrote a list of about 50 different tips before she set out on her challenge. Over the following months and years, Sara has worked tirelessly to find hundreds of useful tips, created an engaging blog and helped thousands of developers become better users of Visual Studio.

As we were putting the finishing touches on Visual Studio 2010 last year, I was reassured to find that Zain Naboulsi had stepped in to create the next generation of the Visual Studio Tips and Tricks blogs. He's engaged directly with the Visual Studio team to highlight each of the new features that were introduced in the latest release and the greatest from previous versions.

Based on their years of experience evangelizing Visual Studio Tips and Tricks, “Coding Faster” distills this knowledge into one easy-to-read book which will make you a better user of Visual Studio. Using the described techniques, you’ll learn to write code with fewer keystrokes, manage projects and documents with ease and powerful debugging techniques. It also introduces Visual Studio Extensibility which allows you to create your own extensions or find those provided by the community.

In retrospect, it’s fortunate that the tip of the day didn’t make it onto the Start Page as it led Sara and Zain to write great blogs and this brilliant book to help everyone code faster.

Sean Laberee
Lead Program Manager, Visual Studio

Introduction

Visual Studio is sexy. In the world of Integrated Development Environments (IDEs), it stands as a beautiful example of how environments should work. Yet many of the features created to improve productivity, I believe, are largely neglected. Most developers use only a small percentage of the capabilities in this wonderful product—not because they don’t want to use them, but because developers don’t know they exist.

In most books that address the various .NET languages or technologies, Visual Studio seems to be mentioned almost as an afterthought; to be fair, its focus is primarily on the language or technology that’s the subject of the book, not the IDE—which is as it should be. On the other side of the coin, books written about Visual Studio do focus on the product, but tend to be broad in scope, describing features, but without saying much about their actual use.

The goal of this book is to arm you with techniques that you can apply immediately to improve productivity. Use the content in this book anywhere, anytime, to dramatically reduce the time required to perform just about any task in Visual Studio. You won’t find an exhaustive treatment of every feature in Visual Studio in this book, but it contains sufficient coverage that we’re sure you’ll find something useful, regardless of how you use the product.

This is much more than just a tips and tricks book. Within these pages are—for the first time ever—the keyboard mapping shortcuts, commands, and menu paths for features, along with detailed descriptions of how to use them. We worked very hard to present the information in a way that makes the book easy to read cover-to-cover or as a quick reference.

Who Should Read This Book

If you use Visual Studio 2005, 2008, or 2010, you should read this book. There are over 365 tips in this book (including the additional online Appendix), all selected with the single goal of helping you be more productive by showing you how to use Visual Studio features. The contents in this work are great on their own or as a perfect complement to any course, book, or other learning tool as you explore Visual Studio.

Assumptions

This book assumes you have, at a minimum, Visual Studio Professional 2005, 2008, or 2010 installed. Specifically, it covers techniques that can be used in Visual Studio as well as examples in C++, C#, and/or VB where appropriate.

With a heavy focus on helping you get work done faster, we assume that you have a basic understanding of how to use Visual Studio, and have had exposure to one of the many languages supported in the product.

Organization of This Book

This book is divided into two sections. Part I, written by me, Zain Naboulsi, called “Productivity Techniques,” provides information that can be used in your daily work with Visual Studio; these techniques range from very easy to quite advanced methods of using the product. The chapters are organized to take you through the most common daily tasks you perform. Within each chapter the information is arranged, essentially in order, from beginning to more advanced optimizations:

- Chapter 1, “Getting Started,” shows key skills to have when starting up and using Visual Studio.
- Chapter 2, “Projects and Items,” shows ways to create and use projects and items more effectively.
- Chapter 3, “Getting to Know the Environment,” gives guidance on how to organize the environment to best advantage.
- Chapter 4, “Working with Documents,” illustrates how best to navigate and manipulate document windows.
- Chapter 5, “Finding Things,” is a collection of tips on how to find just about anything in your code or code related in Visual Studio.
- Chapter 6, “Writing Code,” the largest chapter, shows a host of techniques for using the editor more efficiently.
- Chapter 7, “Debugging,” the second largest chapter, shows you great techniques to improve your debugging experience within the IDE.

Part II, “Extensions for Visual Studio,” written by Sara Ford and other authors, contains an examination of selected extensions from the Visual Studio Gallery that you can install to further accelerate the Visual Studio experience.

Finally, we have included an entire second book of tips in Appendix B (downloadable at <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>) that were cut from the main book so that we could keep the print size manageable. You are literally getting two books for the price of one.

Finding Your Best Starting Point in This Book

Each chapter—and in fact, almost every item—in Part I of this book stands on its own, so feel free to begin reading wherever you like. However, I suggest that you start by choosing the tasks that will have the greatest impact in your daily work. If most of your day is spent debugging, then start with Chapter 7, “Debugging,” first. After you have a good handle on using the features built-in to Visual Studio from Part I of this book, look in Part II to see if there’s an extension that can help you advance your goals even further. Visual Studio has many extensions that can improve your overall experience.

Conventions and Features in This Book

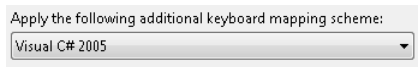
This book presents information using conventions designed to make the information readable and easy to use.

Keyboard Settings

Throughout this book I refer to the keyboard settings often, so it is important to know the connection between development settings and keyboard mapping schemes. When first installed, Visual Studio asks you to choose a collection of settings, as shown here:



The settings chosen are directly related to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard within the “Apply the Following Additional Keyboard Mapping Scheme” dropdown list. For example, when you choose Visual C# Development Settings, you will see Visual C# 2005 as the keyboard mapping, as shown here:



The following table lists the setting collection and its corresponding keyboard mapping scheme:

SETTINGS	ADDITIONAL KEYBOARD SCHEME
GENERAL DEVELOPMENT SETTINGS	(Default)
PROJECT MANAGEMENT SETTINGS	(Default)
VISUAL BASIC DEVELOPMENT SETTINGS	Visual Basic 6
VISUAL C# DEVELOPMENT SETTINGS	Visual C# 2005
VISUAL C++ DEVELOPMENT SETTINGS	Visual C++ 6
VISUAL F# DEVELOPMENT SETTINGS	(Default)
WEB DEVELOPMENT	(Default)
WEB DEVELOPMENT (CODE ONLY)	(Default)

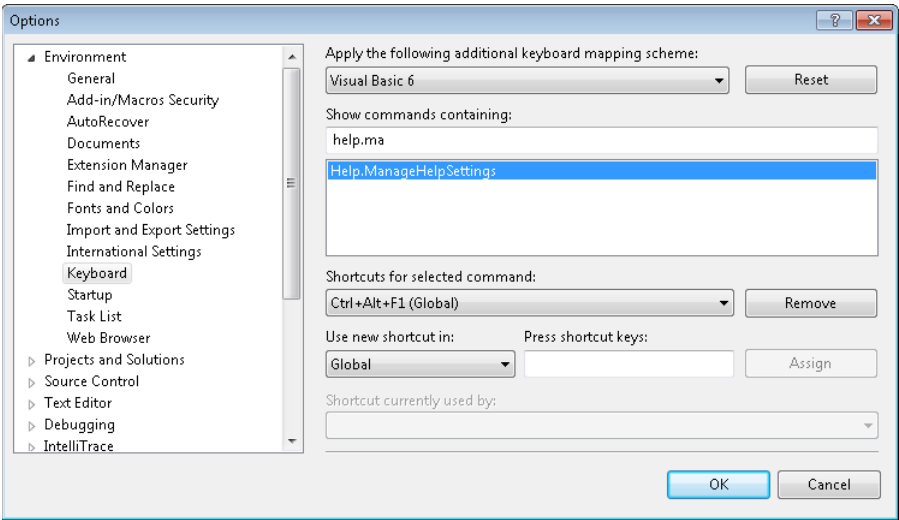
Summary Information

One of the unique features of this book is the summary information at the top of every item. All tips will contain a table with one or more pieces of summary information that looks like this example:

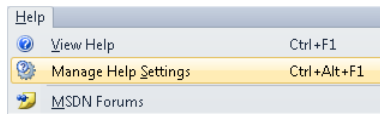
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F1, M (help settings); Ctrl+F1, Ctrl+M (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
WINDOWS	Alt, H, S (help settings); Alt, H, V (view help)
MENU	Help Manage Help Settings; Help View Help
COMMAND	Help.ManageHelpSettings; Help.F1Help
VERSIONS	2010
LANGUAGES	All
CODE	vstipTool0120

Here is what each piece of information means:

- **Default to Visual Studio 6**—Keyboard shortcuts assigned that are mapped to the choice made for development settings. These settings can be found at Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard. If absent, implies there are no keyboard shortcuts that apply.



- **Windows**—Keyboard shortcuts that navigate the Menu Bar for commands. If absent, implies there are no Menu Bar shortcuts that apply.



- **Menu**—Menu Bar path for using a command. Help | Manage Help Settings means click on the Help menu and choose Manage Help Settings item underneath it. If absent, implies the item can not be accessed from the Menu Bar.
- **Command**—Visual Studio command used to assign keyboard shortcuts, aliases, run macros, etc. Found at Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard. If absent, implies there is no command available for this activity.
- **Versions**—Versions of Visual Studio that support the information given in the tip. If absent, implies all versions are supported.
- **Languages**—Languages supported (C++, C#, and/or VB). If absent, implies all languages are supported.
- **Code**—Unique identifier for each tip for looking up references to the tip in the book, online, etc.

Additional Information

- Boxed elements with labels such as “Warning” are used to tell you about items that may impact you negatively. Be aware that these activities are done at your own risk.
- Boxed elements with labels such as “Note” provide additional information or alternative methods for completing a step successfully.
- Text that you type (apart from code blocks) appears in bold.
- A plus sign (+) between two key names means that you must press those keys at the same time. For example, “Ctrl+Alt+L” means that you hold down the Ctrl key while you press the Alt key and the L key.
- A comma (,) between key names means you press each key separately. For example, “Alt+T, O” means you hold down Alt while you press T then let up on the keys and finally press O by itself.
- A vertical bar between two or more menu items (e.g., File | Close), means that you should select the first menu or menu item, then the next, and so on.

System Requirements

You will need the following hardware and software to complete the practice exercises in this book.

Software Requirements

- Windows XP (x86) with Service Pack 3—all editions except Starter Edition
- Windows Vista (x86 & x64) with Service Pack 2—all editions except Starter Edition
- Windows 7 (x86 & x64)
- Windows Server 2003 (x86 & x64) with Service Pack 2
- Windows Server 2003 R2 (x86 & x64)
- Windows Server 2008 (x86 & x64) with Service Pack 2
- Windows Server 2008 R2 (x64)

Supported Architectures:

- 32-Bit (x86)
- 64-Bit (x64)

Hardware Requirements

- Computer that has a 1.6GHz or faster processor
- 1 GB (32-Bit) or 2 GB (64-Bit) RAM (Add 512 MB if running in a virtual machine)
- 3 GB of available hard disk space
- 5400 RPM hard disk drive
- DirectX 9 capable video card running at 1024 x 768 or higher-resolution display
- DVD-ROM Drive

Depending on your Windows configuration, you might require Local Administrator rights to install or configure Visual Studio.

Acknowledgments

From day one this book has been a community-driven effort. The readers of my (Zain) and Sara's blogs have been a constant source of content, comments, and ideas. Our heartfelt thanks for all our readers have done to make this book a reality.

I used to make fun of those people who win awards on TV because they always have a huge list of people to thank and never seem to get through them. It looks like it's my turn now and I *know* that I will forget someone, so let me just say that behind every effort like this you will always have a great deal of people helping you in one way or another. Below is just a partial list of people Sara and I want to thank for contributing, directly or indirectly, to the effort:

Russell Jones and Adam Zaremba—Editors at O'Reilly Media, who herded the cats to make this book happen.

Kevin Stevens—Who came up with the name of the book and was instrumental in the technical review process.

Paul Millsaps, Bill Needels—For doing some of the technical review for the book.

Sean Laberee—Senior Program Manager Lead at Microsoft who helped both Sara and me get started with Tips and Tricks.

Dustin Campbell—Program Manager at Microsoft who continues to be a constant source of information when I get stuck on a feature or concept.

Brittany Behrens—Program Manager at Microsoft who helped me during those first tenuous days after I took over Sara's work.

Matt Manela—for writing the content for the Snippet Designer extension.

Andrew Steele—for writing the content for the Productivity Power Tools extension.

Jim Christopher—for writing the content for both the GhostDoc and the StudioShell extensions.

Terry Leeper—Principal Architect, Windows C++ Team, my main contact with the C++ folks and a good friend that has helped me resolve questions about features since I started doing the tips.

Lisa Feigenbaum and Beth Massi—Program Managers at Microsoft who constantly provided guidance and support as the content of the book evolved.

Brian Moore—Director, DPE Central Region, for providing support and being a great manager.

Clint Edmonson—Senior Architect Evangelist at Microsoft who I have toured with throughout the country delivering Visual Studio talks to thousands of people.

Phil Wheat—My best friend at Microsoft and a constant source of information. Phil is easily the smartest person I know.

Jared Bienz, Mike Azocar—Very good friends who have been great to bounce ideas around as I worked on the book.

Rob Bagby, Mike Benkovich, John Weston, Keith Combs—My old Microsoft Across America buddies.

Finally, Sara Ford wishes to thank Dr. Terrance Delaney and Dr. Michael McMurray for fixing her chronic shin splints during the course of writing this book.

Errata & Book Support

We've made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this book and its companion content. Any errors that have been reported since this book was published are listed on our Microsoft Press site at oreilly.com:

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Part I

Productivity Techniques

In this part:

Chapter 1: Getting Started	3
Chapter 2: Projects and Items	43
Chapter 3: Getting to Know the Environment	83
Chapter 4: Working with Documents	153
Chapter 5: Finding Things	171
Chapter 6: Writing Code	209
Chapter 7: Debugging	291

Chapter 1

Getting Started

"A beginning is the time for taking the most delicate care [...]"

—Frank Herbert, "Dune"

This chapter addresses tasks that would be immediately beneficial as you work in Visual Studio. The main themes here are exporting your development settings, learning the Start Page, adjusting your performance, and other key tasks.

This chapter is arguably the most important one you will read in this book—and yet, I suspect, the one people will think they need the least. If you have been using Visual Studio for any length of time, you might easily feel that the tasks in in this chapter have little application to your situation. But whether you have been using Visual Studio for ten days or ten years, these tips will help ensure that all your other efforts go smoothly, so taking time to absorb the contents is definitely worthwhile.

01.01 Running Multiple Versions of Visual Studio Side-By-Side

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0054

People often ask whether you can run multiple versions of Visual Studio side-by-side on the same machine. The answer is yes you can!

You can find documentation on MSDN, in the topic "Installing Visual Studio Versions Side-by-Side," at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms246609.aspx>.

The recommendation is that you install multiple versions from oldest to newest. So you would install Visual Studio 2005, 2008, and then 2010—in that order.

01.02 Getting Table of Contents in Visual Studio 2010 Online Help

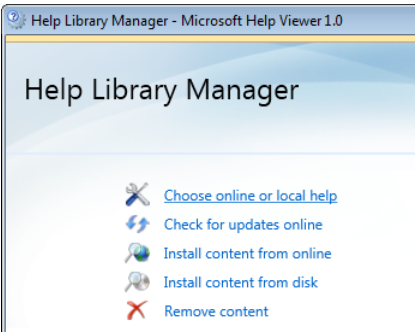
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F1, M (help settings); Ctrl+F1, Ctrl+M (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+F1 (help settings); F1 (view help)
WINDOWS	Alt, H, S (help settings); Alt, H, V (view help)
WINDOWS KEYBOARD	Alt, H, S (help settings); Alt, H, V (view help)
MENU	Help Manage Help Settings; Help View Help
COMMAND	Help.ManageHelpSettings; Help.F1Help
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0120

I have to admit I don't like the new online help in Visual Studio 2010. Not that I think it's bad per se, but I was just used to the old help system's look and feel—particularly the table of contents list.

If you are like me and want to get that classic help look-and-feel back for online help, you need to do two things.

Online Help

First, you need to set your default help to online help (you need Internet connectivity to use this feature) by selecting Help | Manage Help Settings. Then click Choose Online Or Local Help.

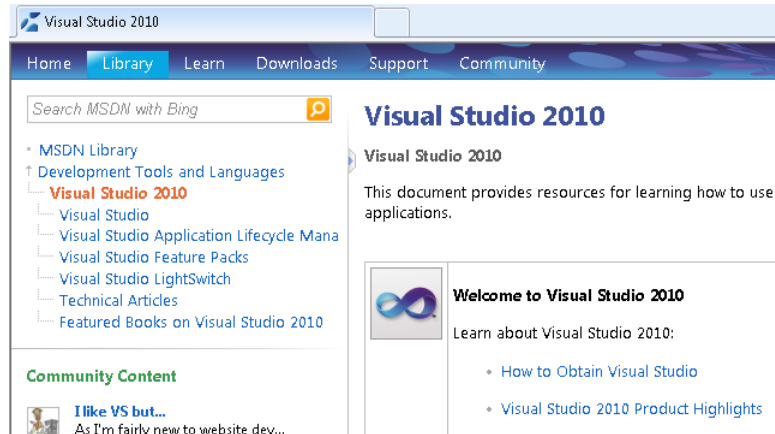


Select I Want To Use Online Help, and click OK.

- ☒ I want to use online help
- ☐ I want to use local help

Using Classic View

Now that you are using online help, Go to Help | View Help to see a page similar to the following:



In the upper-right corner of the page, if you see the Preferences link, click it.



Note You may not see the Preferences link but instead just three links to Lightweight, ScriptFree, and Classic. In this case, just click Classic and skip the next step.

Choose Classic and click OK.

Choose View

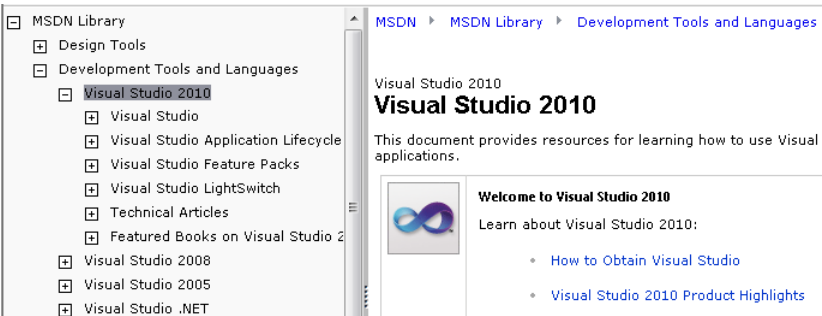


Choose between a Lightweight experience that balances both richness and speed, a fast ScriptFree experience, or a feature-rich Classic experience.

- ☐ **Lightweight**
A balance between a fast and rich experience.
- ☐ **ScriptFree**
Super-fast with no script.
- ☒ **Classic**
Classic. Feature rich view. It includes a side-by-side view of translated and English for some content.



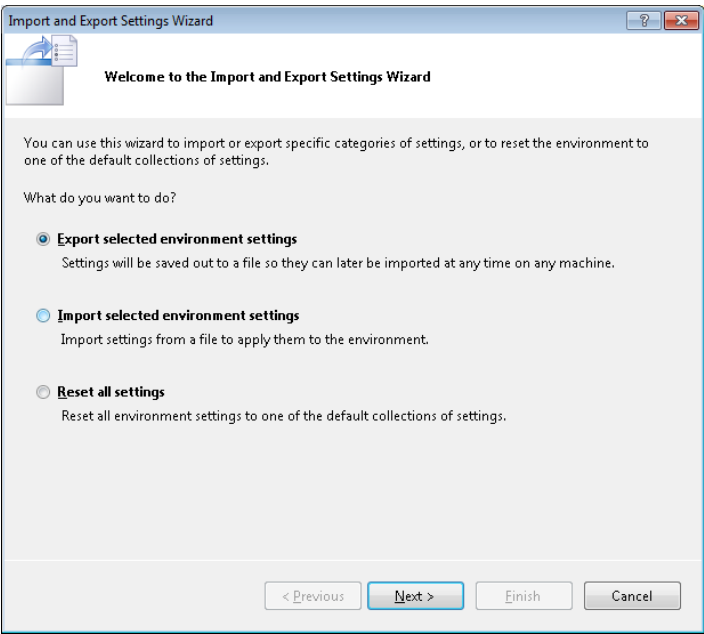
Now your help will use the old-style contents list.



01.03 Exporting Your Environment Settings

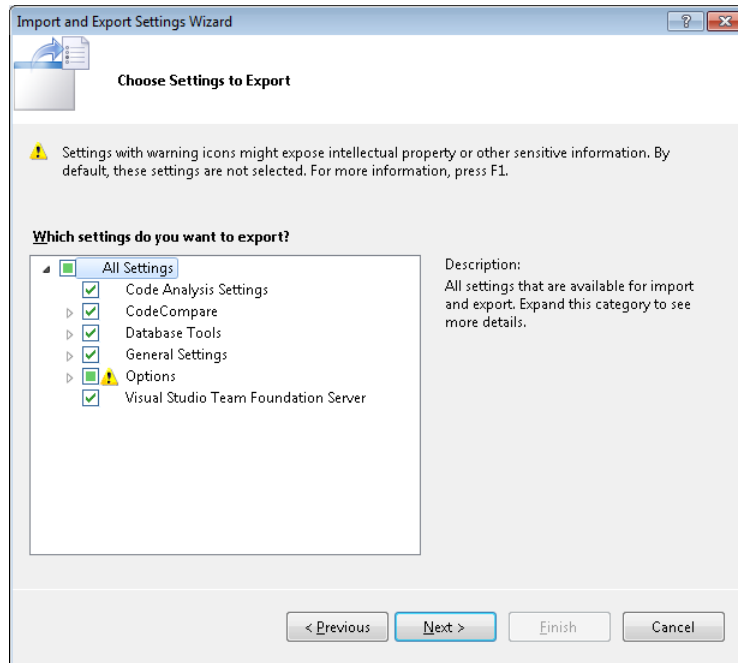
WINDOWS	Alt,T, I
MENU	Tools Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0021

Exporting your environment settings is a great way to back them up. You can export your settings by selecting Tools | Import And Export Settings Wizard.

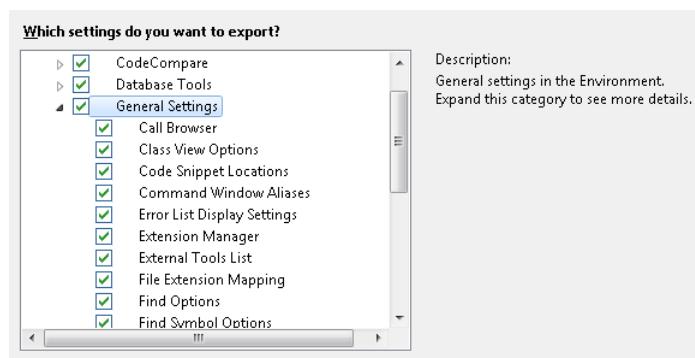


The Export Selected Environment Settings option lets you save your settings to a .vssettings file.

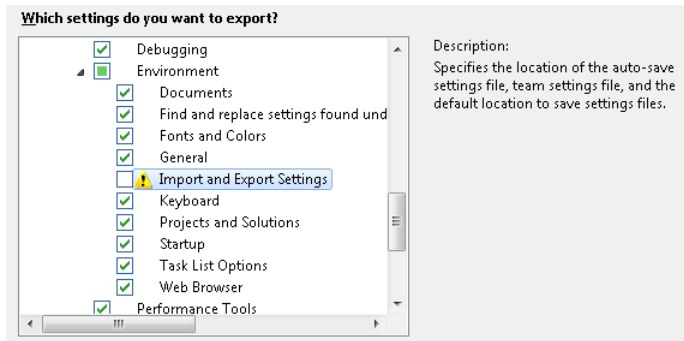
Click Next to see the Choose Settings To Export dialog box.



You can expand the areas to choose the items you want to include or exclude.



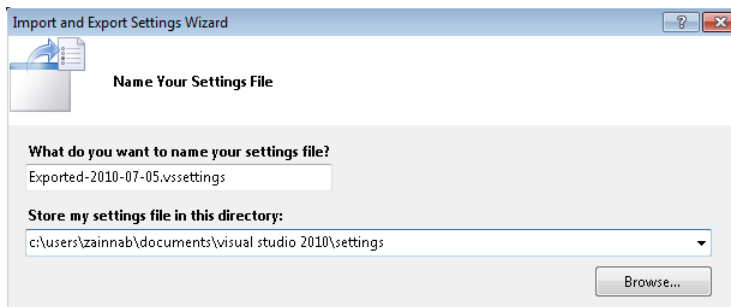
By default, almost everything is selected except for items that could expose sensitive information. You can tell which options these are by the yellow warning symbol icon next to the item.



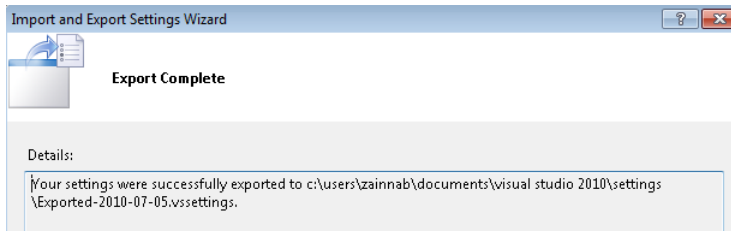
After you make your choices and click Next, you can pick the location (C:\users\<current user>\documents\visual studio <version>\settings, by default) and the filename (the current date, by default) where you want to save the exported information.



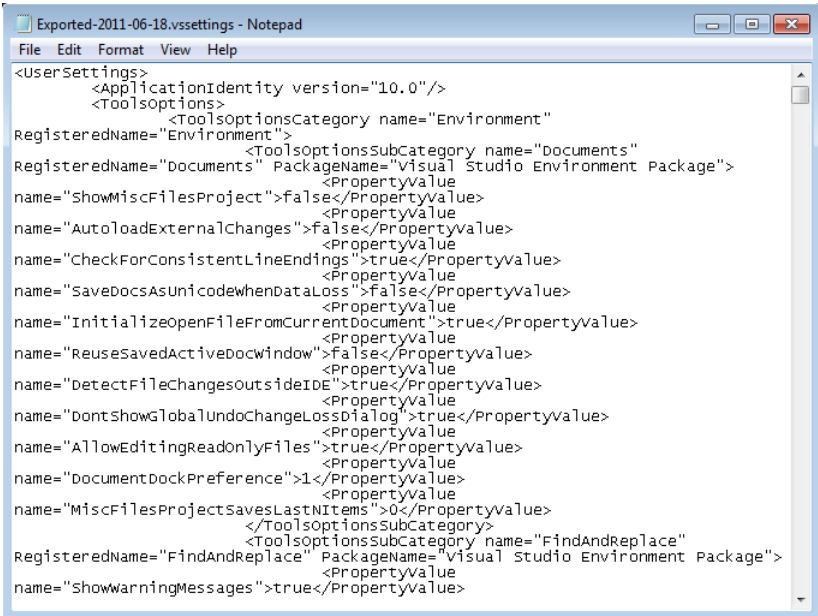
Warning If you don't give your exported settings good names it will be hard to figure out what they are for later. For example, if you are just exporting your favorite black theme fonts and colors, a name like "Fonts and Colors (Black Theme) 2010-07-05" would make sense.



When you click Finish, Visual Studio exports your settings, and the following dialog box appears.



If you are curious, the exported file is just an XML file. You can open it in Notepad and see the contents, as shown in the following illustration.

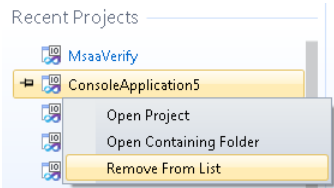


01.04 Remove Projects from the Recent Projects List

WINDOWS	Alt,F, J, [Number]
MENU	File Recent Projects and Solutions
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0017

In Visual Studio 2010, you can now remove projects from the Recent Projects list on your Start Page.

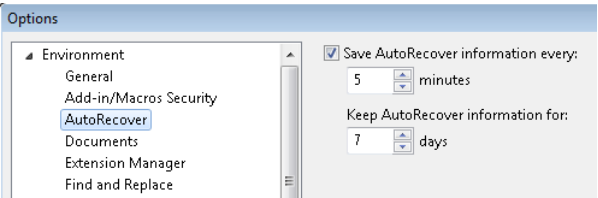
Just right-click the project, and select Remove From List, as shown in the following illustration. That's it. The project is removed from the list but not deleted. If you want to permanently delete the project, you need to do that yourself from the filesystem.



01.05 AutoRecover

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment AutoRecover
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0019

AutoRecover can be a real life saver if the development environment crashes or if a power outage occurs. It's simple to use: Just go to Tools | Options | Environment | AutoRecover.

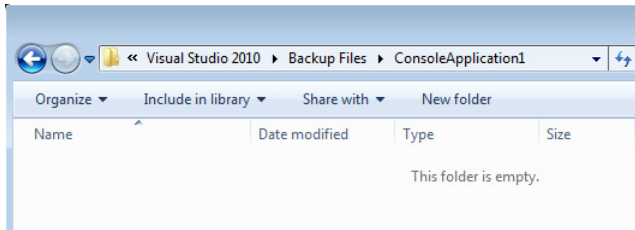


To turn this feature off (not recommended), you can clear the Save AutoRecover Information Every check box. Here's an explanation of what the other options do:

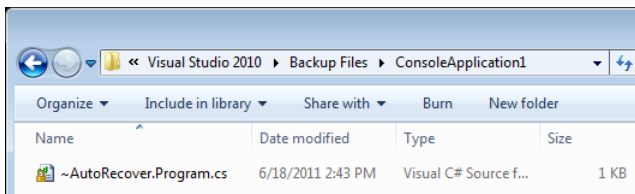
- **n minutes** Determines how often Visual Studio saves AutoRecover information for files. The default is to save every five minutes, but you can adjust that interval up or down depending on your needs. There is an inverse relationship between this value and the frequency of your updates to code. If you make frequent code updates, you should set a smaller save interval. Conversely, if you make relatively infrequent code updates, you can increase this interval. It's better to err by using an interval that's too short rather than too long; in other words, it's better to take a performance hit from file I/O than to lose a ton of work.
- **n days** Determines how long Visual Studio keeps AutoRecover files in the Backup Files directory. The default is seven days, which is adequate for most situations. If you work with a lot of projects over a short period of time, you might want to decrease this number to keep the Backup Files directory from getting too cluttered. If you're not sure about what you need for this value, it's better to guess high and later reduce the number as needed.

I want to be clear about what exactly gets saved and where it gets saved. First, recovered files are stored at My Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Backup Files\<projectname>. But not every file is saved here. The backup folder is empty when you first create a solution in Visual Studio.

When I make a change to a file and save the change, I wait five minutes to see the result.

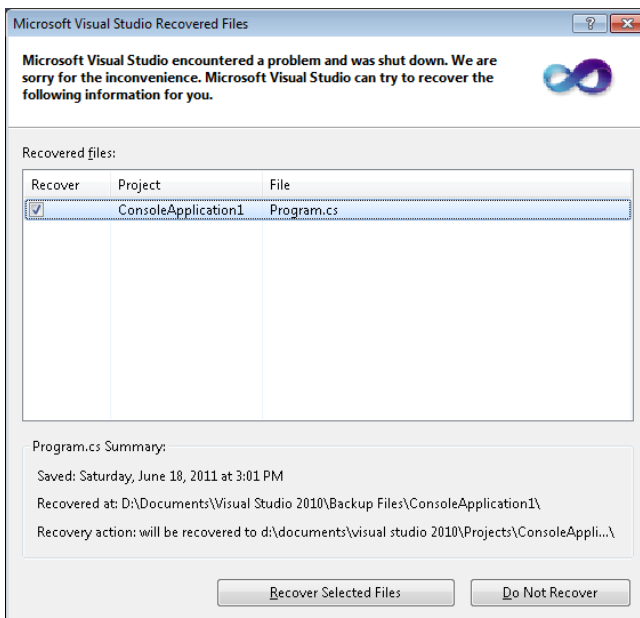


There's still nothing there, because Visual Studio knows there is no need to recover a saved file. But if I make a change to a file without saving it and wait another five minutes, here is what you see:



At this point, the AutoRecover information appears because there are unsaved changes. If Visual Studio crashes now, you would need to make a decision about whether to recover the unsaved changes or keep the last saved version. Giving you that choice is the essential function of the AutoRecover feature.

When you do finally have to recover a file, you will see the following dialog box.



To explain the terminology in the preceding dialog box:

- **Recovered files**
Lists the file(s) that can be recovered. Use a check box to select or clear the files you want to keep as well as to see some basic information.
- **<File Name> Summary**
Shows detailed information about the currently selected file, including date/time information, location of the backup file, and the destination location where the recovered file will be saved.
- **Recover Selected Files**
Performs a recovery action on the selected file(s), copying the recovered source file to the previously indicated destination.
- **Do Not Recover**
Closes the dialog box without recovering any listed files.

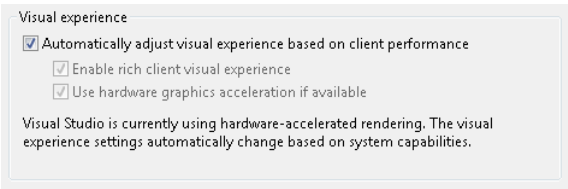
01.06

Improving Performance by Changing the Visual Experience in Visual Studio 2010

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment General Visual Experience
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEnv0017

Visual Studio 2010 automatically adjusts the visual experience depending on the situation. For example, it might eliminate or reduce the use of gradients and animations when running in Remote Desktop or virtual machine environments. It also makes use of hardware graphics acceleration when that’s available.

In some situations, you can improve Visual Studio’s performance by changing its Visual Experience manually. To change these settings, select Tools | Options | Environment | General | Visual Experience to see the following dialog box.



Clear the Automatically Adjust Visual Experience Based On Client Performance check box.



Note As you work with the preceding options, the message at the bottom of the dialog box does not change until you click OK to commit the changes you have made.

Following is a brief explanation of what each option does:

- **Enable Rich Client Visual Experience** This option gives you gradients and animations (also known as “eye candy”) for elements such as sliding tool windows and so on. If you leave this option selected, Visual Studio uses these rich animations in all scenarios—including remote sessions. You should usually turn this option off in such situations to get a bump in performance.
- **Use Hardware Graphics Acceleration If Available** This option lets you decide whether Windows Presentation Foundation (WPF) hardware acceleration is something you want. If this can benefit you, you’ll notice a clear change in performance when you enable or disable this option. Make sure to test both scenarios.



Note If you have a system whose performance doesn’t suffer when animations and gradients are turned on, a little eye candy can be a good thing, so this tip is really for those folks who are having performance issues in their Visual Studio experience, either locally or remotely.

Now that you have played with the preceding options a bit, you might be wondering whether you can actually see how much they can improve (or hurt) performance. The Windows SDK includes a tool called WPFPerf that enables you to measure WPF performance. You can find a great article on how to use it at the Microsoft WindowsClient.NET site, at <http://windowsclient.net/wpf/perf/wpf-perf-tool.aspx>.

Also, when using Visual Studio 2010 over remote sessions, you should definitely read the article titled “Optimizing Visual Studio 2010 and WPF Applications for Remote Desktop,” at <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/jgoldb/archive/2010/02/27/optimizing-visual-studio-2010-and-wpf-applications-for-remote-desktop.aspx>. This article provides important information about how to dramatically improve performance over Remote Desktop.

01.07

Change Tool Window Animations

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008
CODE	vstipEnv0018

In the tip vstipEnv0017 (“Improving Performance by Changing the Visual Experience”, page 14), you saw a discussion of how you can improve the visual performance of Visual Studio 2010. Now let’s look at Visual Studio 2008 and 2005. You can change the animation speed of tool windows in Visual Studio 2008 and 2005, but why would you want to do this?

The answer is that you can get a performance boost by speeding up or completely turning off the animation. Select Tools | Options | Environment | General, and locate the Animate Environment Tools option.



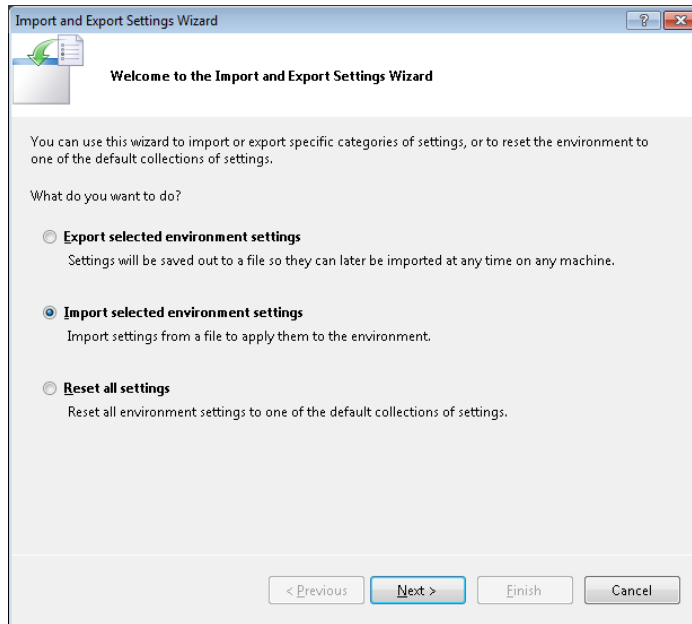
I suggest you turn off this feature to begin with, to see whether you notice any performance improvements. Later, if you want your animations back, turn on the option and set the slider to the far-right side (the fastest speed). As you test the performance, you can adjust it back to the left to determine the best setting for you.

01.08

Importing or Changing Your Environment Settings

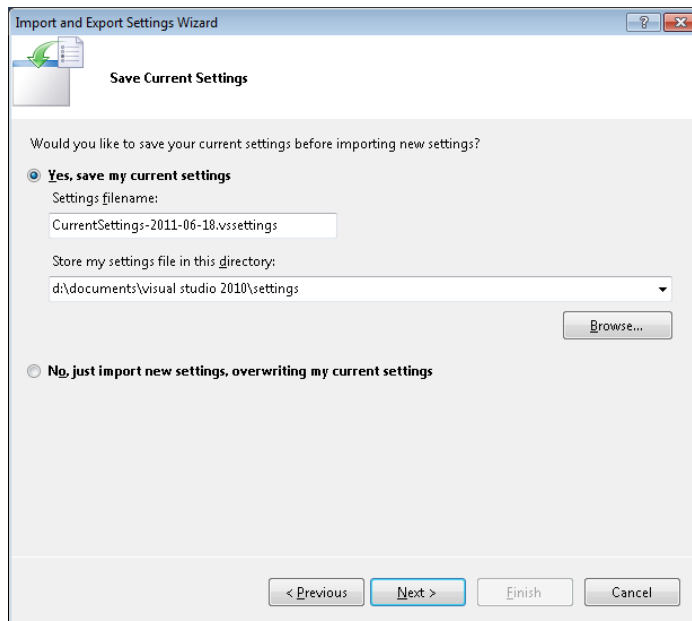
WINDOWS	Alt,T, I
MENU	Tools Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0022

Assuming you have exported your settings (vstipEnv0021, “Exporting Your Environment Settings”, page 6), you can import your settings by going to Tools | Import And Export Settings Wizard and selecting Import Selected Environment Settings:

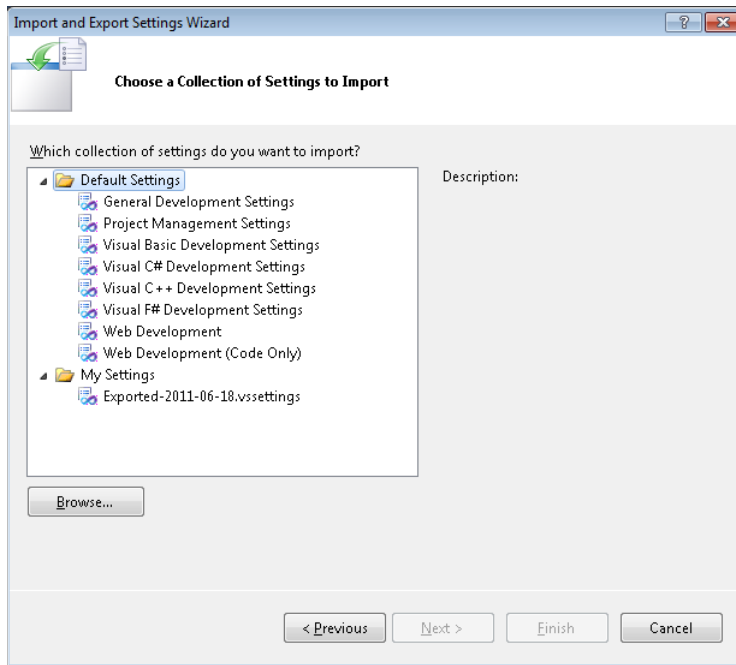


This setting enables you to import a previously exported .vssettings file.

After you click Next on the Welcome page shown in the preceding illustration, you have the option to save your existing settings (recommended) before overwriting or to just overwrite them:



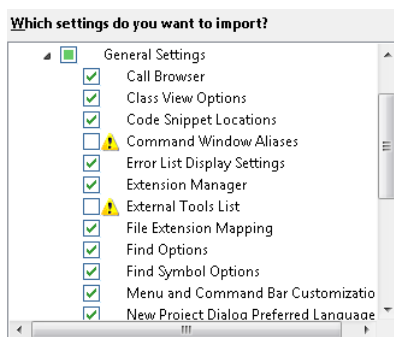
Click Next, and you can choose from the default settings, settings that have been saved previously, or you can browse for your own .vssettings file:



Now click Next again to choose what settings you want to import. All the previously exported settings are selected by default except for Command Window Aliases, External Tools List, and Import and Export Settings, which are considered potentially dangerous.



Warning You have to determine the potentially dangerous areas for yourself, but if doing a full export or import, you would most likely check all the items in this dialog. It is not recommended that you share full exports with team members as there may be information in the file you don't want to share. Instead, just export the items you want to share with team members in a separate file.



After you have checked (or unchecked) the items you want, click Finish to import the settings and to see the final page of the wizard:



Now, just click Finish and you are done.

01.09 Change Your Visual Studio Color Scheme

WINDOWS	Alt,T, I
MENU	Tools Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0034

Ever see a set of colors your friend or coworker has and wish you could get it too? Ever go to <http://studiostyles.info> and want some of those cool color schemes?

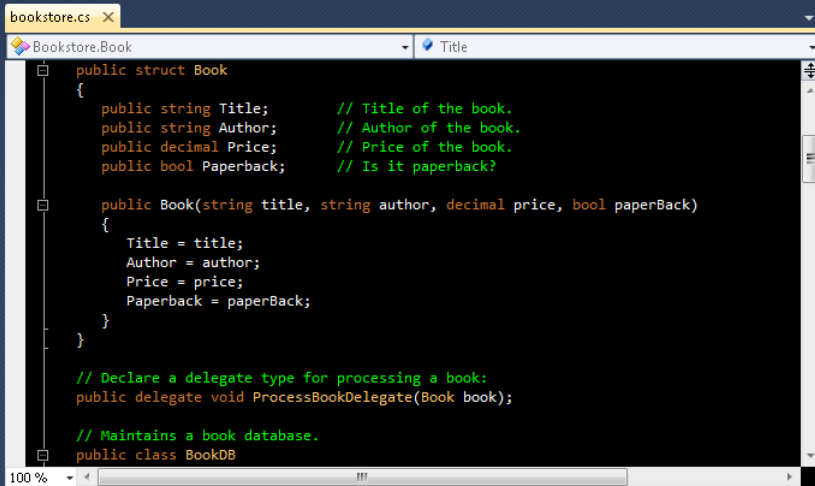
Top-rated schemes

rated	downloads	views	preview	name	tags	updated	author
165	58545	95933		Son of Obsidian	advanced razor	1 year ago, updated 7 months ago	einaros
134	62639	112573		WekeRoad Ink	advanced razor	1 year ago, updated 7 months ago	Luke Sampson
74	13450	30879		Selenitic	advanced razor	1 year ago, updated 4 months ago	Tim G. Thomas

Well you can get the colors you want! Let's walk through how it's done.

Seeing What You Like

First, you see a seriously cool color scheme on someone's screen or at the Studio Styles site:



```
bookstore.cs
Bookstore.Book
Title

public struct Book
{
    public string Title;    // Title of the book.
    public string Author;  // Author of the book.
    public decimal Price;  // Price of the book.
    public bool Paperback;  // Is it paperback?

    public Book(string title, string author, decimal price, bool paperBack)
    {
        Title = title;
        Author = author;
        Price = price;
        Paperback = paperBack;
    }
}

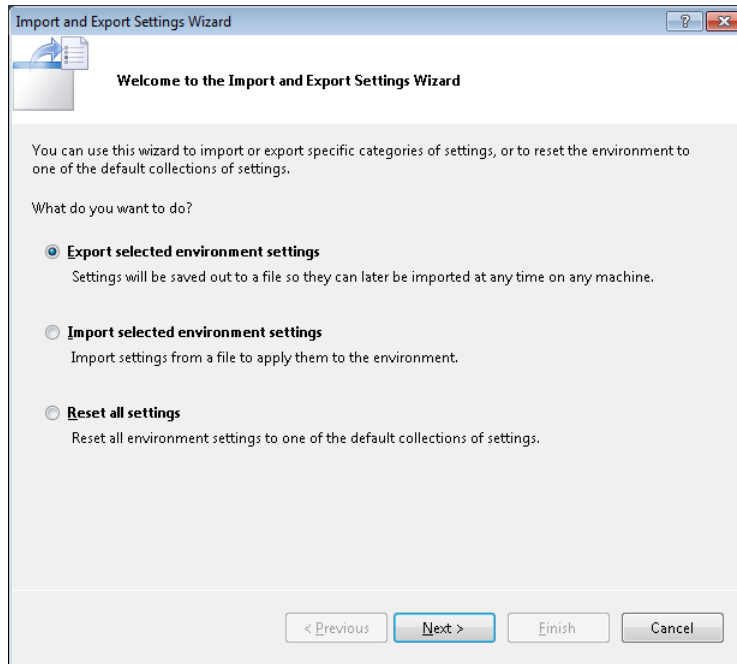
// Declare a delegate type for processing a book:
public delegate void ProcessBookDelegate(Book book);

// Maintains a book database.
public class BookDB
```

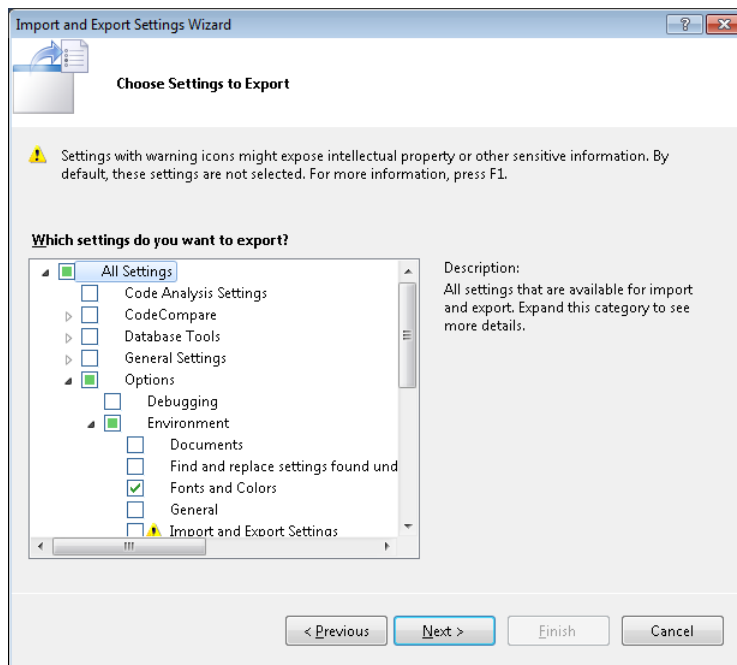
Getting the Goods

On someone's computer

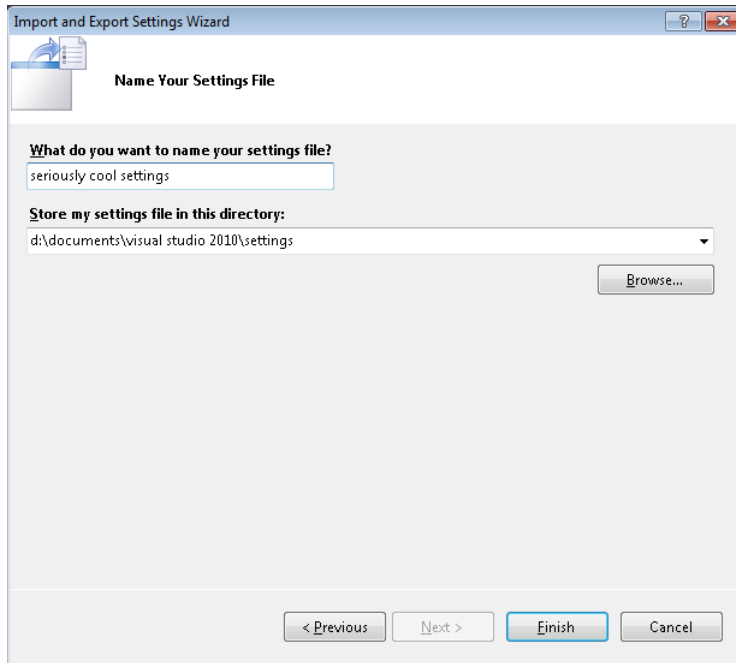
Now that you see what you like, get them to export their fonts and colors. Go to Tools | Import And Export Settings:



Click Next, and export *only* the fonts and colors—*nothing else*:





Click Next, give the settings a cool name, and click Finish:



On the Studio Styles site

Click the style you want:

Top-rated schemes

rated 165	58548 dls	95939 views		Son of Obsidian advanced razor 1 year ago, updated 7 months ago einaros
rated 134	62645 dls	112581 views		WekeRoad Ink advanced razor 1 year ago, updated 7 months ago Luke Sampson

Choose your Visual Studio version, click Download This Scheme, and follow the instructions in the next section:

WekeRoad Ink

rated
134

Submitted by [Luke Sampson](#)
 This is a refresh of Rob Conery's take on the Vibrant Ink theme WekeRoad (<http://blog.wekeroad.com/2007/10/17/textmate-th>) advantage the expanded syntax settings in VS2010.
 Do you like it? [Hot](#) or [not](#)

Download this scheme

for

Visual Studio 2010
 Visual Studio 2010
 Visual Studio 2008
 Visual Studio 2005

C# code

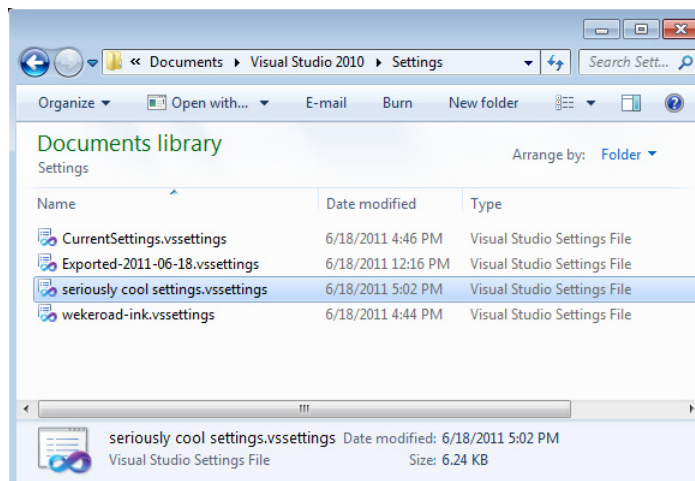
```

1 #region Studio Style
2 class Program : IThemeable
3 {
4     static int _I = 1;
5     delegate void DoSomething();
6

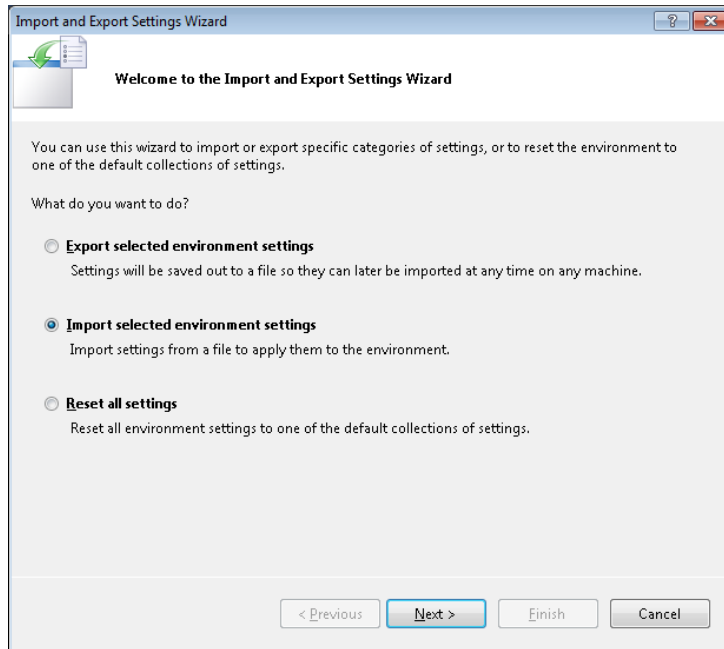
```

Changing Your Colors

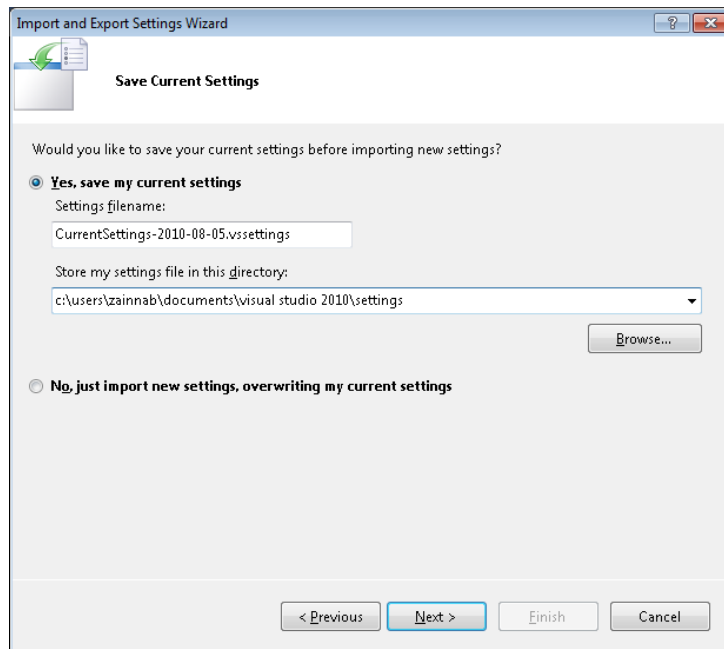
When you have a .vssettings file you want to import, copy or move the file to your computer. While you can put the file anywhere you want on your system, I prefer to put it with the other settings files located at C:\Users\<user>\Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Settings:



Now just go to Tools | Import And Export Settings on your computer:



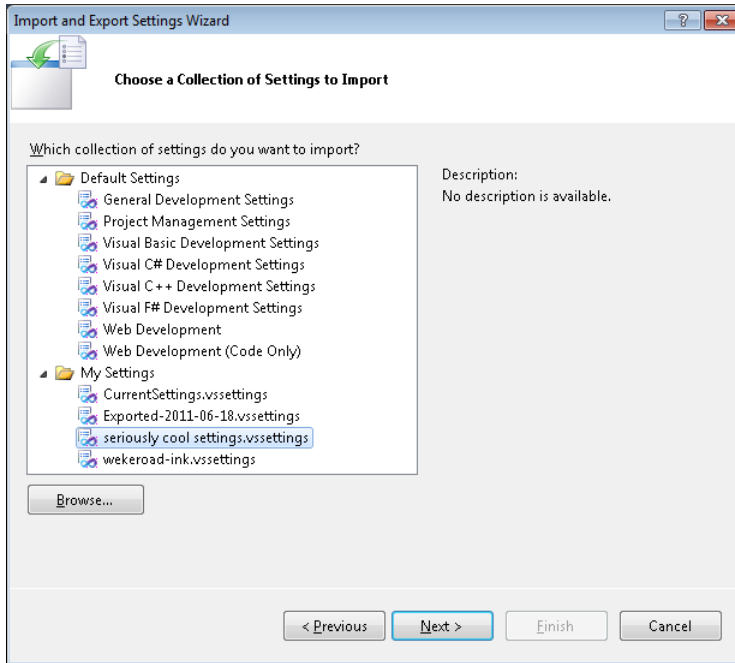
Make sure that Import Selected Environment Settings is selected, as shown in the preceding illustration, and click Next. If you haven't backed up your settings in a while, feel free to do so. Check out [vstipEnv0034](#) ("Change Your Visual Studio Color Scheme", page 17) if you want more information on exporting your settings:



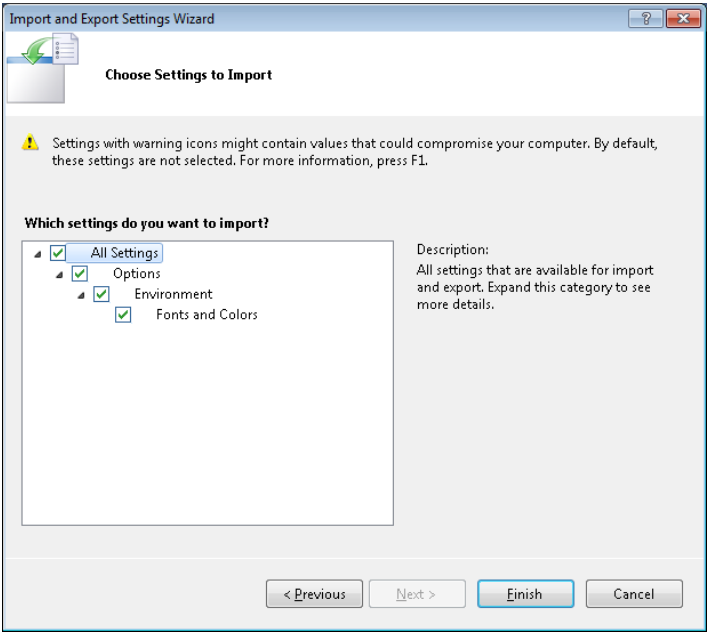
Choose the settings file that has the color scheme you want:



Note Click Browse to find your file if you didn't put it in your Settings folder.



Click Next. Verify that the file is importing *only* fonts and colors, and then click Finish:

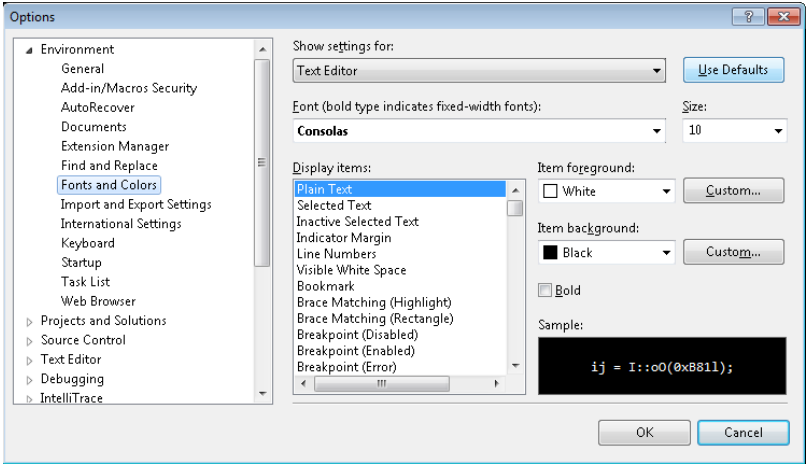


Resetting the Colors

You should have your new colors. If things get bad (for example, you get colors you don't like and didn't make a backup of your old colors) and you need to get the default colors back, all you have to do is go to Tools | Options | Fonts And Colors and click Use Defaults.



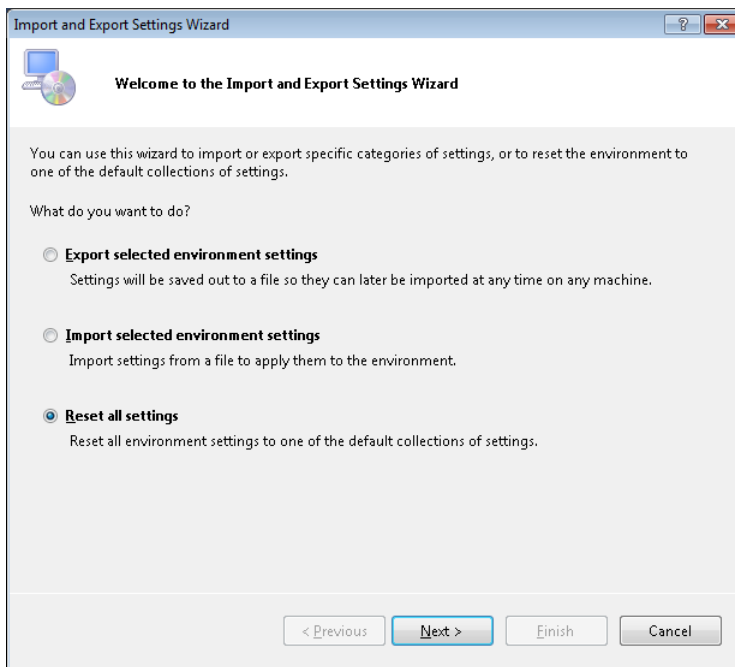
Warning Clicking Use Defaults is an option that wipes out any custom colors used previously.



01.10 Reset All Your Development Settings

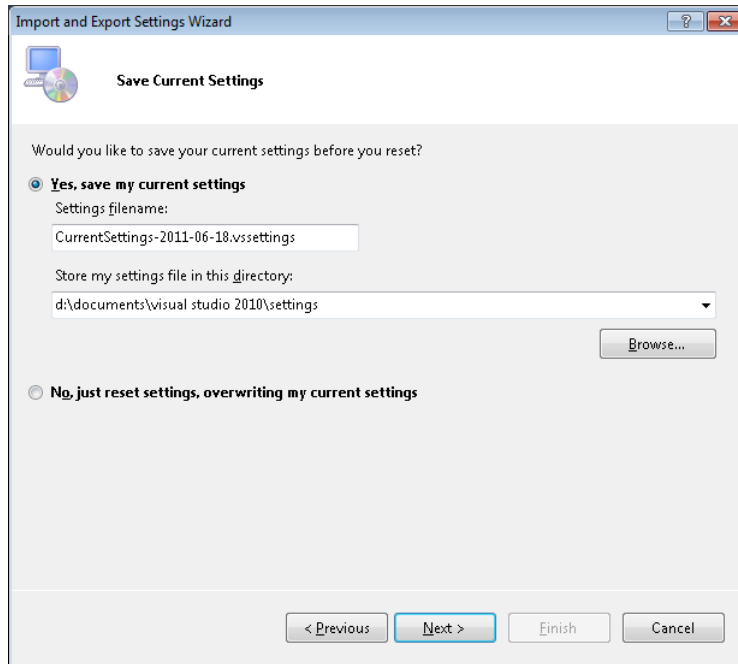
WINDOWS	Alt,T, I
MENU	Tools Import and ExportSettings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExport Settings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0023

Sometimes you need to get all your settings back to their original state. You can do this with the Reset All Settings option found under Tools | Import And Export Settings:

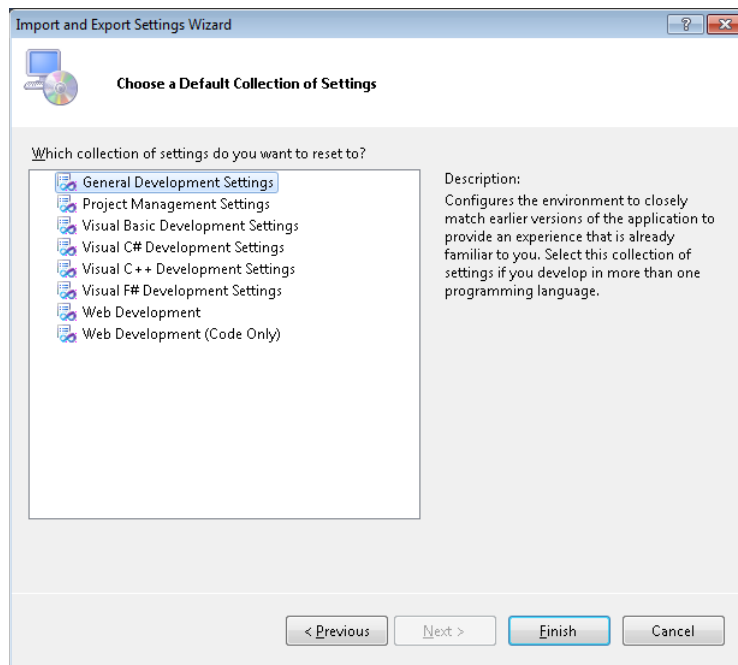


Warning Use the Reset All Settings option at your own risk. It *will* reset your settings, including a reset of your Toolbox, getting rid of any custom items you have put in there.

After you click Next on the Welcome page shown in the preceding illustration, you see the option to save your current settings. *You should absolutely do this.*



The next screen lets you choose from the list of default settings:

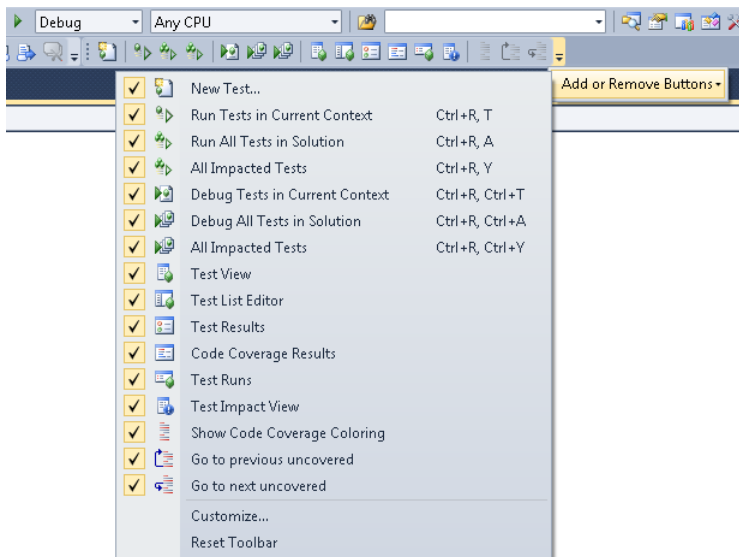


Choose your default settings, and click Finish. After the reset operation runs, it resets all your settings. This is definitely something you would do as a last resort, and remember, you can always bring back your old settings by importing settings you saved earlier (see vstipEnv0021, “Exporting Your Environment Settings”, page 6).

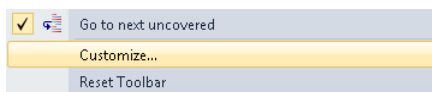
01.11 Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2010: Toolbars Tab

WINDOWS	Alt,T, C
MENU	Tools Customize
COMMAND	Tools.Customize
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEnv0030

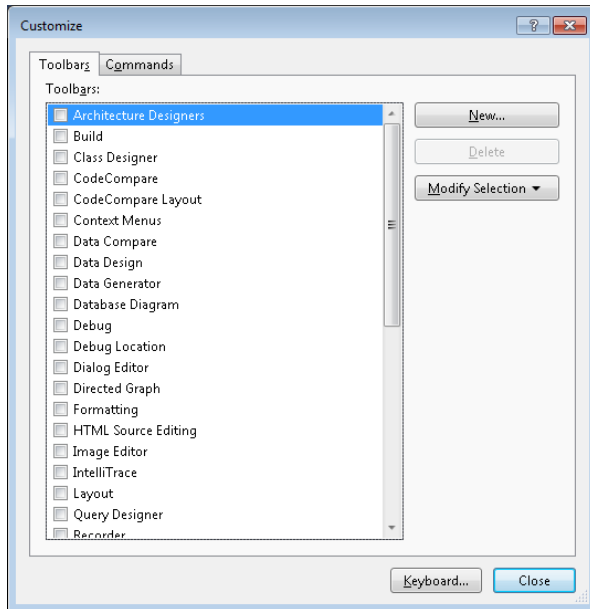
You can customize any toolbar in Visual Studio 2010. Just click the drop-down arrow to the right of any toolbar, and then click Add Or Remove Buttons:



Then click Customize:

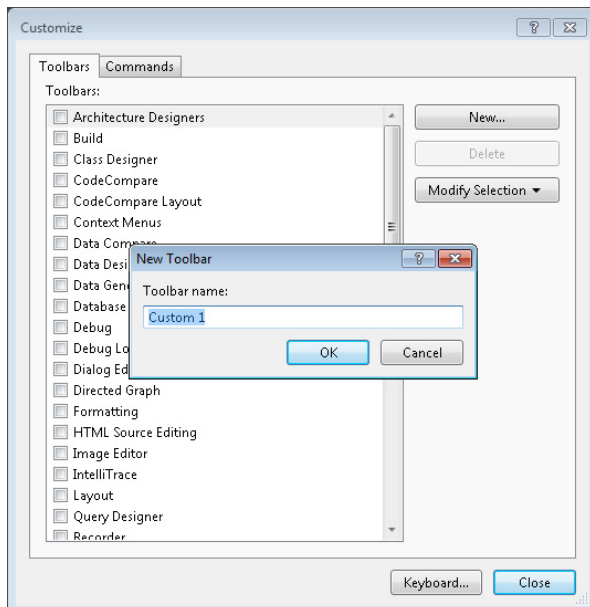


Alternatively, you can go to Tools | Customize on the menu bar. Whichever option you choose opens the Customize dialog box:

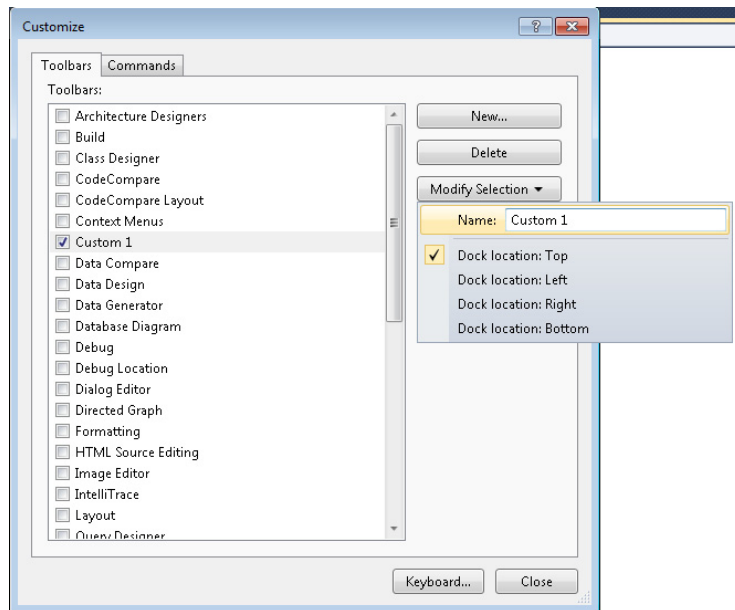


Custom Toolbars

As shown in the preceding illustration, the Toolbars tab lists all the available toolbars. After you click New to create a customized toolbar, you are prompted to give the new toolbar a name:



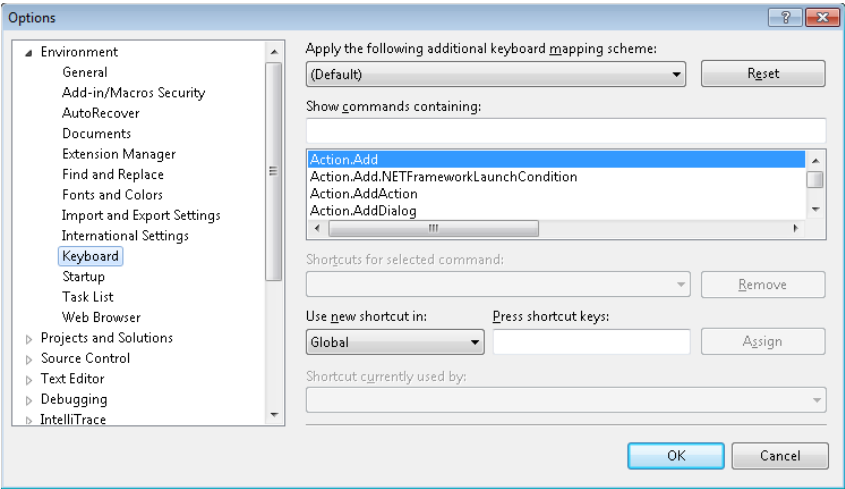
After you name it, you can delete the custom toolbar by clicking Delete, or you can change it by clicking Modify Selection to rename or relocate the toolbar:



Although you can rename custom toolbars by clicking Modify Selection, default toolbars can't be changed in this way:



Clicking Keyboard at the bottom of the Customize dialog box takes you to the Tools | Options | Keyboard area, where you can add keyboard shortcuts for selected commands. (See vstipTool0063, “Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts”, page 127, for details.)

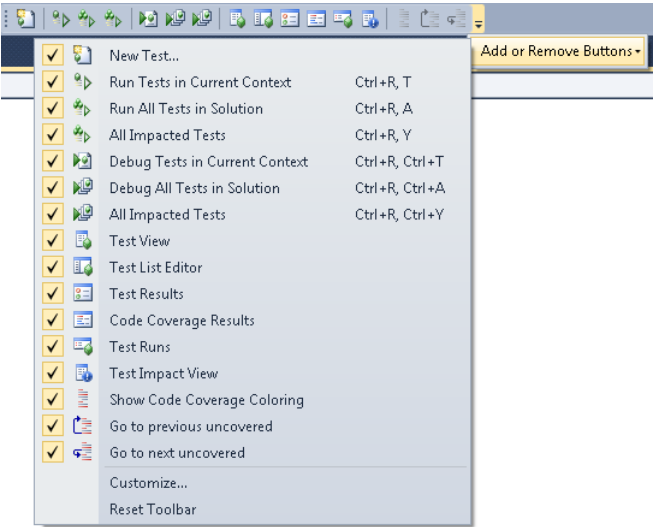


01.12

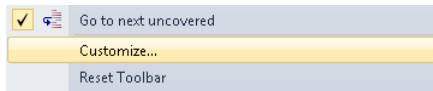
Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2010: Commands Tab

WINDOWS	Alt,T, C
MENU	Tools Customize
COMMAND	Tools.Customize
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEnv0031

You can customize any toolbar in Visual Studio 2010. Just click the drop-down arrow to the right of any toolbar, and then click Add Or Remove Buttons:

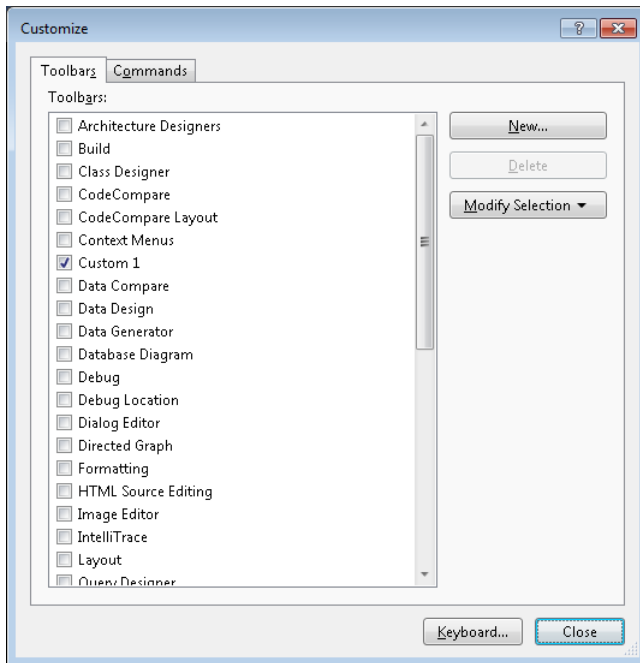


Then click Customize:



Alternatively, you can go to Tools | Customize on the menu bar.

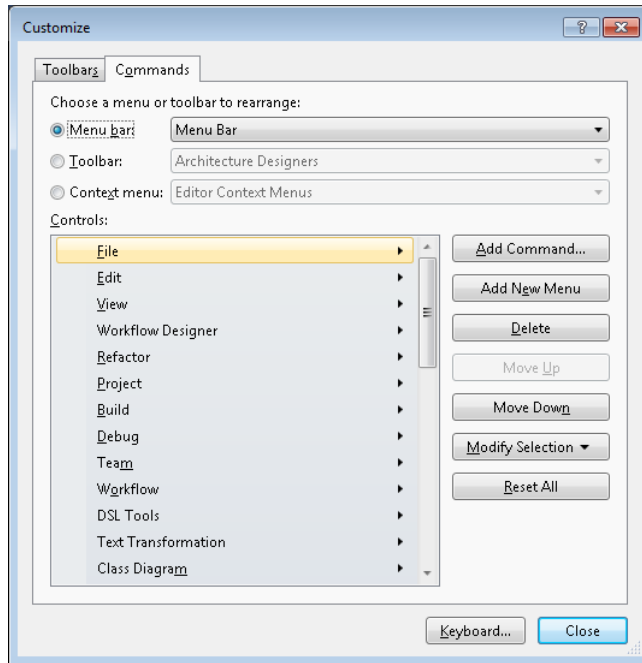
Either option you choose opens the Customize dialog box:



Click the Commands tab:



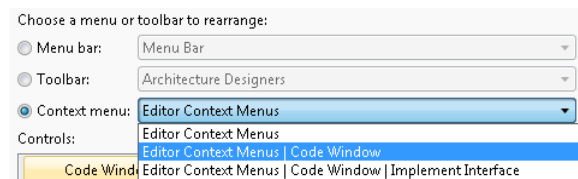
Note For information about the Toolbars tab, see vstipEnv0030, “Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2010 Toolbars Tab”, page 27.



As you can see, the Customize dialog box is fairly complex, so let's break it down into its parts as we look at an example.

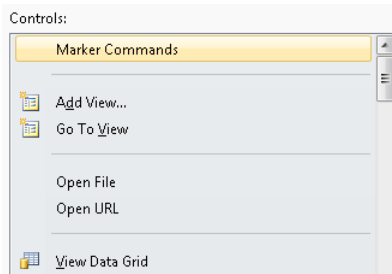
Rearrange

First is the choice of menu or toolbar to modify. In this case, choose the Editor Context Menus | Code Window option, which is what you see when you right-click while writing code:

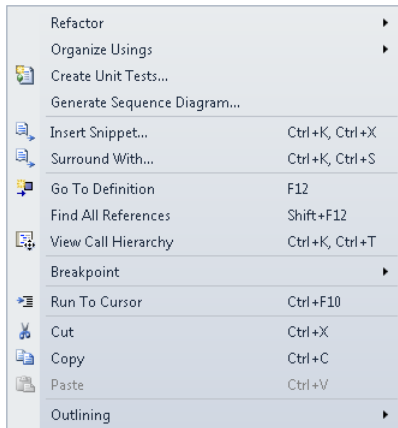


Controls

Next is the Controls area that shows the items on the menu or toolbar you have chosen to modify. For this example, it shows the items available when you right-click in a code window:



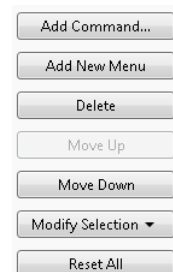
Remember that not all the items you see are available all the time because these items show up only in the proper context. So while it seems you have a large number of buttons currently available, when you right-click in your code window, this is an example of what you will currently see:



Buttons

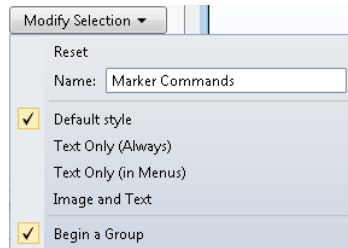
Finally, let's look at the area of the dialog box that has all the buttons that actually *perform* actions:

- **Add Command**
Lets you add a new item to the existing menu or toolbar.
- **Add New Menu**
Creates a new menu in the existing menu or toolbar.
- **Delete**
Removes the current item from the Controls area.
- **Move [Up or Down]**
Changes the location of the item in the Controls area.



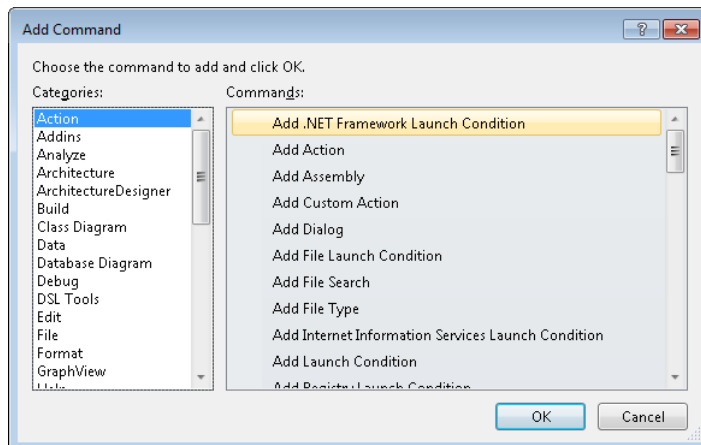
Modify Selection

Choosing Modify Selection enables you to make changes to the existing item in the Controls area, such as resetting it to the default settings, changing the name, and modifying text visibility options. Modify Selection also enables you to make a new group on the menu or toolbar:

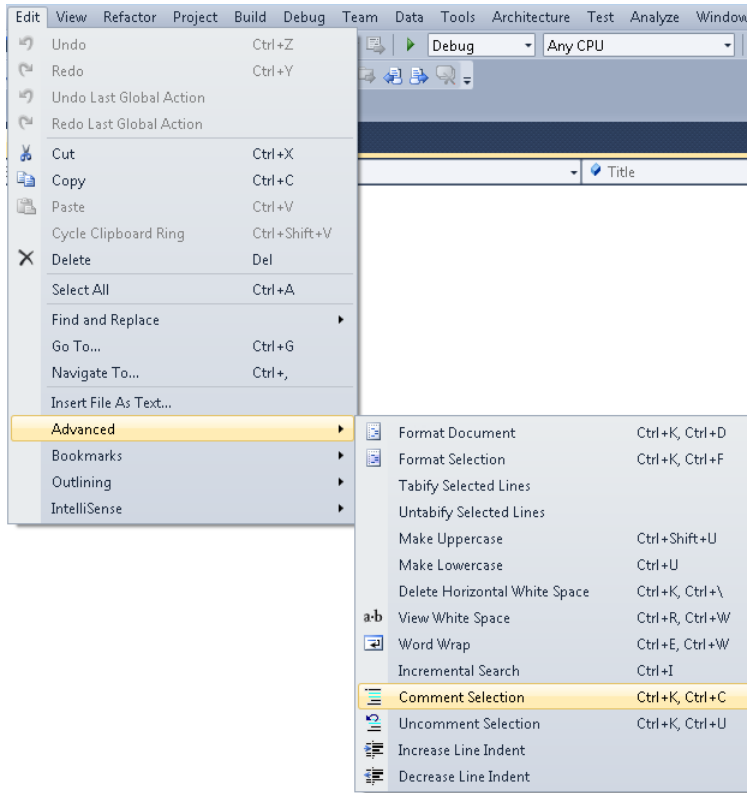


Finally, the Reset All option resets every item in the Controls area to its default settings. This capability is particularly useful if you have made a lot of changes.

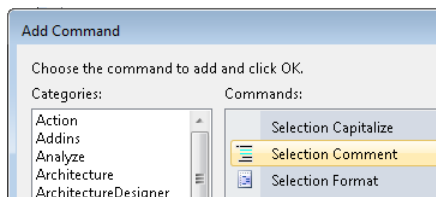
Getting back to our example: Let's assume you want to add the comment and uncomment items to the context menu so that you can use them when you select some code. First, click Add Command to bring up the Add Command dialog box:



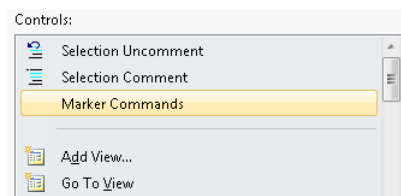
Now you need to figure out where the comment and uncomment items are located. How would you do this? Well, the best path is usually to see whether the item can be found on a menu somewhere and then use that as a clue:



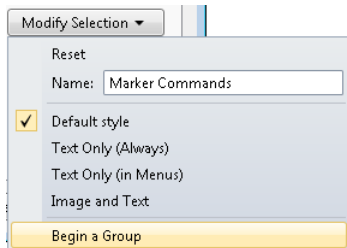
Because the items you want are off the Edit menu, you can search there first. It turns out the items you want are called Selection Comment and Selection Uncomment:



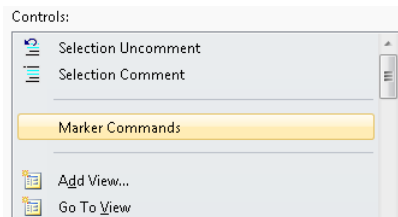
Find each one of these items, and click OK to add them to the Controls list:



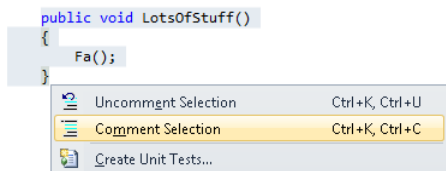
It would be nice to have these buttons in their own group, so select the item in the Controls dialog box, shown in the preceding illustration, where you would like the group line to be (Marker Commands, in this case), and then click Modify Selection and choose Begin A Group:



This creates a new group line, and your commands are in their own group:



Click Close and go to any code area. Select some code, right-click, and select Comment Selection:



It works perfectly, and you are all set to begin making your own modifications to your environment:

```
//public void LotsOfStuff()  
//{  
//    Fa();  
//}
```

01.13 Visual Studio Logging

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0048

There's no doubt Visual Studio is an awesome piece of software, but occasionally you might run into a problem loading it. Did you know that it comes with a logging switch? While the documentation (<http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms241272.aspx>) is lacking, the community comment contributed by Paul Harrington on the Visual Studio team helps a great deal.

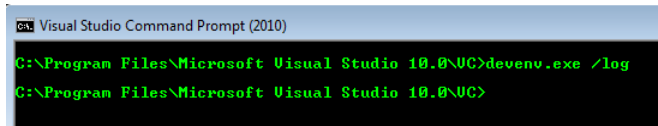
Essentially, the syntax is as follows:

```
devenv.exe /log [filename]
```

The [filename] is optional and, if not specified, the ActivityLog.xml file is called by default. The path to the log file is:

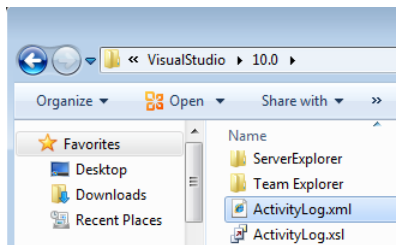
```
%APPDATA%\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version>\ActivityLog.xml
```

Give it a try. Go to the Visual Studio command prompt, and enter **devenv.exe /log**:

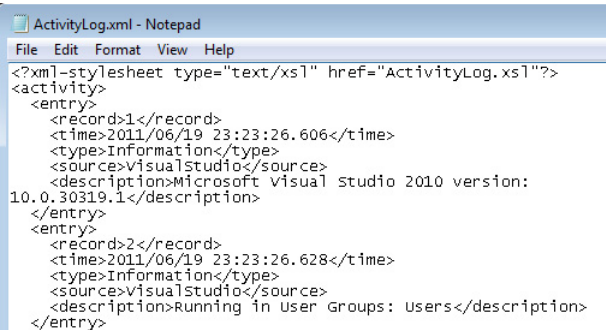


```
Visual Studio Command Prompt (2010)
C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\VC>devenv.exe /log
C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\VC>
```

You can then navigate to the file location:



When you open the log file, the following illustration provides an example of what you might see:

A screenshot of a Notepad window titled 'ActivityLog.xml - Notepad'. The menu bar shows 'File', 'Edit', 'Format', 'View', and 'Help'. The XML content is as follows:

```
<?xml-stylesheet type="text/xsl" href="ActivityLog.xsl"?>
<activity>
  <entry>
    <record>1</record>
    <time>2011/06/19 23:23:26.606</time>
    <type>Information</type>
    <source>VisualStudio</source>
    <description>Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 version:
10.0.30319.1</description>
  </entry>
  <entry>
    <record>2</record>
    <time>2011/06/19 23:23:26.628</time>
    <type>Information</type>
    <source>VisualStudio</source>
    <description>Running in User Groups: Users</description>
  </entry>
</activity>
```

Fortunately, an XML style sheet (XSL) comes with the data, so if you view the XML file in your browser, you can see a much cleaner view:

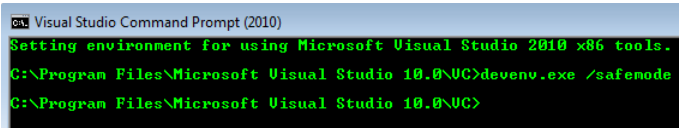
Activity Monitor Log		
infos	276	
warnings	1	
errors	0	
#	Type	Description
1		Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 version: 10.0.30319.1
2		Running in User Groups: Users
3		Available Drive Space: C:\ drive has 83539099648 bytes; D:\ drive has 51970506752 bytes
4		Internet Explorer Version: 8.0.7600.16821
5		.NET Framework Version: 4.0.31106.0

Now you can easily see the logging information and look for any issues.

01.14 Visual Studio Safe Mode

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0050

Occasionally you have a situation where Visual Studio might not start up correctly or at all. Using Visual Studio in safe mode, you can load only the default environment, services, and shipped versions of third-party packages to see whether the problem is caused by one or more third-party add-ins. Just go to the Visual Studio command prompt, and type **devenv.exe /safemode**:

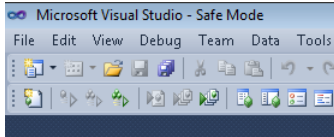
A screenshot of the 'Visual Studio Command Prompt (2010)' window. It shows the following text:

```
Setting environment for using Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 x86 tools.
C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\VC>devenv.exe /safemode
C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\VC>
```




Note Although I don't show it here, I suggest using the Visual Studio logging feature before running safe mode to see whether it can help you determine the source of the problem. For more information, see [vstipEnv0048](#), "Visual Studio Logging", page 37.

When Visual Studio starts up, it indicates it is running in safe mode in the title bar:



From here, you can start determining what might have caused Visual Studio to fail and remedy the issue.

01.15 The ResetSettings Switch

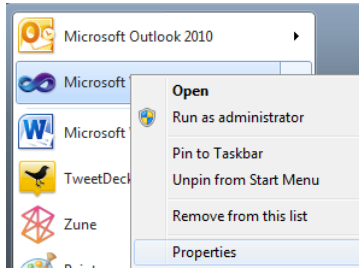
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0047

Visual Studio supports several switches. One of these is the `/ResetSettings` switch. When used by itself, it resets Visual Studio to the default settings you initially chose during install. That's nice, but an even better option is available that can be particularly useful for people in other scenarios.

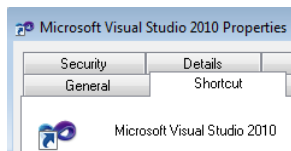
Let's take a classic example: You might have two (or more) monitors at work, but when you get home, you work with just one monitor. Your window layouts (among other things) could be very different in each place. In [vstipEnv0040](#), "Export Your Window Layouts" (page 134), I showed you how to export just your window layouts. Using the exported information, you could create and use two different window layouts: one for work and one for home. This tip shows you how to do this when using two different machines or the same machine at work and home.

Two Different Machines

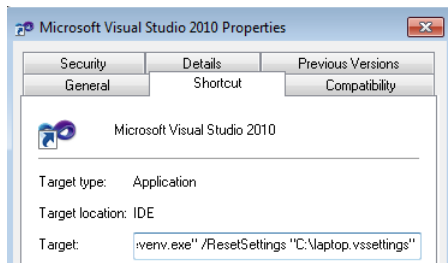
The question is: What do you do once you have exported the window layouts? Well, now you put the `.vssettings` files where you can easily get to them on your machines and then you go to the Properties dialog box of the Visual Studio program icon:



Click the Shortcut tab:



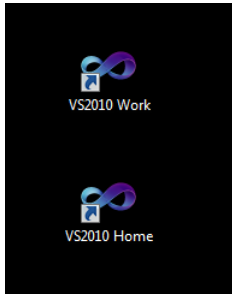
In the Target area, type **/ResetSettings [settings file]**, where [settings file] is the path to the settings file for one of your layouts:



Now Visual Studio loads up with the settings appropriate for your machine.

Same Machine

What if you use the same machine for home and work, like a laptop? Just make two copies of the Visual Studio program icon, put them somewhere (on your Desktop, most likely), and give them names:



Now just follow the steps for the different machines for each icon, and you can use one icon when you are at work to get the work window layouts and the other for home with the home window layout.

Chapter 2

Projects and Items

"He recalled his exertions and solicitations, and the history of his project [...], which had been accepted for consideration [...]"

—Leo Tolstoy, "War and Peace"

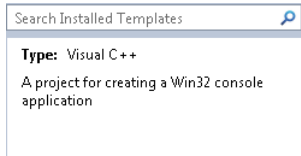
After you get past your initial customization of Visual Studio, you will start creating projects and items to get your work done. This section contains a group of resources that you will find useful early on. Some will definitely be more useful to beginners (for example, searching templates), and others will apply to more advanced users (such as creating custom templates).

On the subject of custom templates, make sure you read though (and practice) how to create them. Of all the topics in this chapter, I feel that creating custom project and item templates will save you the greatest amount of time. That's a pretty bold statement—but I have seen properly set up templates save untold hours for developers.

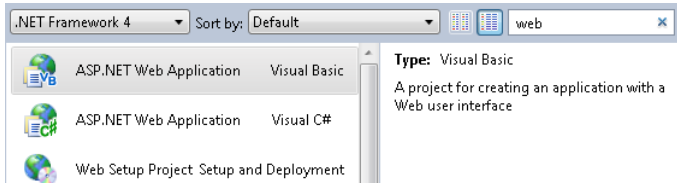
02.01 Search for Project Templates in the New Project Dialog Box

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+E (puts cursor in search box)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+N (new project); Ctrl+E (puts cursor in search box)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+E (puts cursor in search box)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+E (puts cursor in search box)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+E (puts cursor in search box)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+E (puts cursor in search box)
WINDOWS	Alt,F, N, P (new project dialog box); Alt,F, D, N (add new project)
MENU	File New Project; File Add New Project
COMMAND	File.NewProject; File.AddNewProject
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipProj0001

Did you know that you can search for templates in the New Project dialog box? Look in the upper-right corner, and notice the new search area.



Click there or press Ctrl+E, and type the word web into the search box. The following illustration shows what you should expect to see.



Good News

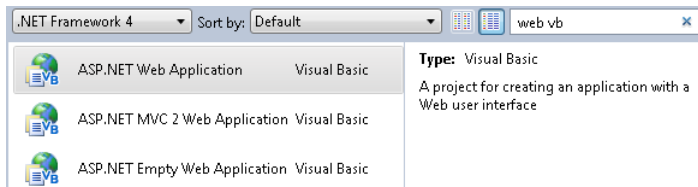
The search populates the middle pane with results from the recent, installed, or online lists, depending on which category you select.

Bad News

The search doesn't automatically filter the results according to your preferred language, and it doesn't support any advanced search options, such as Boolean searches, regular expressions, and so on.

More Good News

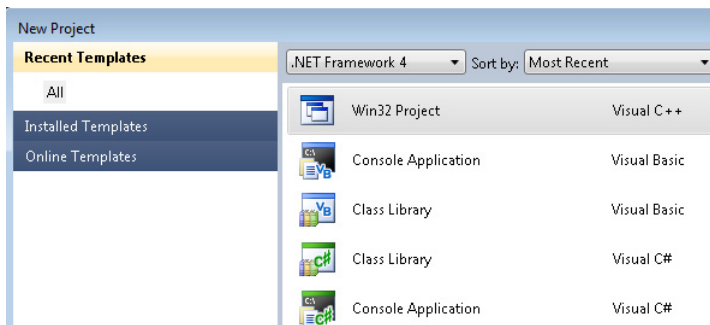
In most cases, you can easily filter on your language by simply typing in an abbreviation of your language (C#, VB, F#, or C++).



02.02 Recent Project Templates in the New Project Dialog Box

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+N (new project)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+N (new project dialog box)
WINDOWS	Alt,F, N, P (new project); Alt,F, D, N (add new project)
MENU	File New Project; File Add New Project
COMMAND	File.NewProject; File.AddNewProject
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipProj0002

In the Visual Studio 2010 New Project dialog box, you can get a list of your five most recently used templates. Just click Recent Templates to see a list of the templates you have used.

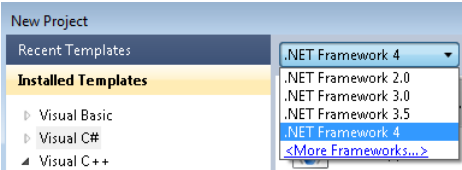


02.03 Using Older Frameworks with Multi-Targeting

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box); Ctrl+N (new project)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+N (new project dialog box)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+N (new project dialog box)
WINDOWS	Alt,F, N, P (new project); Alt,F, D, N (add new project)
MENU	File New Project; File Add New Project
COMMAND	File.NewProject; File.AddNewProject
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0005

Even if you use an older version of the Microsoft .NET Framework, you can still use all the great features in Visual Studio 2008 and Visual Studio 2010 through multi-targeting.

When you create a new project, locate the drop-down list of supported .NET Framework versions and simply choose the one you prefer. You get to use most of the great features in the new IDE but still keep your older version of the .NET Framework. The following graphic shows the New Project dialog box in Visual Studio 2010.



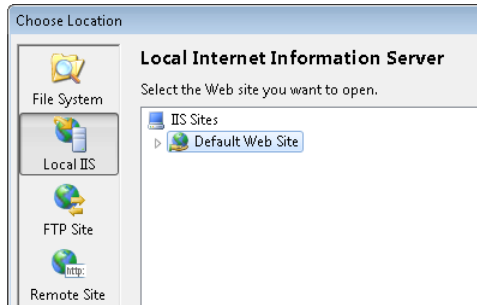
02.04

Create Web Application or Virtual Directory in IIS

DEFAULT	Shift+Alt+N
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+Alt+N
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Alt+N
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Alt+N
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Alt+N
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Alt+N
WINDOWS	Alt,F, N, W
MENU	File New Web Site
COMMAND	File.NewWebSite
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0058

How can you create Web Applications and Virtual Directories in Internet Information Server from inside Visual Studio? Just select File | New Web Site, and click Browse in the lower-right corner.

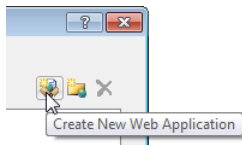
In the Choose Location dialog box, select Local IIS, and pick the website in which you want to create the new item.



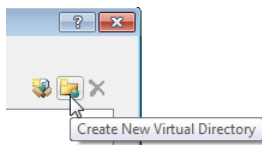
In the upper-right corner of the dialog box, notice the three buttons, as shown in the following illustration.



The button to the far left creates a new Web Application.



The middle button creates a new Virtual Directory.

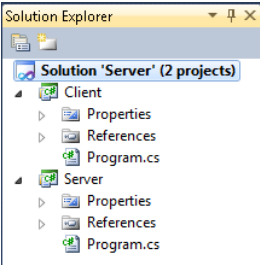


You can pick whichever one you want to create, without ever leaving Visual Studio.

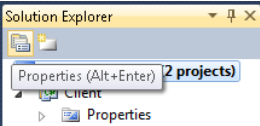
02.05 Multiple Startup Projects

DEFAULT	Alt+Enter (in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Alt+Enter (in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+Enter (in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+Enter (in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+Enter (in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+Enter (in Solution Explorer)
WINDOWS	Alt, P, P
MENU	Project Properties [with Solution Selected in Solution Explorer]; [Right-Click the solution in Solution Explorer] Properties
COMMAND	Project.Properties
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipEnv0015

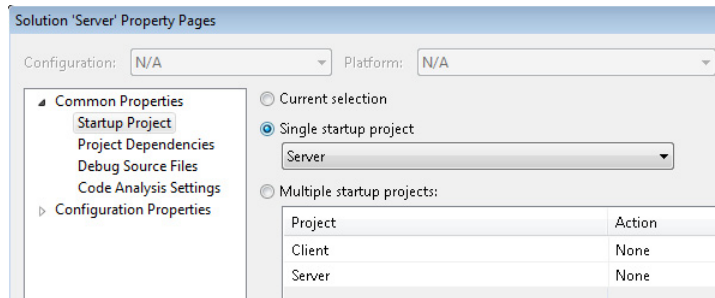
It's common for developers to work with multiple projects. For example, consider a classic Client/Server scenario: One project includes all the elements shown here:



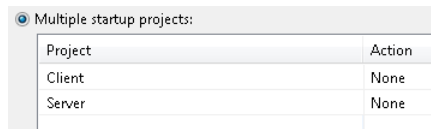
In this case, setting a single Startup Project isn't sufficient; you want both these projects to start up when you press F5. Just click the solution in Solution Explorer, and then click the Properties button (Alt+Enter) at the top.



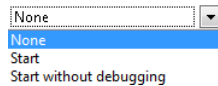
Make sure you are in the Common Properties | Startup Project area, and you should see a dialog box similar to the following.



Notice that, currently, Single Startup Project is selected, but that isn't what you need. Instead, select Multiple Startup Projects.



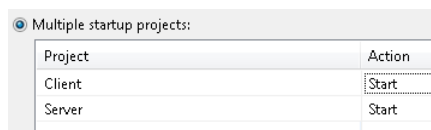
Now you need to indicate which action each project should take when you press F5. Click the drop-down in the Action field.



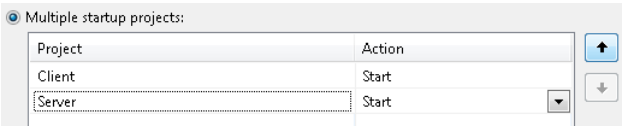
As shown in the preceding illustration, you see the following choices:

- **None**
Don't start this project.
- **Start**
Start with debugging.
- **Start without debugging**
Start without attaching the debugger.

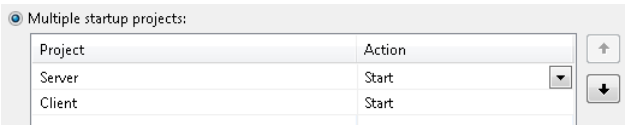
For this example, you would choose Start for both projects.



Now both projects start when you press F5. But there’s just one little problem: The Client project launches first, and you need the Server project to launch first. To set the launch order, use the buttons to the far right of the project list, as shown in the following illustration.



These buttons move the selected project up or down in the list so that you can arrange them to start in the order you would like. In this case, as shown in the following illustration, I’ve selected the Server project and then clicked the Move button to move it up in the startup order.



With the Server first in the list, you’re all set. When you press F5, you can see the server start and then the client.

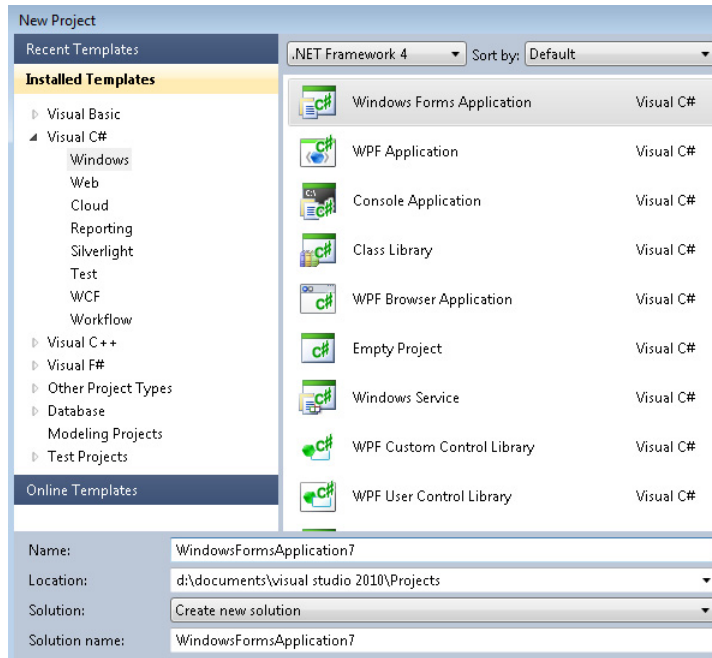
One interesting side effect of setting multiple startup projects is that the bold project name you normally see in Solution Explorer isn’t there—because there is more than one startup project.

02.06

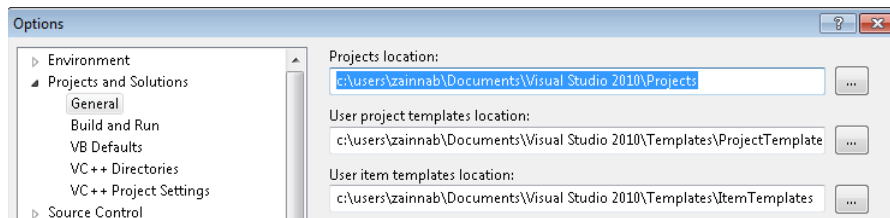
Change the Default New Project Location

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects And Solutions General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0006

You probably know that you can change the location for a new project in the New Project dialog box by entering a different location in the Location field.



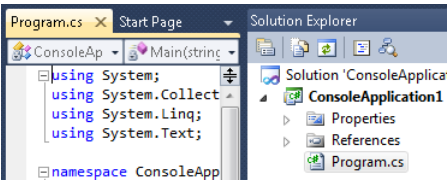
But if you do this often, did you know that you can change the default location so that you don't have to keep typing in custom paths? To change the default, select Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General from the menu bar. You'll see an Options dialog box, shown below, where you can change several default paths to suit your needs.



02.07 Track Active Item in Solution Explorer

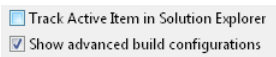
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects and Solutions General
COMMAND	View.TrackActivityinSolutionExplorer
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0011

By default, Visual Studio tracks the file you are currently editing in Solution Explorer. The Solution Explorer tool window highlights the current file.



As you switch between files in the editor, notice that Solution Explorer automatically highlights the file you’re currently editing. This is a great way to keep track of where you are in the solution when you are working with a lot of files.

If you don’t like the feature, you can turn it off. Just select Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General, and clear the Track Active Item In Solution Explorer check box shown in the following illustration.

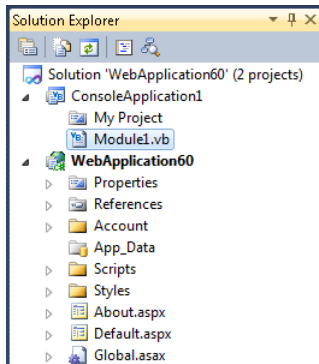


02.08

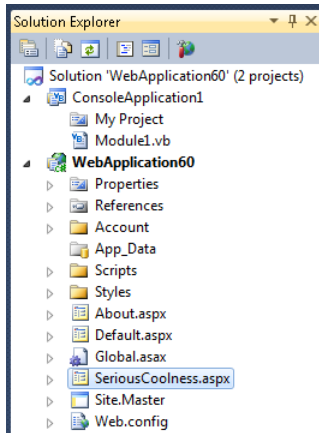
Type-Ahead Selection Support in Solution Explorer

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+L
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+R; Ctrl+Alt+L
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+W, S; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+S; Ctrl+Alt+L
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+O; Ctrl+Alt+L
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+L
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
WINDOWS	Alt,V, P
MENU	View Solution Explorer
COMMAND	View.SolutionExplorer
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0010

Have you ever had a big list of files in Solution Explorer and wanted to jump to a specific file very quickly? Just click anywhere in Solution Explorer, and start typing the name of the file you want. For example, suppose you have a solution with multiple projects:



Assume you need to find a file called `SeriousCoolness`. To find it, click in Solution Explorer and then just start typing the name. Solution Explorer finds the file for you as you type.



What if you don't know the whole name—just that it starts with an “S”? No worries! Just type **S** several times, and the selection cycles through all the files that begin with that letter.



Note The type-ahead feature works only with items that have been expanded, so if you have collapsed folders or projects in Solution Explorer, the tool cannot search within those areas.

02.09 Using Solution Folders

WINDOWS	(with Solution selected) Alt,P, D
MENU	(with Solution selected) Project Add New Solution Folder; [Right-Click Solution] Add New Solution Folder
COMMAND	(with Solution selected) Project.AddNewSolutionFolder
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0009

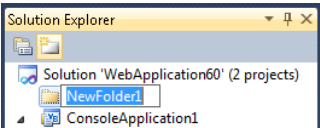
Did you know that Visual Studio provides special folders that can help you organize large solutions? They are called, appropriately enough, “Solution Folders.”



Note Solution Folders are an organizational tool in Solution Explorer; creating one doesn’t create a corresponding Windows file system folder. Microsoft recommends that you organize your projects on disk in the same way that you organize them in the Solution Folder. But of course, you’re free to organize them as you like.

Adding Solution Folders

To create a Solution Folder, right-click your solution (or, with the solution selected, go to Project | Add New Solution Folder). Solution Explorer adds a new folder, which you can type a name for.

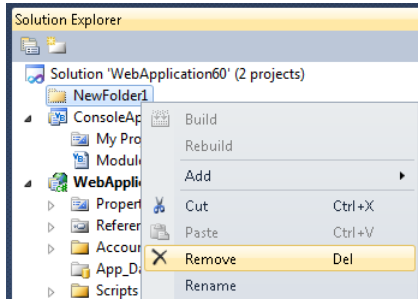


After you enter a name for the new folder, press Enter, and you’re done. So what can you actually do with these things? It turns out, quite a lot:

- Move or add projects to them. Solution Folders can be nested to create greater organizational structure.
- Add, delete, or rename Solution Folders at any time, if the organizational requirements of your solution change.
- Unload all projects in a Solution Folder to make them temporarily unavailable for building.
- Collapse or hide entire Solution Folders so that you can work more easily in Solution Explorer. Hidden projects are built when you build the solution.
- Build or rebuild all the projects. The projects are built in the order specified by the project dependencies.

Removing Solution Folders

If you want to get rid of a folder, just right-click it and choose Remove to delete it, or alternatively, select it and press the Delete key.

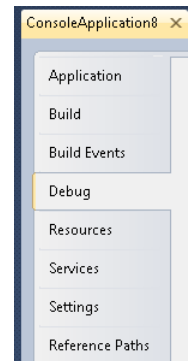


02.10 Navigating Property Tabs in the Project Properties

DEFAULT	Ctrl+PgUp; Ctrl+PgDn
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+PgUp; Ctrl+PgDn
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+PgUp; Ctrl+PgDn
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+PgUp; Ctrl+PgDn
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+PgUp; Ctrl+PgDn
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+PgUp; Ctrl+PgDn
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.PreviousTab; Window.NextTab
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0023

When you are looking at your project's properties, you might have wondered whether you can navigate among the property tabs by using the keyboard.

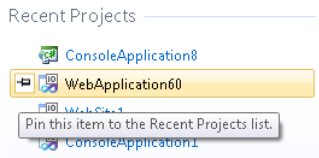
It turns out that you can. Just use Ctrl+PgUp or Ctrl+PgDn to move between the property tabs. This also works for properties in C++ projects if you want to quickly navigate among the categories.



02.11 Pin a Project to the Recent Projects List

VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0003

Tired of your projects getting pushed out of the Recent Projects list on the Start Page? You can pin projects to the Recent Projects list in Visual Studio 2010 so that they stay around until you unpin them.

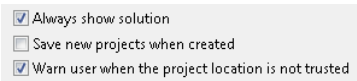


Pinned projects do not stay at the top of the list; instead, they’re sorted according to when you use them. In other words, the most recent project is on top—pinned or not. Pinning guarantees only that the project will not be pushed out of the list.

02.12 Creating Temporary Projects

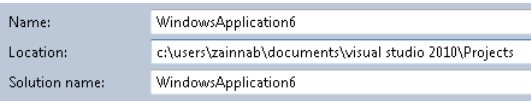
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects and Solutions General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0010

Temporary projects are particularly useful for showing a colleague some trick or technique quickly, or for performing ad hoc demos. To create temporary projects, select Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General and clear the Save New Projects When Created check box, as shown in the following illustration.

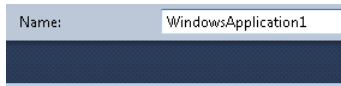


While convenient, the option has some side effects. For example, when you subsequently create a new project, the New Project dialog box does not show the usual “save” fields at the bottom of the dialog box.

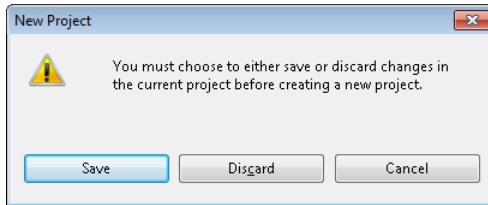
Before:



After:



The good news is that now you can create projects all day long but can choose to either save or discard the changes when the solution is closed.



Note You can still save changes to a project—even a temporary project—anytime you like if you decide you want to keep the code around. When you decide to save, your AutoRecover settings take over. For more information, see vstipEnv0019 (“Autorecover”, page 10).

02.13 Create Your Own Item Template

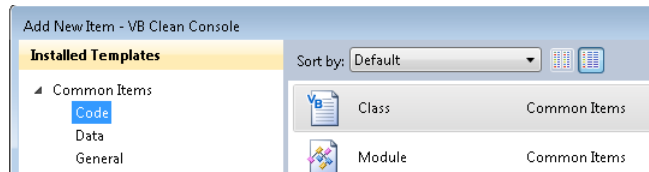
WINDOWS	Alt,F, E
MENU	File Export Template
COMMAND	File.ExportTemplate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipProj0013

Have you ever used or created a template in Microsoft Word, Excel, or PowerPoint? Unless you live in a cave, the answer is most likely “yes.” Just as with the Microsoft Office products, you can create and use your own templates in Visual Studio. This tip shows you how to make your own item template. Sometimes you just want to customize an individual item that you use frequently in projects. Class files are a perfect example of this type of scenario. Here’s an example.

Create a new project, and then add a class to it (Ctrl+Shift+A).



Note The process is the same regardless of which language you’re using.



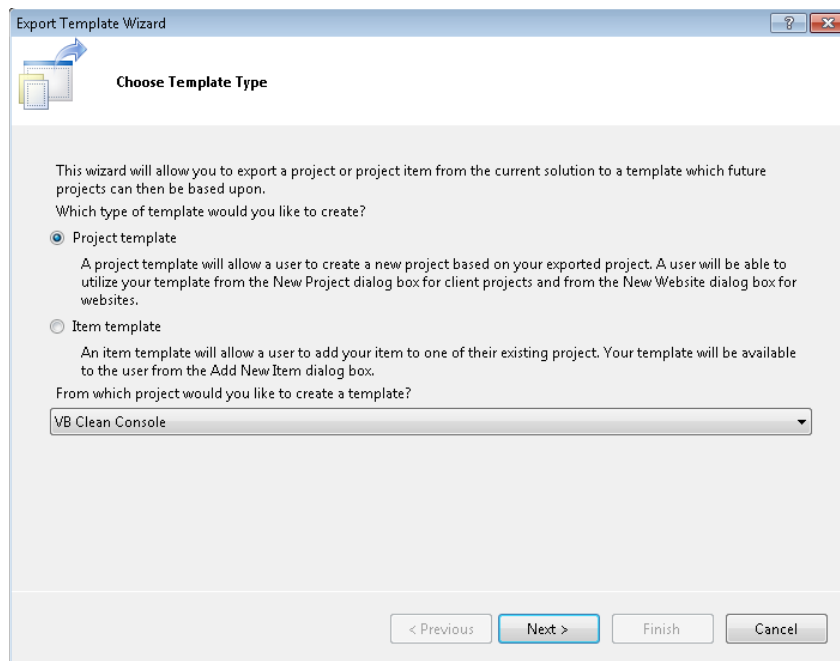
Now modify the class code so that it looks the way you would like your item template to look, and save your changes to the file.

```
3 Imports System.DirectoryServices
4
5 ' company required comments here
6 Friend Class Class1
7     ' todo put your connection string here
8
9 End Class
10
```

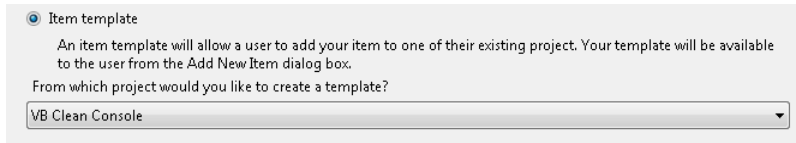
At this point, you can export the item template so that you can use it in future projects. Select File | Export Template to start the Export Template Wizard.



Note You are prompted to save changes to your project if you haven't already done so.



Select Item Template, and select the project that currently contains the item you want to export (if you have more than one project in your solution).



☒ Item template

An item template will allow a user to add your item to one of their existing project. Your template will be available to the user from the Add New Item dialog box.

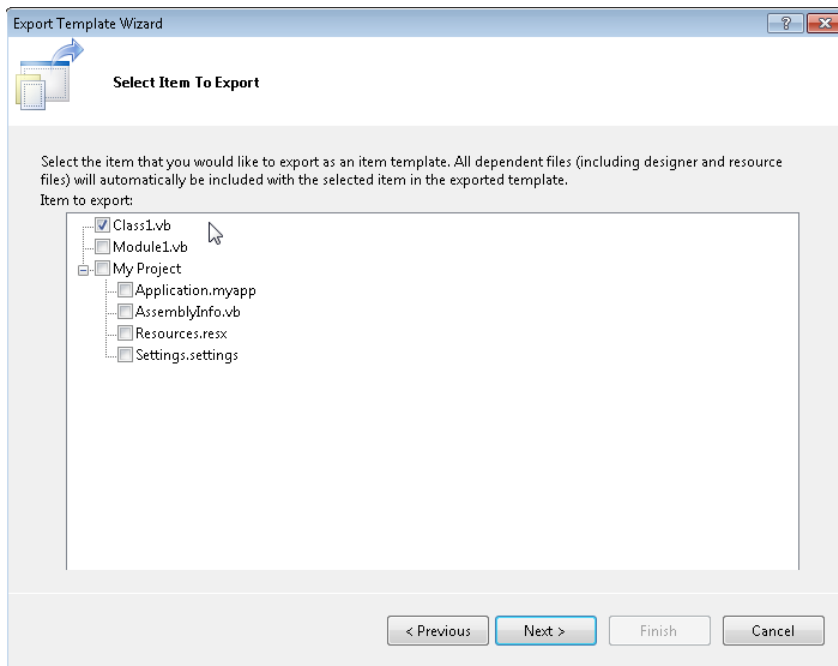
From which project would you like to create a template?

VB Clean Console

Click Next and then select the item to export as a template.



Note The wizard automatically selects any dependent files as needed based on your selection. Also, even though it looks like you can select more than one item here, you can only select a single item in this list.



Export Template Wizard

Select Item To Export

Select the item that you would like to export as an item template. All dependent files (including designer and resource files) will automatically be included with the selected item in the exported template.

Item to export:

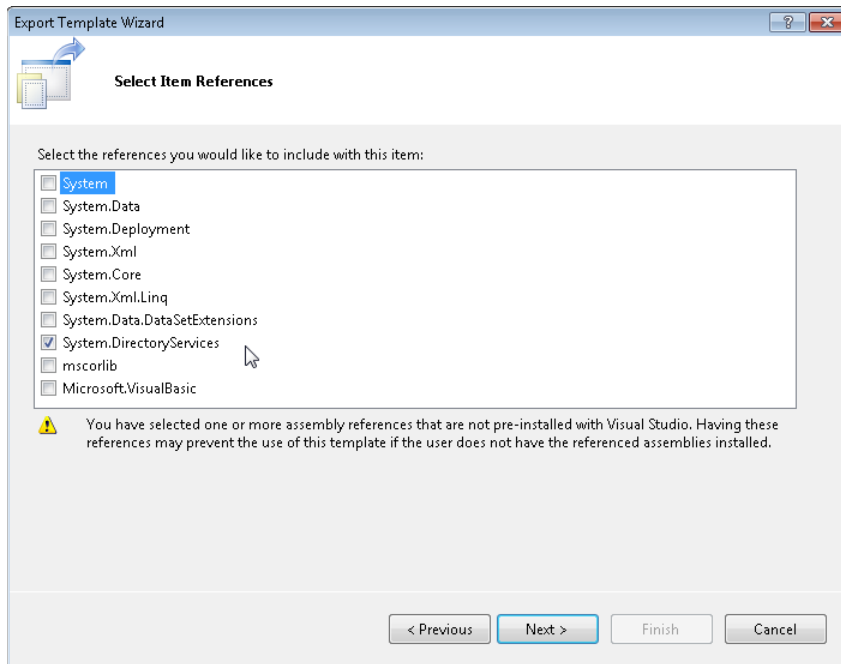
- ☒ Class1.vb
- ☐ Module1.vb
- ☐ My Project
 - ☐ Application.myapp
 - ☐ AssemblyInfo.vb
 - ☐ Resources.resx
 - ☐ Settings.settings

< Previous Next > Finish Cancel

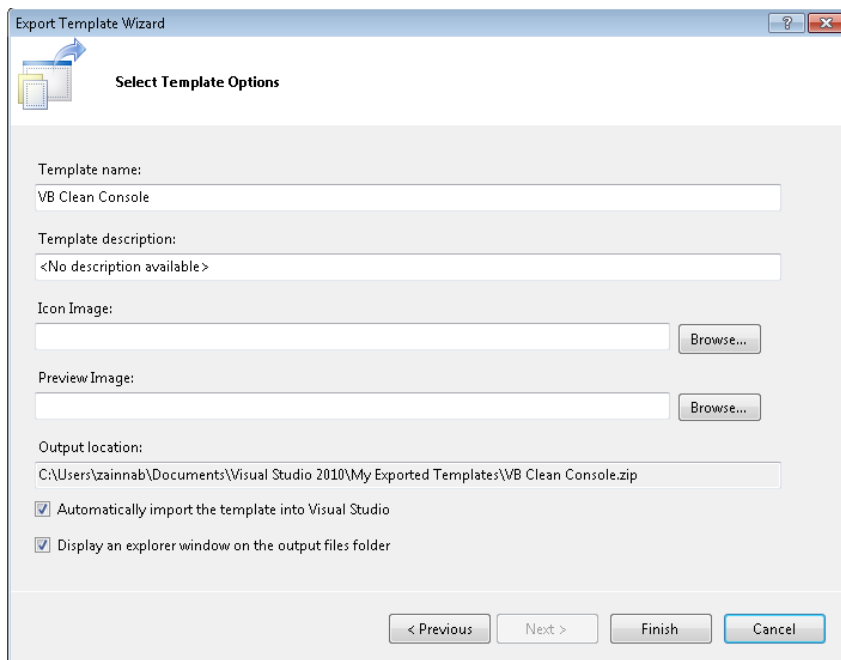
Click Next again. Now you can select any references that you want included with the item. If you have any Using or Imports statements, you need to pick the references here or the template will not work correctly.



Note The wizard generates this list of assemblies from the assembly references in the current project. If the assembly you want to reference does not appear in the list, exit the wizard and add the reference to your project, and then run the wizard again.



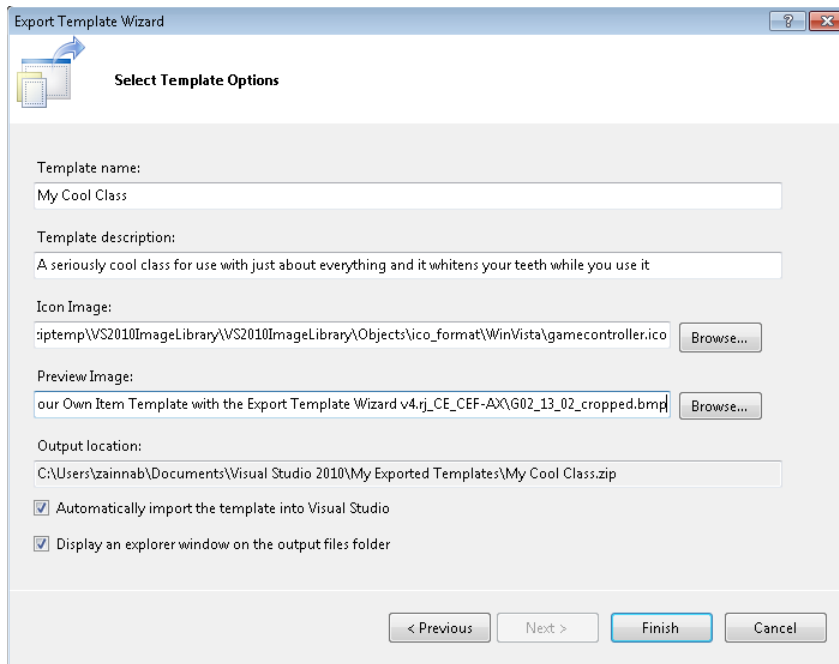
Click Next. As you can see from the following illustration, you can add quite a bit of information.



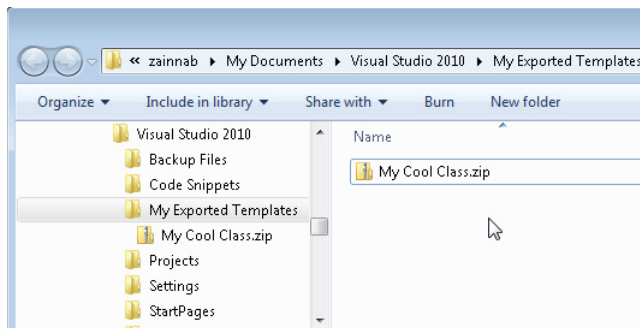
Here's a description of the information you can add:

- **Template Name** The friendly name for the template that Visual Studio displays in the list of templates. I suggest keeping this to around 50–60 characters. Don't get too verbose here.
- **Template Description** A short description that provides a little more detail about the template's purpose. In this text box, I want you to get very descriptive. This is your one and only chance to make it perfectly clear what this template should be used for, so don't skimp on detail.
- **Icon Image** A small image that represents the icon for the item. I suggest you just leave this blank.
- **Preview Image** A larger image that provides a preview of what the template looks like. As with the Icon Image field, I suggest you leave this blank.
- **Output Location** The location where the wizard stores exported items. This is the initial storage location of your templates. To be clear, they are not usable in Visual Studio when they are just created. To make them useable in Visual Studio, you need to check Automatically Import The Template Into Visual Studio. Leave this as-is unless you are storing your templates on a network share somewhere. If you do change this value, make sure you use the new location consistently when you create templates or you will wind up forgetting where you put them.
- **Automatically Import The Template Into Visual Studio** Lets you decide whether you want to import the template right away or want to do it manually later. This "import" is just a copy of the .zip file created in the appropriate location in My Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Templates\ItemTemplates. By doing this, the template immediately becomes usable in Visual Studio.
- **Display An Explorer Window On The Output Files Folder** Opens up the location where the template files are stored after they are created. This is useful when you want to see the .zip file that is created. It's interesting the first few times you do it, but then it's pretty much a waste of time. You will wind up turning off this option most of the time.

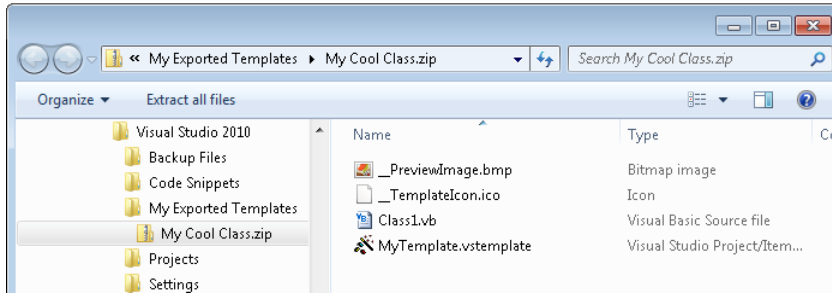
The following illustration shows the settings I used for this example.



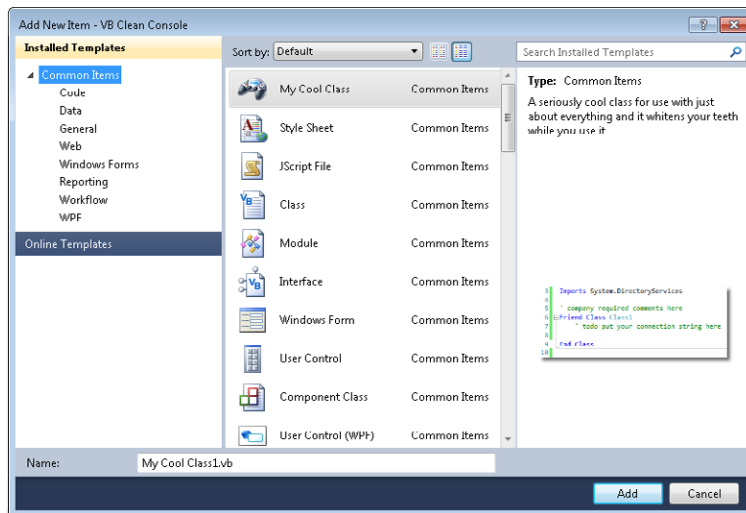
To complete the wizard, click Finish. The wizard closes and opens up the output file location, showing the .zip file that contains the exported templates.



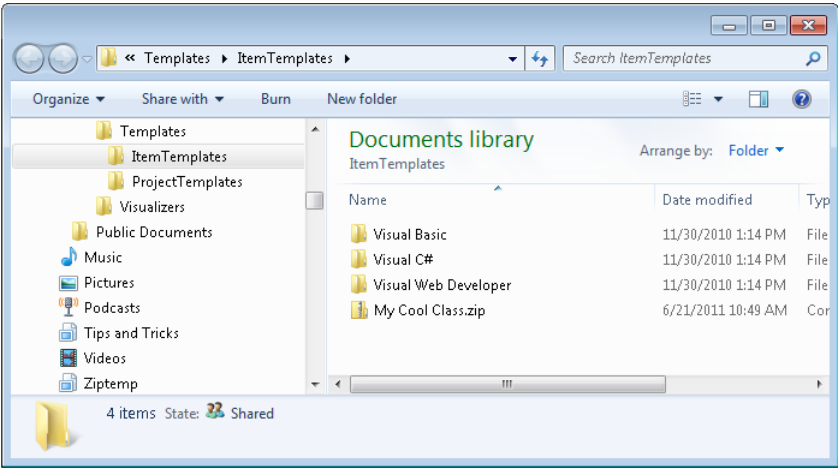
Although you aren't interested in the details right now, if you explore inside the .zip file, you can see the files that make up an item template.



Finally, test your new template. Create a new item (Ctrl+Shift+A), and you should see the new template. Notice the Icon Image next to the name of the item and the Preview Image (the Visual Studio 2010 logo in the lower-right) that is below the description. I feel that the names and descriptions are critical but really don't see a lot of value in the icons.



You can also see the template in the My Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Templates\ItemTemplates\ folder.



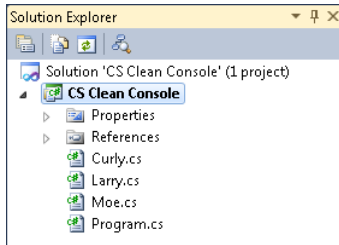
If you aren't happy with your new template, just delete the .zip file from this directory; it no longer shows up in the Add New Item dialog box.

02.14 Roll Your Own Project Template with the Export Template Wizard

WINDOWS	Alt,F, E
MENU	File Export Template
COMMAND	File.ExportTemplate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0004

Are you always adding the same extra files to projects when you create them? Ever wish you could have it all just “be there”? Well, you can when you become familiar with the Export Template Wizard.

First, set up an existing project template the way you want it. All changes (new files, code, interfaces, and so on) will be used in the template you create. In this simple example, I always want to include larry, curly, and moe C# class files with my console applications.

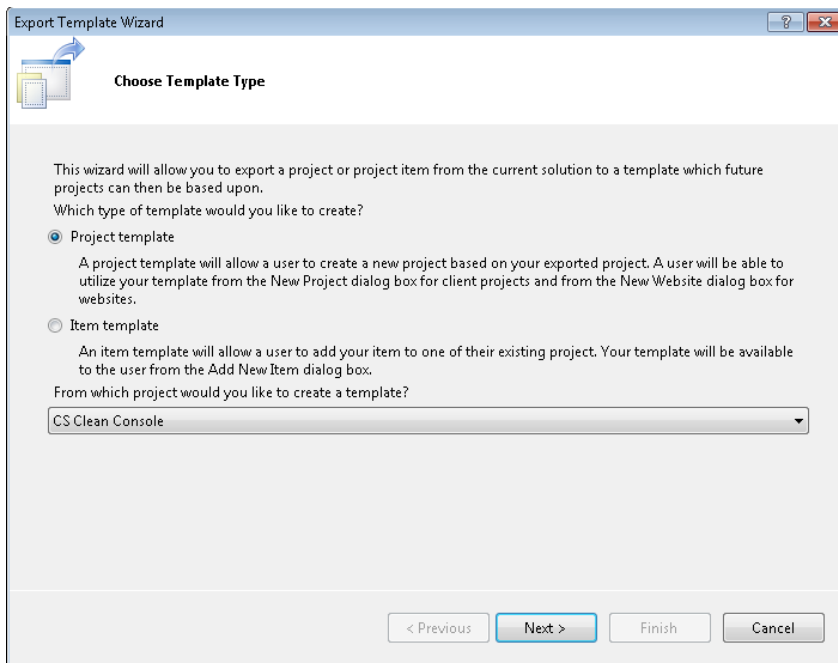


Now select File | Export Template from the menu bar.

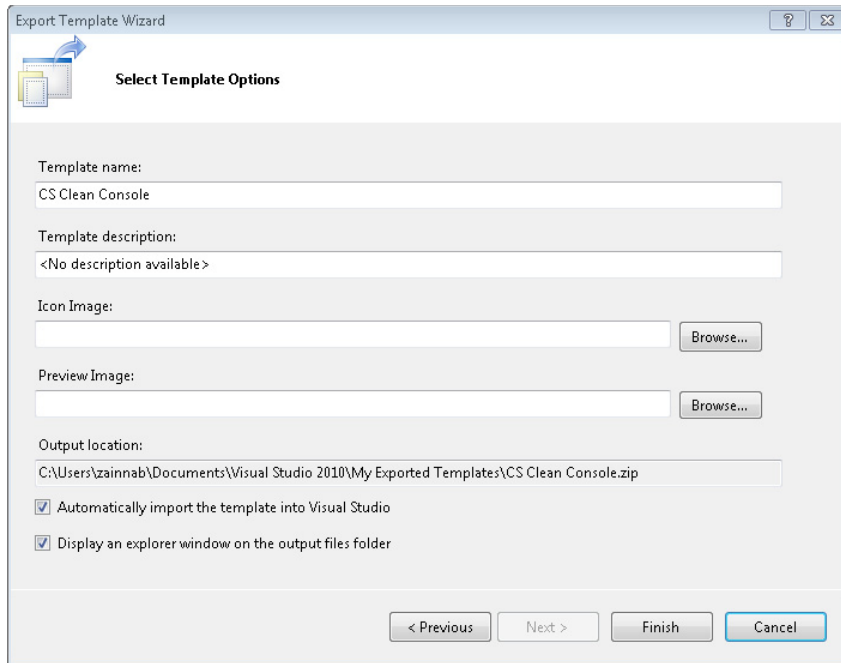


Note Choosing Export Template prompts you to save any pending changes if you haven't already.

You'll see the Export Template Wizard. From this first screen, you can choose to make either a Project template or an Item template.



For this example, I selected Project Template and then clicked Next to continue to the Select Template Options screen, shown in the following illustration.

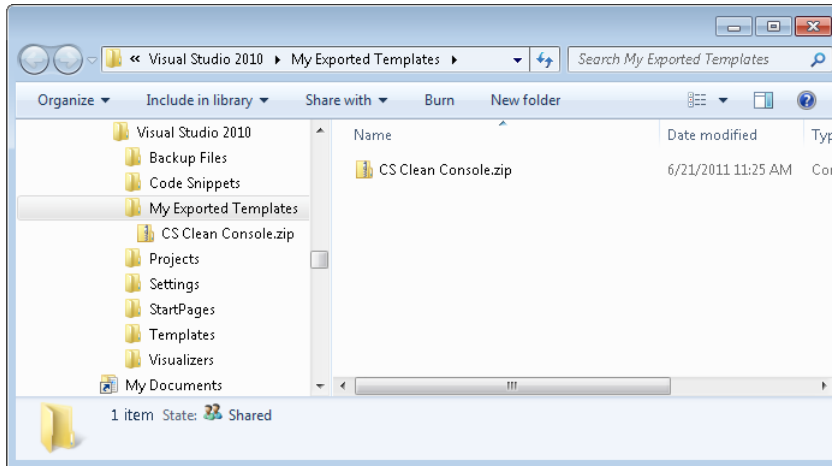


The following list provides a brief description of each option:

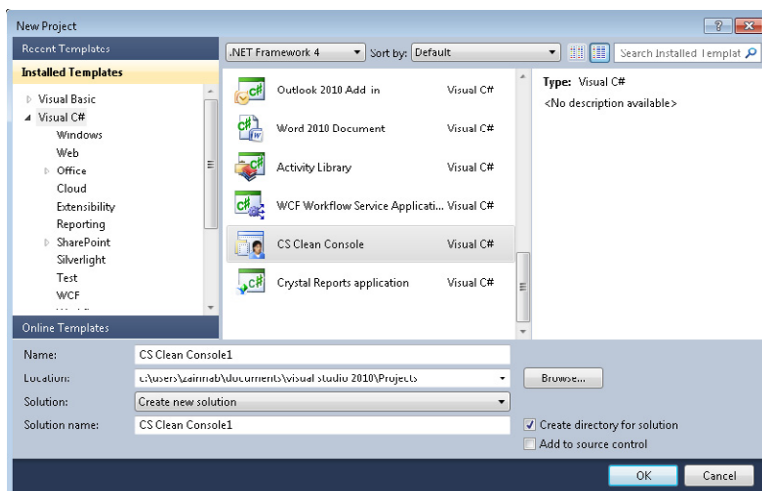
- **Template Name** The friendly name for the template that Visual Studio displays in the list of templates. I suggest keeping this to around 50–60 characters. Don't get too verbose here.
- **Template Description** A more complete explanation of how this template is intended to be used. This is your one and only opportunity for you to be very clear on the proper usage for this template.
- **Icon Image and Preview Image** The images used with the template name (icon image) and just below the description (preview image). I suggest you don't bother setting these because they don't have much use, in my opinion.
- **Output Location** The location where the wizard saves the .zip file that it creates. The default value is usually what you will stick with unless you have, say, a network share where you want your templates to stored.
- **Automatically Import The Template Into Visual Studio** Controls whether the wizard puts a copy of the new template to your templates directory: My Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Templates\ProjectTemplates. If you want the template to be available the next time you create a new project, select this option. Most of the time you should leave this option selected.

- **Display An Explorer Window On The Output Files Folder** Controls what happens when you complete the wizard. When selected, it displays the folder containing the .zip file that the wizard saves. After the first few times you create templates, this option can get tiresome, so I usually turn it off. I suggest you leave it on the first few times you create templates to see the template that is created.

After filling out the wizard and clicking Finish, the wizard closes and opens up my Exported Templates (output) folder, where I can see the new .zip file containing the template files.



Now, when I create a new application, the new template appears, visible in the New Project dialog box.



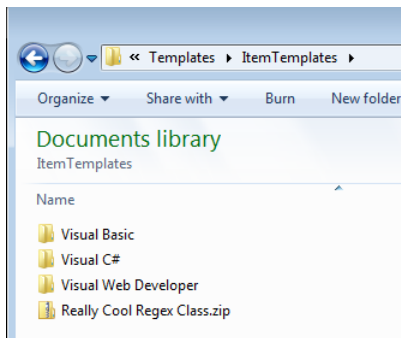
Obviously, this is a simple example; you can do a lot more with templates, and I suggest you visit the “Export Template Wizard” documentation, at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms185318.aspx>, for more detailed information about how to make good use of this feature.

02.15 Organizing Your Custom Item Templates

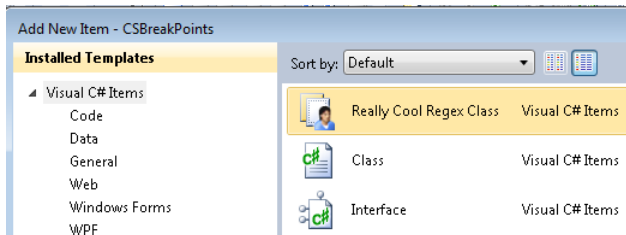
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0020

In vstipProj0013 (“Roll Your Own Item Template with the Export Template Wizard”, page 57), I showed you how to create custom item templates but didn’t show you how to organize them.

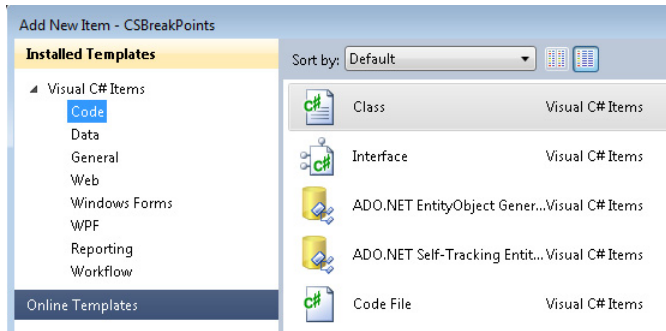
Fortunately, organizing them is pretty easy. After you have created your template(s), navigate to the folder My Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Templates\ItemTemplates. For example, on my machine, the path is My Documents\Visual Studio 2010\Templates\ItemTemplates.



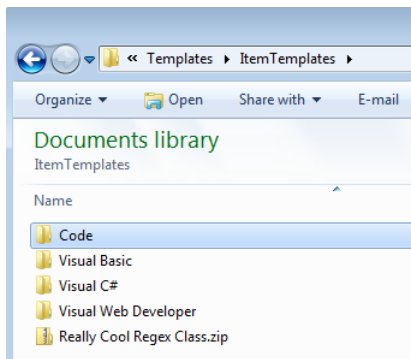
As you can see in the preceding illustration, I have a custom item—a class called “Really Cool Regex Class.” Unfortunately, when I want to use it and I bring up the Add New Item (Ctrl+Shift+A) dialog box, that class shows up in the root list.



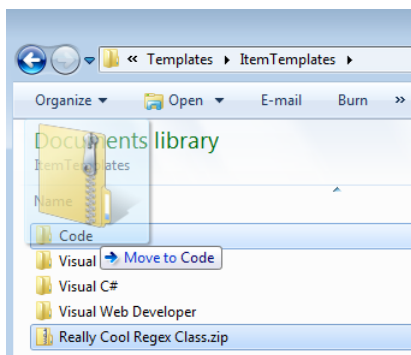
I want it to show up in the Code area, but it doesn’t.



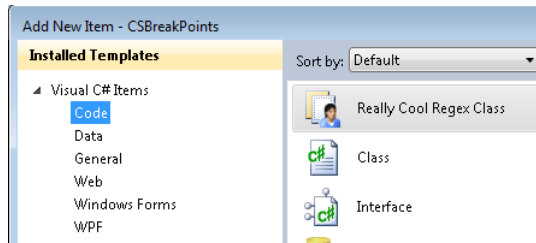
To get the custom template to show up in the Code area, you need to go back to the ItemTemplates directory and create a new folder named Code.



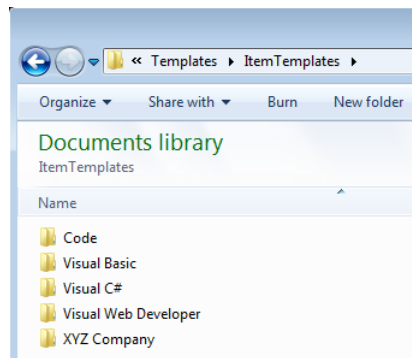
Then move the custom template into the Code folder.



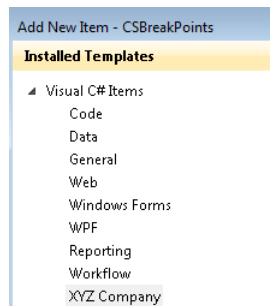
Now whenever I press Ctrl+Shift+A to add a new item, my custom template appears in the Code section.



In addition to working with existing folder names, you can create custom names as well. If, for example, you wanted an XYZ Company folder for your templates you would just create one and put your templates in there:



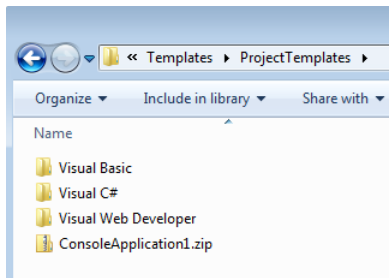
Now, when you go to add a new item, you will see your new folder in the dialog box:



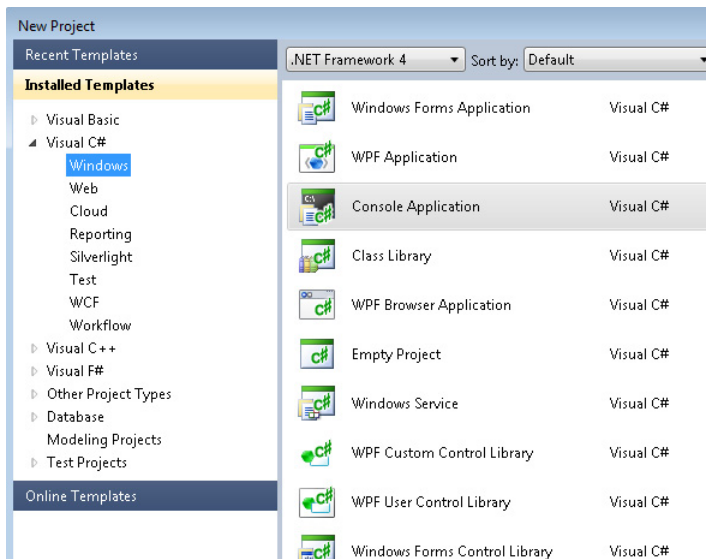
02.16 Organizing Your Custom Project Templates

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0019

In vstipProj0004 (“Roll Your Own Project Template with the Export Template Wizard”, page 64), we discussed how to create custom project templates, but it doesn’t show you how to organize them. Fortunately, that’s pretty easy. After you have created one or more custom project templates, browse to My Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Templates\ProjectTemplates. For example, on my machine, the full path is My Documents\Visual Studio 2010\Templates\ProjectTemplates.

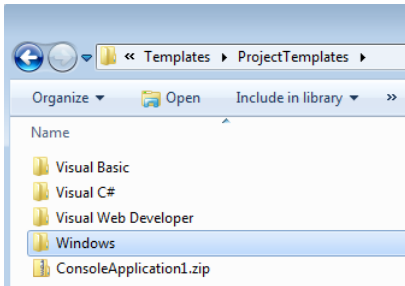


As the preceding illustration shows, I created a custom Console application project type for this example with the name ConsoleApplication1. By default, custom project templates don’t show up in the project subfolders.

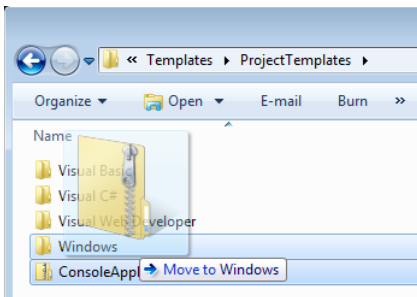


To get the custom templates to appear, the trick is to create a new folder in that directory with a name that matches where you want the template(s) to show up. You place custom templates in this new folder—and then they show up in the appropriate areas.

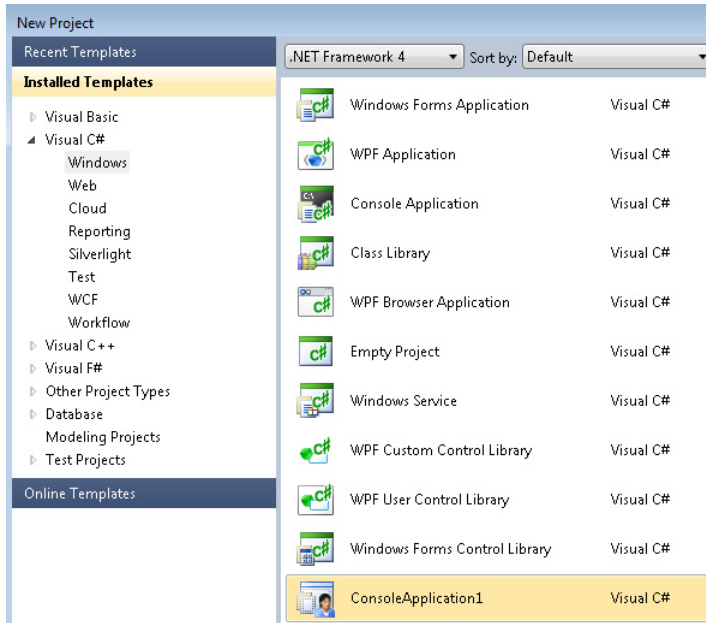
To do this, return to the My Documents\Visual Studio <version>\Templates\ProjectTemplates directory and create a new folder called Windows—to match the Windows area in the New Project dialog box, which is where we want the new Console template to appear.



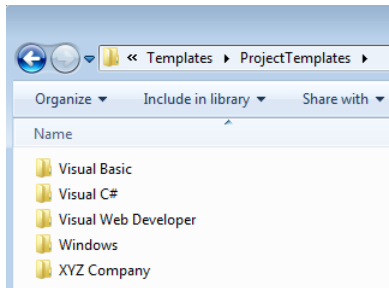
Move your template into the new folder. For this example, I moved ConsoleApplication1.zip into the Windows folder.



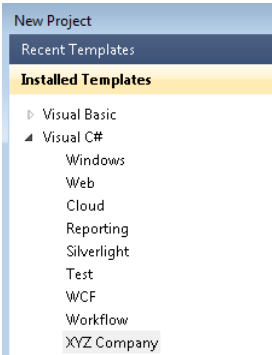
The next time you open up the New Project dialog box (Ctrl+Shift+N), it shows the project template in the proper area.



In addition to matching the existing folder names, you can create new ones. If you want a custom area for your company templates, for example, you would just create a folder with your company name and put at least one template in the folder:



The next time you bring up the New Project dialog box, it will show your new subfolder in the list:



02.17

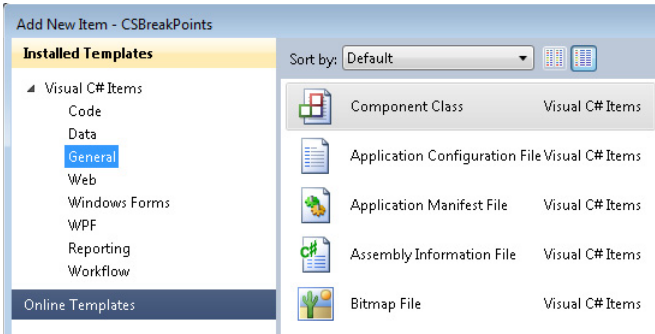
Reorganize the Default Item Templates

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0021

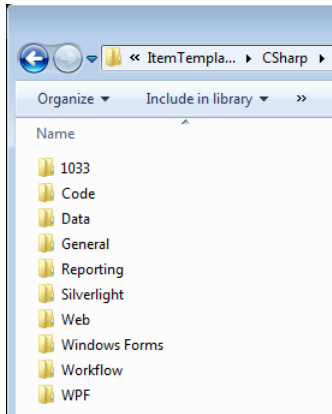


Warning The procedures in this tip could cause your templates to disappear if you don’t follow the instructions carefully. So do this at your own risk. You might want to back up your ItemTemplates folder just to be safe.

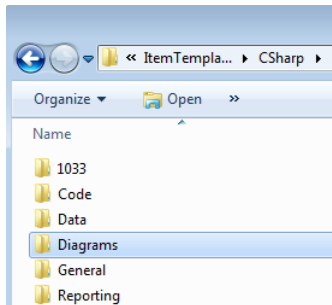
You’ve probably noticed that General section of the New Item dialog box contains a large number of items. If you want to organize those a bit more, this tip shows you how to create custom areas in which you can store the default item templates that ship with Visual Studio. This example creates a Diagram area for the diagram items that—by default—appear in the General section.



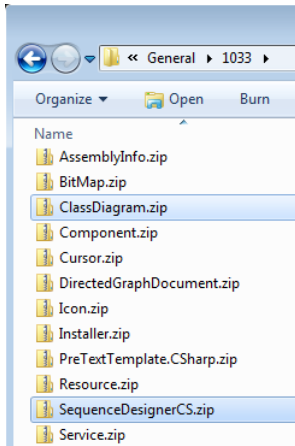
To get started, find where Visual Studio stores item templates on your machine. Typically, this is in `C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio <version>\Common7\IDE\ItemTemplates\<language>`. You might have to drill down into the file structure, depending on what items you're looking for, and the path might be slightly different on your machine, based on your Visual Studio version. In this case, the actual full path on my machine is `C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\Common7\IDE\ItemTemplates\CSharp`.



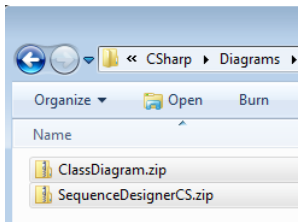
When you've found the template location for your language, create a new folder. For this example, I created a folder called Diagrams.



Now go into the General\1033 folder, and locate the diagram .zip files you want, as shown in the following illustration.

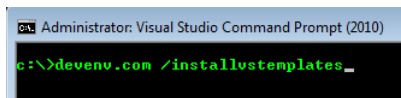


Now carefully move them to the new Diagrams folder.

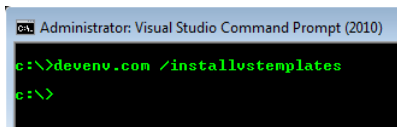


Close all instances of Visual Studio, and then run the following command from the Visual Studio command prompt (must be run with administrative privileges) :

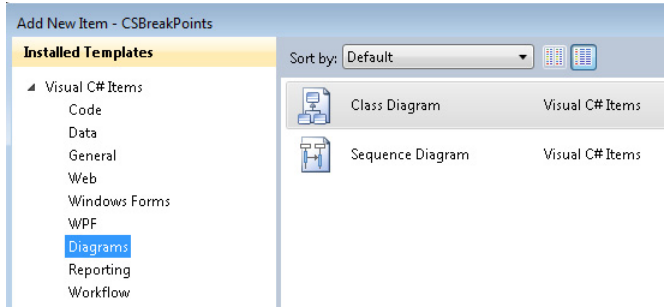
`devenv.com /installvstemplates`



Warning Let this process complete without interfering. It is extremely important that you let the process finish. The devenv.com command runs without any user interface. You know it is done when another cursor shows up:



When the process completes, open up Visual Studio, and then open any project. Bring up the Add New Item dialog box (Ctrl+Shift+A). Notice your brand new Diagrams area, with the templates you moved there inside it.



02.18 Reorganize the Default Project Templates

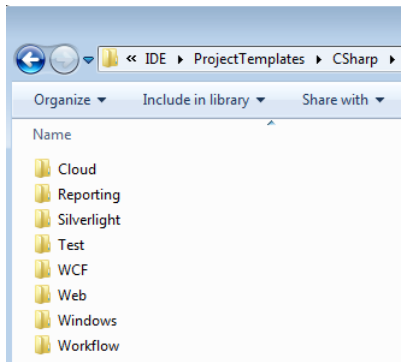
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0018



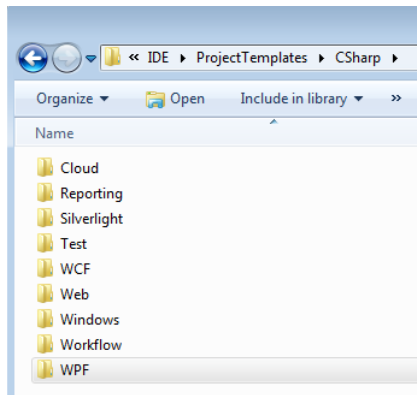
Warning The procedures in this tip could cause some of your templates to disappear unless you follow the instructions carefully. So do this at your own risk. You might want to back up your ProjectTemplates folder just to be safe.

Maybe it's just me, but I get really annoyed that, for example, my WCF project templates are in a WCF section when I go to create a new project—but my WPF projects are under "Windows." That just doesn't seem intuitive. So this example shows you how you can create custom areas for the default project templates that ship with Visual Studio. In this example, you create a WPF area for your WPF project templates.

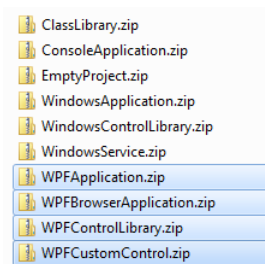
You need to find the location where your version of Visual Studio stores project templates. Typically, that's in C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio <version>\Common7\IDE\ProjectTemplates\<language>. You might need to explore the file system to find the templates, and your path might be slightly different, based on which Visual Studio version you're running. For example, the actual full path on my machine for C# templates is C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\Common7\IDE\ProjectTemplates\CSharp.



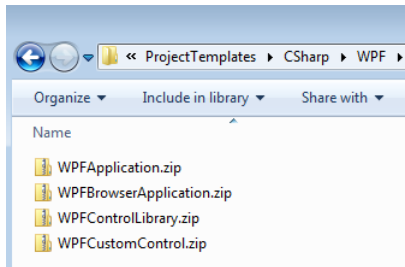
Now create a new folder, and name it "WPF."



These next steps are potentially dangerous, so be careful. Navigate to the Windows folder (actually Windows\1033\), and locate the WPF templates.

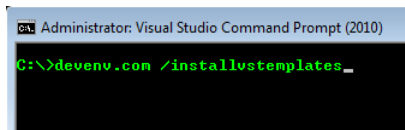


Move these .zip files into the new folder you just created.

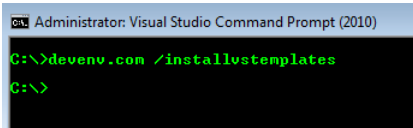


Close all instances of Visual Studio, and then run the following command from the Visual Studio command prompt, which you can find on your Start menu:

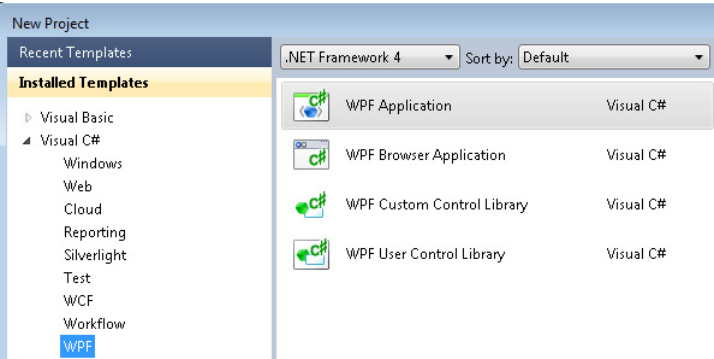
```
devenv.com /installvstemplates
```



Warning It is very important that you let this process finish without interruption. The devenv.com command runs without any user interface. You know it is done when the command prompt shows up again:



When the process completes, open up Visual Studio, and open the New Project dialog box (Ctrl+Shift+N) to see your brand-new WPF area containing the WPF templates, as shown in the following illustration.



Note While researching how to do this, I experimented with copying the templates instead of moving them. However, Visual Studio apparently detects duplicate template names and doesn't allow you to have multiple copies in different locations. So I wound up with an empty WPF section; the templates stayed in their original Windows section. I suspect this is dependent on load order—and my tests indicate Visual Studio loads the known default directories first, so having a folder called “Abacus” to beat the sort order doesn't work.

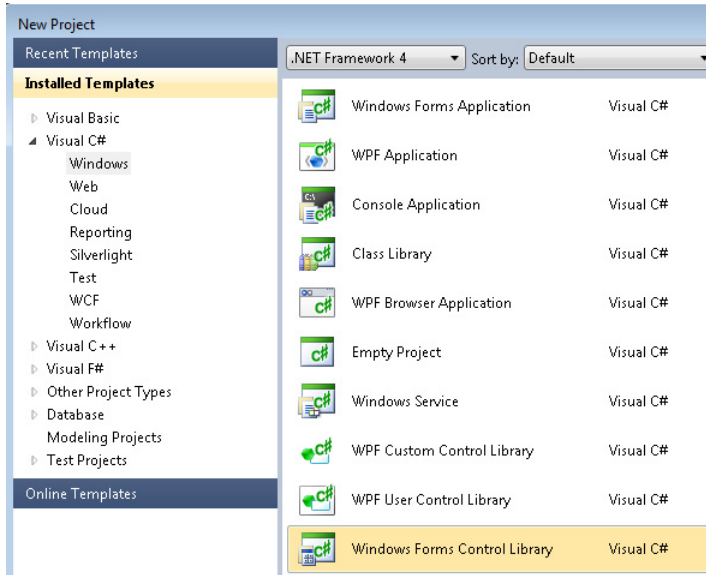
02.19 Change the Templates that Appear in the New Project or Item Dialog Boxes

VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0017

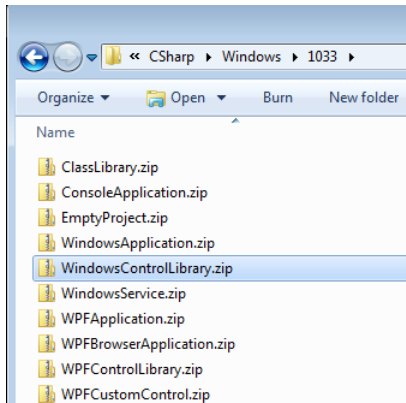


Warning: Manipulating templates as discussed here can cause serious problems if you don't know what you are doing. Use this information at your own risk. You should consider backing up your ProjectTemplates or ItemTemplates folders.

With all the great changes to the New Project and New Item dialog boxes, you might be perfectly happy with the list of things that Visual Studio presents by default. But for argument's sake, suppose you want to get rid of some of the entries. This example removes the C# Windows Forms Control Library from the New Project dialog box (Ctrl+Shift+N), but you can follow the same steps to remove or change items in the New Item dialog box.



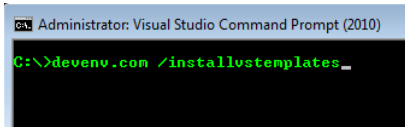
Navigate to the location where your version of Visual Studio stores templates for your selected language. Typically, that's `C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio <version>\Common7\IDE\<Project or Item>Templates\<language>\<project category>`. You might have to explore a little; your path might be slightly different, based on which Visual Studio version you're running. On my machine, the path to the Windows Forms Control Library .zip file is `C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\Common7\IDE\ProjectTemplates\CSharp\Windows`.



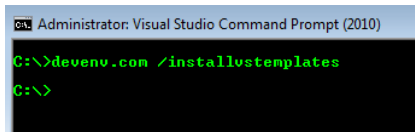
You don't want to simply delete the file—you might need it in the future. Instead, just move the .zip file to another directory. That way, you can always retrieve it from that location if you need it again.

Close all instances of Visual Studio, and then run the following command from the Visual Studio command prompt, which you can find on your Start menu:

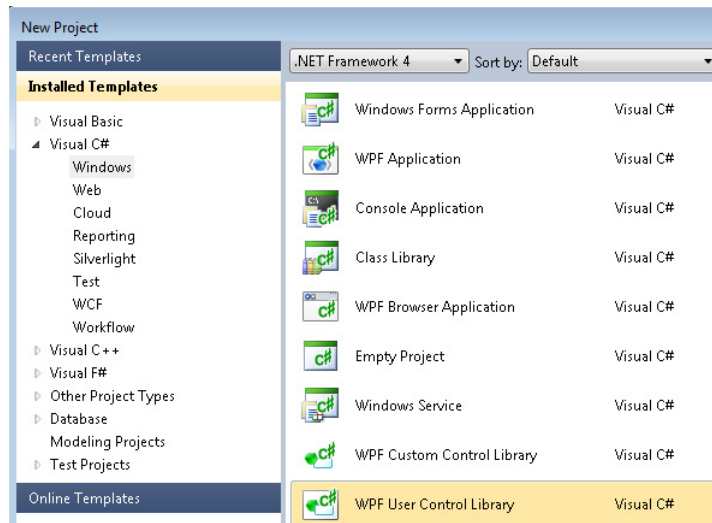
```
devenv.com /installvstemplates
```



Warning It is very important that you let this process finish without interruption. The devenv.com command runs without any user interface. You know it is done when the cursor shows up again:



After the process completes, start Visual Studio again, and then create a new project (Ctrl+Shift+N). You should see that the moved template is no longer in the list.



Chapter 3

Getting to Know the Environment

"A mobile robot has to devote a tremendous amount of processing time simply to avoid obstacles in the environment. Human beings do, too, but they're never aware of it—until the lights go out. Then they learn painfully just how much processing is really required."

—Michael Crichton, "Prey"

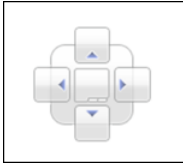
Too often we take our environment for granted—the little things that we see every day and, yet, fail to notice. This section is meant to awaken you to the possibilities in your Visual Studio environment.

Most notably, the purpose is to highlight how best to work with your window layouts, how to use the toolbox to your advantage, and how to work with commands properly, among other things. Take time to really explore the Visual Studio environment, and you can unlock the secrets to navigating that same environment successfully.

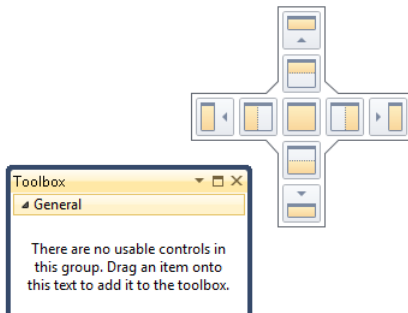
03.01 Rearrange Windows in Visual Studio 2010 Using the Guide Diamond

DEFAULT	[no shortcut]
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+F6 (dock)
VISUAL C++ 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,W, F (Float); Alt,W, K (Dock); Alt,W, T (Dock as Tabbed Document)
MENU	Window Float; Window Dock; Window Dock as Tabbed Document
COMMAND	Window.Float; Window.Dock; Window.DockasTabbedDocument
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0008

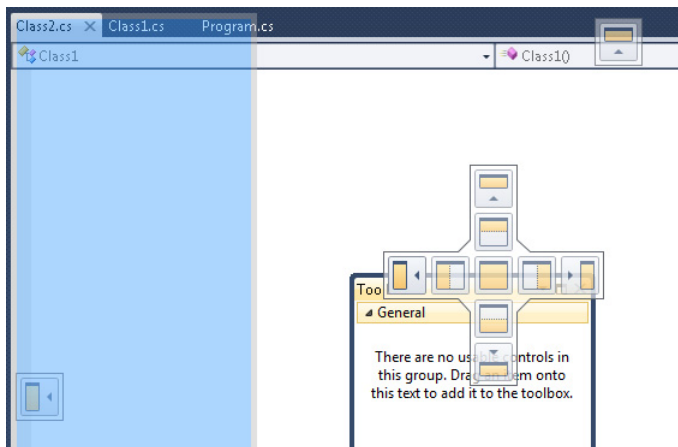
Docking and undocking windows in the IDE has always been interesting. In Visual Studio, we have a tool called the Guide Diamond that is used to assist our efforts. The following illustration shows the Guide Diamond in Visual Studio 2008.



Unfortunately, this doesn't really provide good visual cues to help determine the final position of a window. Visual Studio 2010 provides a new and improved Guide Diamond that makes docking much easier, as shown in the following illustration.



Now you can clearly see how your docked window will look based on the image in the diamond. Just drag the title bar of your window over one of the previews in the Guide Diamond.

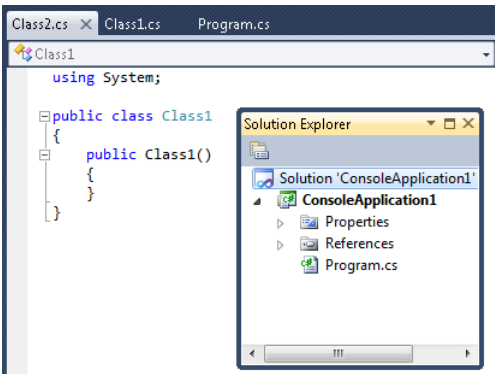


When the preview matches where you want your window to go, just release the mouse and the window docks at that location.

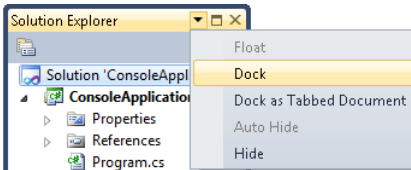
03.02 Dock a Floating Tool Window Back to Its Previous Location

DEFAULT	[no shortcut]
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+F6
VISUAL C++ 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,W, K
MENU	Window Dock
COMMAND	Window.Dock
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0036

You can easily dock a floating tool window back to its previous docked location.



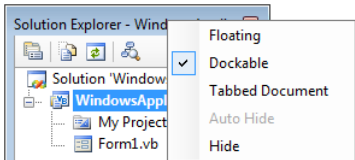
Just right-click the Title Bar, and choose Dock, as shown in the following illustration.





Note In Visual Studio 2008, you can also double-click the title bar to dock the window back to its previous location.

In Visual Studio 2005, to place a tool window back to its previous docking location without using the docking guides, you must double-click the title bar. Additionally, the title bar menu is slightly different for 2005. The word “Dockable” is used in place of the word “Dock.”

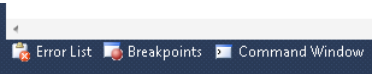


03.03 Cycle Through Your Open Tool Windows

DEFAULT	Alt+F6 (next); Alt+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Alt+F6 (next); Alt+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+F6 (next); Alt+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	F6 (next); Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+F6 (next); Alt+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+F6 (next); Alt+Shift+F6 (previous)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.NextPane; Window.PreviousPane
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0038

In vstipTool0023, “Using the IDE Navigator,” page 160, you saw how to get around among your open tool windows. Here’s how to get around among your open tool windows without using the IDE Navigator.

Press Alt+F6 (next) or Alt+Shift+F6 (previous) to begin going through your open tool windows. It’s important to understand what the word “open” means in this context. An “open” tool window is one whose tab appears in the IDE. For example, suppose you have the following view:

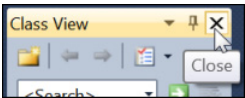


The Error List, Command Window, and Breakpoints are “open” tool windows—even though the tool windows are hidden. This is an important distinction as you use this tip, because it explains why you cycle through all the open tool windows—whether or not they are hidden.

03.04 Closing Tool Windows

DEFAULT	Shift+Esc
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+Esc
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Esc
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Esc
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Esc
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Esc
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.CloseToolWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0039

Eventually, after using your tool windows, you will want to close one or more of them. You can always do this by clicking the Close button (the “X” in the upper-right corner).

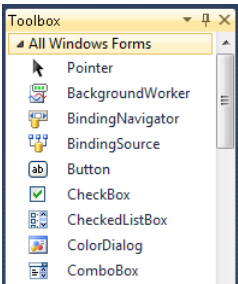


Using the keyboard, you can simply press Shift+Esc to close the current tool window.

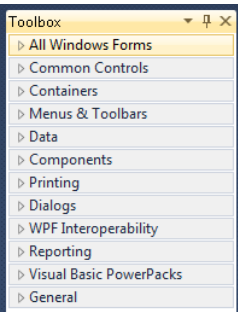
03.05 Expand and Collapse All in the Toolbox

WINDOWS	* (expand all); / (collapse all)
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0050

You can quickly expand the entire Toolbox by pressing the asterisk (*) when the Toolbox is active.



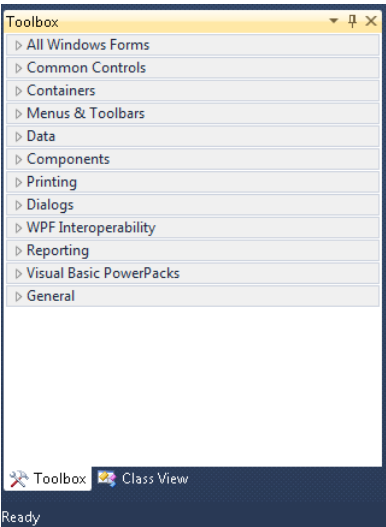
You can also collapse the entire Toolbox by pressing the forward slash (/) when the Toolbox is active.



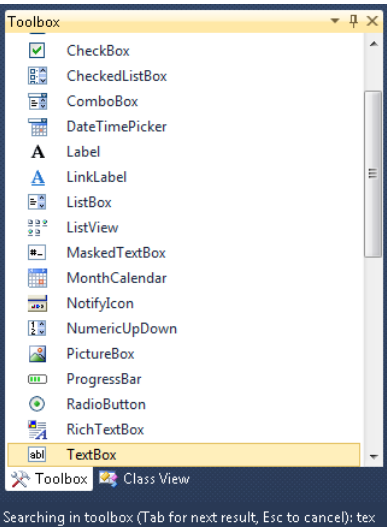
03.06 Searching in the Toolbox

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+X (view toolbox)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+X (view toolbox)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+X (view toolbox); Ctrl+W, X (view toolbox); Ctrl+W, Ctrl+X (view toolbox)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+X (view toolbox)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+X (view toolbox)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+X (view toolbox)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, X (view toolbox); TAB (next result); ESC (cancel)
MENU	View Toolbox
COMMAND	View.Toolbox
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0114

This tip provides a much-requested and much-anticipated feature: searching the Toolbox. Simply switch focus to the Toolbox (Ctrl+Alt+X), as shown in the following illustration.



Now start typing the name of the control you are looking for. In the following example, I'm looking for the TextBox control by typing **tex**:



The letters you are typing appear in the Status Bar, and you are even provided instructions either for looking for the next item or for cancelling the search.

Press Tab to go the next result, or press Esc to cancel. Also, you can actively use the Backspace key to delete letters from the search when you want to quickly retype new characters.

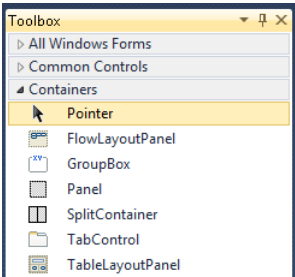
03.07 Navigate Among Tabs in the Toolbox

KEYBOARD	Ctrl+[Up, Down] Arrow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0051

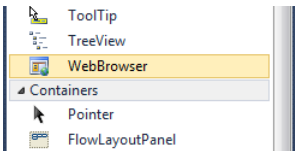
You can jump between tabs in the Toolbox.



Just press Ctrl+[Up, Down] Arrow to navigate. When you use Ctrl+Down Arrow, it expands the next tab and jumps to the first item in that group, as shown in the following illustration.



When you press Ctrl+Up Arrow it jumps to the last item in the previous control group:

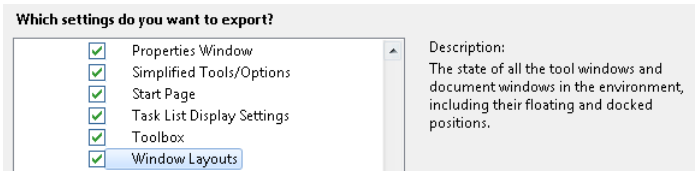


03.08 Window Layouts: The Four Modes

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0051

Ever wonder why the windows seem to shift around when you go from Design to Debug Mode? The answer is simple: window layouts.

You might have seen them if you have ever tried to export your window layouts. You can find it under General Settings | Window Layouts, as shown in the following illustration.



The four window layout modes in Visual Studio are as follows.

Design View

This view is the one you see when you start up Visual Studio. It's what most people refer to as the "normal" view.

Debugging View

This is the view that you get when you enter Debug Mode as you are stepping through your code.

Full Screen

This is the view that you get when you go to View | Full Screen (Shift+Alt+Enter).

File View

This is the lesser-known view that you can get when you open up a file via devenv.exe [filename].

```
.\ConsoleApplication1>devenv.exe class1.cs_
```

The thing to remember here is that your tool windows and your command bar customiza- tions are saved separately for each state. There is no way to tell Visual Studio to use one state for all modes at this time. Additionally, when you shut down Visual Studio in any state, all four states are saved.

03.09 Window Layouts: Design, Debug, and Full Screen

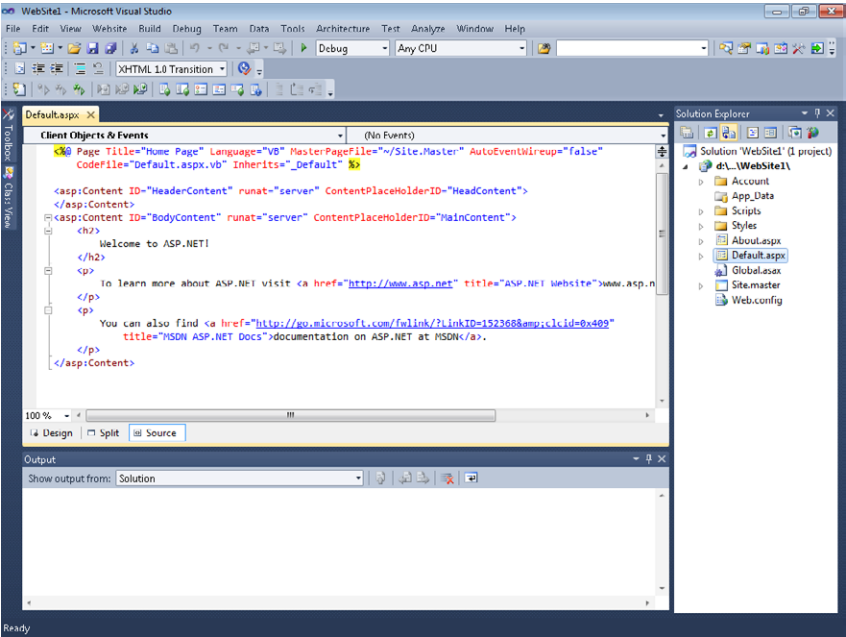
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0052

In vstipEnv0051, “Window Layouts: The Four Modes,” page 90, I discussed the four layout modes in Visual Studio. I thought it would be instructive to demonstrate the three most com- mon modes together here.

As we discuss these modes, keep in mind that each has its own layout that can be customized to your needs. For example, you might clearly need some windows in Design Mode (for ex- ample, the Pending Changes window) that perhaps aren’t necessary in Debug Mode.

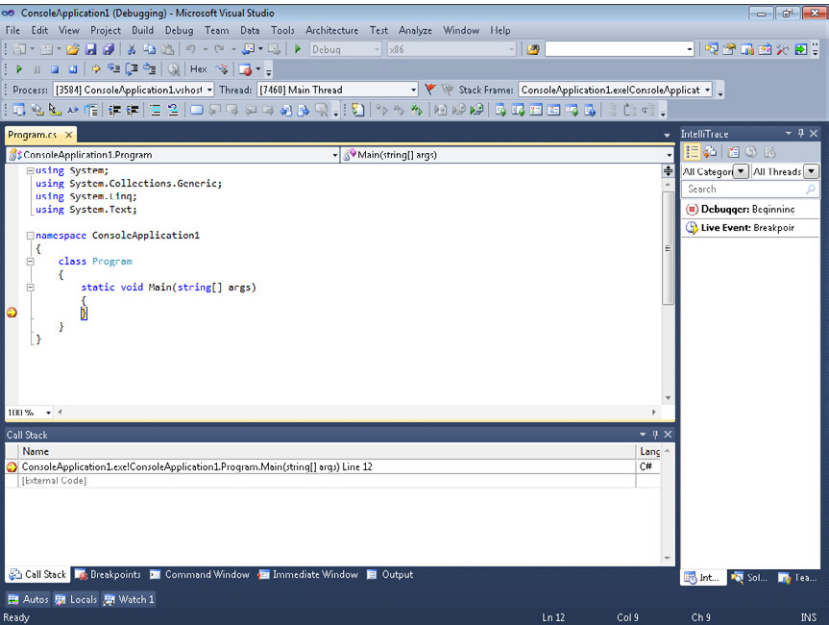
Design Mode

This is the mode you see when you first start up Visual Studio. It is one of the two most com- mon modes you will find yourself in. The following illustration shows a view of my Design Window Layout for a website.



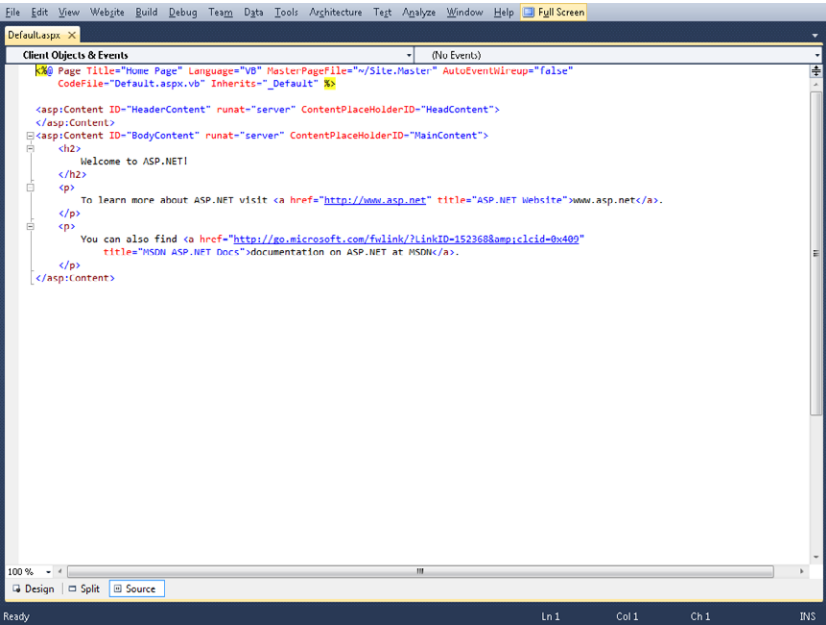
Debug Mode

When I enter Debug Mode, the second most common mode, I see my Debug Window Layout, as shown in the following console application.



Full Screen Mode

I addressed this mode in vstipEnv0024, “Full Screen Mode,” in Appendix B (<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>). You can get here by pressing Shift+Alt+Enter. An example of what it looks like is shown in the following illustration.



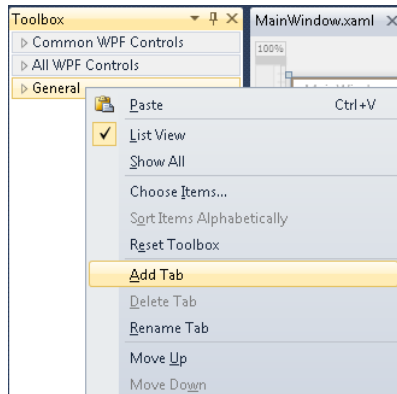
03.10 Working with Tabs in the Toolbox

WINDOWS	Shift+F10, A (with the Toolbox selected)
MENU	[Right-click the Toolbox] Add Tab
COMMAND	Tools.AddTab
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0054

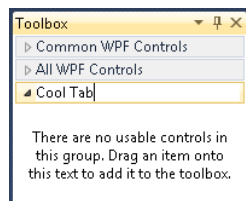
The Toolbox is a pretty cool place, and one of its best features is the ability to organize items by using tabs.

Creating Tabs

To create a custom tab, right-click inside the Toolbox and choose Add Tab, as shown in the following illustration.

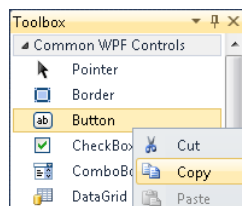


Just type in a name for your new tab, and press Enter.

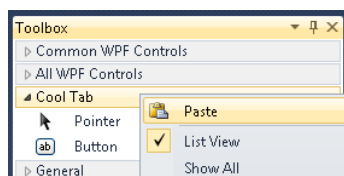


Adding Items

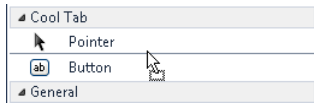
You can add items to your custom tab as you see fit. For example, to add controls to this new tab from existing tabs, just pick the control you want and copy it.



Then go to your customized tab, and paste inside it to get a copy of that control for your use.

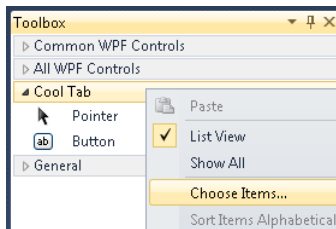


You can also click and drag items onto new tabs.



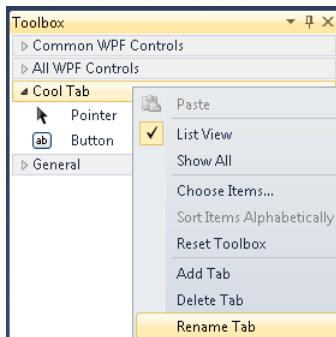
Custom Controls

Of course, if you want custom controls, you can always right-click in the custom tab and select **Choose Items**, as shown in the following illustration.



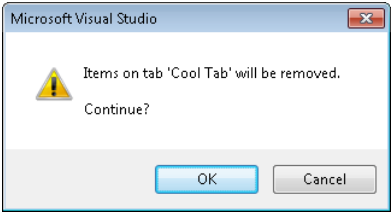
Renaming Tabs

If you don't like a tab name, you can always rename it:



Deleting Tabs

Also notice the option to delete the tab, shown in the preceding illustration. If you choose this option, the following dialog box appears. When you click OK in this dialog box, you lose the tab as well as all the items on it.



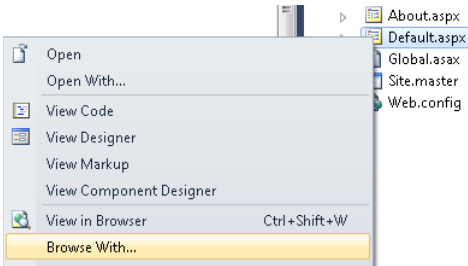
This action is just an organizational mechanism and doesn't permanently delete any controls from your system, so you can add them as needed to any future tabs.

03.11 Using Additional Browsers for Web Development

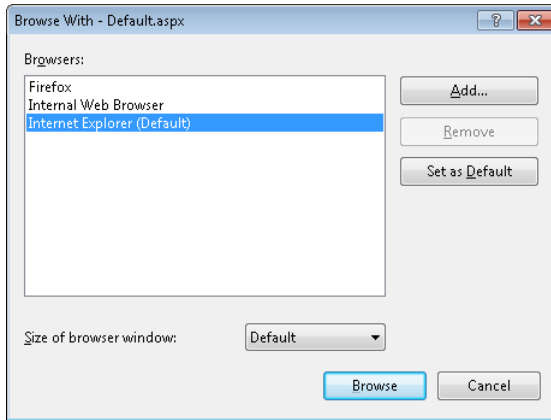
WINDOWS	Alt,F, H (with file selected in Solution Explorer)
MENU	File Browse With (with file selected in Solution Explorer)
COMMAND	File.BrowseWith (with file selected in Solution Explorer)
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0057

When you are doing web development in Visual Studio, you might want to use a different default browser than you are currently using. You can do this by using the Browse With dialog box.

Getting to this dialog box is a little interesting because it is context sensitive. It is best to have either your web project or a webpage selected in Solution Explorer to see the Browse With option on the File Menu or when you right-click:

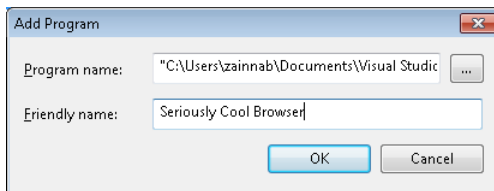


The Browse With dialog box appears as shown in the following illustration.



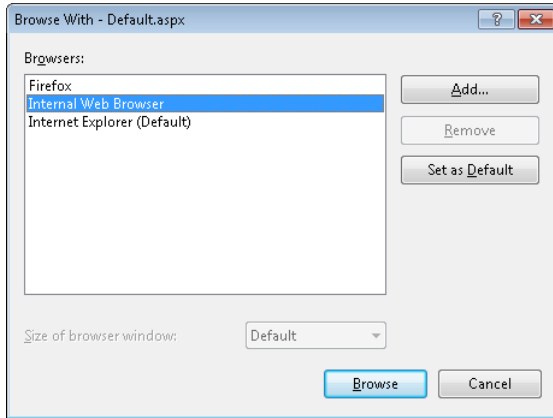
Adding New Browsers

Visual Studio automatically detects some browsers. For example, I installed Firefox and the preceding dialog box automatically detected it. However, if you don't see your browser in the Browse With dialog box, you can click Add, enter the path to the executable in the Program Name field, and enter a friendly name for your browser in the Friendly Name field, as shown in the following illustration.



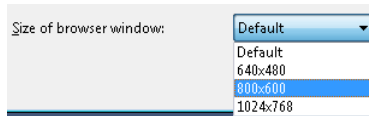
Changing the Default Browser

You can also change the default browser by choosing a browser in the list and then clicking Set As Default:



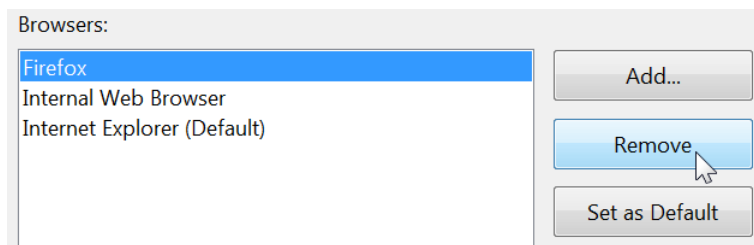
Browser Window Size

Choose the window size you want for your browser by using the Size Of Browser Window drop-down list:



Removing Browsers

Eventually, you might want to get rid of some of your browser choices. Simply select the browser in the list, and click Remove:



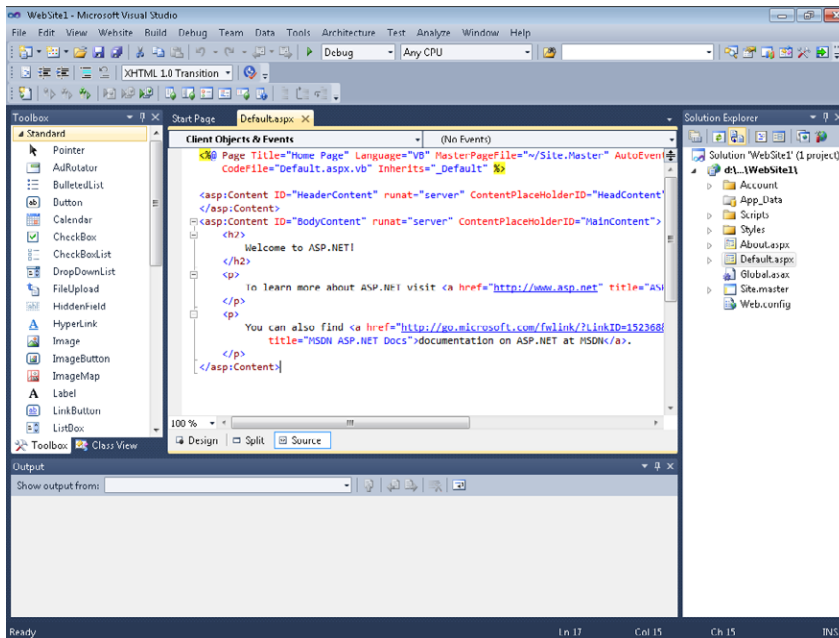
03.12 Auto-Hide All Tool Windows

WINDOWS	Alt,W, U
MENU	Window Auto Hide All
COMMAND	Window.AutoHideAll
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0034

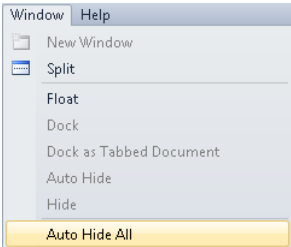


Warning While this is a great tip, there is no way to “un-auto-hide” all tool windows, so you have to bring your tool windows back individually.

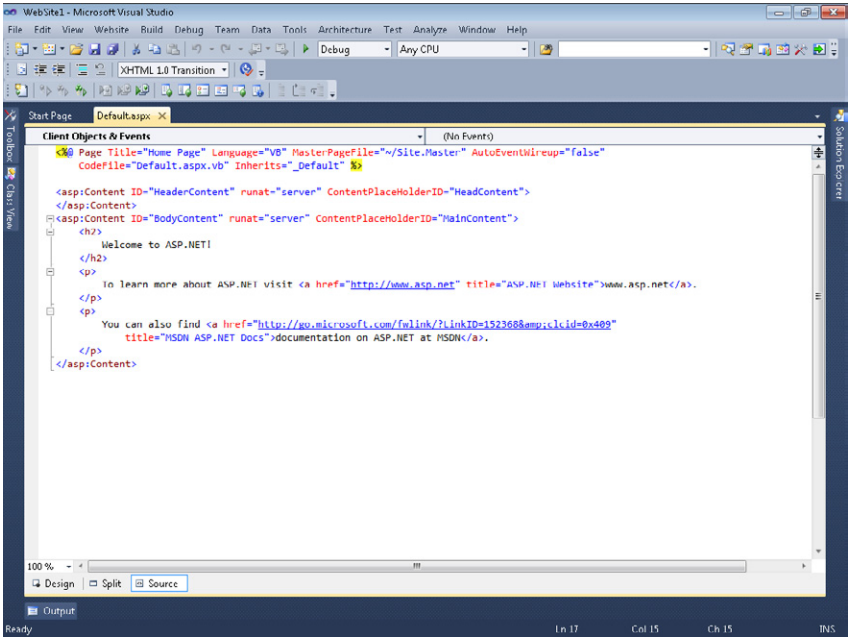
So let’s say you have a crowded space with lots of tool windows open, as shown in the following illustration.



You can make all the tool windows go away quickly—just go to Window | Auto Hide All:



All the tool windows are automatically hidden.

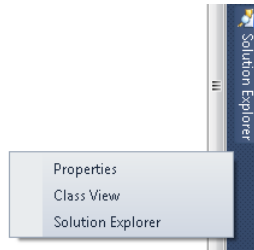


03.13

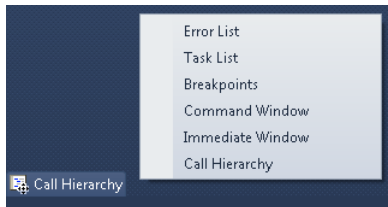
Showing Hidden Tool Windows with the Auto Hide Channel

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0037

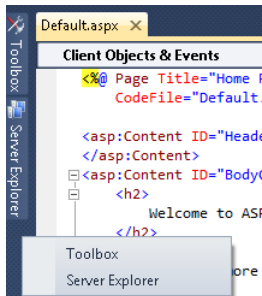
You can use a special place called the Auto Hide Channel to see what tool windows are hidden. Just go to any area that has hidden tool windows, and then right-click the bar where the tabs are to see a list of the hidden tool windows.



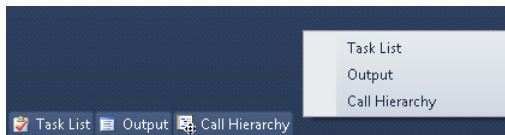
The best part is that this works on the bottom channel.



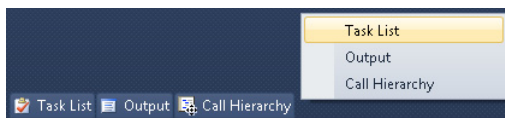
And it works on the channel to the left as well.



For best results, click in the empty space in the channel, beyond any tabs, as shown in the following illustration.



And, of course, to show any hidden window, just select it from the list.



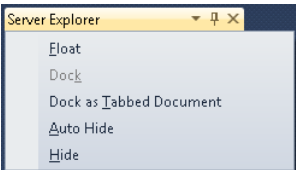
03.14 Moving Tool Windows Around with Your Keyboard

DEFAULT	Alt+- (dock menu)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+- (dock menu)
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+- (dock menu)
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+- (dock menu)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+- (dock menu)
WINDOWS	Alt,Space (floating tool windows)
MENU	Window [Float, Dock, etc.] (dock menu)
COMMAND	Window.ShowDockMenu
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0041

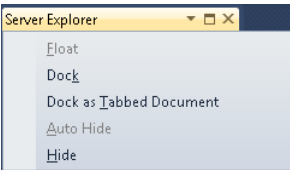


Note The minus sign (-) used in the keyboard shortcut is from the top row of numeric keys on your keyboard, not the minus sign on the numeric keypad.

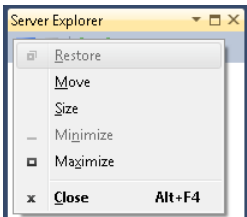
With the rewrite of the IDE for Visual Studio 2010, you'll find some changes in how you control the tool windows. When an active tool window is docked, you can use Alt+minus (-) to bring up the Dock menu and then use your arrow keys to pick an item from the menu.



This works for floating tool windows as well.



But active floating tool windows have a System menu that you can access *only* by pressing Alt+Space.

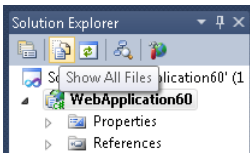


These commands should be familiar to just about everyone, and they give you full control over moving, resizing, and other window manipulations.

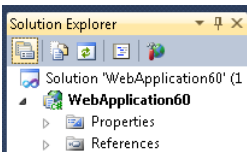
03.15 Keyboard Access to a Tool Window’s Toolbar

WINDOWS	Shift+Alt; Tab
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0042

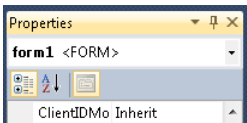
Sometimes, when you have an active tool window, you just want access to the toolbar in the window without having to reach over and use your mouse.



A little-known fact is that you can do this very easily for any active tool window by pressing Shift+Alt for some or by pressing Tab for others. For example, to get access to the Solution Explorer Toolbar, just press Shift+Alt.



In the Properties Tool Window, you would use press the Tab key to gain access to the toolbar.



Now you can use your arrow keys to move between toolbar items, and use the Enter key to “press” the button you choose.

03.16 Command Prompt History

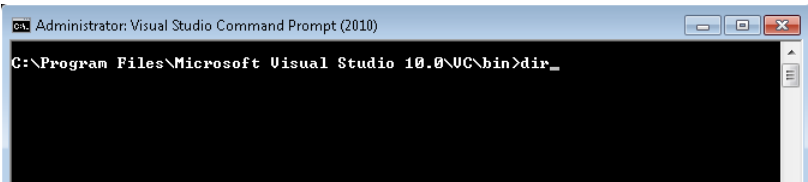
WINDOWS	F7 (history window); [Up / Down] Arrow (history)
CODE	vstipTool0055

Many people like to use the command prompt; I thought we might explore one of the oldest features around: command history.

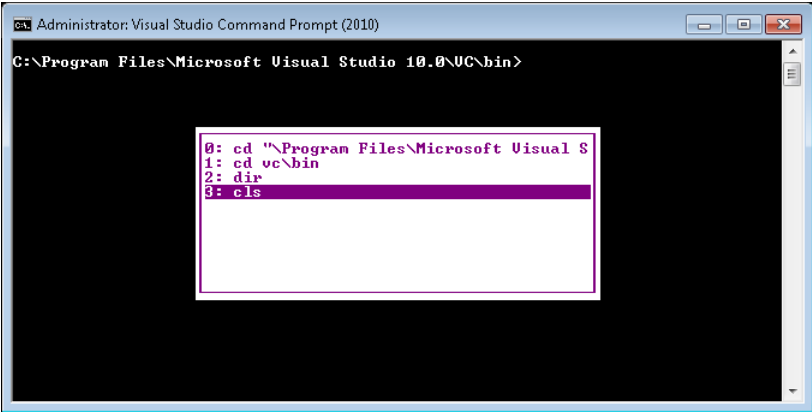


Note The following examples will not work unless you have typed some commands into the Command Window already, so type a few commands and then clear the screen by typing **cls** and pressing Enter.

There are two main ways to get commands you’ve typed in previously. First, you can just press the Up Arrow key to start going through your history at the prompt itself.



The advantage here is that you can quickly edit the command to change it if needed. However, if you just want to run a command from your history, you can use a very old trick by pressing F7.



Pressing F7 runs the command you selected from the list by using your Up or Down Arrow keys.

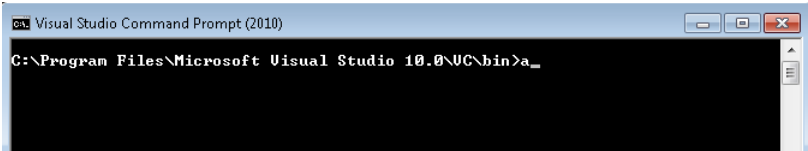
03.17 Command Prompt Tab Completion

WINDOWS	Tab
CODE	vstipTool0056

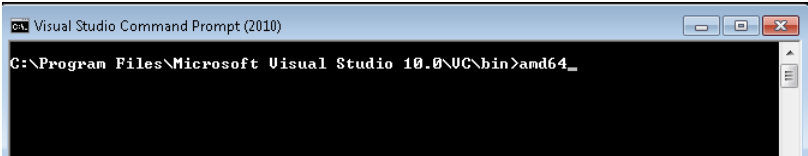
When using the Visual Studio command prompt (or any command prompt), you have several ways to use tab completion.

Simple Search

You can type the first letter of a file, as shown in the following illustration.



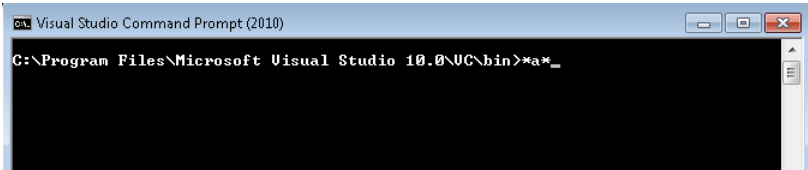
Then press Tab one or more times to see all the files that begin with that letter.



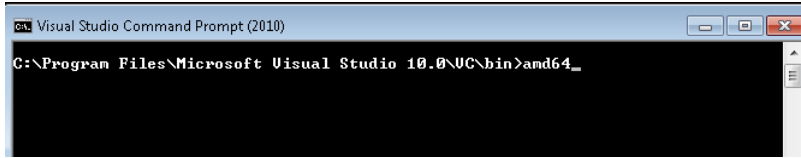
Wildcard Search

Not as well-known is the ability to use wildcards to match characters. You can use an asterisk (*) to represent any number of characters and a question mark (?) to represent a single character.

So if you want to find a file name that has the letter "a" anywhere in it, you would use ***a*** as shown in the following illustration.

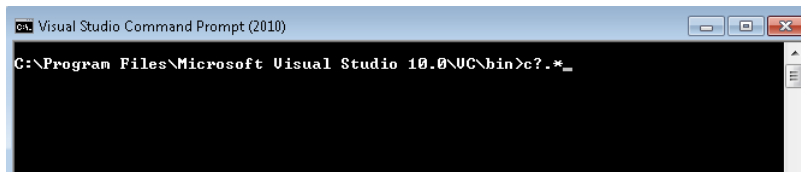


Then press Tab to get the first result.

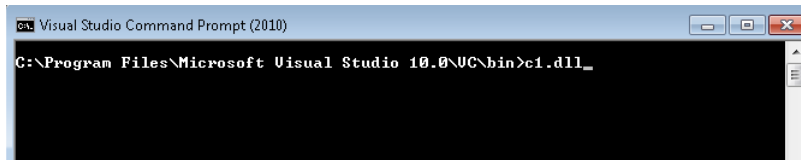


Press Tab several times, and notice that each file name listed contains the letter "a" somewhere in it.

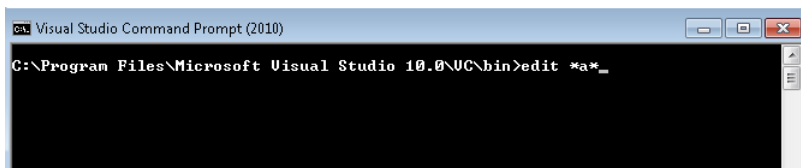
What about a two-letter file that begins with a "c" but can have any other character and any extension? Use **c?.*** and press Tab.



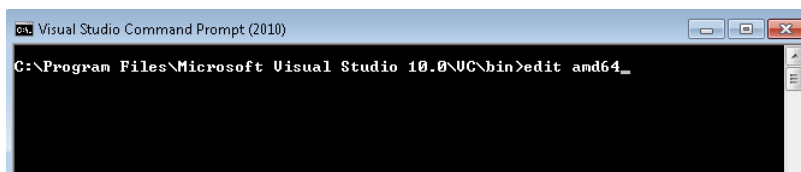
Press Tab again.



This feature extends to any commands you want to use as well. You can type something like **edit *a***, as shown in the following illustration.



Then press Tab to see the following result:



If I keep pressing tab, it continues to cycle through all file names that contain an "a".

Finally

As you can see, tab completion is a very useful and powerful feature with the command prompt. You definitely want this skill in your tool belt.

03.18 Undock and Dock a Single Tool Window in a Group

DEFAULT	[no shortcut]
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+F6 (dock)
VISUAL C++ 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt, -, F (float, VS2010 Only); Alt, -, K (dock, VS2010 Only); Alt, W, F (float); Alt, W, K (dock)
MENU	Window Float; Window Dock
COMMAND	Window.Float; Window.Dock
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0099

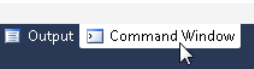
Docking and undocking tool windows is a common activity. In this tip, we look at the different techniques you can use to accomplish these tasks.

Undock

You have multiple ways to undock a single tool window in a group.

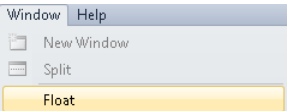
Click and drag

With the mouse, you can click and drag the tab out of the group.



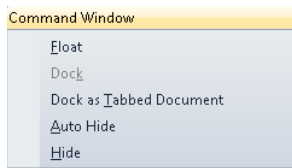
Menu

With the tool window active, you can select Window | Float from the menu bar, as shown in the following illustration.



Control box (Visual Studio 2010 only)

Press Alt+minus (–) to get the tool window menu.

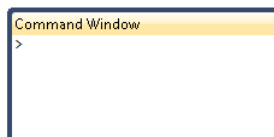


Then press "F" to make the tool window float.

Result

Whichever method you use, the result is the same: You wind up with an undocked tool window.

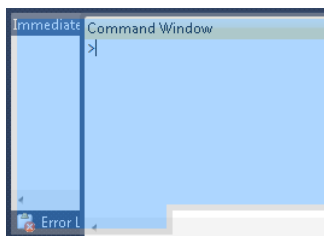
```
</p>  
</asp:Content>
```

**Dock**

To dock a floating tool window back into a group (assuming it came from a group), you also have multiple options.

Click and drag

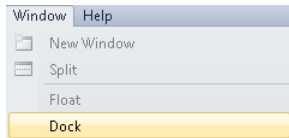
By far, the hardest option is to click and drag the tool window back into the group. The best way to do this is to drag the tool window title bar over the title bar of another tool window in the group you want it to join, as shown in the following illustration.



Notice how the target shading looks like a tab being put onto the existing group? That is what you look for when doing it this way. Of course, I would do it this way only if I were taking a tab from one group to another, *not* if I were returning a floating tool window back to its original group.

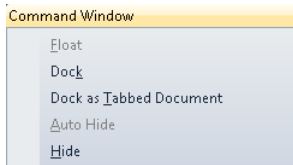
Menu

The menu option is pretty easy: Just go to Window | Dock, as shown in the following illustration.



Control box (Visual Studio 2010 only)

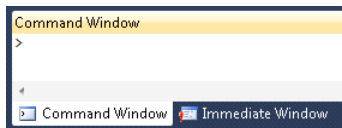
And then there is the Control menu. Press Alt+minus (–) to get the menu.



Then press "K" to make the tool window dock back to its original location.

Result

You can use any of these methods to put the tool window back into the group it came from, with the notable exception of the click and drag method, which can be used to put the tool window anywhere.



03.19 Understanding Commands: Simple Commands

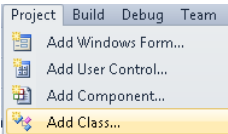
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0067

Just about everything you do in Visual Studio comes with an associated command. But what exactly is a command?

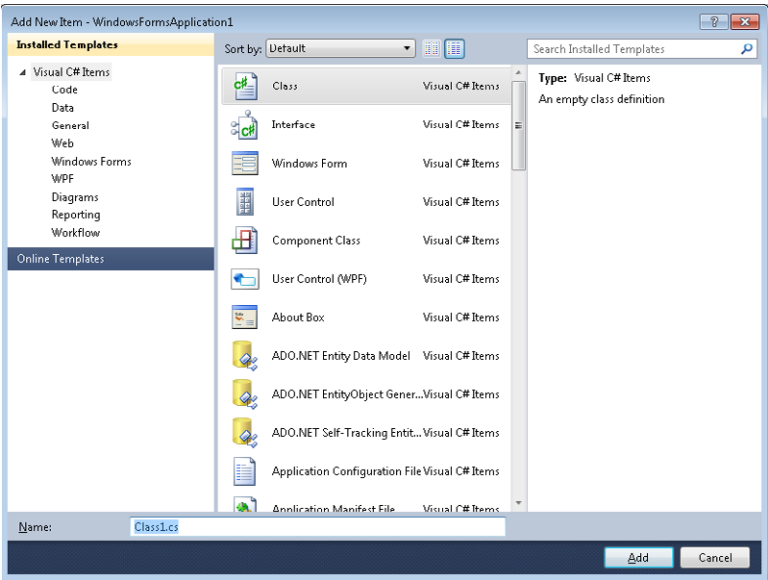
According to the MSDN documentation (<http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/kcc7tke7.aspx>), commands “allow direct interaction with the integrated development environment (IDE) from the keyboard. Dialog boxes, windows, and other items within the IDE have a command equivalent that you can type into the Command window or Find/Command box to display and, in some cases, execute the item.”

In plain English, commands allow you to perform actions in Visual Studio. Let’s take adding a class as an example.

First, let’s examine the typical way you add a class. Normally, you would just go to Project | Add Class.



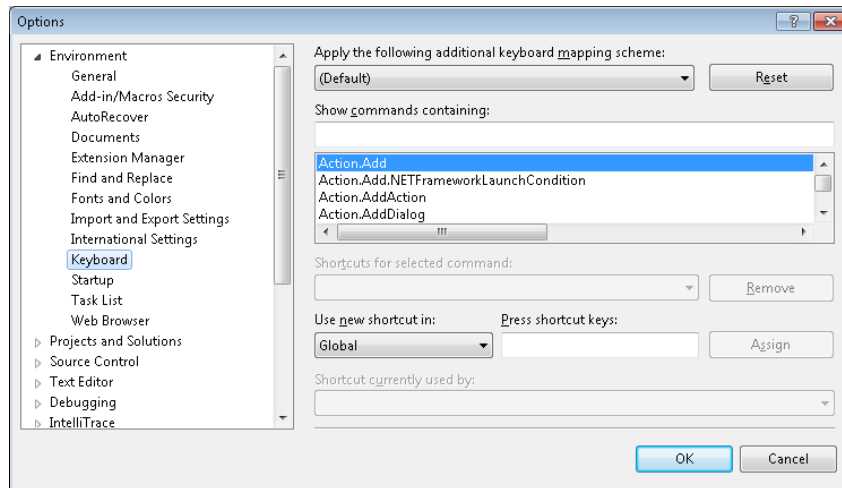
Obviously, this command is used to add a new class to your project and shows the Add New Item dialog box.



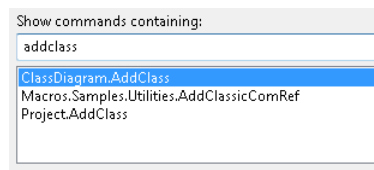
That's too much extra work for something I like to use all the time. I want to search and see whether a specific command is associated with this action. To do this, I'll use what most people refer to as the "command well," because it is a deep "well" of commands. It's where all the commands that you can use are located. To get there, go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard, as shown in the following illustration



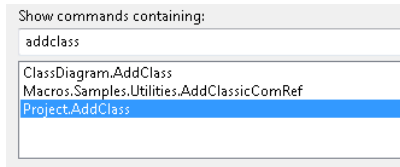
Note For this example, I'm using the General keyboard settings, so your settings might have a shortcut key assigned already. You can still follow this tip to create a new shortcut.



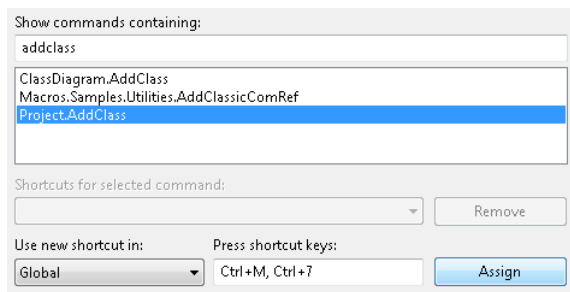
I'll type a keyword in the Show Commands Containing area to narrow down the command list. In this case, the keywords Add Class are used in the menu item, so I will use them here. In the following illustration, you can see how I have removed the spaces for the command.



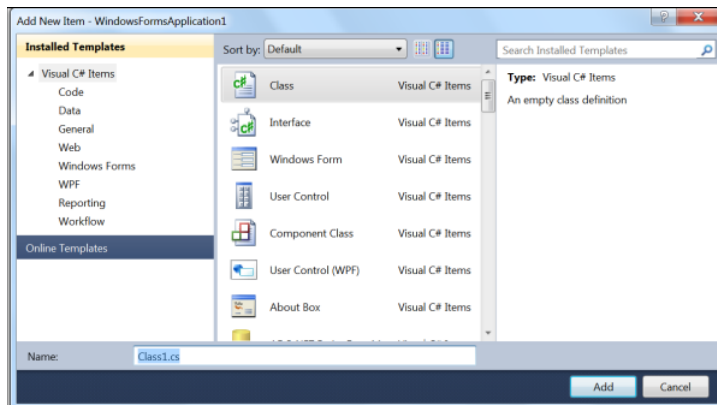
Notice that among the available commands is the Project.AddClass command. It's common to find a command that follows the menu structure, and this one is no exception.



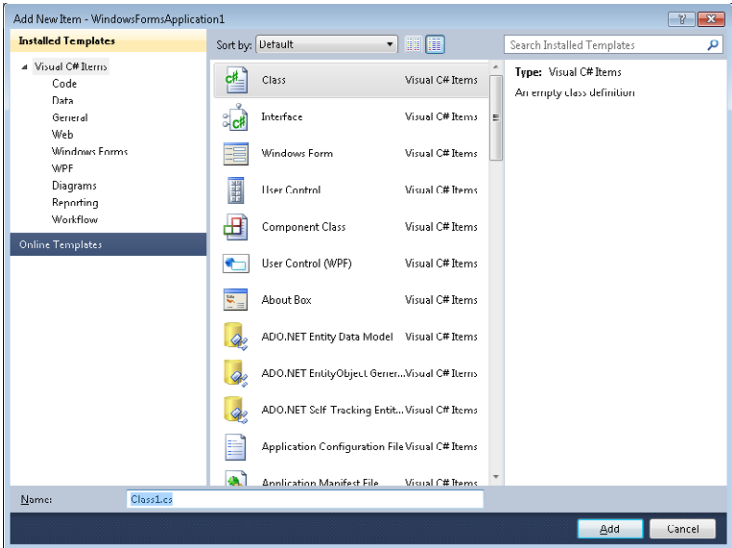
Also notice that no shortcuts are associated with the command. We can now add one. For this example, let's use Ctrl+M, Ctrl+7 as the shortcut key to be assigned.



For now, I won't get into the nuances of assigning shortcut keys, but you can get the details at [vstipTool0063](#), "Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts," page 127. Assuming the key was assigned correctly, you can click OK and then press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+7 to see the Add New Item dialog box pop up, as shown in the following illustration.



Now you understand the power of commands. They can be quite useful, and after you assign a shortcut key, you can see it in the menu as well (if applicable).



03.20 Understanding Commands: Aliases

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+A; Ctrl+W, A; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+A
VISUAL C++ 2005	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
WINDOWS	Alt,V, E, C
MENU	View Other Windows Command Window
COMMAND	View.CommandWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0068

It is sometimes cumbersome to type in a full command. You can use aliases to quickly use a command without having to type in the full command syntax. If you want a list of the current aliases, just open the Command Window (Ctrl+Alt+A) and type **alias**.

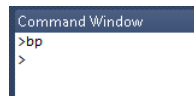
```
Command Window
>alias
alias ? Debug.Print
alias ?? Debug.QuickWatch
alias AddProj File.AddNewProject
alias alias Tools.Alias
alias autos Debug.Autos
alias bl Debug.Breakpoints
alias bp Debug.ToggleBreakpoint
alias callstack Debug.CallStack
alias ClearBook Edit.ClearBookmarks
alias close File.Close
alias CloseAll Window.CloseAllDocuments
```

By the way, you can clear the Command Window out at any time by typing **cls**, just in case you get a lot of clutter in the window.

Let's take a simple alias as an example. How about the "Debug.ToggleBreakpoint" command? Notice in the preceding list that the alias is "bp". Let's find a line of code.

```
17 | Console.WriteLine("Blah");
```

Now we can go to the Command Window and type **bp**, as shown in the following illustration.

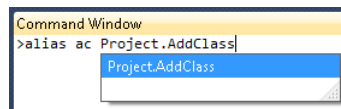


It puts a breakpoint on the line.

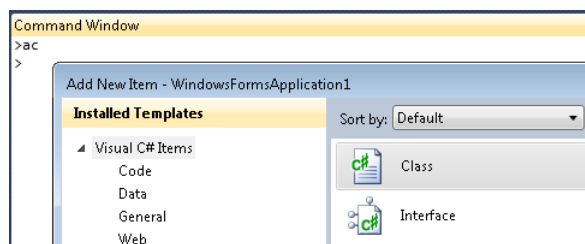
```
17 | Console.WriteLine("Blah");
```

Create a New Alias

In addition to the aliases that are already there, you can create new ones. Let's create one for the Project.AddClass command. Simply type **alias [alias to use] [command]**. In our case, let's put in **alias ac Project.AddClass**, as shown in the following illustration.



Anytime we want to add a class, we can type the command alias **ac** and get the Add New Item dialog box.



Viewing Assigned Aliases

To show what command an alias is assigned to, just type **alias [alias]**. So, in this case, I would put in **alias ac** to see what command "ac" is bound to.

```
Command Window
>alias ac
alias ac Project.AddClass
>
```

Delete an Alias

To get rid of an alias, type **alias [alias] /d[ele]te**. To get rid of the alias we just made, we would type **alias ac /d**.

```
Command Window
>alias ac /d
>
```

You can confirm the alias is gone by typing **alias ac**. You should see the result shown in the following illustration.

```
Command Window
>alias ac /d
>alias ac
No alias 'ac' is defined
>
```

03.21

Understanding Commands: Arguments and Switches

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+A; Ctrl+W, A; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+A
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
WINDOWS	Alt,V, E, C
MENU	View Other Windows Command Window
COMMAND	View.CommandWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0069

Some commands take arguments and switches so that you can quickly execute them without having to deal with user interface elements. You can get a list of commands that take arguments by going to the MSDN Documentation article entitled “Visual Studio Commands with Arguments,” at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/c338aexd.aspx>.

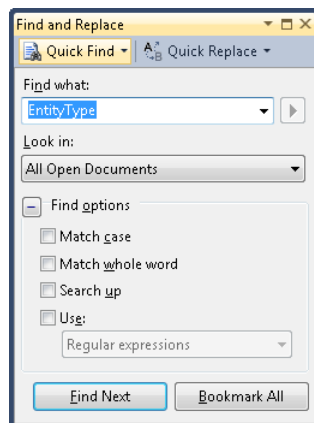
The best way to learn is by doing, so let's use the Edit.Find command. If you want to know more about what Find can do, take a look at vstipFind0007, "Using Quick Find," on page 172.

Basic Use

First, open up the Command Window (Ctrl+Alt+A) and run the command without any arguments, as shown in the following illustration.

```
Command Window
>Edit.Find
```

The preceding command opens the Find And Replace dialog box, shown in the following illustration.



Arguments and Switches

According to the "Find Command" documentation at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/295dhke9.aspx>, the Edit.Find command takes one argument and 12 possible switches. The general syntax for the command is as follows:

```
Edit.Find findwhat [/case] [/doc | /proc | /open | /sel] [/marka11] [/options] [/reset] [/up] [/wild | /regex] [/word]
```

I'll resist the urge to copy and paste from the documentation here and just focus on the items we are going to use.

Argument

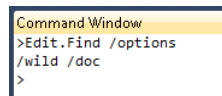
- **findwhat**—Required. The text to match.

Switches

- **/doc** or **/d**—Optional. Searches the current document only. You can use only one of the available search scopes: **/doc**, **/proc** (procedure), **/open** (all open documents), or **/sel** (current selection).
- **/markall** or **/m**—Optional. Places a [bookmark] on each line that contains a search match within the current document.
- **/wild** or **/l**—Optional. Uses predefined special characters in the **findwhat** argument as notations to represent a character or sequence of characters.

List Current Options

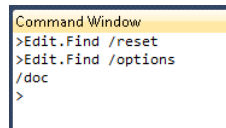
You can list out the current options that are set for the **Edit.Find** command by typing **Edit.Find /options**, as shown in the following illustration.



```
Command Window
>Edit.Find /options
/wild /doc
>
```

Reset Options

You can reset the options to the default values by typing **Edit.Find /reset**.



```
Command Window
>Edit.Find /reset
>Edit.Find /options
/doc
>
```

Using the Arguments and Switches

Let's put this command to the test. We want to bypass the Quick Find dialog box and just find things. We will use the following command:

```
Edit.Find *c* /wild /doc /markall
```

This command finds any line in the current document (**/doc**) that has the letter "c" anywhere in it, using wildcards (**/wild**) and placing a bookmark (**/markall**) on each line.

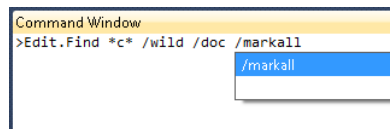
The following illustration shows the code we are going to use before we run the command.

```

1  using System;
2  using System.Collections.Generic;
3  using System.ComponentModel;
4  using System.Data;
5  using System.Drawing;
6  using System.Linq;
7  using System.Text;
8  using System.Windows.Forms;
9
10 namespace WindowsFormsApplication1
11 {
12     public partial class Form1 : Form
13     {
14         public Form1()
15         {
16             InitializeComponent();
17         }
18     }
19 }
20

```

We run our command.



The result is shown in the following illustration.

```

1  using System;
2  using System.Collections.Generic;
3  using System.ComponentModel;
4  using System.Data;
5  using System.Drawing;
6  using System.Linq;
7  using System.Text;
8  using System.Windows.Forms;
9
10 namespace WindowsFormsApplication1
11 {
12     public partial class Form1 : Form
13     {
14         public Form1()
15         {
16             InitializeComponent();
17         }
18     }
19 }
20

```

And now we have a working command that bypasses the Quick Find dialog box and just finds things.

Make an Alias

What if we want to use this all the time? We can make an alias out of the command. In this case, we type **alias findc** `Edit.Find *c* /wild /doc /markall`, as shown in the following illustration.


```
Command Window
>alias findc Edit.Find *c* /wild /doc /markall
```

More information on aliases can be found in vstipTool0068 (“Understanding Commands: Aliases,” page 113). You can double-check the alias assignment by typing **alias findc**.

```
Command Window
>alias findc
alias findc Edit.Find *c* /wild /doc /markall
>
```

From now on, you just type **findc** in the Command Window, and it performs the predefined search.

03.22

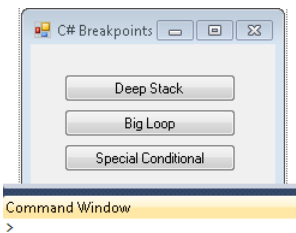
Testing a Command

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+A; Ctrl+W, A; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+A
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+A
WINDOWS	Alt,V, E, C
MENU	View Other Windows Command Window
COMMAND	View.CommandWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0065

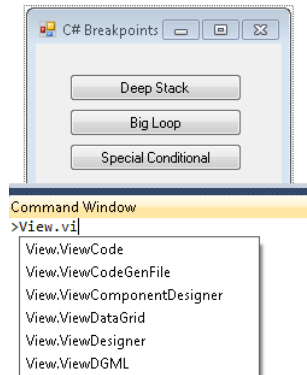
Throughout these tips, I include the command when available. But you might be wondering how to test a command to see how it works. Let’s take a look at one quick way.

First, figure out what command you want to test. In our case, let’s test “View.ViewCode”.

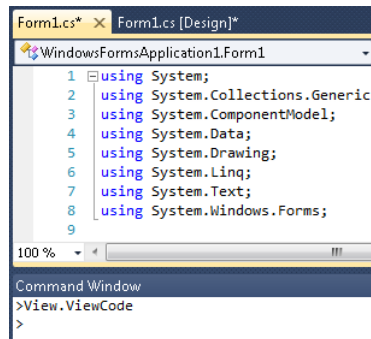
Press Ctrl+Alt+A to bring up the Command Window.



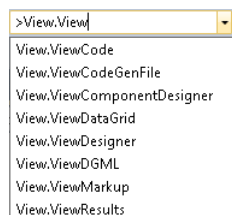
Because we're testing "ViewCode", we have a Design window open so that it can switch to the code. Now start typing the command we want to test (case doesn't matter).



As you can see in the preceding illustration, we have IntelliSense helping us with the command. Now we just press Enter to see the command in action.



Now you have tested a command. Feel free to try various commands to see what they do, but make sure to set up the context as we did in this example to ensure that the command works properly. Some commands can't be run from the Command Window and might require that you assign a shortcut key or use the Find Combo box.



Refer to vstipTool0070 ("Understanding Commands: Running Commands," on the next page) for more information.

03.23

Understanding Commands: Running Commands

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+A (command window); Ctrl+Alt+I (immediate window); Ctrl+/ (find combo box with command symbol)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+A (command window); Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+G (immediate window); (no shortcut for find combo box)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+A; Ctrl+W, A; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+A (command window) Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+D, I; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+I (immediate window) Ctrl+/ (find combo box)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+A (command window); Ctrl+Alt+I (immediate window); Ctrl+/ (find combo box with command symbol)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+A (command window); Ctrl+Alt+I (immediate window); Ctrl+/ (find combo box with command symbol)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+A (command window); Ctrl+Alt+I (immediate window); Ctrl+/ (find combo box with command symbol)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, E, C
MENU	View Other Windows Command Window; Debug Windows Immediate Window
COMMAND	View.CommandWindow; Debug.Immediate; Edit.GoToFindCombo; Tools.GoToCommandLine
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0070

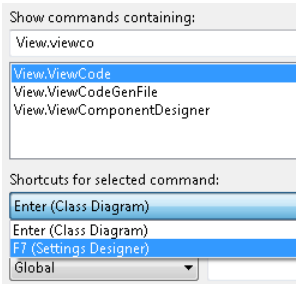
Whenever you work with commands, you have four main ways you can run them. For example, not all commands will run from the Command Window, so it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the other options. Let's take a look at each way.

Shortcuts

The easiest way to run a command is when a shortcut is attached to it. For example, View.Code has a couple of shortcut keys attached to it.

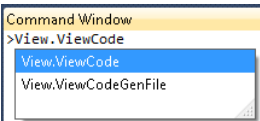


Note For more information about shortcut keys, see vstipTool0061 ("Find Keyboard Shortcuts," on the next page).



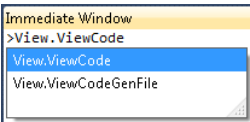
Command Window

The Command Window (Ctrl+Alt+A) is specifically designed to run commands. Just type in the command, and press Enter.



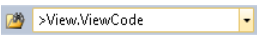
Immediate Window

You can run many commands from the Immediate Window (Ctrl+Alt+I) by typing a greater-than sign (>). Then type any command and press Enter.



Find Combo Box

A little-known feature enables you to run commands from the Find Combo Box (Ctrl+D) on the standard toolbar. Just type a greater-than sign (>), then type any command, and press Enter.

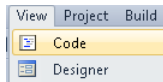


For most language settings, you can bypass the typing of the greater-than sign by using Ctrl+Forward Slash (/), which takes you to the Find Combo Box and automatically inserts the sign for you.

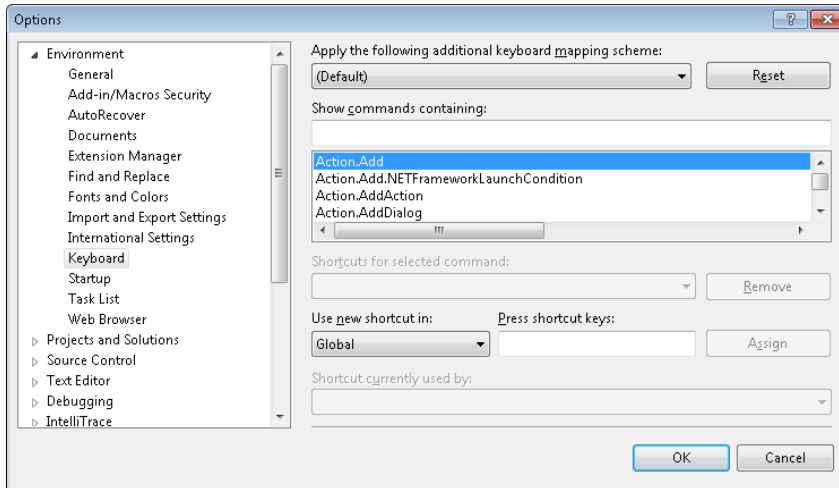
03.24 Find Keyboard Shortcuts

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Keyboard
COMMAND	Tools.CustomizeKeyboard
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0061

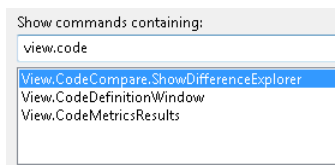
Ever just want to see the keyboard shortcuts available in Visual Studio? Let’s say, for example, that you want to see if View | Code has any keyboard shortcuts. A quick look at the menu doesn’t reveal anything.



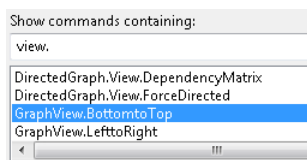
But that's not the end of the story. If we go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard, we get the following dialog box.



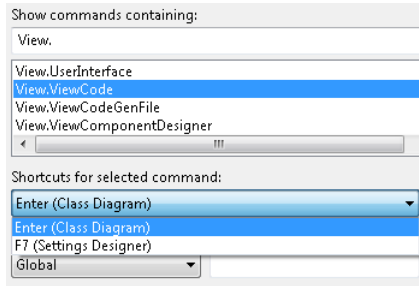
Pretty much everything you do in Visual Studio has a command that runs to execute that action. In our case, we know that View | Code is the path to the command we want, so let's start by trying to see whether we have a "View.Code" command. Notice that commands use dot notation between items:



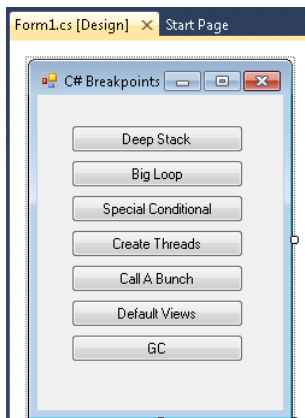
Sadly, what we want isn't there. OK, so either it isn't there or it's called something else. We still know it's off the View menu, so let's type in **View.** and browse to see whether anything pops up.



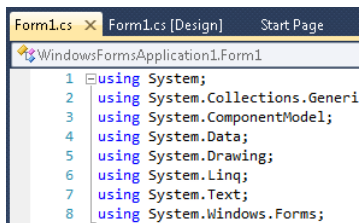
If we scroll down far enough, we actually find an entry for “View.ViewCode”. If we look under Shortcuts For Selected Command, we see a couple of shortcut entries, as shown in the following illustration.



It looks like pressing F7 in the Designer does the trick, so let's try it.

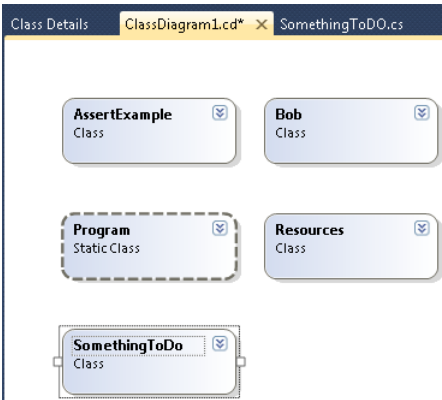


Go to the Designer and press F7.



As we can see in the preceding illustration, we have discovered the shortcut key for viewing code in the Designer.

There is also another entry for the Class Diagram that uses Enter to show us code. Let’s open up a Class Diagram and select a class.



Then press Enter.

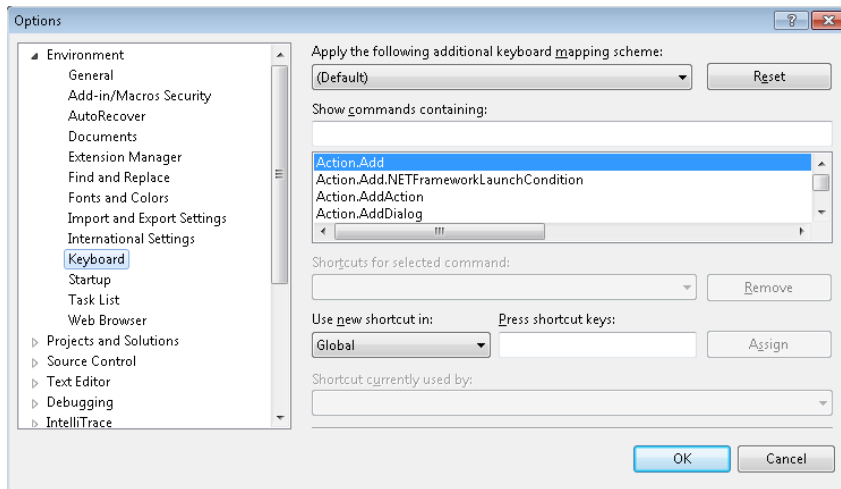
```
1 using System;
2 using System.Collections.Generic;
3 using System.Linq;
4 using System.Text;
5
6 namespace WindowsFormsApplication1
7 {
8     class SomethingToDo
9     {
```

It takes us to the code as well. So now you know how to find shortcut keys (if they exist) for a command.

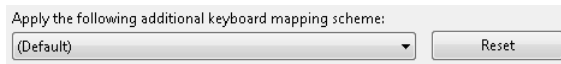
03.25Keyboard Shortcuts: Additional Mapping Schemes

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Keyboard
COMMAND	Tools.CustomizeKeyboard
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0062

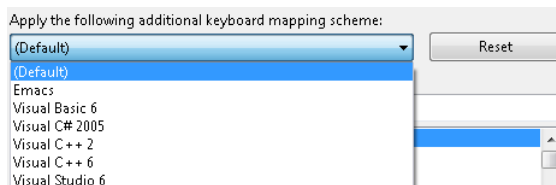
One of the most important places you can go in Visual Studio is the Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard area, shown in the following illustration.



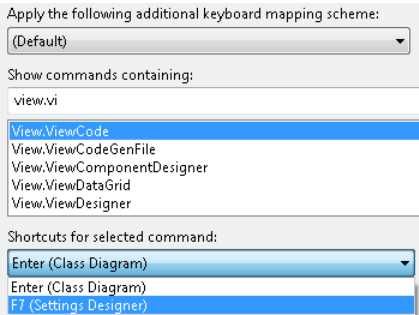
In vstipTool0061, “Find Keyboard Shortcuts,” page 122, we looked at how to find shortcut keys for given commands. Now let’s focus on the Apply The Following Additional Keyboard Mapping Scheme drop-down list.



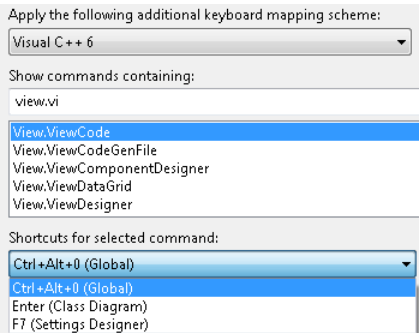
This list allows you to apply additional keyboard shortcuts that were common in certain previous versions.



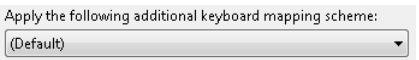
Let’s take an example. If we have the default mapping scheme and want to see the shortcuts for View.ViewCode, we see the options presented in the following illustration.



However, if we add an additional mapping scheme (Visual C++ 6 in this example), this gets the following result:



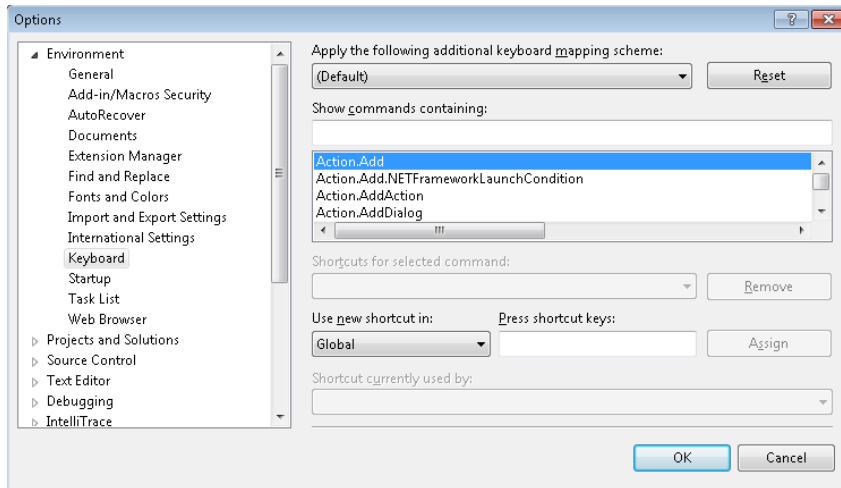
Notice that we have a new shortcut that wasn't there before. This is how adding additional mapping schemes work. If you don't want these additional keys, just set Apply The Following Additional Keyboard Mapping Scheme to Default (or General, if it is available in the list).



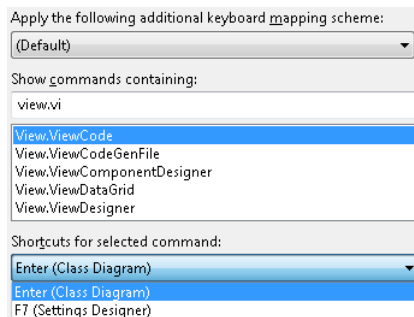
03.26 Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Keyboard
COMMAND	Tools.CustomizeKeyboard
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0063

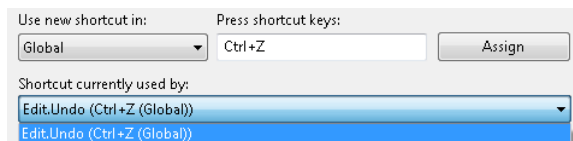
Creating keyboard shortcuts is easy. Let's walk through an example to show you how. First, go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard.



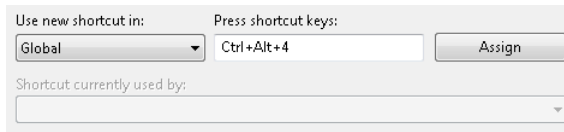
Now let's assume we want to modify the "View.ViewCode" command to include a new shortcut. Notice the existing shortcuts (assuming no additional keyboard mapping schemes).



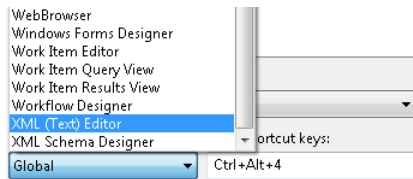
We want to add Ctrl+Z as the shortcut, so click in the Press Shortcut Keys area and press Ctrl+Z.



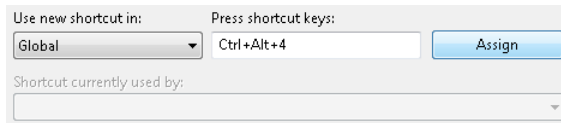
There is a problem. Looking down at the Shortcut Currently Used By area, we see that Ctrl+Z is already mapped to the Edit.Undo command. Because that is an important key combination to us, let's try a new set of shortcut keys. How about Ctrl+Alt+4? Just use backspace to get rid of the current entry, and press Ctrl+Alt+4.



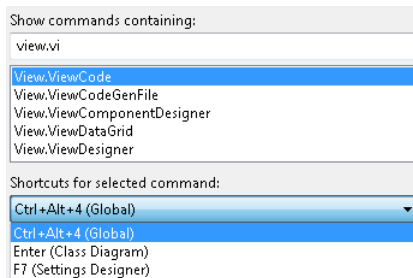
Perfect. It isn't being used by anything currently—but we aren't done yet. We have to decide what scope we want this shortcut to be available in. Notice the drop-down to the left of the new shortcut under Use New Shortcut In? The default scope is global, so you can use it at any time. However, you can narrow the scope down to a specific area.



For example, if we wanted to have this shortcut available only when we're editing XML, we would change Global to XML (Text) Editor. For now, let's keep the Global setting.



After we've decided on the scope and the shortcut keys, all we have to do is click Assign, as shown in the preceding illustration, to make the shortcut available.

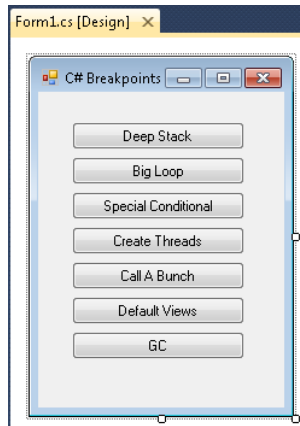


If you mess up here, you can choose the shortcut key and click Remove to start over.

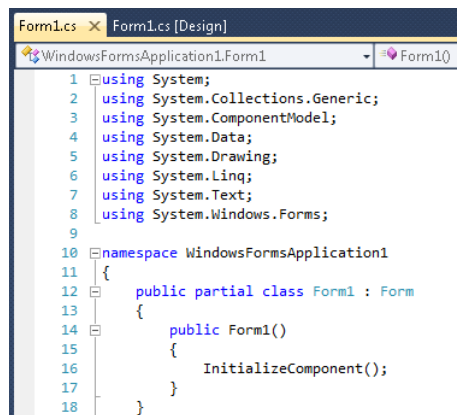


Warning You can remove *any* shortcut, so be careful to remove only the shortcuts you actually want to eliminate.

Click OK, and let's go test our new shortcut. Go to Design View in any project.



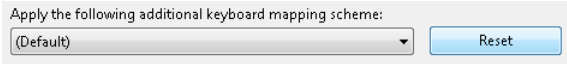
Press Ctrl+Alt+4 to see the following result:



It should take you to the code. You now know how to map new keyboard shortcuts.

Reset

If you make a mistake with your shortcut keys, you can always click the Reset button in Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard.



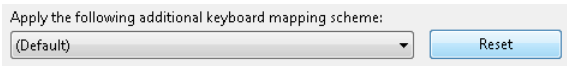
Don't take this option lightly. Refer to `vstipTool0064` ("Keyboard Shortcuts Reset All Your Shortcuts," page 131).

03.27

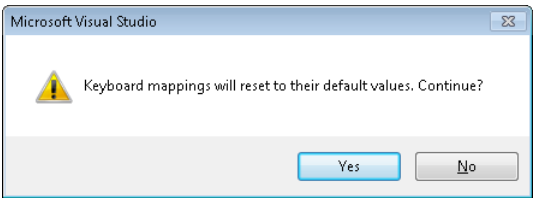
Keyboard Shortcuts: Reset All Your Shortcuts

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Keyboard
COMMAND	Tools.CustomizeKeyboard
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0064

On rare occasions, you might lose track of all the custom shortcuts you have made, or maybe you just want to reset all your shortcuts back to their default settings. You can reset all your keyboard shortcuts by clicking the Reset button in Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard.



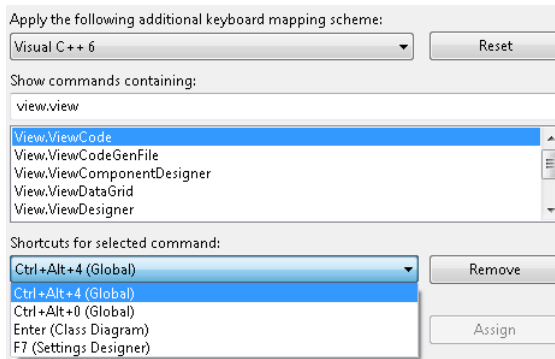
When you click this button, you get the following warning message:



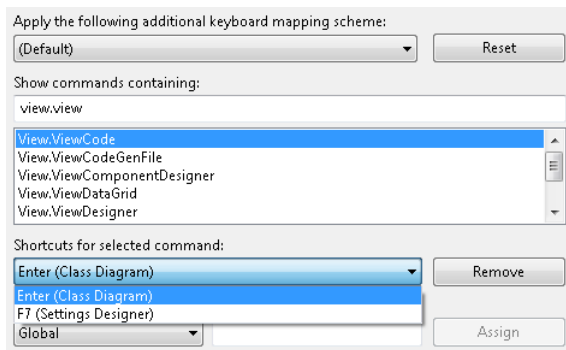
Note Take this warning seriously! It *resets all keyboard mappings to their default values* if you click Yes, so you should use this only if you are sure of the consequences.

The following before-and-after illustrations show what happens after you click Yes in the preceding Warning message.

Before:



After:



03.28 Understanding Commands: Logging Commands

COMMAND	log; Tools.LogCommandWindowOutput
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0071

When using commands, sometimes you want to keep a log of the ones you used. This is especially useful when you are experimenting with commands to see what iterations you went through. The syntax for logging is as follows:

```
log [filename] [/on|/off] [/overwrite]
```

Or you can use the following:

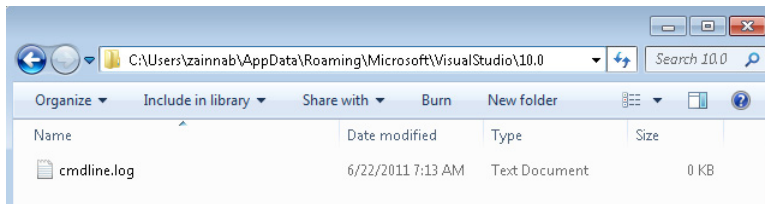
```
Tools.LogCommandWindowOutput [filename] [/on|/off] [/overwrite]
```

Arguments

The following sections describe what the preceding arguments do.

Filename

It's highly recommended that you use a path and file name; otherwise, the default file name is `cmdline.log` and the log file is stored at `C:\Users\<user>\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version>`.



/on /off

This argument turns logging on or off.

/overwrite

By default, all logging operations append to your log file. The `/overwrite` switch changes this behavior and erases any previous commands from the log when a new log session starts.

Example

First, type the "log" command in the Command Window (Ctrl+Alt+A) and specify a file name by typing **log C:\Users\<user>\Documents\vslog.txt /on**, as shown in the following illustration.

```
Command Window
>log C:\Users\zainnab\Documents\vslog.txt /on
>
```

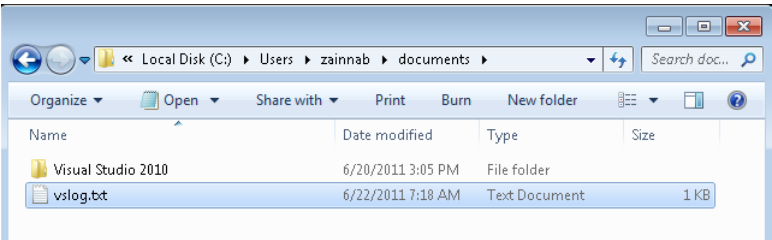
Now type in a couple of commands. The specific commands don't matter here, so feel free to substitute your own commands instead of using mine if you like. I used the commands `View.ViewCode` to get a code window, and I used `Edit.Find sys` to find some text.

```
Command Window
>log C:\Users\zainnab\Documents\vslog.txt /on
>View.ViewCode
>Edit.Find sys
>
```

At this point, you're done typing comments. Turn logging off by using the **log /off** command.

```
Command Window
>log C:\Users\zainnab\Documents\vslog.txt /on
>View.ViewCode
>Edit.Find sys
>log /off
>
```

Now browse to the My Documents folder to see the file.



If you open the file, you should see something similar to the following:

```
vslog.txt - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
>log C:\Users\zainnab\Documents\vslog.txt /on
>View.ViewCode
>Edit.Find sys
>log /off
```

As you can see, the file contains a running log of the commands you entered, including the last command to turn logging off.

03.29 Export Your Window Layouts

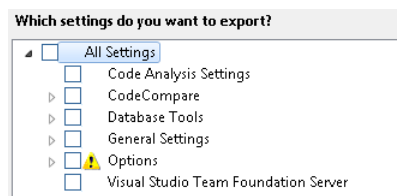
WINDOWS	Alt,T,I
MENU	Tools Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0040

After you get your tool and document windows just the way you want them inside Visual Studio, you want to be able to get those settings back if anything goes wrong.

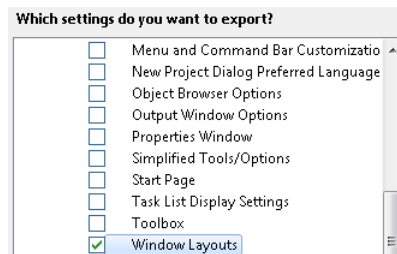
You can export just your window layouts by going to Tools | Import And Export Settings and choosing Export Selected Environment Settings, and then click Next.



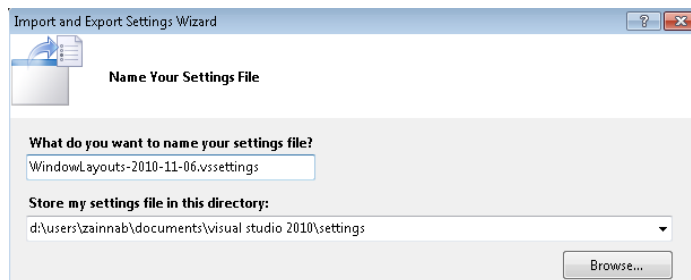
Now clear the All Settings check box.



Go to General Settings, select Window Layouts, and then click Next.



Give the .vssettings file a name and a location to be saved into, click Finish, and then click Close.



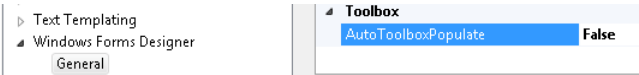
You now can import these settings (see vstipEnv0022, "Importing or Changing Your Environment Settings," in Appendix B [<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>]) whenever you want to get your preferred layouts.

03.30 Stop the Toolbox from Auto-Populating from the Solution

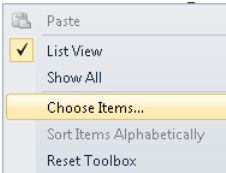
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Windows Forms Designer
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0090

If you find that the Toolbox is taking a long time scanning a solution with a lot of projects in it, you can keep it from doing this.

Just go to Tools | Options | Windows Forms Designer, and set AutoToolboxPopulate to False.



To display custom items when AutoToolboxPopulate is set to False, you can select Choose Items from the Toolbox context menu and add the items manually to the Toolbox.

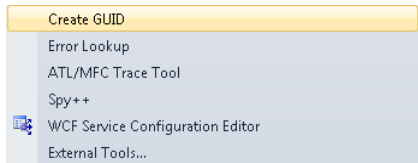


People often set this to False accidentally. If you find your controls are not automatically showing up in the Toolbox, setting this to True might solve the problem.

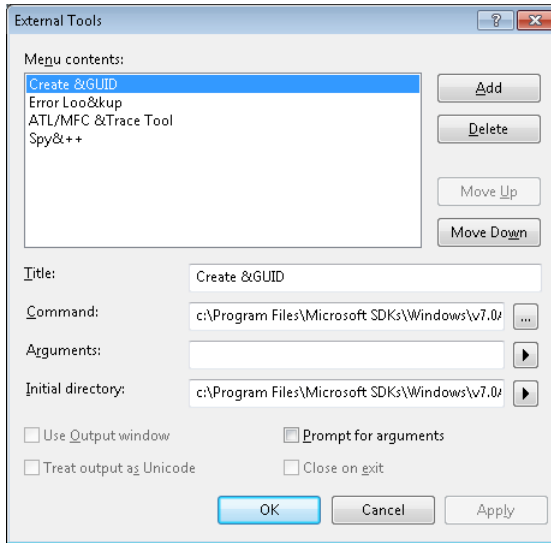
03.31 Using External Tools

WINDOWS	Alt,T, E
MENU	Tools External Tools; Tools [external tool of choice]
COMMAND	Tools.ExternalTools
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0059

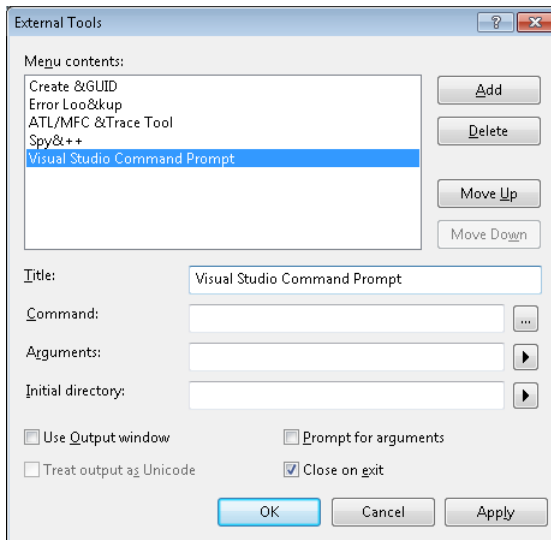
You can run external tools by going to the Tools menu and running your external tool of choice, as shown in the following illustration.



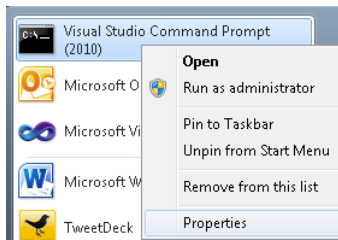
If you want to add additional external tools, you can go to Tools | External Tools.



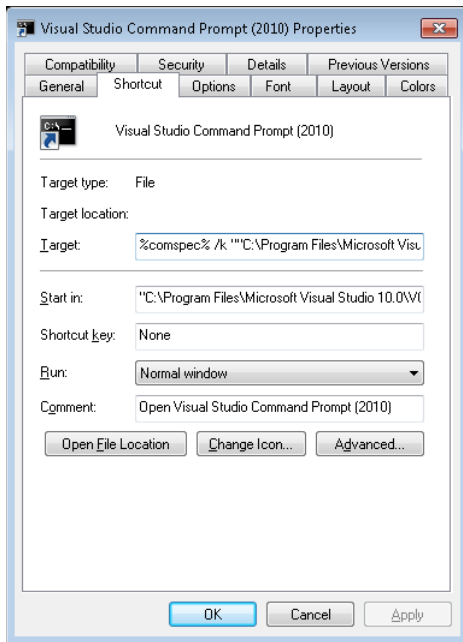
As an example, let's add the Visual Studio command prompt to our external tools list. First, click Add and put in a Title of **Visual Studio Command Prompt**.



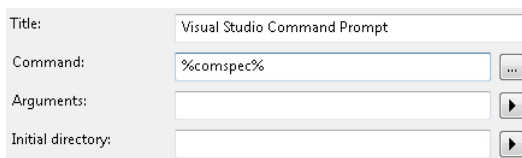
In this case, the Visual Studio command prompt has an icon that we can use to get the information we need. Let's go to its properties.



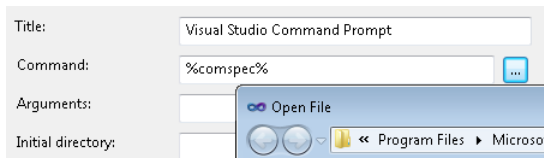
After you click Properties, you see the following dialog box.



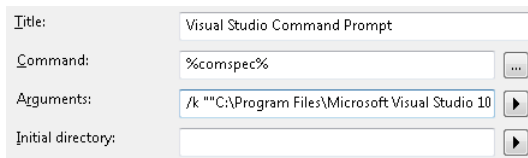
As you can see, the Target field points to %comspec%, with some arguments after it. The variable %comspec% points to the command prompt on the current Windows system and can be used on just about any version of Windows. Let's put that into the Command field for our purposes.



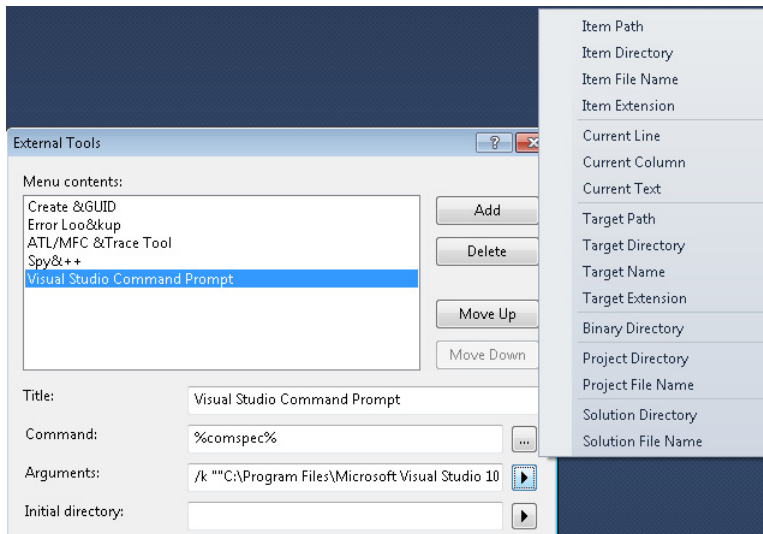
If you weren't using a system variable like this, you could type in the path to the command or use the ellipsis and browse.



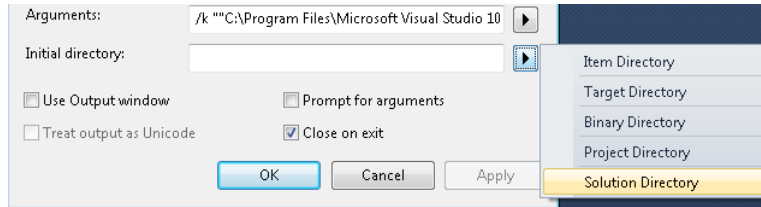
For the Arguments field, again, let's just take from the Visual Studio command prompt properties and enter the path shown in the following illustration.



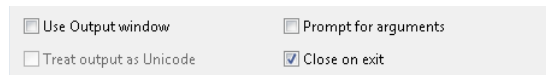
If you want to add items specific to Visual Studio, you can click the arrow to the right and get a large list of variables you can insert as arguments.



The Initial Directory lets you define where you want to start up. I don't have a preference here, so I will leave it blank, but I could type in a path or use one of the variables available to me by clicking on the arrow to the right of the Initial Directory field.



Finally, you can choose from several options at the bottom.



Use Output Window

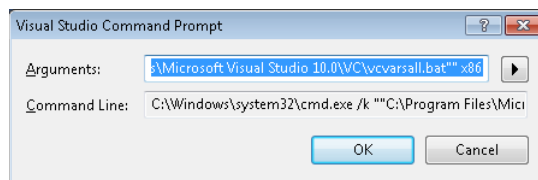
Selecting this option runs the command and puts any output into the Output window. This is useful for commands that just return some data you want to look at. For our command prompt, this wouldn't be a good choice because we want to type in commands.

Treat Output As Unicode

If your tool returns Unicode output, you would select this check box.

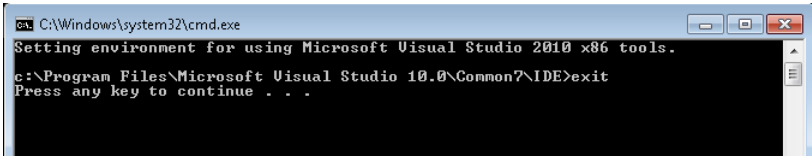
Prompt For Arguments

This option shows a dialog box that enables you to modify the arguments before the command is run or to put in completely new arguments.

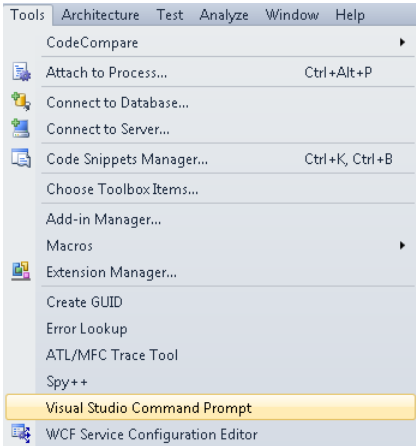


Close On Exit

Selecting this option determines whether the window should close when the tool closes. In the case of our command prompt, with this option checked when we type **exit** and press Enter, the window closes. However, if this option is *not* checked and we do the same thing, we get the result shown in the following illustration.



When you are all done, just click OK, and you now have your command showing up in the external tools list off the Tools menu.

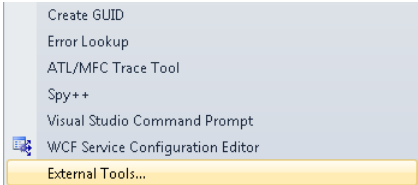


03.32

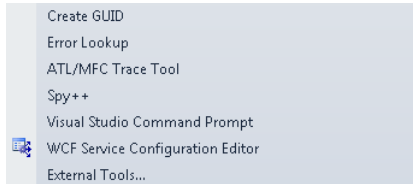
Create Keyboard Accelerators for External Tools

WINDOWS	Alt,T, E
MENU	Tools External Tools
COMMAND	Tools.ExternalTools
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0093

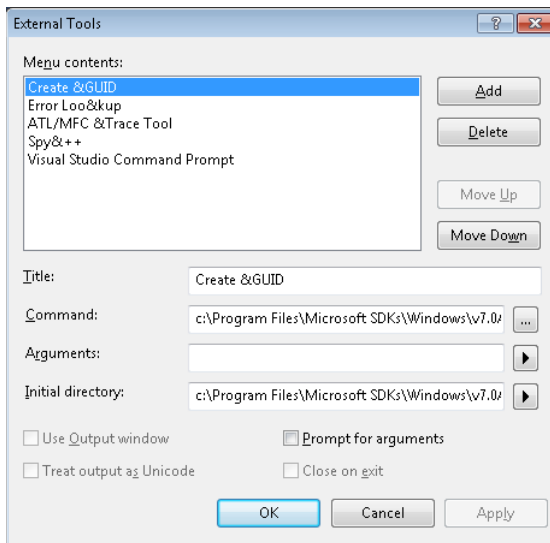
In vstipTool0059 (“Using External Tools,” page 136), I showed you how to add external tools to the Visual Studio Tools menu).



After you create an entry, you probably want to have an accelerator key assigned so that you can use your keyboard to activate the new tool. First, you can see what these keys look like by going to the Tools menu, using your keyboard (Alt+T).



Now you can press any letter that is underlined to access that item. For example, if the letter “G” is pressed, it opens up the Create GUID tool. You can see how this is created by going to Tools | External Tools on the menu bar.

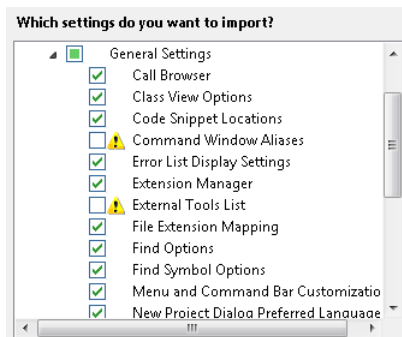


Notice the ampersand (&) before the “G” in “GUID”? Anytime you put an ampersand before any character in your title, the next character after it becomes the accelerator key. As you can see, all these entries have accelerator keys assigned to them. Now you can create special keys for your external tools access.

03.33 Exporting Your Command Window Aliases and External Tools List

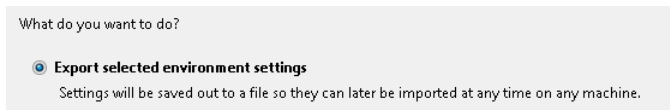
WINDOWS	Alt,T, I
MENU	Tools Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0043

As you probably know, you can export just about any setting you want. Usually, you export several settings together. However, when it comes time to import settings, the following two settings do not get imported by default: Command Window Aliases and External Tools List:

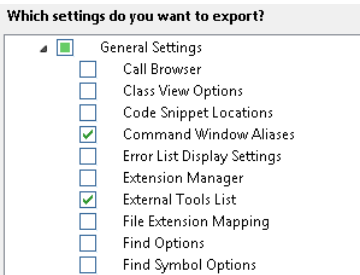


Sometimes, when importing, users just click through the wizard and forget this is the case. For this reason, it might be a good idea to make sure that you have these two settings exported separately as an extra copy. Then you can just import these settings as needed.

To do this, just go to Tools | Import And Export Settings and select Export Selected Environment Settings:



Click Next, clear the All Settings check box, and then select the Command Window Aliases and External Tools List check boxes:

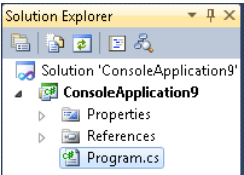


From here, just complete the wizard normally and make sure to give your exported file a logical name, such as Command Aliases and External Tools List.

03.34 Creating and Using a Macro

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+R (record/stop recording); Ctrl+Shift+P (run)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut] (record/stop recording); [no shortcut] (run)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+R (record/stop recording); Ctrl+Shift+P (run)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+R (record/stop recording); Ctrl+Shift+P (run)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+R (record/stop recording); Ctrl+Shift+P (run)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut] (record/stop recording)
WINDOWS	Alt,T, M, C (record / stop recording); Alt,T, M, R (run)
MENU	Tools Macros Record Temporary Macro; Tools Macros Run Temporary Macro; Tools Macros Save Temporary Macro
COMMAND	Tools.RecordTemporaryMacro; Tools.RunTemporaryMacro; Tools.SaveTemporaryMacro
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0055

You can record macros to do just about anything in Visual Studio. In this example, we create a macro that adds a new class to our project. First, create a new project. For this example, create a Console Application:



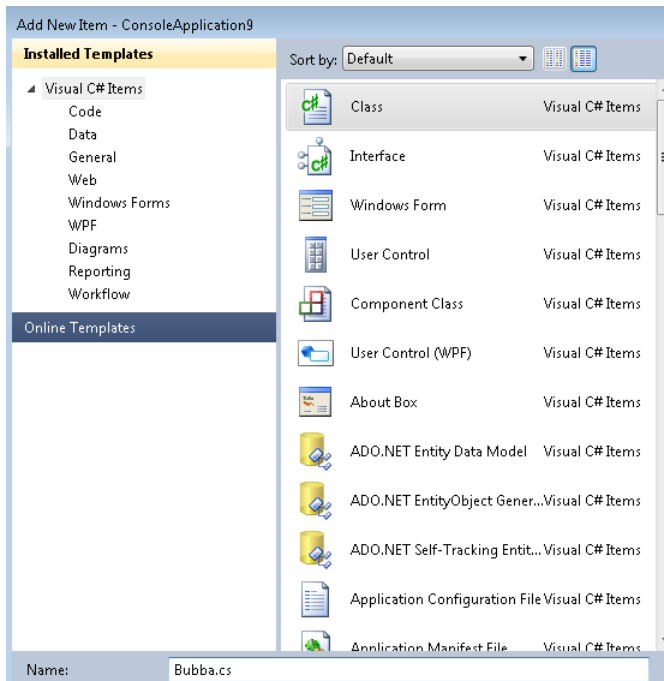
Now we are going to add a class to the project and give the class a name. When we do this, we will record the actions into a temporary macro by pressing Ctrl+Shift+R. You should see the following status in the lower-left corner:



Add a new class (Ctrl+Shift+A) called **Bubba.cs**:



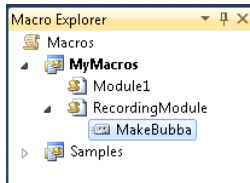
Warning You can run into numerous little “gotchas” when creating macros. One that took me a little while to figure out was leaving off the “.cs” at the end of the file name. For some reason, Visual Studio doesn’t like that at all. Keep an eye out for little things like that as you use this feature.



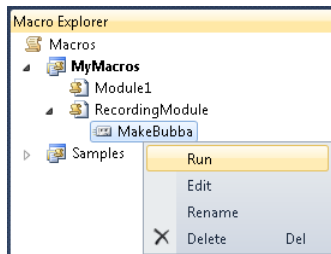
Add a comment to the class:

```
namespace ConsoleApplication1
{
    class Bubba
    {
        // this is the bubba class
    }
}
```

Stop recording (Ctrl+Shift+R), and then go to Tools | Macros | Save Temporary Macro. Name the macro **MakeBubba** in the Macro Explorer:



Now we can test out our new macro by creating a new project and going to the Macro Explorer (Alt+F8). Right-click the MakeBubba macro, and choose Run:



It should make the new class and put your comment in:

```
namespace ConsoleApplication1
{
    class Bubba
    {
        // this is the bubba class
    }
}
```

After you have created your macro, you might want to see the code behind it. You can go to the Macro Explorer (Alt+F8), right-click any macro, and then choose Edit to see the code. Here is what my code (cleaned up a bit) looks like for the macro we just made:

```
Sub MakeBubba ()
    DTE.ItemOperations.AddNewItem _
        ("Visual C# Items\Code\Class", "Bubba.cs")

    DTE.ActiveDocument.Selection.LineDown(False, 8)
    DTE.ActiveDocument.Selection.CharRight(False, 5)
    DTE.ActiveDocument.Selection.NewLine()

    DTE.ActiveDocument.Selection.Text = "// bubba class"
End Sub
```

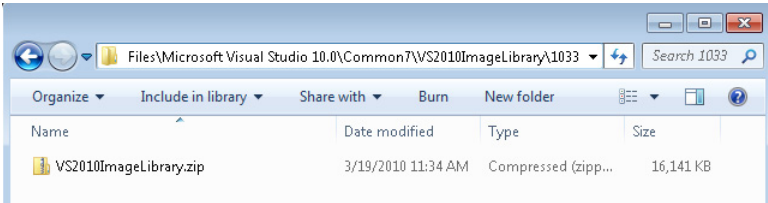
Notice that it is fairly easy to read and understand, which makes it easy to edit as well. Now that you have a working macro, you should visit [vstipTool0066](http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758) ("Create a Shortcut Key for a Macro," in Appendix B [<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>]) and create a shortcut key for it.

03.35 Visual Studio Image Library

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0049

As a developer, you are always looking for images that can be used in your applications. Visual Studio comes with a set of images to help you out. In fact, it comes with over 2000 output files, images ready for immediate use, as well as a variety of source files that you can use to create your own images if needed. These images come from Microsoft Windows, the Office system, Microsoft Visual Studio, and other Microsoft software.

You can find them in a .zip file located at “C:\Program Files\Microsoft Visual Studio <version>\Common7\VS<version>ImageLibrary\1033.” For example, I found my images at “C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Visual Studio 10.0\Common7\VS2010ImageLibrary\1033”:



Types of Files

The Visual Studio Image Library folders contain source files and output files.

Source files

Source files contain building blocks intended for use with an image editor to generate new or to customize existing icons.



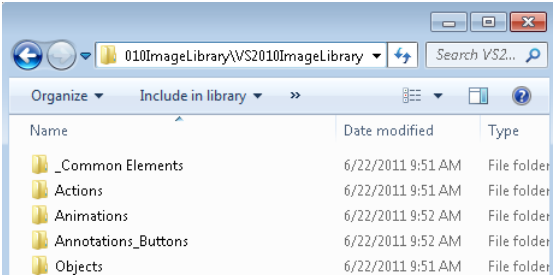
Output files

Typically, output files are composite images made up of a base concept with 1–3 adorners, ready for immediate use by developers.



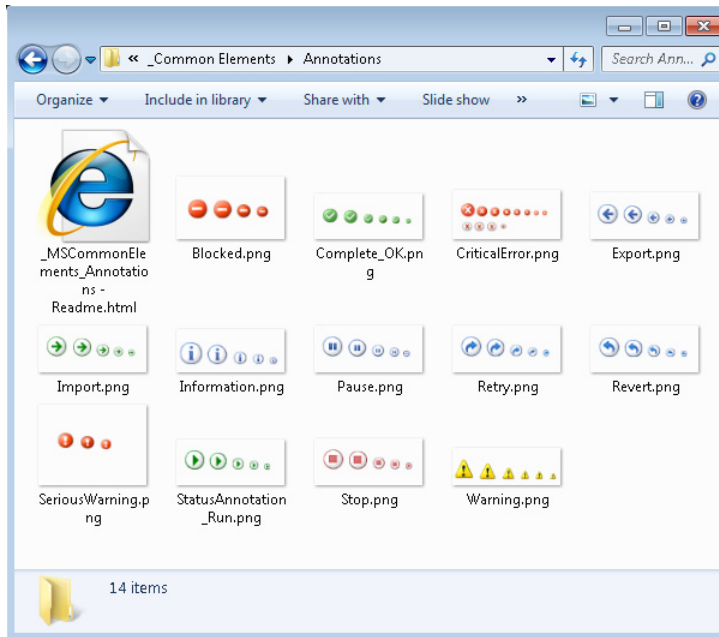
Image Library Contents

The following illustration provides an idea of what is included in the Visual Studio Image Library and what each group of images is used for:

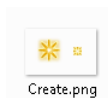


Common Elements

Have you ever tried to edit an existing image that is made up of several overlapping elements? Then you know how hard it is to make simple changes in an output file. In this section, each source file is made up of various sizes of each element on a transparent background. When used with an image editor that utilizes layers, such as Adobe Photoshop or Paint.NET, you can choose the size of an element that fits best with what you're trying to do and then make adjustments by layering the pieces, moving them around without editing the bits that are in the lower layers.



When the final image is composed just the way you like it, you can then flatten and save the file in a usable format such as .ico, .bmp, or .png. A typical use of source files would be to take an existing image and add an adorning from the _Common Elements source files, such as adding a “new” star to the upper left to indicate a command that creates a new item of that base type:



Actions

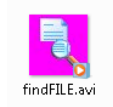
The Actions folder set contains output file images that represent verbs. Most commands are verbs, so if you are building a toolbar or ribbon, you would find most of those images in the Actions folder. In the Visual Studio Image Library, the Actions images are separated by format (24-bit, 32-bit, .ico, and .png), size (16x16, 24x24, 32x32), and style (Office/Visual Studio, DataTools, Windows Vista, and Windows XP).



Use the format that works best within your code; 24-bit .bmp files use a fuchsia color that you can map to the background color of your user interface so that it appears to have a transparent background; 32-bit .bmp files contain a transparent background, although in File Explorer it appears black, and .ico and .png files have transparent backgrounds as well. Also, each style is illustrated differently, so generally, you should choose one style and stay consistent, not mixing different styles in the same user interface.

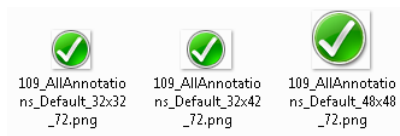
Animations

This folder contains a few of the common animations that you see in Windows and that are used in dialog boxes or other user interface elements to indicate that a process is underway. You have .avi and .gif formats available for most of the animations; which format you use will be determined by which format is best supported by the technology you're using for your user interface.



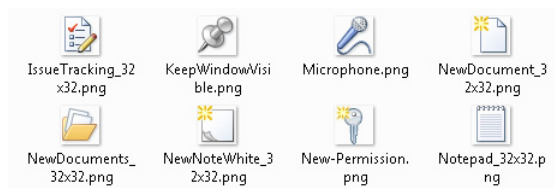
Annotations_Buttons

The Annotations_Buttons folder contains images for notifications, simple actions such as expand/collapse, or to describe the state of an object or process—for example, running, paused, or offline. This group of files is also separated out by format (24-bit .bmp, .ico, and .png) as well as style. Notice that the Windows Vista .ico annotations contain the full range of sizes that can be viewed in the File Explorer and appear correctly in accordance with the size required by your user interface.

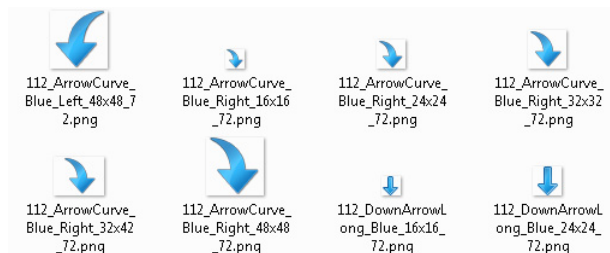


Objects

Objects are output image files representing nouns. Because they represent objects, the most common usage for these files is in tree views, list views, or containers such as toolboxes. When used in this way, these images enable the user to scan a list of elements and to identify types of objects without needing to read the name of the item. Sometimes objects can also represent commands, such as a command to create a new object of that type (New File) or to launch a user interface element related to that object (for example, a stopwatch image used to indicate Start Timer).

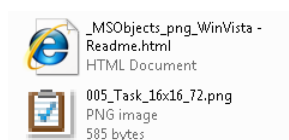


In the `png_format` Windows Vista folder, you can find a wide variety of sizes and colors of various flags, arrows, +/- signs, and so forth, which can be used to indicate a variety of meanings. Generally, Object images are used as base elements when creating a new compound icon. Base elements augmented by annotations or other actions/object images can indicate the state or type of the base image and form a visual language when used with variations of similar icons:



Using the Images

The images are meant to be used for their original intent. So, for example, you can't use the Paste image for something other than a paste operation. When you are using or creating these images, it is important that you make sure to use the images in a manner that is consistent with the description of the respective image in the readme document found in its respective folder:



Chapter 4

Working with Documents

"He turned off the word processor, realizing just a second after he'd flicked the switch that he'd forgotten to save the document. Well, that was all right. Maybe it had even been the critic in his subconscious, telling him the document wasn't worth saving."

—Stephen King, "Secret Window, Secret Garden" in "Four Past Midnight"

Documents serve as the cornerstone of your activities in Visual Studio. Writing code, debugging code, creating interfaces, or just about anything else you do is done with documents. Yet we still seem to take our documents for granted. This chapter focuses on working with documents in the File Tab Channel as well as ways to navigate better. Several advanced topics, such as creating custom file extensions and working with previous versions are covered as well.

04.01 Insert Documents to the Right of Existing Tabs

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Documents
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEnv0001

By default, Visual Studio 2010 opens up new tabs to the left of existing ones, as shown in the following illustration.



You now have an option to put newly opened documents in the file channel to the right of existing tabs.

Just go to Tools | Options | Environment | Documents, and select the Insert Documents To The Right Of Existing Tabs option.

You should see new tabs show up to the right of existing tabs.

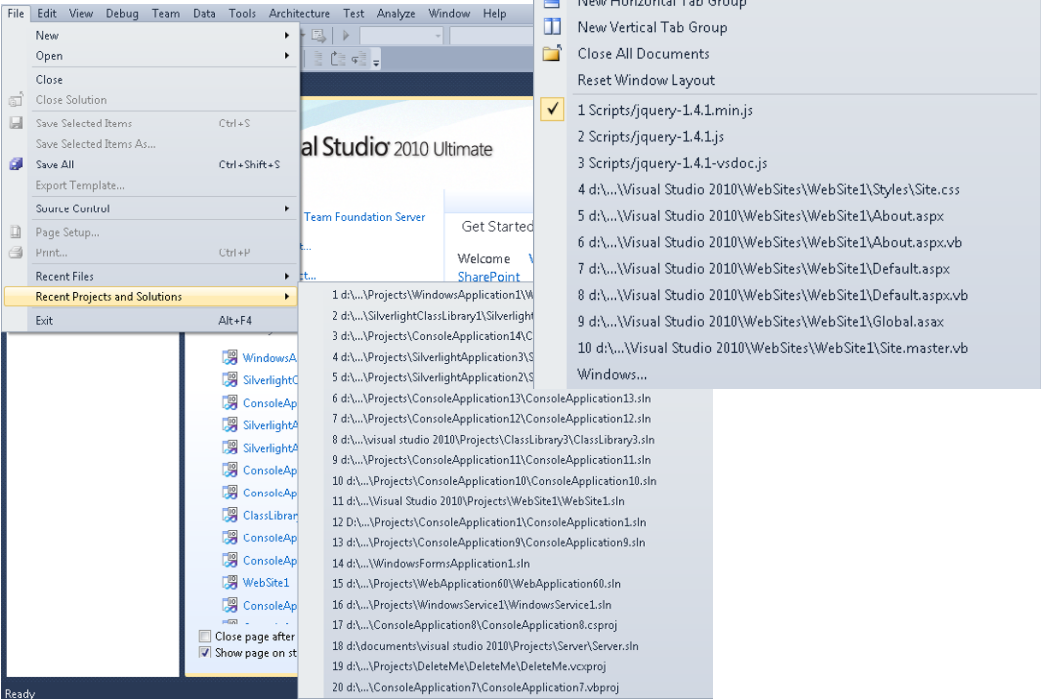


04.02 Recent Files

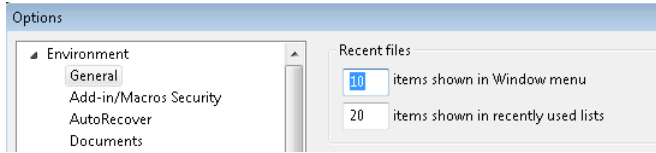
WINDOWS	Alt,W, [1,2,3, etc] (windows); Alt,F, F, [1,2,3, etc] (files); Alt,F, J, [1,2,3, etc] (projects and solutions)
MENU	Tools Options General Recent files; Window [1,2,3, etc]; File Recent Files [1,2,3, etc]; File Recent Projects and Solutions [1,2,3, etc]
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0013

By default, the Window menu shows the 10 most recent files you had open, as shown in the illustration to the right.

Likewise, the Recent Files and Recent Projects And Solutions items on the File menu show only the last 20 entries.



You can easily modify these numbers (up or down) by going to Tools | Options | General | Recent files.

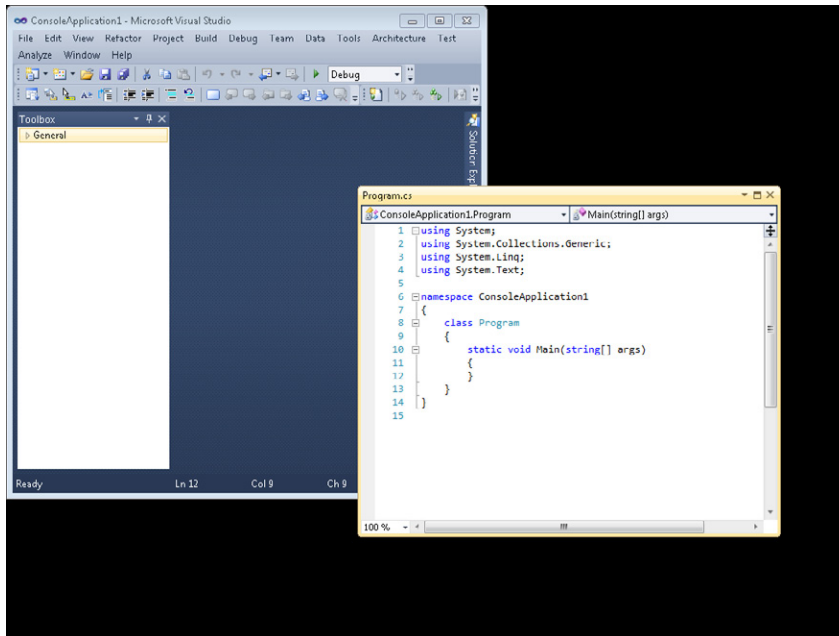


For each of these options, the minimum value is 1 and the maximum value is 24. Experiment with numbers that suit your taste.

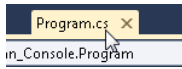
04.03 Working with Documents on Multiple Monitors

WINDOWS	Alt,W, F (float); Alt,W,T (dock)
MENU	Window Float; Window Dock as Tabbed Document
COMMAND	Window.Float; Window.DockasTabbedDocument
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0004

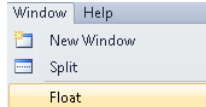
This is one we have all been wanting for a long time: detachable document windows. You can now detach document windows and put them on another monitor! You have a couple of ways to do this.



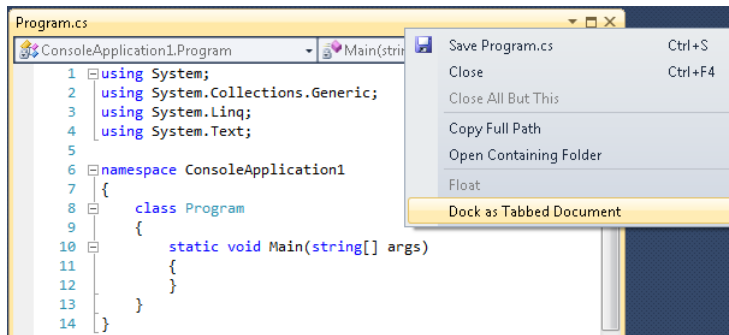
The first way is to simply click and drag the tab for the document window out of the IDE.



The second way is to go to Window | Float on the menu bar, as shown in the following illustration.

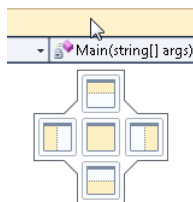


What if you want to put the window back? No worries; just right-click the title bar of the document and choose Dock As Tabbed Document.

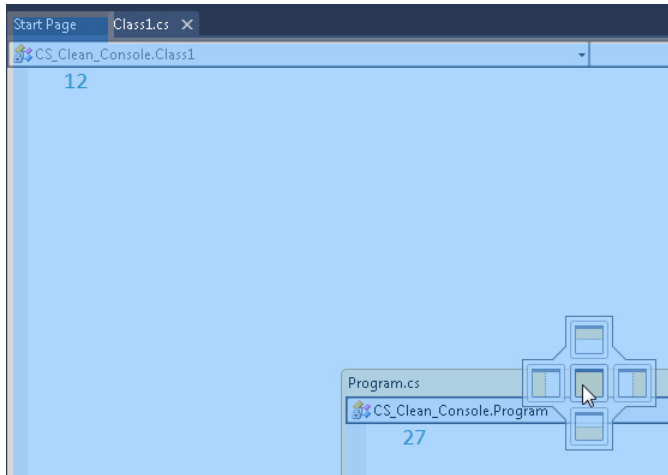


If you want an alternative method, you can go the following route: Click and drag the document window by its title bar into the IDE.

The guide diamond appears in the IDE, as shown in the following illustration.



Hold down the left mouse button, and move your cursor over the middle item in the guide diamond. You should see an outline of where the window will be docked.



Release the mouse button, and it should dock where you want it to go.

04.04 Navigate Open Document Windows

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F6 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F6; Ctrl+Tab (next) Ctrl+Shift+F6; Ctrl+Shift+Tab (previous)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F6; Ctrl+Tab (next) Ctrl+Shift+F6; Ctrl+Shift+Tab (previous)
COMMAND	Window.NextDocumentWindow; Window.PreviousDocumentWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0013

OK, so you have a lot of files open in the file channel:



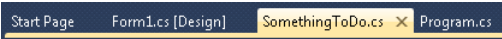
And you don't want to use your mouse to switch between tabs. Just press Ctrl+F6 to go forward.

Or press Ctrl+Shift+F6 to go backward.

04.05 Close the Current Document Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F4
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+F4
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F4
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F4
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+F4
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F4
WINDOWS	Alt,F, C
MENU	File Close
COMMAND	Window.CloseDocumentWindow; File.Close
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0014

You can close the current document window from the keyboard. Just make sure you are in the document you want to close.

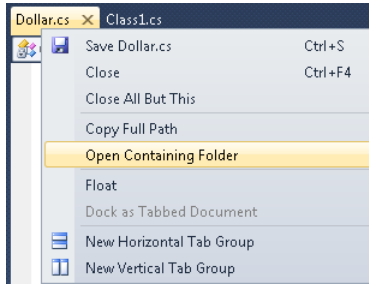


Then press Ctrl+F4. The current document closes, and it prompts you to save changes if you haven't already.

04.06 Open a File Location from the File Tab

DEFAULT	Alt+- (minus sign), O (VS2010 Only)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt+- (minus sign), O (VS2010 Only)
COMMAND	File.OpenContainingFolder; Window.ShowDockMenu
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0014

Do you often find yourself needing to go to your project location in Windows Explorer? Just right-click the file's tab, and choose Open Containing Folder.

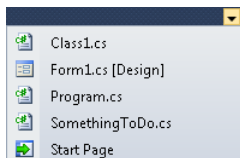


The file location opens in Windows Explorer, and you can manipulate the files from there.

04.07 Open the File Menu Drop-Down List from Your Keyboard

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+Down Arrow
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+Down Arrow
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+Down Arrow
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+Down Arrow
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+Down Arrow
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+Down Arrow
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.ShowEzMDIFileList
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0003

When you have a lot of files open, it is sometimes easier to view them as a list instead of tabs. The File menu drop-down list does that for you. You can click the drop-down button to the far right on the file tab, or you can simply use Ctrl+Alt+Down Arrow to activate it.

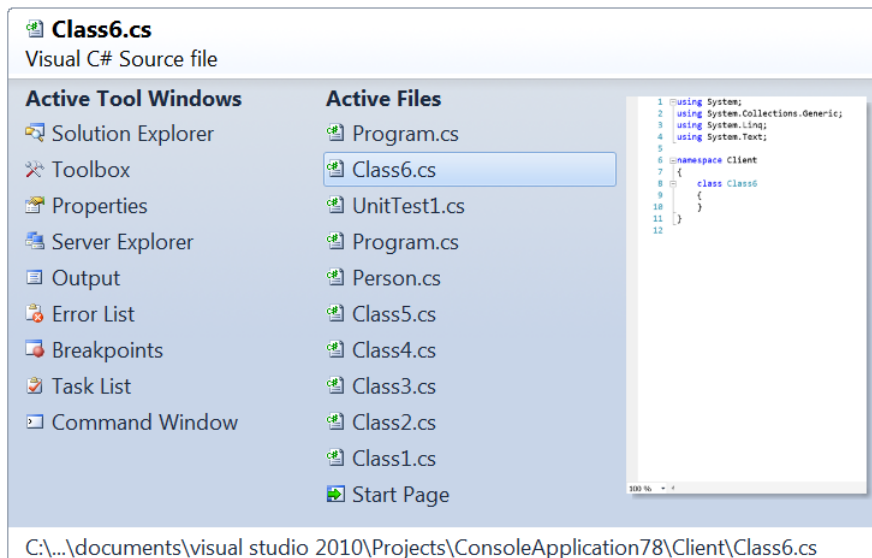


An interesting thing about this list is that it has type-ahead functionality. So, in this example, if you type the letter **S**, it automatically selects SomethingToDo.cs. Hitting **S** again results in Start Page being selected. If you have a lot of files, you can type more characters to narrow down the selection. For example, typing **ST** jumps straight to Start Page.

04.08 Using the IDE Navigator

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Tab (forward in Active Files); Ctrl+Shift+Tab (backward in Active Files); Alt+F7 (forward in Active Tool Windows); Alt+Shift+F7 (backward in Active Tool Windows)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcuts]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Tab (forward in Active Files); Ctrl+Shift+Tab (backward in Active Files); Alt+F7 (forward in Active Tool Windows); Alt+Shift+F7 (backward in Active Tool Windows)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcuts]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Tab (forward in Active Files); Ctrl+Shift+Tab (backward in Active Files); Alt+F7 (forward in Active Tool Windows); Alt+Shift+F7 (backward in Active Tool Windows)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Tab (forward in Active Files); Ctrl+Shift+Tab (backward in Active Files); Alt+F7 (forward in Active Tool Windows); Alt+Shift+F7 (backward in Active Tool Windows)
WINDOWS	[no shortcuts]
COMMAND	Window.NextDocumentWindowNav; Window.PreviousDocumentWindowNav; Window.NextToolWindowNav; Window.PreviousToolWindowNav
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0023

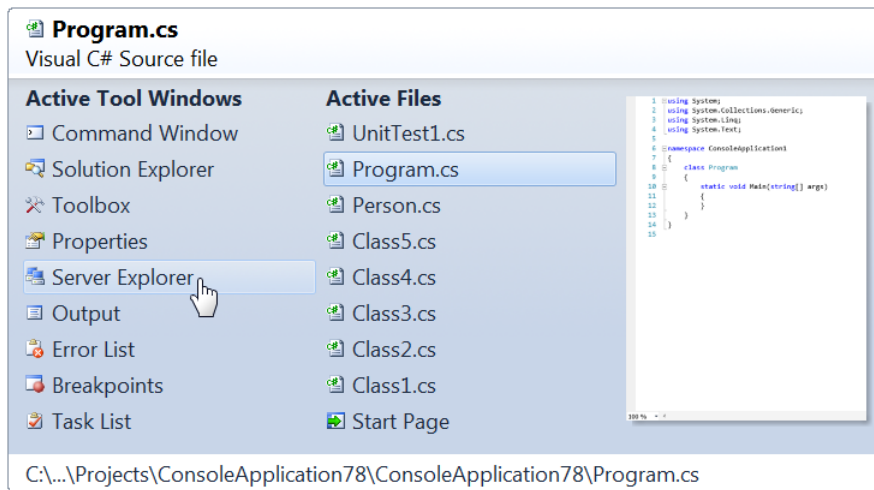
Navigating documents and tool windows in the IDE is a critical part of your development experience. You can easily move among active file and tool windows by pressing Ctrl+Tab.





Note The images in this tip show the IDE Navigator with document preview (image to the right of the lists). This feature is off by default in Visual Studio 2010, but can be turned on as shown in vstipTool0113, “Thumbnail Previews in the IDE Navigator”, in Appendix B (<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>).

Some interesting things come with using this feature. For example, holding down the Ctrl key keeps the IDE Navigator showing once it is up. Also, you can select any item in this dialog box, while it is showing, by using your mouse or arrow keys.



Navigator Areas

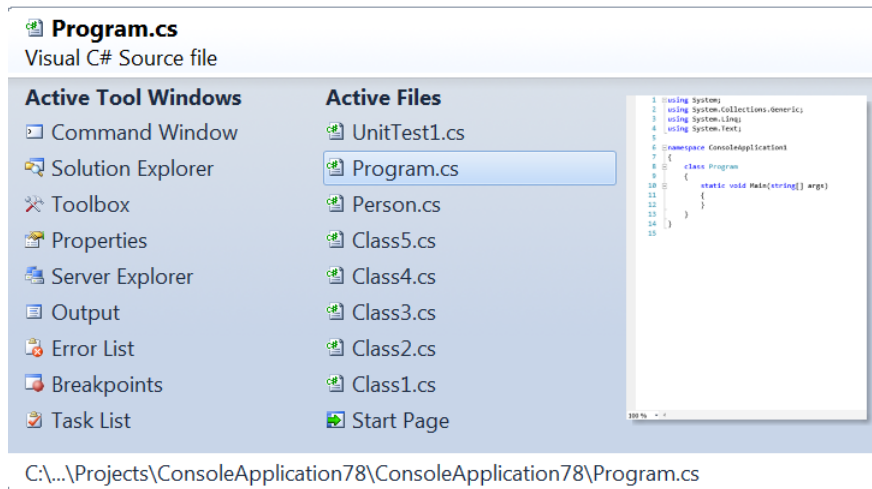
Let's take a look at the two major areas in the navigator: Active Files and Active Tool Windows.

Active files

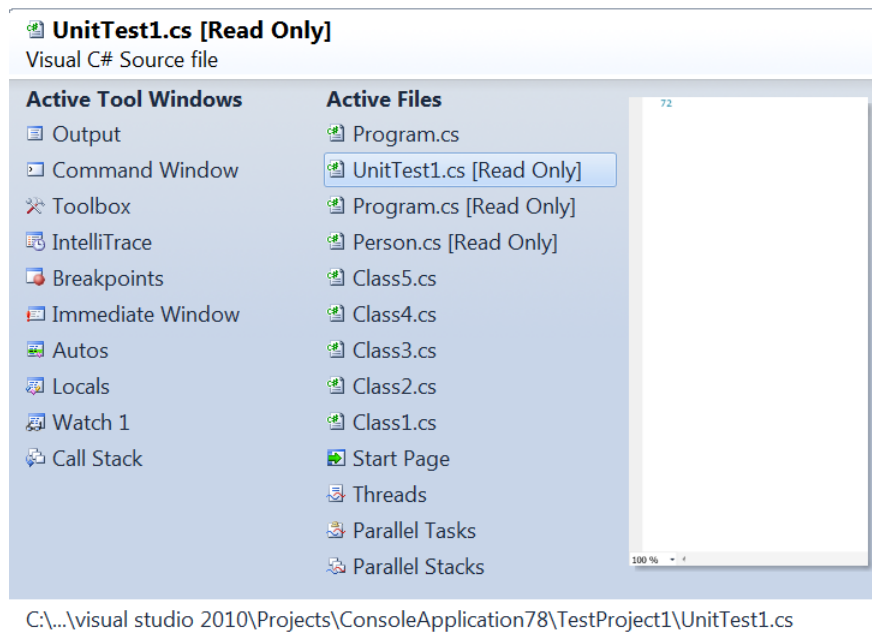
To navigate active files, press Ctrl+Tab to go forward and Ctrl+Shift+Tab to go backward through the list. The currently selected file is highlighted, and its name is displayed at the top of the dialog box. Also, notice that the full file path is shown at the bottom of the IDE navigator.

Active tool windows

This part of the dialog box shows all your tool windows that are currently open. To get to this area, you can use Alt+F7 or Alt+Shift+F7. The interesting part is that this list changes depending on when you use it. The following illustration shows what mine looks like while I am writing code.



And here's what it looks like when I'm debugging:



04.09 Multiple Views of the Same Document

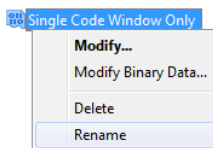
WINDOWS	Alt,W, N
MENU	Window New Window
COMMAND	Window.NewWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0016

Sometimes you might want to look at a particularly large document in several different areas at the same time. For example, you might want to look at the same document on multiple monitors. This tip shows you how to make this happen.

Special Note for VB Users in Visual Studio 2010

This feature is turned off by default in VB. A lot of history and reasoning is behind this, but the long and short of it is that this was fixed for 2010 but time ran out and it wasn't tested. So you can turn this on for VB, but you do so at your own risk. Special thanks to my friend Dustin Campbell for supplying the history and the fix.

To to fix this, go to "HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Languages\Language Services\Basic\" and rename the Single Code Window Only registry key to something like **[your initials here] Single Code Window Only**. The following illustration shows what I did:



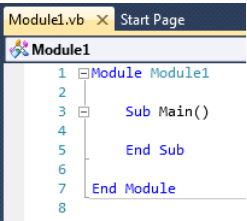
zn Single Code Window Only

Now restart Visual Studio, and you are good to go for the rest of this tip.

Multiple Views

I came across this while I was checking my email one day and noticed a thread started by the legendary Deborah Kurata concerning the Window | New Window menu item. The following example describes how it works.

Open a document window.



Now go to Window | New Window on the menu bar to open a duplicate window of the current document.



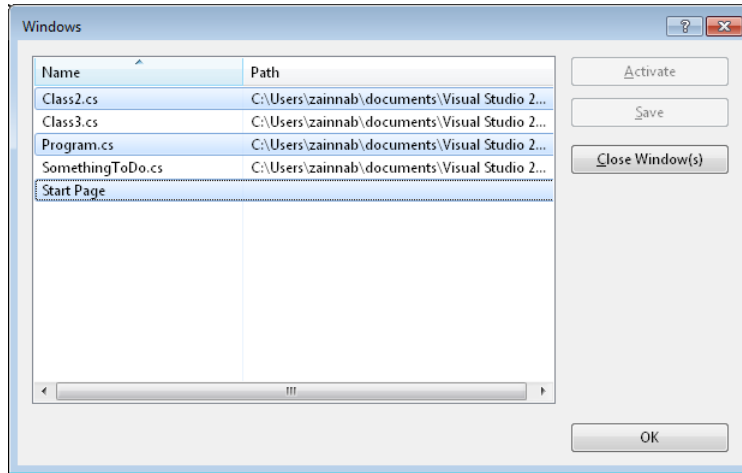
Notice that “:1” is added to the existing document tab text and that “:2” is appended to the name on the new document tab. You can apparently do this *forever* (or at least up to 150, which is as high as I have tested this feature).



04.10 Closing Just the Selected Files You Want

WINDOWS	Alt,W, W
MENU	Window Windows
COMMAND	Window.Windows
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0010

What do you do when you have a lot of files open and want to close only a few of them? Just go to Window | Windows on the menu bar, as shown in the following illustration.

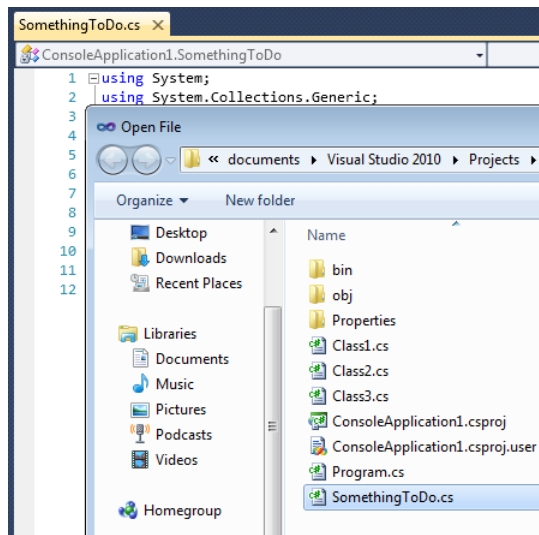


Select the files you want to close (Ctrl+Left-click), and then click Close Window(s). It closes the windows you selected and leaves the rest open.

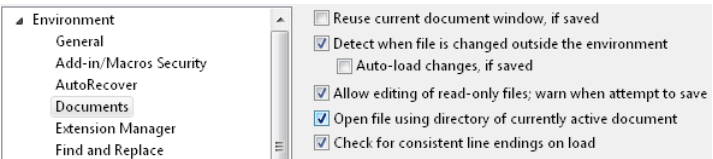
04.11 Understanding the File Open Location

MENU	Tools Options Environment Documents
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0035

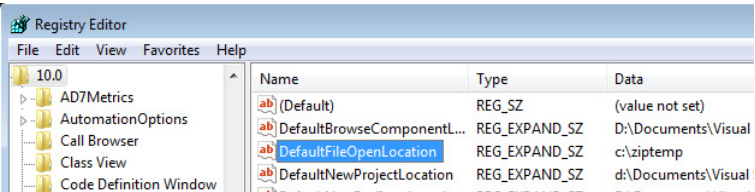
Have you ever noticed that when you go to open a file in Visual Studio (Ctrl+O) it automatically uses the directory of the current active document?



This is controlled by the Open File Using Directory Of Currently Active Document option. You can find this at Tools | Options | Environment | Documents.



You can turn this feature off by clearing its check box, and Visual Studio then uses the DefaultFileOpenLocation from HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version> in the registry instead.



Be aware that the DefaultFileOpenLocation changes every time you successfully open a file in the Open File dialog box. However, the update is not written to the registry until you close Visual Studio.

04.12 Show Previous Versions

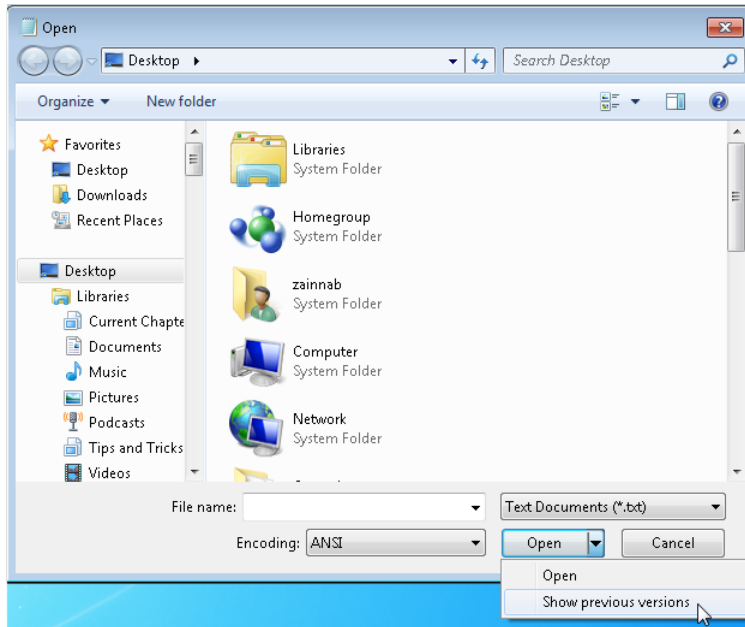
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0036



Note For more information about previous versions including how to activate it if you don't currently have it turned on, go to <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/Previous-versions-of-files-frequently-asked-questions>.

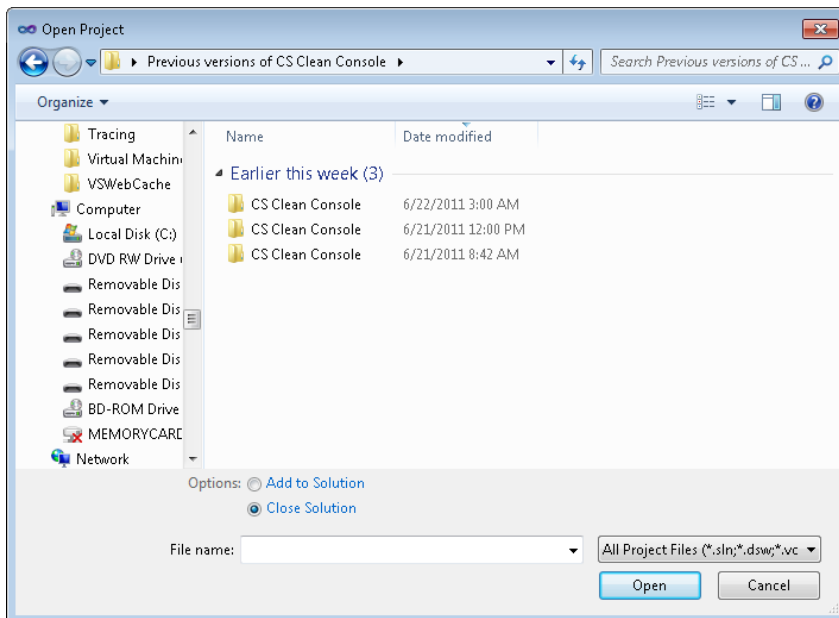
Ever want to go back in time when you save a change to your code that you didn't want saved? If you use source control, you are usually OK, but if you don't, this tip is for you.

If you run a Windows Vista or later operating system (excluding Home Editions), you have an option you might not have noticed before called Show Previous Versions. It shows up in various applications, such as Notepad, as shown in the following illustration.



You can also see this option in the Open Project dialog box as well.

When you click Show Previous Versions, you can see prior versions of the current directory you are in, as shown in the following illustration.

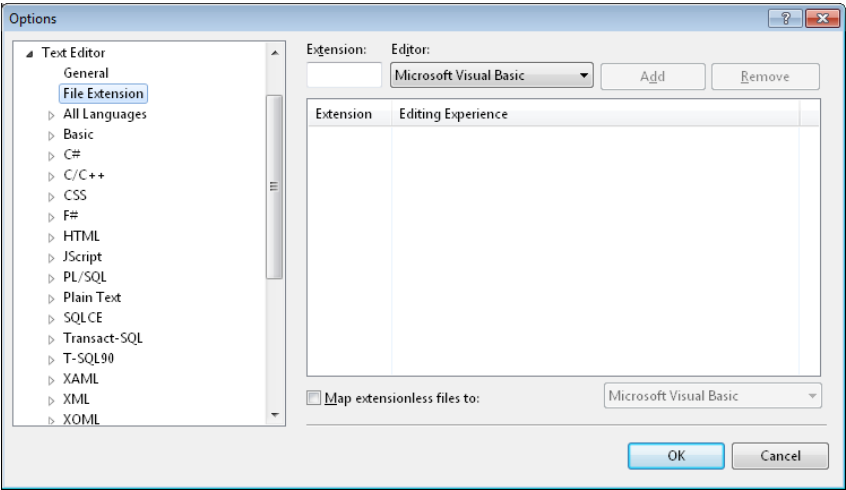


Now you can open previous versions of solutions, projects, files, and so forth, and do what you like.

04.13 Using Custom File Extension Associations

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor File Extension
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0038

If you have a custom file extension that you would like to associate with an editing experience, just go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | File Extension to see the options shown in the following illustration.



Simply type in your extension and the editing experience you want to have when it is opened. In the following example, I have a .cool extension that is associated with the Script Editor:



When I click Add, as shown in the preceding illustration, the following information is added to the overall list:

Extension:	Editor:		
cool	Script Editor	Apply	Remove
Extension	Editing Experience		
cool	Script Editor		
jack	Transact-SQL Editor		
stuff	Web Form Editor		

Notice that you can select any item in the list, modify the extension and/or editor, and then click Apply to save the changes. Additionally, you can click Remove to take any entry out of the list.

Chapter 5

Finding Things

"I am in hopes, then, that we may find the object of our search thus. I imagine that our state, being rightly organized, is a perfectly good state."

—Plato, "The Republic"

It's very frustrating when you are looking for something in your code and can't find it. This can range from a simple method definition to a complex set of classes in the .NET Framework, and everything in between. This chapter explores how to use the various search features in Visual Studio.

The ability to find information and then act on that information in some way is one of the central keys to creating good code. When we search for or replace code with complex criteria, our mastery of the various Find dialog boxes becomes the difference between a few minutes or several hours of work.

05.01 Repeat Your Last Search

DEFAULT	F3 (next); Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL BASIC 6	F3 (next); Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL C# 2005	F3 (next); Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	F3 (next); Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 6	F3 (next); Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F3 (next); Shift+F3 (previous)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.FindNext; Edit.FindPrevious
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0004

After you perform a Find operation, you can quickly repeat that find. The following steps show you how.

Verify that your last Find shows up in the Find combo box on the Standard toolbar (usually located toward the upper right of your screen).

double

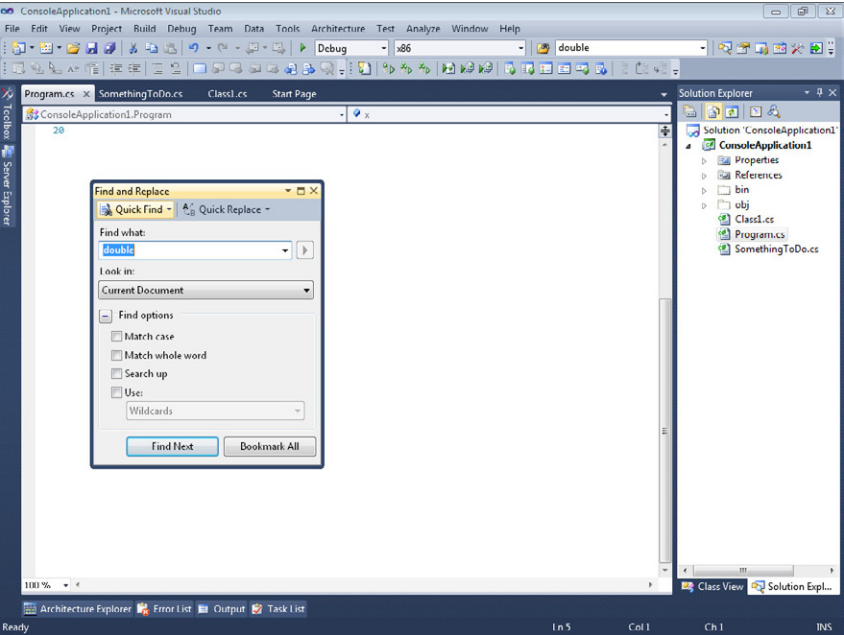
Press F3 (next) or Shift+F3 (previous) to move through the results.

Continue pressing F3 (next) or Shift+F3 (previous) as needed to find what you are looking for.

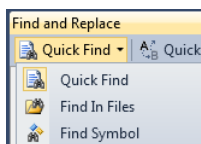
05.02 Using Quick Find

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+F
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+F3
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+F
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F
WINDOWS	Alt, E, F, F
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Quick Find
COMMAND	Edit.Find
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0007

There’s more to Quick Find than meets the eye. The first thing to understand is that this is a tool window, so it can be moved and docked like any other tool window. Press Ctrl+F to bring up Quick Find.

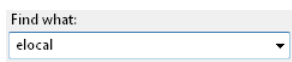


The Quick Find drop-down menu lets you choose what type of find you want to do:

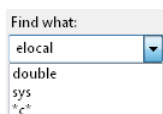


Find What

For this discussion, we want to focus only on Quick Find, but each of these items comes with its own set of options. The Find What area is used to determine what you want to find:



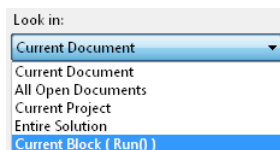
You can type what to look for in the drop-down combo box, or you can choose from the list of previous searches:



Don't worry about the arrow button to the right of the drop-down combo box (not shown here)—we will get to that later.

Look In

Next is the Look In area. It's used to determine the scope of your search:

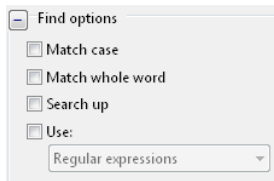


Most of the options are pretty self-explanatory, but we have a couple of key things to know, as follows:

1. The Current Project and Entire Solution actions search files whether they are open or closed.
2. Current Block is a little misleading because it doesn't search the current block but the entire method you are currently in.

Find Options

The Find Options area is where the fun really happens:



Following is a run-down of these options:

Match case

This option makes your search case-specific. Searching for `elocal` would show `"elocal"` but not `"eLocal"` or any other variant.

Match whole word

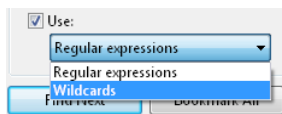
By default, your search is a "contains" operation and therefore finds a result anywhere the word exists. For example, searching for `"elocal"` finds `"elocal"` and `"elocalstuff"`, and so on. This option restricts the search to only the word by itself. So, in this example, it finds `"elocal"` but *not* `"elocalstuff"`.

Search up

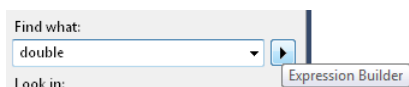
Ordinarily, the search starts from the current cursor location and searches down in the current document. You can use this option to search up from the current cursor location instead.

Use

This option is a *lot* more interesting and requires a bit of explanation. When you select this, you get to choose between Regular Expressions and Wildcards:

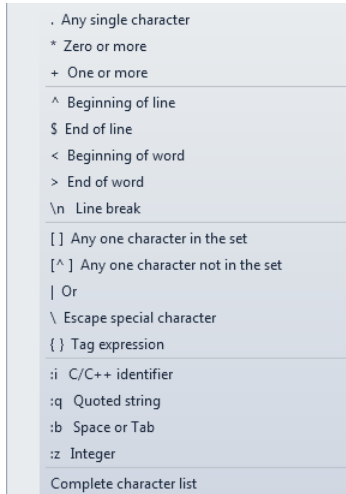


When you use this option, it automatically enables the Expression Builder button to the right of the Find What combo box:



Regular expressions

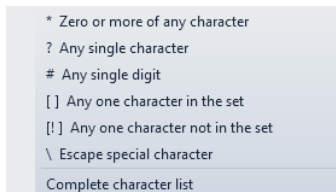
Whether or not you are familiar with regular expressions, Visual Studio has its own syntax, so be aware of the differences. The following illustration shows what options the Expression Builder button provides you when Regular Expressions is selected.



Note To see the details of the regular expression syntax available in Visual Studio, see the topic “Regular Expressions (Visual Studio)” at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/2k3te2cs.aspx>.

Wildcards

These aren’t as advanced as regular expressions but are more familiar to people. They allow you to use special characters to represent one or more letters. More information about wildcard searches can be found at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/afy96z92.aspx>. The following illustration shows what options the Expression Builder button provides when Wildcards is selected.



Buttons

Finally, we have the two buttons at the bottom of the Quick Find tool window:



Find Next

Keeps going to the next instance of the search term you are looking for until it reaches your original starting point.

Bookmark All

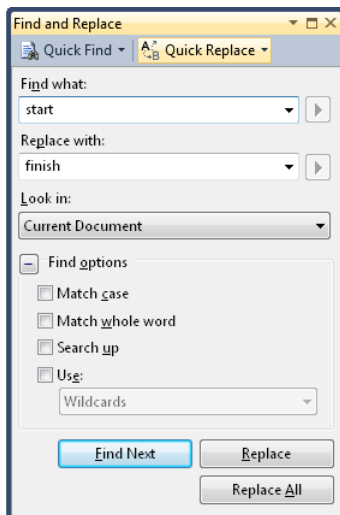
Automatically places a bookmark at every location where the search term is found. Use this with caution because it can definitely cause a large number of bookmarks to be created.

05.03 Using a Simple Quick Replace

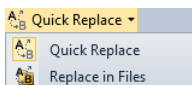
DEFAULT	Ctrl+H
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+H
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+H
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+H
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+H
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+H
WINDOWS	Alt, E, F, R
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Quick Replace
COMMAND	Edit.Replace
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0008

Previously, we looked at Quick Find, and now we will look at Quick Replace. They are almost exactly the same except for the replace operation itself. For that reason, I will not repeat all the options here but refer you back to vstipFind0007 ("Using Quick Find," page 172), for most of the details.

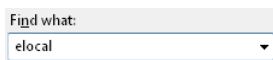
Press Ctrl+H to bring up Quick Replace:



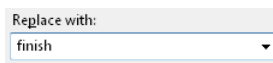
This is a tool window, so it can be docked like any other tool window, pretty much anywhere you want. Notice that the Quick Replace drop-down menu lets you choose what type of replace you want to do:



For this discussion, let's focus only on Quick Replace. The Find What area is used to determine what you want to find:



The Replace With area functions exactly the same way, but it takes the text that you want to be used to replace the Find What text with:

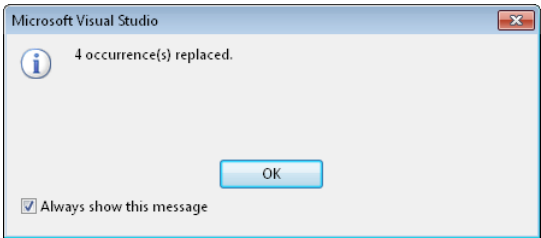


The Look In and Find Options function the same way as using Quick Find and are explained in vstipFind0007 ("Using Quick Find," page 172).

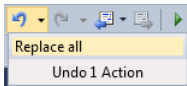
Finally, we have the three buttons at the bottom of the Quick Replace tool window:



- **Find Next**—Selects the next instance of the search term you are looking for until it reaches your original starting point.
- **Replace**—Replaces the currently selected item from Find What by using the text in Replace With.
- **Replace All**—Replaces all instances of Find What by using the text in Replace With. This produces a dialog box that shows how many replacements were made:



Make sure to pay attention to this value because it might be higher (or lower) than expected and might require further investigation. If you make a mistake, you can always undo a Replace All:



05.04

Hide the Quick Find and Quick Replace Tool Window After the First Match

WINDOWS	Alt, T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Find and Replace
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0010

When using the Quick Find or the Quick Replace tool window, you have an option to make the window disappear after the first match. This can be useful when you want to use your shortcut keys after the first match is found.

Just go to Tools | Options | Environment | Find And Replace, and then select the Hide Find And Replace Window After A Match Is Located For Quick Find Or Quick Replace check box.

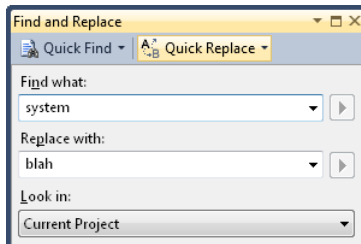
05.05 Undo Quick Replace and Replace in Files

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Z; Alt+Backspace
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Z; Alt+Backspace
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Z; Alt+Backspace
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Z; Alt+Backspace
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Z; Alt+Backspace
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Z; Alt+Backspace
WINDOWS	Alt,E, U
MENU	Edit Undo
COMMAND	Edit.Undo
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0020

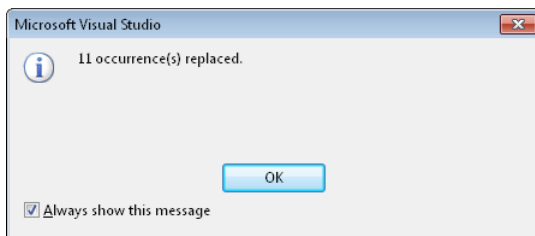
When using Find And Replace, people often wonder under what conditions you can undo the changes. Because performing a Find Next and Replace operation is very straightforward and easy to undo, let's focus on how to undo the "Replace All" operations. Following is a summary of the conditions that allow undo to happen.

Quick Replace (Ctrl+H)

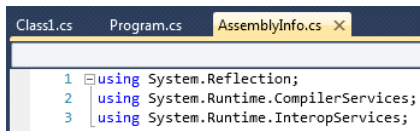
Let's assume we're choosing the Quick Replace option with the Look In option set to Current Project or Entire Solution:



A Replace All operation, by default, opens documents and marks them by putting an asterisk in the file name tab so that you can undo the changes:

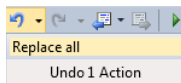


When we undo (Ctrl+Z), it reverses *all* the changes made. In this case, it undoes all eleven changes:



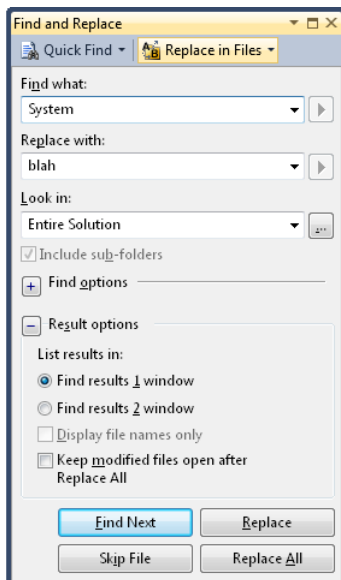
```
1 using System.Reflection;
2 using System.Runtime.CompilerServices;
3 using System.Runtime.InteropServices;
```

From the toolbar, the following entry appears in the undo stack:

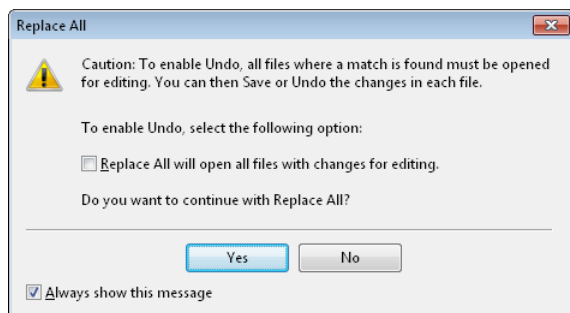


Replace in Files (Ctrl+Shift+H)

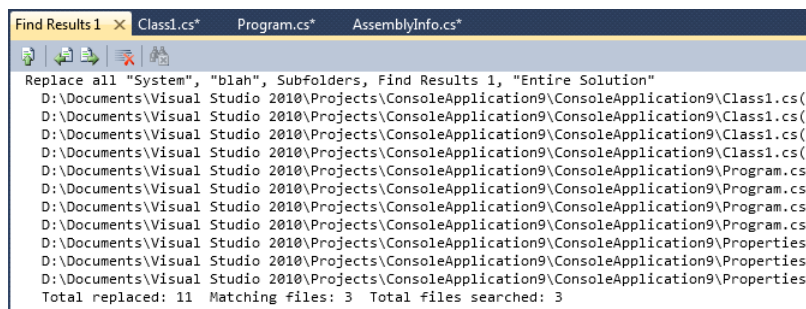
If we perform a Replace in Files operation with Look In set to Current Project, Entire Solution, or Visual C++ Include Directories, we see the following dialog box:



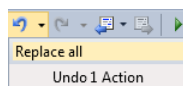
As shown in the preceding illustration, notice the option called Keep Modified Files Open After Replace All. If we do not select this option and click Replace All, we get the following message:



Checking the Replace All Will Open All Files With Changes For Editing makes it possible to undo *all* the changes made:



The entry in the undo stack on the toolbar looks like this:



So, as you can see, it is quite easy to undo the changes made by Quick Replace and Replace in Files.

05.06 Using the Find Combo Box Keyboard Shortcuts

DEFAULT	Ctrl+D (find); Ctrl+ / (run command); Ctrl+G (go to line); Ctrl+Shift+G (go to file); F9 (set breakpoint)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut] (find); [no shortcut] (run command); [no shortcut] (go to line); Ctrl+Shift+G (go to file); F9 (set breakpoint)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+ / (find); [no shortcut] (run command); Ctrl+G (go to line); Ctrl+Shift+G (go to file); F9 (set breakpoint)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F (find); ALT+A (find); Ctrl+D (find); Ctrl+ / (run command); Ctrl+G (go to line); Ctrl+Shift+G (go to file); F9 (set breakpoint); Ctrl+Shift+F9 (set breakpoint)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+D (find); Ctrl+ / (run command); Ctrl+G (go to line); Ctrl+Shift+G (go to file); F9 (set breakpoint)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+F (find); Ctrl+ / (run command); Ctrl+G (go to line); Ctrl+Shift+G (go to file); F9 (set breakpoint)
COMMAND	Edit.GoToFindCombo; Tools.GoToCommandLine; Edit.GoTo; Edit.OpenFile; Debug.ToggleBreakpoint
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0019

We have looked at the Find Combo box in a variety of places. Recall that this toolbar item is located on the standard toolbar by default:



I thought it would be a good idea to consolidate the keyboard shortcuts of this wonderful tool into one place.

Find (Ctrl+D)

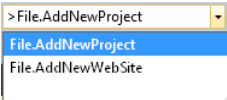
First and foremost, the Find / Command box is used to find strings. Just press Ctrl+D to go to the box and type in your search term:



When you press Enter, it searches for your string by using the settings from Quick Find (Ctrl+F) as it searches. Pressing Enter again finds the next instance, and so on.

Run Command (Ctrl+ /)

The Find / Command box is also used to run commands. For more information about commands, see vstipTool0067 ("Understanding Commands: Simple Commands," page 110). Just press Ctrl+ / to go to the box, and type in your command:



When you press Enter, it runs the command you typed.

Go To Line (Ctrl+G)

When in the Find / Command box, you can type any line number:

A screenshot of a text input field with a yellow border and a dropdown arrow on the right. The number '17' is entered in the field.

Then press Ctrl+G, and you are taken to the line number that you entered.

Go To File (Ctrl+Shift+G)

Type in any file name that is in your solution or in the INCLUDE path:

A screenshot of a text input field with a yellow border and a dropdown arrow on the right. The filename 'person.vb' is entered in the field.

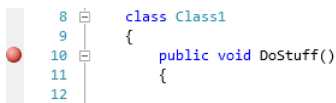
Use Ctrl+Shift+G to go to the file. If the file isn't already open, this command opens the file first.

Set a Breakpoint (F9)

Enter any function name:

A screenshot of a text input field with a yellow border and a dropdown arrow on the right. The function name 'DoStuff' is entered in the field.

Then press F9, and Visual Studio sets a breakpoint on the function:



A couple of things to note:

- Pressing F9 again does *not* turn off the breakpoint—that is, it's not a toggle.
- This feature works only with open documents.

05.07 Using Incremental Search

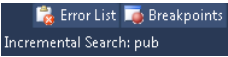
DEFAULT	Ctrl+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Alt+I
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+I
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+I
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+I
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, S
MENU	Edit Advanced Incremental Search
COMMAND	Edit.IncrementalSearch
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0001

Incremental search is a powerful feature to use when you want to keep your cursor in the editor while searching in the current document. It allows you to keep your hands on the keyboard without having to use the mouse for any dialog boxes.

To conduct an incremental search, press Ctrl+I and start typing the text you are searching for. You'll see the cursor in the editor jump to the first match, highlighting the current search string, and your mouse cursor turns into a pair of binoculars with an arrow pointing in the direction (up or down) you are searching:

```
// i love public tips
private int x = 10;
public int y = 0;
```

If you look at the status bar, you can see the details of your incremental search:



Press Ctrl+I again to jump to the next occurrence of the search string:

```
// i love public tips
private int x = 10;
public int y = 0;
```

The following table lists all the options you can leverage while in this mode:

ACTION	SHORTCUT
Move to the next match in the file	Ctrl+I
Reverse the direction of the search	Ctrl+Shift+I
Remove a character from the search string	Backspace
Stop the incremental search	Esc

05.08 Search the Currently Selected String Without the Find Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F3 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+F3 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F3 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F3 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+F3 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F3 (previous)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F3 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F3 (previous)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.FindNextSelected; Edit.FindPreviousSelected
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0003

Ever just want to find the next (or previous) instance of a word quickly without using the Quick Find dialog box? Well, it's easy.

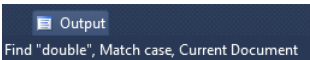
Put the cursor in any word you want to look for:

```
public double x = 10;  
public double y = 30;  
public double z = 50;  
public double a = 30;
```

Press Ctrl+F3 (next) or Ctrl+Shift+F3 (previous) to start a find:

```
public double x = 10;  
public double y = 30;  
public double z = 50;  
public double a = 30;
```

You can also see a message in the status bar showing you the parameters of the search:





Note As you can see, the find has certain settings already in place. These settings can be changed in the Find dialog box (Ctrl+F).

After the Find has started, just press F3 (next) or Shift+F3 (previous) to continue searching as you normally would with a Quick Find.

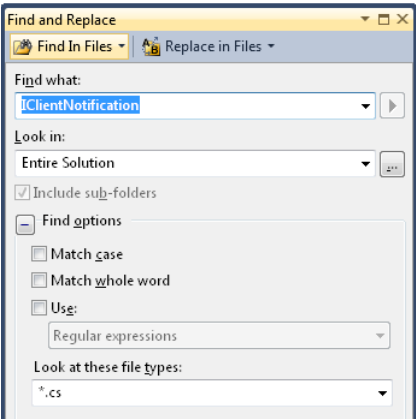
05.09 Find In Files: Find Options

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,E, F, I
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Find in Files
COMMAND	Edit.FindInFiles
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0013

When working in Visual Studio, you often need to search for information in files. Find In Files allows you to quickly locate information you need. Let’s begin by looking at the options you can set to find information in files (Ctrl+Shift+F).

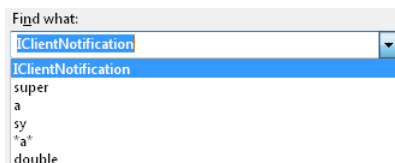


Note If you have already read vstipFind0007 (“Using Quick Find,” page 172), you might want to just skim this one because much of the information is repeated here for those who might not have read the prior tip.

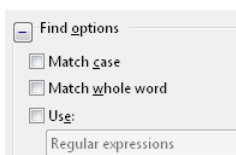


Find What

The Find What combo box lets you type in text to find or choose from previous text that has been searched:



This area is very closely bound to all but one of the options under Find Options:



Following is an overview of these options:

Match case

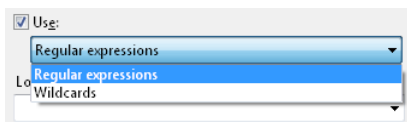
This option makes your search case-specific. Searching for elocal would show “elocal” but not “eLocal” or any other variant.

Match whole word

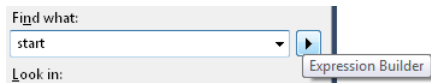
By default, the search is a “contains” operation and finds the word anywhere it exists. For example, searching for “elocal” finds “elocal” and “elocalstuff”, and so on.

Use

This is a *lot* more interesting and requires a bit of explanation. When you select this, you get to choose between Regular Expressions and Wildcards:

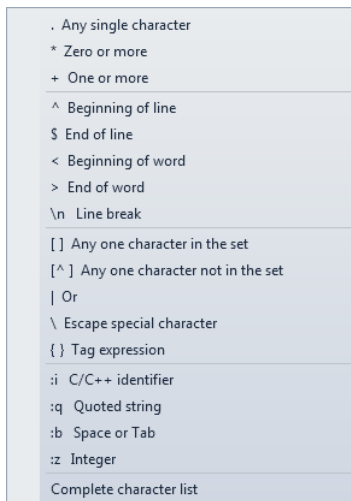


When you use this option, it automatically enables the Expression Builder button to the right of the Find What combo box:



Regular expressions

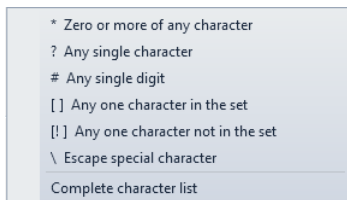
Whether or not you are familiar with regular expressions, Visual Studio has its own syntax, so be aware of the differences. The following illustration shows the options provided by the Expression Builder button when you have selected Regular Expressions:



Note To see the details of the regular expression syntax available in Visual Studio, see the topic “Regular Expressions (Visual Studio)” at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/2k3te2cs.aspx>.

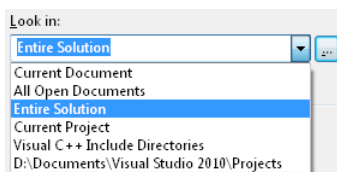
Wildcards

This option isn’t as advanced as regular expressions but is more familiar to most people. It allows you to use special characters to represent one or more letters. For more information about wildcard searches, see “Wildcards (Visual Studio)” at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/afy96z92.aspx>. The following illustration shows the options provided by the Expression Builder button when Wildcards is selected:



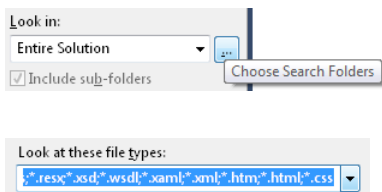
Look in

The Look in drop-down list lets you specify what areas you want to look in:



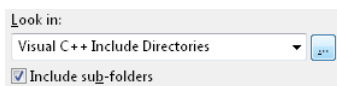
Most of the options are pretty self-explanatory. The Current Project and Entire Solution commands search files whether they are open or closed.

The Choose Search Folders and Look At These File Types options are discussed in `vstip-Find0005` ("How to Customize What Files to Search with Find In Files," in Appendix B [<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>]):



Include sub-folders

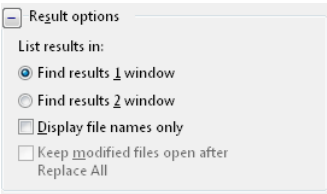
This option searches the current directory and all subdirectories and shows up only if you use the Visual C++ Include Directories or Choose Search Folders options:



05.10 Find In Files: Result Options

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+F (find); F8 (next); Shift+F8 (previous);
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+F (find);[no shortcut] (next); [no shortcut] (previous);
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+F (find); F8 (next); Shift+F8 (previous);
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+F (find); F4 (next); Shift+F4 (previous);
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+F (find); F8 (next); F4 (next); Shift+F8 (previous); Shift+F4 (previous);
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut] (find); F8 (next); F12 (next); Shift+F8 (previous); Shift+F12 (previous);
WINDOWS	Alt,E, F, I (find)
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Find in Files
COMMAND	Edit.FindInFiles; Edit.GoToNextLocation; Edit.GoToPrevLocation; Edit.ClearFindResults1; Edit. ClearFindResults2
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0014

When working with Find In Files (Ctrl+Shift+F), you can choose several result options:



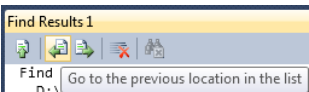
Find Results [1,2] Window

The Find Results windows allow you to view and navigate the results of a find operation. Each time you use Find, the results replace the contents of the previous find. This is why two windows are available—so that you avoid overwriting a find result you might want to keep.

Navigation

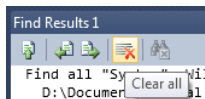
You can use F8 and Shift+F8 to go to the next and previous items in the results list. This operation also shows the line of code where the item was found, which includes opening closed files if needed:

The Find Results windows have toolbar buttons that allow you to go to the next and previous items as well:



Clear All

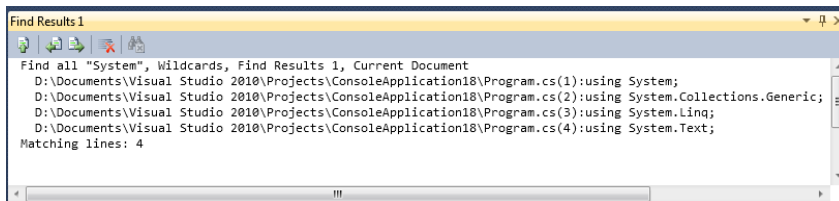
You can manually clear the results in a Find Results window by clicking Clear All:



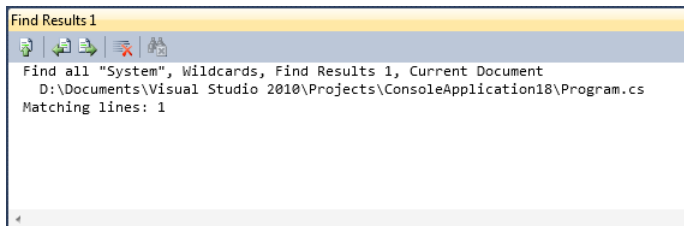
Display File Names Only

The operation shows only the files names in your results and not the full path and additional information. This means the result set is much smaller.

Before:



After:



You can do much more with the displayed results than this. See [vstipFind0002](#) ("Customize How Find In Files Results Are Displayed in the Find Results Window," page 206) for more information.

Keep Modified Files Open After Replace All

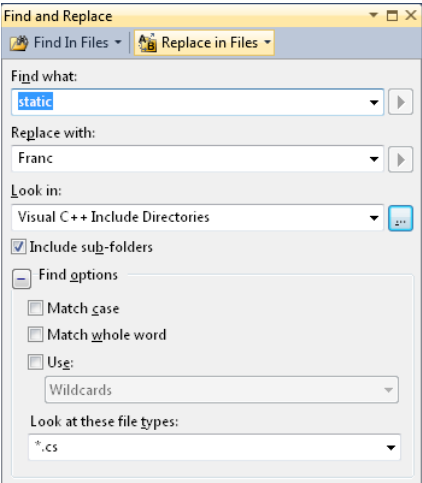
This option doesn't apply to Find In Files and is always disabled when doing a find operation. You can see this option when using the Replace In Files option.

05.11 Replace In Files: Basic Options

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+H
WINDOWS	Alt,E, F, S
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Replace in Files
COMMAND	Edit.ReplaceInFiles
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0015

Did you know that you can replace text in files, whether or not they are open, by choosing Replace In Files (Ctrl+Shift+H)? Let’s take a look at what can be done.

Find Options



Fortunately, the majority of find options are the same for Replace In Files as they are for Find In Files (see vstipFind0013, “Find In Files: Find Options,” on page 186), so you can leverage those skills again here.

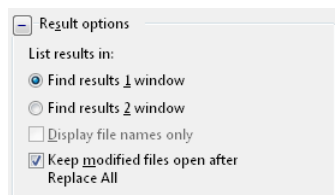
Replace With



This area is the most interesting piece of the Replace In Files dialog box. It can be as simple as a literal string (replacing “static” with “Franc”, for example) or very, very complex. In simple situations, you just want to use the literal text as a replacement to the Find What text.

Result Options

Again, these options are exactly like the Find In Files options (vstipTool0014, “Find In Files: Result Options,” page 158) with the exception of the Keep Modified Files Open After Replace All option:



This option makes it possible to keep modified files open after they are changed so that you can review the change or make additional manual changes. This is particularly useful when you are modifying closed files and want to look inside files that were modified.

Execution

After all the options have been set, we can execute find and replace operations by using the following four buttons:



Find Next

Used to find the next instance of the Find What search string.

Replace

Used to replace the current instance of the Find What string with the Replace With string and then find the next instance.

Replace All

Used to replace all instances of the Find What string with the Replace With string, in all files within the Look In scope.



Warning The Replace All option can get you into big trouble if you don't pay attention to the scope of Look In.

Skip File

Available when the Look In list includes multiple files. Choose this button if you do not want to search or modify the current file. The search continues in the next file on the Look In list.

05.12 Go To Definition for Cascading Style Sheets

DEFAULT	F12
VISUAL BASIC 6	F12; Shift+F2
VISUAL C# 2005	F12
VISUAL C++ 2	F11; Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	F12
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.GoToDefinition
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0021

For those who are familiar with using Go To Definition in your code, you might not be aware that you can use the same technique to go to your Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) definition class for attributes. Just put your cursor inside the class name:

```
<div class="bold">
    something cool
</div>
```

Then press F12 (or right-click and choose Go To Definition). It instantly takes you to the CSS definition and highlights it:

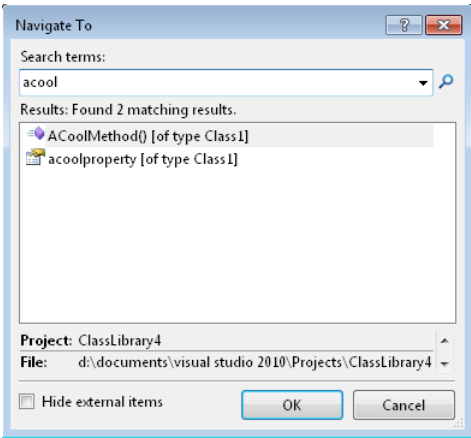
```
.bold
{
    font-weight: bold;
}
```

Now you can review the definition and make changes as you see fit.

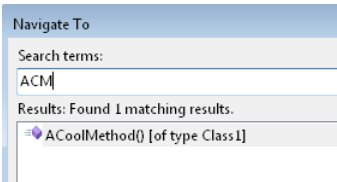
05.13 How to Use Navigate To

DEFAULT	Ctrl+, [comma]
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+, [comma]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+, [comma]
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+, [comma]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+, [comma]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+, [comma]
WINDOWS	Alt,E,.[period]
MENU	Edit Navigate To
COMMAND	Edit.NavigateTo
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0006

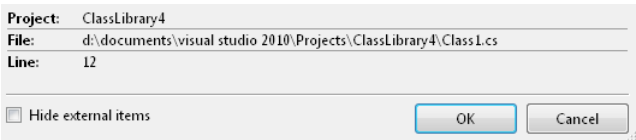
The Navigate To dialog box is very useful for finding symbols. The search is an “includes” operation, so it shows you symbols that contain the letters you type. Just put in what you are looking for:



Notice that the search is *not* case-specific. However, you might notice a surprise in this dialog box. Watch what happens when you put in **ACM**:



It pays attention to Pascal Case. There is also summary information at the bottom of this dialog box:



You’re probably wondering about the Hide External Items option as well. When selected, only the local project is examined for symbols, instead of your project *plus* every library you reference.

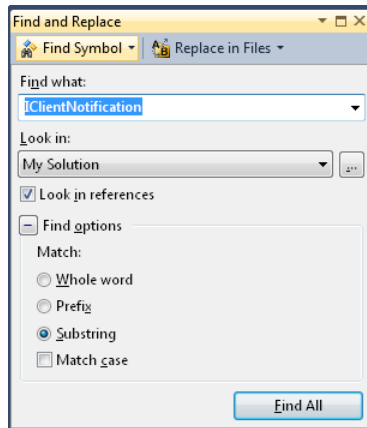
Also, notice that the Navigate To syntax does not support special logic or special characters such as the following:

- Wildcard matching
- Boolean logic operators
- Regular expressions

05.14 Understanding Find Symbol

DEFAULT	Alt+F12
VISUAL BASIC 6	Alt+F12
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+F12
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+F12; Ctrl+F11; Ctrl+Alt+F11
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+F12; Ctrl+Shift+Y
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+F12
WINDOWS	Alt,E, F, Y
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Find Symbol
COMMAND	Edit.FindSymbol
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0011

You can quickly search for symbols (objects, definitions, and references) by using the Find Symbol dialog box (Alt+F12):



Find What

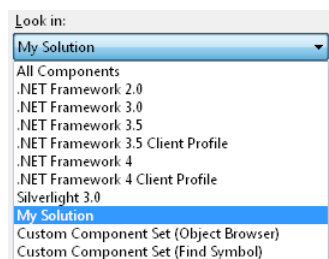
This is pretty straightforward; you just type in the search string you are looking for.



Note You can also get to Find Symbol by using any shortcut to get to the Find and Replace dialog box and selecting Find Symbol from the drop-down list in the upper-right corner.

Look In

This indicates where you want to look:



As you can see, the Look In dialog box has a number of search options.

All Components

Includes the current solution and its referenced components, all of the .NET Framework, and any components that you have added.

Framework X / Silverlight X

Searches specific versions of the Framework for a symbol.

My Solution

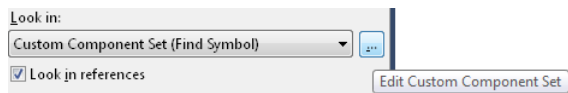
Searches the current open solution.

Custom Component Set (Object Browser)

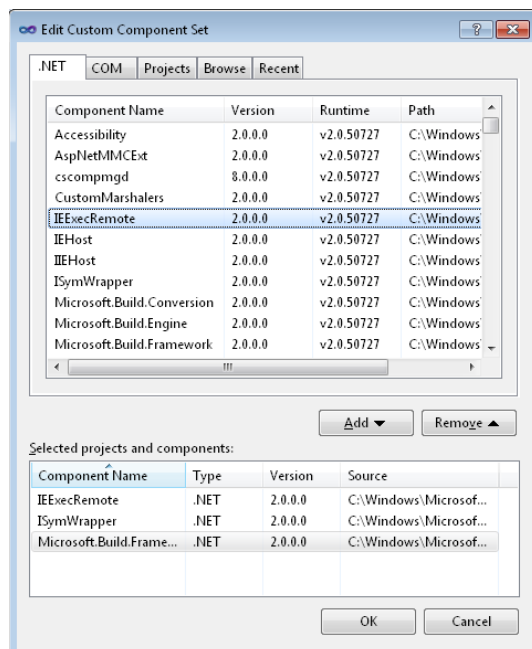
Searches the predefined custom component set in the Object Browser. See [vstipTool0078](#) ("The Object Browser: Browsing Scope," page 358) for more information.

Custom Component Set (Find Symbol)

Searches the custom component set defined in this dialog box. You edit the list of components by clicking the ellipsis in the dialog box:



The Edit Custom Component Set dialog box allows you to pick components from a variety of areas to have a specialized search experience when looking for symbols. It allows for a very refined search capability:



Look In References

Displays references in the projects within the current browsing scope.

Find Options

Match

Sets criteria for the search string when finding matches.

Whole Word

Finds the complete word only, not partial matches.

Prefix

Finds results where the search string is at the beginning of the result.

Substring

Finds results where the search string is anywhere in the result.

Match Case

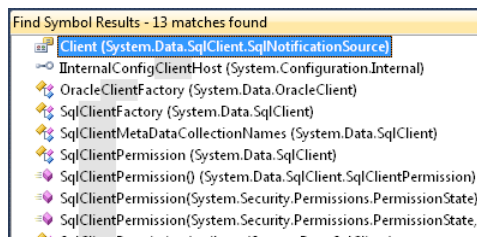
Finds only results that exactly match the case of the search string.

Find All

Initiates the search based on the criteria that has been set.

Search Results

When you run a search, the results look something like this:



The icons to the left of each entry indicate what type of symbol you are looking at in the results. For a complete list of icons and their meanings, see `vstipTool0076` ("Class View and Object Browser Icons," in Appendix B [<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>]) for more information.

Additionally, you can use F8 or Shift+F8 to navigate forward or backward through the results while automatically showing the location of the result as you proceed.

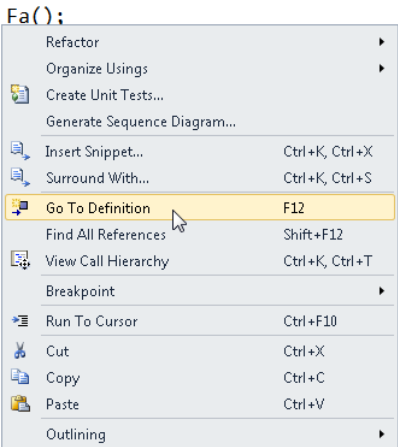
05.15 Find Symbol Results Shortcuts

DEFAULT	F12 (go to definition); Ctrl+F12 (go to declaration); Shift+F12 (find all references); Ctrl+C (copy); Ctrl+Insert (copy);
VISUAL BASIC 6	F12 (go to definition); Shift+F2 (go to definition); Ctrl+F12 (go to declaration); Alt+F2 (find all references); Ctrl+C (copy); Ctrl+Insert (copy);
VISUAL C# 2005	F12 (go to definition); Ctrl+F12 (go to declaration); Shift+F12 (find all references); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+R (find all references); Ctrl+K, R (find all references); Ctrl+C (copy); Ctrl+Insert (copy);
VISUAL C++ 2	F11 (go to definition); Alt+F1 (go to definition); [no shortcut] (find all references); Ctrl+C (copy); Ctrl+Insert (copy);
VISUAL C++ 6	F12 (go to definition); Ctrl+F12 (go to declaration); Ctrl+Alt+F12 (go to declaration); [no shortcut] (find all references); Ctrl+C (copy); Ctrl+Insert (copy);
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut] (go to definition); Ctrl+F12 (go to declaration); [no shortcut] (find all references); Ctrl+C (copy); Ctrl+Insert (copy);
WINDOWS	Alt,E, C (copy)
MENU	Edit Copy
COMMAND	Edit.GoToDefinition; Edit.GoToDeclaration; Edit.FindAllReferences;View.BrowseDefinition;Edit.Copy;Edit.ClearAll
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0012

To locate any symbol, you can quickly leverage a series of commands to help you. The nice thing about these commands is that many of them work both in the Find Symbol Results window and in the code editor.

Go To Definition (F12)

This command takes you to the definition of the symbol in your code, if one is available.



```
public void Fa()  
{  
    So();  
}
```

Go To Declaration (Ctrl+F12)

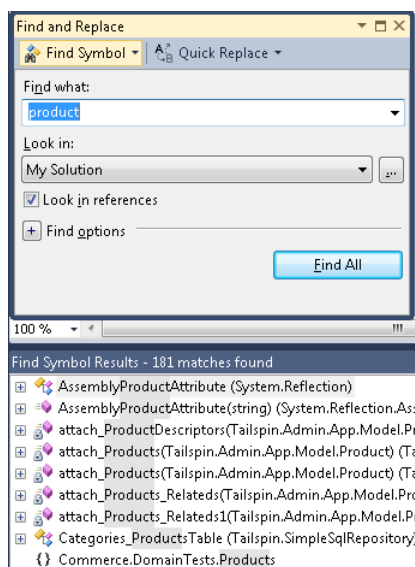


Note The information in this section applies to C++ only.

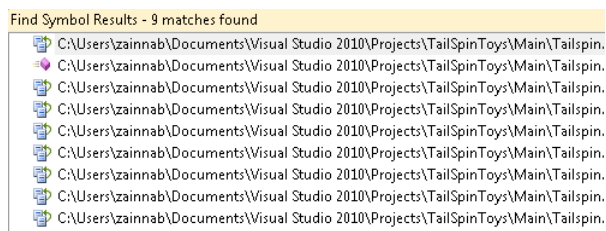
This command takes you to the declaration of the symbol in your code, if one is available.

Go To Reference (Shift+F12)

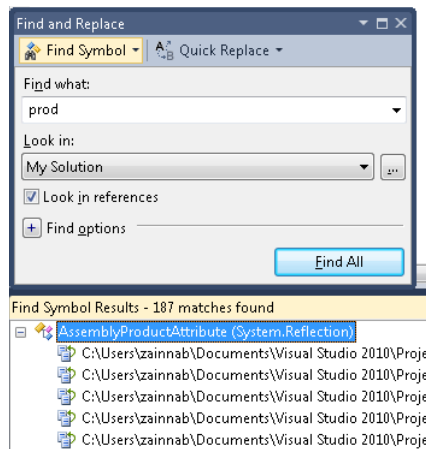
This command works for any symbol:



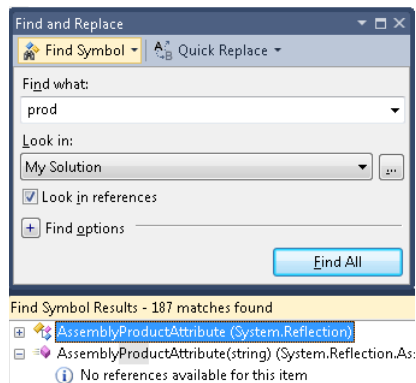
This command finds all references to that symbol:



If you are using the Find Symbol Results window, you can make this much easier by simply expanding a node in the window. It automatically shows all references:

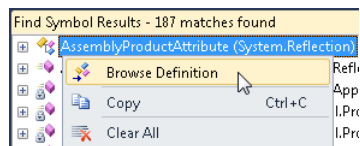


If no references are found, it tells you that also:

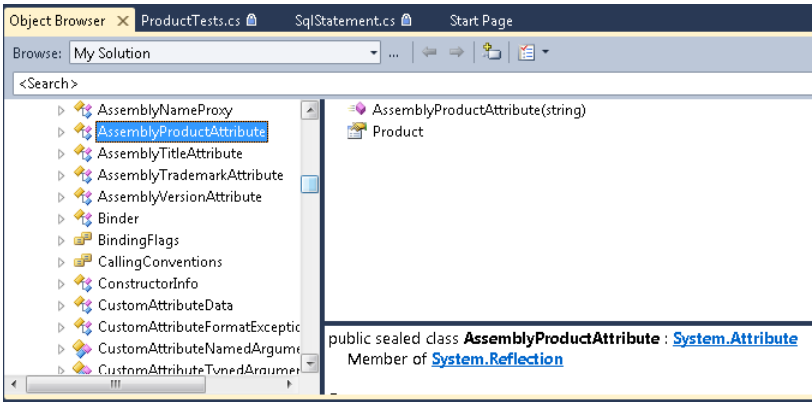


Browse Definition

For any symbol in your results, simply right-click and choose Browse Definition:



Clicking Browse Definition takes you to the primary node (typically top level) for the symbol in the Object Browser, which can be particularly useful for deeper examination:



Copy (Ctrl+C)

Allows you to copy the fully qualified name for the selected symbol to the clipboard. You can then paste the code as text into the code editor.

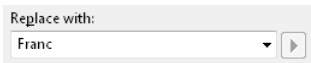
Clear All

Clears the Find Symbol Results window.

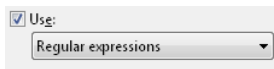
05.16 Replace in Files: Tagged Expressions

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+H
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+H
WINDOWS	Alt,E, F, S
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Replace in Files
COMMAND	Edit.ReplaceinFiles
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0016

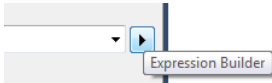
As mentioned in vstipFind0015 ("Replace In Files: Basic Options," page 192), the Replace With area is the most interesting piece of the Replace In Files dialog box. It can be as simple as a literal string replacement:



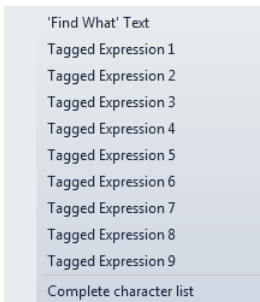
Under normal situations, this is just the literal text you want to use as a replacement for the Find What text. However, suppose you choose to use regular expressions:



This enables the Expression Builder:



These options are *not* like the builder options you get in the Find What area:



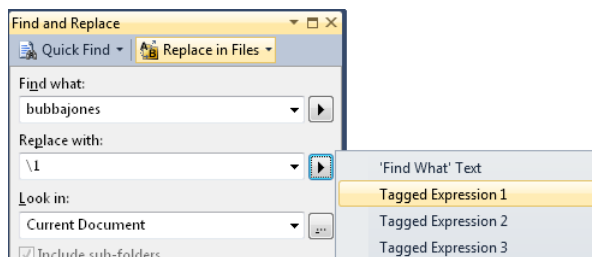
In addition to being able to use any of the regular expression characters, you can refer to the original text and any tagged expressions.

Example

The best way to show how tagged expressions work is with an example. Let's assume you have the following text:

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    // bubbaJones
    // bubbaJones
    // bubbaJones
    // bubbaJones
    // bubbaJones
    // bubbaJones
}
```

And you use the following options:

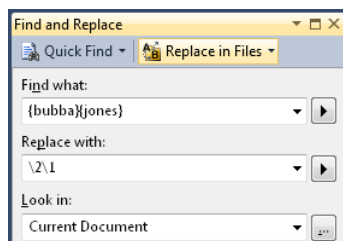


Notice the curly brackets around “jones”? That denotes a tagged expression. Every time you use the brackets, it creates a tagged expression that is numbered (beginning with 1). So, in this example, we are looking for “bubba{jones}” and replacing it with tagged expression 1 (which is just “jones”). Also, notice the notation used to refer to the tagged expression: \n, where n is the tagged expression we want.

When I do my replacements, this is the result:

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    // jones
    // jones
    // jones
    // jones
    // jones
    // jones
    // jones
}
```

We can take this further. Now we want to turn “bubbajones” into “jonesbubba,” so we can use the following settings:



So now we are looking for “{bubba}jones,” which creates tagged expression 1 (“bubba”) and tagged expression 2 (“jones”). At this point, it’s simply a matter of replacing with the expressions switched around (“\2\1”), and we get the following:

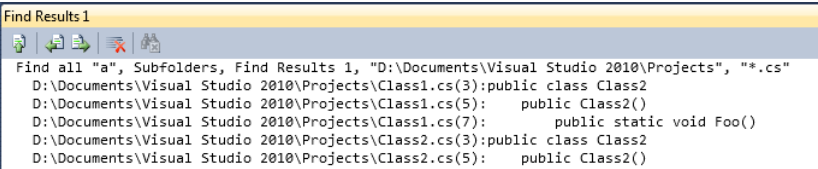
```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    // bubbajones
    // bubbajones
    // bubbajones
    // bubbajones
    // bubbajones
    // bubbajones
}
```

Of course, this can get much more complex when using regular expressions, so you definitely need to spend some time learning how to fully leverage these features.

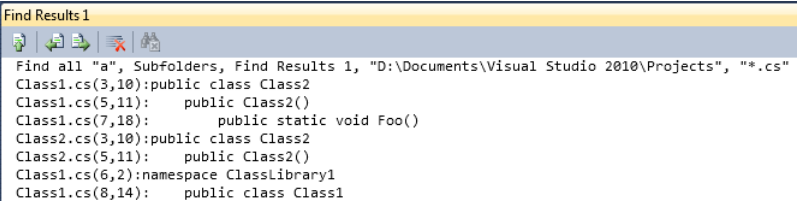
05.17 Customize Results in Find In Files Searches

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,E, F, I
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Find in Files
COMMAND	Edit.FindinFiles
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0002

You can customize your Find In Files results to just about any format you can imagine. For example, let's say you don't want to view the entire file path shown in the Find Results tool window:



Instead, you want this:



You can easily make this change. Just follow these instructions:



Warning This involves modifying the registry, so use this tip at your own risk.

1. Open RegEdit.exe.
2. Go to HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version>\Find.
3. Add a new string called Find Result Format, with a value of `fe($l,$c):$t\r\n`.



4. In Visual Studio, run a Find In Files search.



Note You do not need to restart Visual Studio to see the changes made in the registry, which is great for testing different string combinations.

Variables

For your reference, the following are valid values you can use when creating your own custom values.

Files

- **\$p** path
- **\$f** filename
- **\$v** drive/unc share
- **\$d** directory
- **\$n** name
- **\$e** .extension

Location

- **\$l** line
- **\$c** col
- **\$x** end col if on first line, else end of first line
- **\$L** span end line
- **\$C** span end col

Text

- **\$0** matched text
- **\$t** text of first line
- **\$s** summary of hit
- **\$T** text of spanned lines

Char

- **\n** newline
- **\s** space
- **\t** tab
- **** backslash
- **\\$** \$

Chapter 6

Writing Code

"We will never be rid of code, because code represents the details of the requirements. At some level those details cannot be ignored or abstracted; they have to be specified. And specifying requirements in such detail that a machine can execute them is programming. Such a specification is code."

—Robert C. Martin, *"Clean Code: A Handbook of Agile Software Craftsmanship"*

Writing code and debugging code are the two activities we tend to do more than any other as developers. It's no accident that this chapter is one of the two largest in the book. Within these pages, you'll find tips from older versions all the way through to the great new features in Visual Studio 2010. Really take your time to absorb the material here, and find those pieces that are most relevant to your situation.

As you are reading, make sure to pay particular attention to the new IntelliSense and box selection improvements. In my travels, thousands of people have found these particularly useful for daily work. Also, take some time to review the tips on code snippets and discover how they can accelerate your code writing.

06.01 Zoom In or Out of Text in the Editor Using the Mouse Wheel

WINDOWS	Ctrl, Mouse Wheel
COMMAND	View.ZoomIn; View.ZoomOut
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit0002

The editor has a new feature that allows you to instantly change the zoom factor of text. It's particularly useful for pair programming and doing code demos for your team. Just hold down your Ctrl key and use the wheel on your mouse to zoom in or out.

```
using System;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Linq;
using System.Text;
```

```
using System;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Linq;
using System.Text;
```

If you don't like this feature, you can disable it by installing an extension called "Disable Mouse Wheel Zoom," which you can find at <http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/d088791c-150a-4834-8f28-462696a82bb8?SRC=VSIDE>.

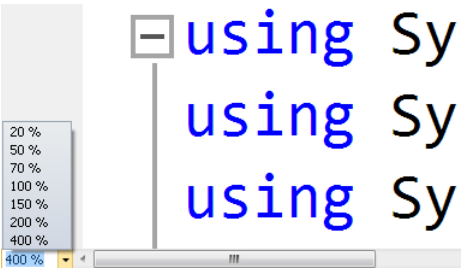
06.02 Zoom In or Out of Text in the Editor

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+> (zoom in); Ctrl+Shift+< (zoom out)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+> (zoom in); Ctrl+Shift+< (zoom out)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+> (zoom in); Ctrl+Shift+< (zoom out)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+> (zoom in); Ctrl+Shift+< (zoom out)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+> (zoom in); Ctrl+Shift+< (zoom out)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+> (zoom in); Ctrl+Shift+< (zoom out)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	View.ZoomIn; View.ZoomOut
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit0003

In vstipEdit0002, "Zoom In or Out of Text in the Editor Using the Mouse Wheel," on page 209, I showed you how to use the mouse to zoom in and out of your text. Now I'll show you two additional ways to accomplish this goal.

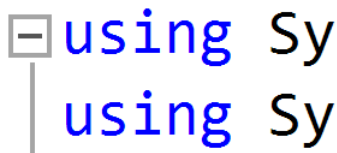
Combo Box

First, you can change the zoom factor for text by using the Zoom combo box in the lower-left corner of the editor. Simply choose a pre-determined size, or type in a value of your own. To my knowledge there is no keyboard shortcut for getting to this area.



Keyboard

Second, you can use the keyboard shortcuts Ctrl+Shift+Greater Than (>), to zoom in, and Ctrl+Shift+Less Than (<), to zoom out.



Universal Zoom

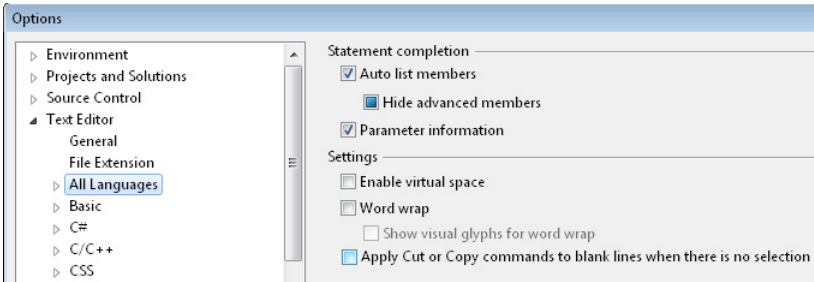
The zoom factor is per tab and doesn't apply across each file, so you need to manually set it on each tab. Alternatively, you can use an extension called "Presentation Zoom," located at <http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/6a7a0b57-7059-470d-bcfa-60ceb78dc752?SRC=VSIDE>.

06.03 How to Keep from Accidentally Copying a Blank Line

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor All Languages General
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0004

Ever cut something and accidentally cut a blank line? I can't really think of a good reason to cut or copy just a blank line, and yet you are still allowed to do it.

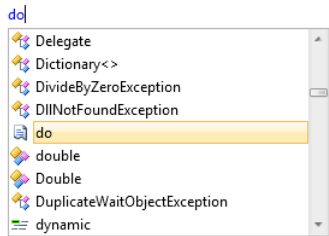
The good news is that you can keep this from ever happening again by simply going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | All Languages | General and clearing the Apply Cut Or Copy Commands To Blank Lines When There Is No Selection check box.



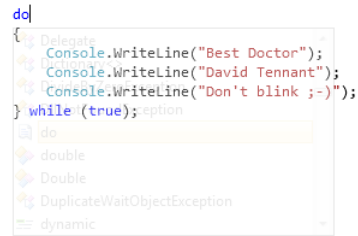
06.04 Make IntelliSense Transparent

WINDOWS	Ctrl
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0077

Sometimes when you are writing code, you find yourself in a situation where IntelliSense is covering up something you want to see, as shown in the following illustration.



You can make it temporarily transparent simply by pressing and holding the Ctrl key.



Using this tip, you don't have to get rid of IntelliSense, look at the code, and then bring IntelliSense back. Just press the Ctrl key, get the information you need, and move on.

06.05 Cut or Delete the Current Line

DEFAULT	Ctrl+L (cut line); Ctrl+Shift+L (delete line); Shift+Del (cut line); Ctrl+X (cut line)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Y (cut line); [no shortcut] (delete line); Shift+Del (cut line); Ctrl+X (cut line)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Y (cut line); Ctrl+Shift+L (delete line); Shift+Del (cut line); Ctrl+X (cut line)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Y (cut line); Ctrl+L (cut line); Ctrl+Shift+L (delete line); Shift+Del (cut line); Ctrl+X (cut line); Ctrl+Alt+W (cut line)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+L (cut line); Shift+Alt+L (cut line); Ctrl+Shift+L (delete line); Shift+Del (cut line); Ctrl+X (cut line)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+M (cut line); Ctrl+L (cut line); Ctrl+Shift+L (delete line); Ctrl+Shift+M (delete line); Shift+Del (cut line); Ctrl+X (cut line)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, T
MENU	Edit Cut
COMMAND	Edit.LineCut; Edit.LineDelete; Edit.Cut
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0038

You will often find times when you want to cut a line to be pasted somewhere else or just delete a line entirely. Let's take a look at how you can quickly cut or delete any line.

Regardless of what you are trying to do, begin by placing your cursor inside the line anywhere:

```
throw new ArgumentException("userName");
```

Cut

If you want to cut the line for use somewhere else, perform one of the following actions:

- Press Ctrl+L to cut the line; this uses the Edit.LineCut command.
- Press Shift+Del or Ctrl+X to cut the line using the Edit.Cut command.

There is no difference in the result just two different commands for accomplishing the same task.

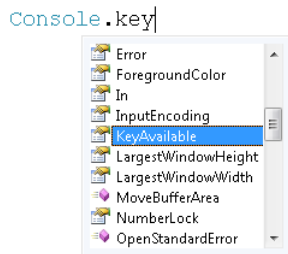
Delete

If you want to delete the line instead, you can use Ctrl+Shift+L to have it permanently removed from your code.

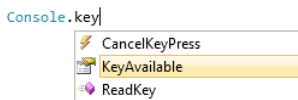
06.06 Using the New IntelliSense: Keywords

DEFAULT	Ctrl+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+J
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+J Ctrl+K, L Ctrl+K, Ctrl+L
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+J Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+J Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+J
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, L
MENU	Edit IntelliSense List Members
COMMAND	Edit.ListMembers
VERSIONS	2010
LANGUAGES	VB, C#
CODE	vstipEdit0016

The one feature we use more than just about anything else in Visual Studio is IntelliSense. It has been our friend for many years. Well, it just got friendlier. To show you the new features, let's take a closer look at Visual Studio 2008 IntelliSense. Notice what happens when you type **Console.Key**:



It does what you would expect it to do and highlights the first (in this case, *only*) item that *begins with* the word "Key" in a huge alphabetical list of item names. That's great, but what if you don't know what you are looking for but you do know that it has the word "Key" somewhere in it? Well, you can go search in the Object Browser, of course, or better yet, you can use the new IntelliSense in Visual Studio 2010. Look what happens when you do the same thing in Visual Studio 2010:

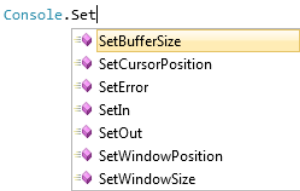


It now shows only those items that have the word "Key" in them and doesn't care where the word is in the name of the member. This results in a significantly smaller list of items in IntelliSense and an easier way to find names even if you don't know what they begin with.

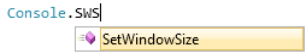
06.07 Using the New IntelliSense: Pascal Case

DEFAULT	Ctrl+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+J
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+J Ctrl+K, L Ctrl+K, Ctrl+L
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+J Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+J Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+J
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, L
MENU	Edit IntelliSense List Members
COMMAND	Edit.ListMembers
VERSIONS	2010
LANGUAGES	VB, C#
CODE	vstipEdit0017

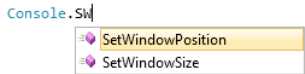
Have you ever been in a situation where you wanted to use IntelliSense to get a method but you're faced with a *ton* of methods that start with same word, meaning that you have to type almost the entire method name?



Well, those days are over. Let's say you want the SetWindowSize method, but you really, really don't want to type it out or even scroll down to get the method. IntelliSense now supports Pascal case. All you have to do is type **SWS**, and you are all set:



What if you don't remember all the uppercase letters in a name? No problem. Just type what you know (they don't even have to be in the correct order), and IntelliSense narrows the list down for you:



06.08 Comment and Uncomment in Web Pages

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+E, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl +E, C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, M (comment) Alt,E, V, E (uncomment)
MENU	Edit Advanced Comment Selection; Edit Advanced Uncomment Selection
COMMAND	Edit.CommentSelection; Edit.UncommentSelection
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0083

By now, you probably know that you can comment and uncomment your code, but did you know that you can do the same thing with your source during web development? Just put your cursor inside any element you want commented, as shown in the following illustration.

```
<h2>
  Welcome| to ASP.NET!
</h2>
```

Comment

Now just press Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C to comment out the selection.

```
<%--<h2>
  Welcome| to ASP.NET!
</h2>--%>
```

Of course, you can also select multiple elements:

```
<p>
  To learn more about .
</p>
<p>
  You can also find <a
    title="MSDN ASP.
  </p>
```

And you can comment them out too:

```
<%--<p>
    To learn
</p>
<p>
    You can
    titl
</p>--%>
```

Uncomment

Naturally, you can put your cursor inside any commented area:

```
<%--<p>
    To learn
</p>|
<p>
    You can
    titl
</p>--%>
```

And you can uncomment that area by pressing Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U:

```
<p>
    To learn
</p>|
<p>
    You can
    titl
</p>
```

06.09

Insert a Blank Line Above or Below the Current Line

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Enter (line above); Ctrl+Shift+Enter (line below)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Enter (line above); Ctrl+Shift+Enter (line below)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Enter (line above); Ctrl+Shift+Enter (line below)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Enter (line above); Ctrl+Shift+Enter (line below)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Enter (line above); Ctrl+Shift+Enter (line below)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Enter (line above); Ctrl+Shift+Enter (line below)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.LineOpenAbove; Edit.LineOpenBelow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0005

This is a great feature for adding extra white space when you need it. Go to any line in the editor, and press Ctrl+Enter to insert a blank line above or press Ctrl+Shift+Enter to insert a blank line below the current line, as shown in the following illustration.

```
// I love public tips and tricks
public int xI= 10;
public int y = 30;
```

06.10 Transpose Lines, Words, and Characters

DEFAULT	Alt+Shift+T (line); Ctrl+Shift+T (word); Ctrl+T (character)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Alt+Shift+T (line); Ctrl+Shift+T (word); [no shortcut] (character)
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+Shift+T (line); Ctrl+Shift+T (word); Ctrl+T (character)
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+Shift+T (line); Ctrl+Shift+T (word); Ctrl+T (character)
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+Shift+T (line); Ctrl+Shift+T (word); Ctrl+T (character)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+Shift+T (line); Ctrl+Shift+T (word); Ctrl+T (character)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.LineTranspose; Edit.WordTranspose; Edit.CharTranspose
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0042

Ever have a line you want to move down or switch with another line? Just find a couple of lines you want to switch, and put your cursor in the top line:

```
'seriously cool comment #2
'seriously cool comment #1
```

Then press Alt+Shift+T to transpose the two lines:

```
'seriously cool comment #1
'seriously cool comment #2
```

You can also do something similar with words. Place the cursor in the word you want to transpose:

```
'cool seriously comment
```

Press Ctrl+Shift+T:

```
'seriously cool comment
```

Just want to transpose a character? Just place the cursor to the right of the character you want to transpose:

```
'seriously
```

And then press Ctrl+T to transpose that character with the character at its immediate right:

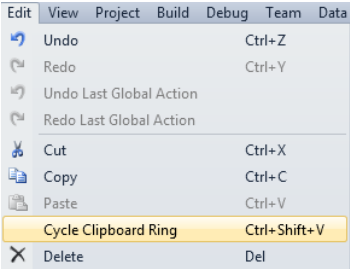
```
'seriously
```

06.11 How to Cycle Through the Clipboard Ring

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+V; Ctrl+Shift+Insert
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+V; Ctrl+Shift+Insert
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+V; Ctrl+Shift+Insert
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+V; Ctrl+Shift+Insert
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+Insert
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+V; Ctrl+Shift+Insert
WINDOWS	Alt,E, Y
MENU	Edit Cycle Clipboard Ring
COMMAND	Edit.CycleClipboardRing
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0001

The Clipboard Ring keeps track of the past 20 items you’ve either cut or copied so that you can reuse them over and over again. After you hit item 20, it goes back to the first item. This is why the feature is called the Clipboard Ring.

This is particularly useful when you move between several code windows and need to copy and paste different items. You can copy all of the code from the original window and then go to one of the other windows and, using the Clipboard Ring, paste all of your items.



Try it out. Copy a few pieces of text into your clipboard, and then keep pressing Ctrl+Shift+V to repeat-paste them into the editor. This is one seriously cool time-saving feature. Unfortunately, there is no way to see the contents of the Clipboard Ring in Visual Studio without cycling through the list.

06.12 Using the Undo and Redo Stack

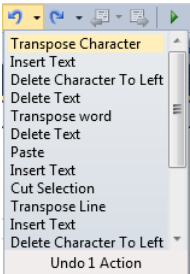
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Z (undo); Alt+Backspace (undo); Ctrl+Shift+Z (redo); Alt+Shift+Backspace (redo); Ctrl+Y (redo)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+Z (redo); Alt+Shift+Backspace (redo)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Z (undo); Alt+Backspace (undo); Ctrl+Shift+Z (redo); Alt+Shift+Backspace (redo); Ctrl+Y (redo)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+Z (redo); Alt+Shift+Backspace (redo); Ctrl+Y (redo); Ctrl+A
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Z (undo); Alt+Backspace (undo); Ctrl+Shift+Z (redo); Alt+Shift+Backspace (redo); Ctrl+Y (redo)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Z (undo); Alt+Backspace (undo); Ctrl+Shift+Z (redo); Alt+Shift+Backspace (redo); Ctrl+Y (redo)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, U (undo); Alt,E, R (redo)
MENU	Edit Undo; Edit Redo
COMMAND	Edit.Undo; Edit.Redo
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0045

We have all used Ctrl+Z (undo) at one time or another to fix a mistake. Did you know you don't have to press Ctrl+Z a billion times to go back to a particular action? The Undo and Redo stacks are readily available for you to use for quick, multiple undo or redo operations.

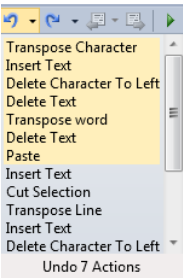
It's easy to use. Just locate the Undo and Redo section of the toolbar shown in the following illustration.



Next, click the drop-down arrow for the action you want to perform. In this case, let's look at the Undo stack:



By default, it undoes only the last action. However, notice what happens when I put my mouse over the list:

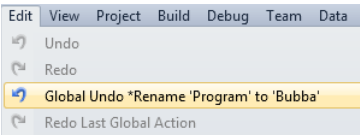


It automatically selects multiple actions to undo or redo. Also notice that it shows you at the bottom how many actions you are about to undo. When you have all the actions selected that you want to undo or redo, just click the left mouse button.

06.13 Undo and Redo Global Actions

WINDOWS	Alt,E, N (undo); Alt,E, U (redo)
MENU	Edit Undo Last Global Action; Edit Redo Last Global Action
COMMAND	Edit.UndoLastGlobalAction; Edit.RedoLastGlobalAction
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0020

Everyone knows about undo and redo, but did you know that the Edit menu offers global versions of these actions?



By definition, global actions impact multiple files. Global actions include renaming a class or namespace, performing a find-and-replace operation across a solution, refactoring a data-base, or any other action that changes multiple files.

You can apply the global undo and redo commands to actions in the current Visual Studio session, even after you close the solution that an action applies to.

06.14 How to Use Reference Highlighting

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow (next); Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow (previous)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow (next); Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow (previous)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow (next); Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow (next); Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow (previous)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow (next); Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow (previous)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow (next); Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow (previous)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.NextHighlightedReference; Edit.PreviousHighlightedReference
VERSIONS	2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0010

This is absolutely one of my favorite tips because you don't have to do anything to make it work. The MSDN documentation (at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ee349251.aspx>) describes reference highlighting this way:

"When you click a symbol in the Code Editor, all instances of the symbol are highlighted in the document. [...] Highlighted symbols may include declarations and references, and generally anything else that Find All References would return. This includes the names of classes, objects, variables, methods, and properties."

```
private void SomeCoolMethod()
{
    // blah
}

private void A()
{
    SomeCoolMethod();
}

private void B()
{
    SomeCoolMethod();
}

private void C()
{
    SomeCoolMethod();
}
```

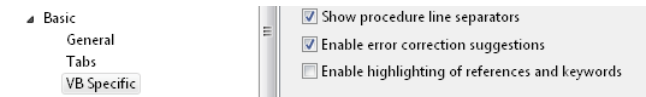
Navigation

All you have to do is click in any symbol, and it automatically highlights any references in the current document. You can navigate through the highlights by using Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow (next) or Ctrl+Shift+Up Arrow (previous).

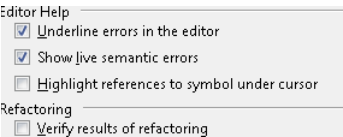
Turning it Off

What if you don't like this feature? You can always turn it off by using following instructions, depending on whether you're working in VB or C#.

VB: Go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | Basic | VB Specific, and clear the Enable Highlighting Of References And Keywords check box.



C#: Go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | C#| Advanced, and clear the Highlight References To Symbol Under Cursor check box.



06.15 Moving or Selecting Between Matching Braces (C++, C# Only)

DEFAULT	Ctrl+] (move); Ctrl+Shift+] (select)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+] (move); Ctrl+Shift+] (select)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+] (move); Ctrl+Shift+] (select)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+] (move); Ctrl+M (move); Ctrl+Shift+] (select); Ctrl+Shift+M (select)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+] (move); Ctrl+Shift+] (select)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+] (move); Ctrl+Shift+] (select)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.GotoBrace; Edit.GotoBraceExtend
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++, C#
CODE	vstipEdit0075

When you are working with the C* languages, you sometimes want to move to the bottom or top of a method or code block. You can quickly travel or select between matching braces by performing the following steps.

Moving

Click next to an opening or closing brace:

```
int main(array<System:
{
    Console.WriteLine

int main(array<System::String ^> ^args)
{
```

Now press Ctrl+] to go from one brace to the other one. You should find yourself easily navigating between them. This technique is very useful when you have braces far apart from each other. Also notice that the term “brace” is very loose here and applies to curly braces, square brackets, and parentheses.

Selecting

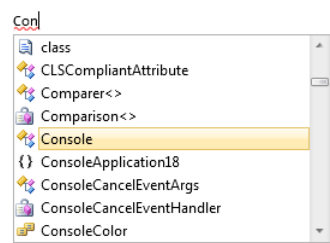
In addition to moving, you can also select everything between matching braces by pressing Ctrl+Shift+], as shown in the following illustration.

```
int main(array<System::String ^> ^args)
{
    Console.WriteLine(L"Hello World");
    DoSomething();
    return 0;
}
```

06.16 Invoke Statement Completion

DEFAULT	Ctrl+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+J
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+J; Ctrl+K, Ctrl+L; Ctrl+K, L
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+J; Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+J; Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+J
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, L
MENU	Edit IntelliSense List Members
COMMAND	Edit.ListMembers
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++ (not available in VS2010), C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0061

This little trick is particularly useful if you lose IntelliSense and want to get it back. You can invoke statement completion from the command line by using Ctrl+J.

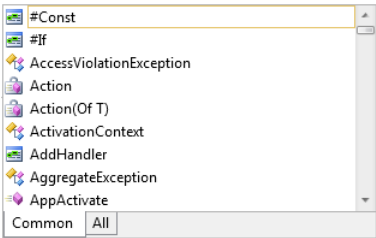


06.17

Move Between the Common Tab and All Tab in Statement Completion (VB)

DEFAULT	Alt+. (All Tab); Alt+, (Common Tab)
COMMAND	Edit.IncreaseFilterLevel; Edit.DecreaseFilterLevel
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	VB
CODE	vstipEdit0064

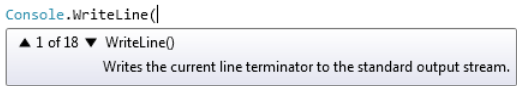
You don't have to take your hands off the keyboard when switching between Common and All in statement completion for Visual Basic. Just press Alt+Period (.) to go to the All tab, and press Alt+Comma (,) to go to the Common tab.



06.18 Using Parameter Information

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+Space (show Parameter Info); Up or Down Arrow (move to next or previous overload)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+Space (show Parameter Info); Ctrl+Shift+I (show Parameter Info); Up or Down Arrow (move to next or previous overload)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+Space (show Parameter Info); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+P (show Parameter Info); Ctrl+K, P (show Parameter Info); Up or Down Arrow (move to next or previous overload)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+Space (show Parameter Info); Up or Down Arrow (move to next or previous overload)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+Space (show Parameter Info); Up or Down Arrow (move to next or previous overload)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+Space (show Parameter Info); Ctrl+Shift+I (show Parameter Info); Up or Down Arrow (move to next or previous overload)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, P
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Parameter Info
COMMAND	Edit.ParameterInfo
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++ (not available in VS2010); C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0062

When working with a function, you automatically get parameter information, as shown in the following illustration.



If it goes away and you want it back, you can always press Ctrl+Shift+Space.

Also notice that the function in this example has 19 overloads. You can iterate through them by pressing your Up or Down Arrow keys. If you are using your mouse, you can go forward by clicking anywhere in the parameter information area. You do not have to click the tiny up and down arrows inside the box unless you want to go backward in the list.

06.19 Using Quick Info

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+I
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+K, I
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+T
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+I
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+I
WINDOWS	ALT,E, I, Q
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Quick Info
COMMAND	Edit.QuickInfo
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++ (not available in VS2010), C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0063

The Quick Info option helps you identify the details of a particular function. It comes up automatically as you type, but if it goes away, you can quickly bring it back by placing the cursor in a method and pressing Ctrl+K, Ctrl+I.

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    Console.WriteLine
```

void Console.WriteLine(string format, params object[] arg) (+ 18 overload(s))
Writes the text representation of the specified array of objects, followed by the

Exceptions:
System.IO.IOException
System.ArgumentNullException
System.FormatException

06.20 Word Completion

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Space; Alt+Right Arrow
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Space; Alt+Right Arrow
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Space; Alt+Right Arrow Ctrl+K, Ctrl+W; Ctrl+K, W
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Space; Alt+Right Arrow
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Space; Alt+Right Arrow
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Space; Alt+Right Arrow
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, W
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Complete Word
COMMAND	Edit.CompleteWord
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++ (not available in VS2010), C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0065

This one is very popular and one of the core skills to use in Visual Studio. Let's say you are typing and you have the situation shown in the following illustration.

```
Console.writel|
```

You can press Ctrl+Space or Alt+Right Arrow to complete the word:

```
Console.WriteLine|
```

This works only if there are no other possible matches. Suppose, for example, that you have something similar to the following:

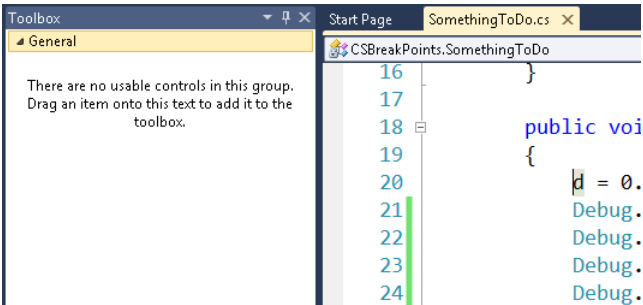
```
Console.Wr|
```

If you now press Ctrl+Space or Alt+Right Arrow to complete the word, you would just get statement completion instead.

06.21 Drag and Drop Code into the Toolbox

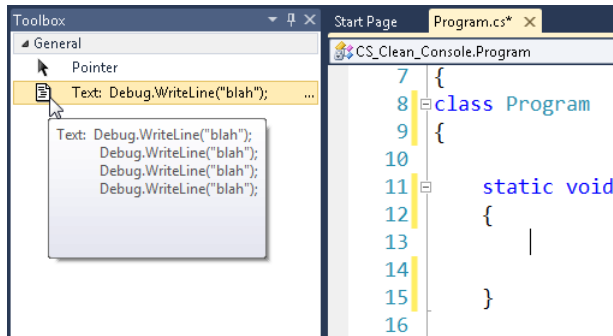
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0007

Got code you use all the time? Start using the Toolbox for more than just controls. When you are in the Editor, the Toolbox appears as shown in the following illustration.

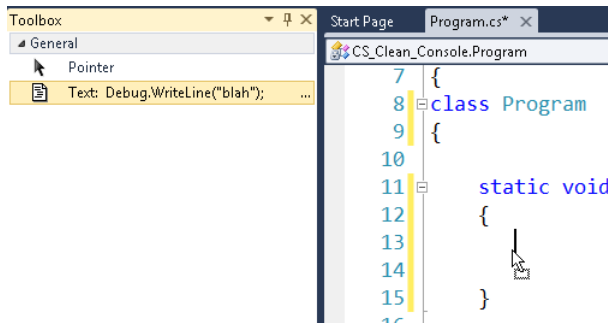


This is a vast expanse of opportunity! Just select some text from the editor, and drag it into the Toolbox and see the magic happen.

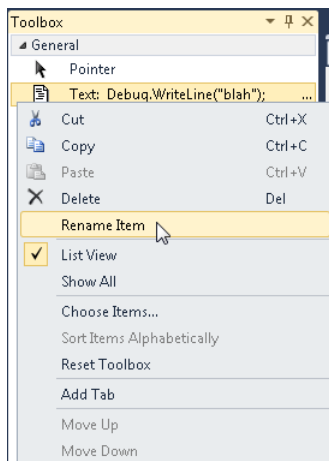
Now you have code ready to go anytime. Just place the cursor where you want the code to go, and double-click the item in your Toolbox.



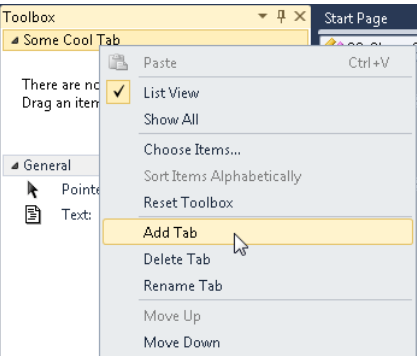
You can also click and drag where you want the code to go, as shown in the following illustration.



You also have a couple of extra things you can do. For example, you can rename (among other tasks) the item in the Toolbox to whatever you would like by right-clicking on it:



You can also create additional tabs, delete existing tabs, and rename tabs to organize the Toolbox better.



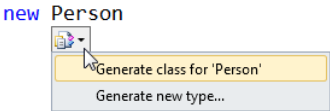
06.22 Using Smart Tags from the Keyboard

DEFAULT	Ctrl+. (period); Shift+Alt+F10
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+. (period); Shift+Alt+F10
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+. (period); Shift+Alt+F10
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+. (period); Shift+Alt+F10
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+. (period); Shift+Alt+F10
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+. (period); Shift+Alt+F10
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	View.ShowSmartTag
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0076

You have probably seen the smart tag indicator before. It's a blue or red bar that shows up in your code when you use certain items.

new Person

Most people just put their mouse over the line and choose the option(s) listed in the tag.

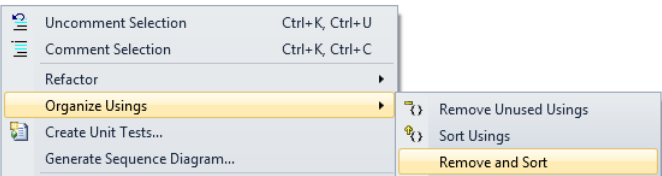


However, did you know that you can use a keyboard shortcut to bring up the options? Just press Ctrl+Period (.), and it brings up the option(s) without using the mouse.

06.23 Organize Using Statements (C# Only)

WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, [R (remove), U (sort), A (remove and sort)]
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Organize Usings [Remove Unused Usings, Sort Usings, Remove and Sort]; Right Click Organize Usings [Remove Unused Usings, Sort Usings, Remove and Sort]
COMMAND	EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.OrganizeUsings.[RemoveUnusedUsings, SortUsings, RemoveAndSort]
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#
CODE	vstipEdit0070

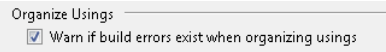
You can easily organize your using statements. Simply right-click anywhere in the editor to get the context menu, choose Organize Usings, and then Remove, Sort, or Remove And Sort.



Remove Unused Usings

Before removing unused using directives, using aliases, and extern aliases, you should consider a couple things about this feature.

First, it should be used only on code that builds, because it could remove required using statements if activated on code that does not build. As shown in the following illustration, you have an option in Visual Studio 2008 (**not** Visual Studio 2010), found at Tools | Options | Text Editor | C# | Advanced | Organize Usings, that prevents you from removing using statements if your code doesn't build.



Second, it works only on the active set of code. For example, suppose you have a set of using statements such as the following:

```
using System;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Linq;
using System.Text;
using Microsoft.CSharp.RuntimeBinder;
using System.Text.RegularExpressions;
using System.Collections.Concurrent;
```

If you remove the unused using statements, you see the following result:

```
using System;
```

However, suppose those using statements are organized into code that has active and inactive blocks:

```
#define DEBUG

#if DEBUG
using System;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Linq;
using System.Text;
#else
using Microsoft.CSharp.RuntimeBinder;
using System.Text.RegularExpressions;
using System.Collections.Concurrent;
#endif
```

When you perform the action to remove them, only the extra using statements in the active block are removed:

```
#define DEBUG

#if DEBUG
using System;
#else
using Microsoft.CSharp.RuntimeBinder;
using System.Text.RegularExpressions;
using System.Collections.Concurrent;
#endif
```

Generally accepted reasons for removing unused using statements include the following:

- Results in cleaner code
- Significantly reduces the size of the IntelliSense list because there are fewer namespaces
- Enables potentially faster compilation because the compiler has fewer namespaces to resolve
- Avoids potential naming collisions when new types are added to the unused namespaces that might have the same name as types you are currently using

Sort Usings

When you perform a sort action on your using statements, they sort in the following order: extern aliases, using directives, using aliases. Also, by default, using statements that reference the System namespace are sorted before the other using directives. So, suppose you have some using statements such as the following:

```
using System;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Linq;
using System.Text;
using Microsoft.CSharp.RuntimeBinder;
using System.Text.RegularExpressions;
using System.Collections.Concurrent;
```

When you sort them, you get the result shown in the following illustration.

```
using System;
using System.Collections.Concurrent;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Linq;
using System.Text;
using System.Text.RegularExpressions;
using Microsoft.CSharp.RuntimeBinder;
```

Notice that the Microsoft namespace is below all the System namespaces. If you don't like this behavior, you can change it by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | C# | Advanced | Organize Usings and clearing the Place 'System' Directives First When Sorting Usings check box.

Now, when you sort, you see the following result:

```
using Microsoft.CSharp.RuntimeBinder;
using System;
using System.Collections.Concurrent;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Linq;
using System.Text;
using System.Text.RegularExpressions;
```

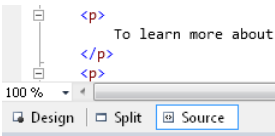
Remove and Sort

When you click the Remove And Sort command, it first performs a remove operation and then it performs a sort operation.

06.24 Switch Between Design and Source in Web Projects

DEFAULT	Shift+F7 (view designer and view markup toggle)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+F7 (view designer and view markup toggle)
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+F7 (view designer and view markup toggle)
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+F7 (view designer and view markup toggle)
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+F7 (view designer and view markup toggle)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+F7 (view designer and view markup toggle)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, D (view designer); Alt, V, K (view markup)
MENU	View Designer; View Markup
COMMAND	View.ViewDesigner; View.ViewMarkup
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0045

When working with web projects, you can switch between Design and Source (Markup) views quite easily.



In any view, simply press Shift+F7 to switch to the other view. In other words, you can press Shift+F7 as a toggle between views.

Split View

This keyboard shortcut does not work the way you might think in Split view.

Pressing Shift+F7 takes you to either the Design or Source view (depending on which one you were in last) and does not return to Split view when you press Shift+F7 again.

06.25 Toggle Designer

DEFAULT	F7 (view designer); F7 (view code)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut] (view designer); F7 (view code)
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut] (view designer); F7 (view code)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut] (view designer); F7 (view code)
VISUAL C++ 6	[no shortcut] (view designer); F7 (view code)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut] (view designer); F7 (view code)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, D (view designer); Alt,V, C (view code)
MENU	View Designer; View Code
COMMAND	View.ToggleDesigner; View.ViewCode
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0044

You often find that there is a need to switch from Design view (web, windows, or WPF) to code. You can use F7 to go from the current Source or Design view to the Code view.

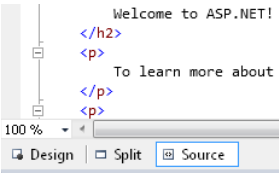
To go back, just press F7 again. It's a toggle, so it jumps back and forth between the views.

In WPF applications, you can use F7 to view code but not to go back to Design view, so it isn't a full toggle operation in that scenario.

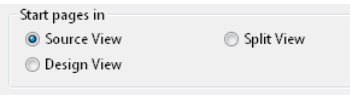
06.26 Change the Default View in the HTML Editor

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options HTML Designer General
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0088

The default view when you use the HTML Designer is Source view.



If you don't like this or just want another view to be the default, you can go to Tools | Options | HTML Designer | General and choose a new view in the Start Pages In area.





Note In Visual Studio 2005, you don't have the Split View option.

06.27 Jump Back to the Editor from Just About Anywhere

DEFAULT	Esc
VISUAL BASIC 6	Esc
VISUAL C# 2005	Esc
VISUAL C++ 2	Esc
VISUAL C++ 6	Esc; Alt+0
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Esc
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.ActivateDocumentWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0066

Did you know that you can usually get to the active document window by just pressing Esc? For example, if you are in any tool window (like the Output window) and you press Esc, you go back to the active document window.

You might have to press Esc multiple times, depending on the situation, but it should almost always wind up at the active document window.

06.28 Replacing Text with a Box Selection

DEFAULT	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.Line[Up, Down]ExtendColumn; Edit.Char[Left, Right]ExtendColumn
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit0006

You have been able to select a block of text for some time in Visual Studio by holding down the Alt+Shift+Arrow keys (or Alt+Left Mouse Button) and making a selection. In Visual Studio 2010, you can now do multiline replacements of a box selection.

Simply select a block of text:

```
public int x = 10;
public int y = 30;
public int z = 50;
```

Now type your replacement text:

```
private int x = 10;
private int y = 30;
private int z = 50;
```

The Editor turns your box selection into a zero-length box selection (a multiline cursor) that you can use to type in what you like.

06.29 Pasting the Contents of One Box Selection into Another

DEFAULT	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.Line[Up, Down]ExtendColumn; Edit.Char[Left, Right]ExtendColumn
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0007

Box selection is a powerful tool that is often overlooked. One of the things you can do, for example, is paste one box selection into another of the same size. Let’s assume you have the following code:

```
public int x = 10;
public int y = 30;
public int z = 50;

public double a = 30;
public Int32 b = 50;
public Int64 c = 60;
```

However, you want the first set of variables to be the same data types as the second set (and in the same order). Simply box select (Alt+Left Mouse Button) the second set of data types, and then copy the selection (Ctrl+C).


```
public int x = 10;
public int y = 30;
public int z = 50;

public double a = 30;
public Int32 b = 50;
public Int64 c = 60;
```

Next, select the first set of data types (Alt+Left Mouse Button):

```
public int x = 10;
public int y = 30;
public int z = 50;

public double a = 30;
public Int32 b = 50;
public Int64 c = 60;
```

And paste (Ctrl+V):

```
public double x = 10;
public Int32 y = 30;
public Int64 z = 50;

public double a = 30;
public Int32 b = 50;
public Int64 c = 60;
```

06.30 Pasting a Single Selection into a Box Selection

DEFAULT	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.Line[Up, Down]ExtendColumn; Edit.Char[Left, Right]ExtendColumn
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit0008

In this tip, we see how to take a single selection and put it into a box selection. Let’s assume you have the following code:

```
public int x = 10;
public int y = 30;
public int z = 50;

public double a = 30;
```

But you realize that you need change all the ints to doubles.

Select the double keyword and copy it (Ctrl+C):

```
public int x = 10;
public int y = 30;
public int z = 50;

public double a = 30;
```

Then box select the destination (Alt+left mouse button):

```
public int x = 10;
public int y = 30;
public int z = 50;

public double a = 30;
```

Finally, do a paste (Ctrl+V) to see the following result:

```
public double x = 10;
public double y = 30;
public double z = 50;

public double a = 30;
```

06.31 Using Zero-Length Box Selection

DEFAULT	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Alt+[Up, Down, Left, Right] Arrow
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.Line[Up, Down]ExtendColumn; Edit.Char[Left, Right]ExtendColumn
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit0009

The power of box selection is even more powerful with the new zero-length box selection. Let’s assume that you have a situation with some variables, like the ones shown in the following illustration, and you want to make them all public.

```
| double a = 10;  
double b = 20;  
double c = 30;  
double d = 40;  
double e = 50;
```

The answer is a zero-length box selection. Hold down your Alt key, and use your Down Arrow key to extend straight down. A line is created, as shown in the following illustration.

```
| double a = 10;  
double b = 20;  
double c = 30;  
double d = 40;  
| double e = 50;
```

Release the keys, and now just start typing.

```
public double a = 10;  
public double b = 20;  
public double c = 30;  
public double d = 40;  
public double e = 50;
```

This feature acts just like any cursor, so you can go forward and backward at will, plus you can put one of these anywhere you want to create or edit multiple lines of text.

06.32 View White Space

DEFAULT	Ctrl+R, Ctrl+W
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+R, Ctrl+W; Ctrl+E, Ctrl+S; Ctrl+E, S
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+R, Ctrl+W; Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+R, Ctrl+W; Ctrl+Shift+8
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+R, Ctrl+W
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, W
MENU	Edit Advanced View White Space
COMMAND	Edit.ViewWhiteSpace
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0043

Ever want to see the white space you are working with? Maybe you want to know whether you have tabs or extra spaces on lines? It's easy to find out. Just go to Edit | Advanced | View White Space (Ctrl+R, Ctrl+W).

```
// some comment
// another comment

.....//.some.comment.....
→ → //.another.comment→ → →
```

Spaces are represented as dots, and tabs are the arrows you see in the preceding illustration.

06.33 Collapsing Your Code with Outlining

DEFAULT	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M; Ctrl+M, M
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt, E, O, T
MENU	Edit Outlining Toggle Outlining Expansion
COMMAND	Edit.ToggleOutliningExpansion
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0029

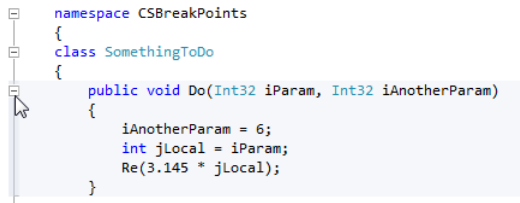
By default, outlining is enabled in Visual Studio. It's the line you see with the boxes to indicate the status of the area (collapsed or expanded):

```
[-] namespace CSBreakPoints
{
[-] class SomethingToDo
{
    public void Do(Int32 iParam, Int32 iAnotherParam)
    {
        iAnotherParam = 6;
        int jLocal = iParam;
        Re(3.145 * jLocal);
    }
}
```

You can collapse code to get it out of your way so that you can focus on other areas. You have four ways to do it.

Minus Sign

Click the minus sign to collapse an area of code.



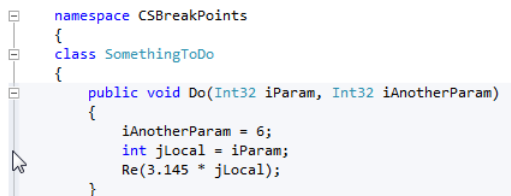
```
namespace CSBreakPoints
{
    class SomethingToDo
    {
        public void Do(Int32 iParam, Int32 iAnotherParam)
        {
            iAnotherParam = 6;
            int jLocal = iParam;
            Re(3.145 * jLocal);
        }
    }
}
```



Note Visual Studio 2010, if Visual Experience is turned on in Tools | Options | Environment | General, now highlights the area that will be collapsed. If you don't like the highlighting color, you can go to Tools | Options | Environment | Fonts and Colors and change the color for the Collapsible Region setting.

Vertical Line

In Visual Studio 2010 only, click *anywhere* on the vertical line in the highlighted region.



```
namespace CSBreakPoints
{
    class SomethingToDo
    {
        public void Do(Int32 iParam, Int32 iAnotherParam)
        {
            iAnotherParam = 6;
            int jLocal = iParam;
            Re(3.145 * jLocal);
        }
    }
}
```

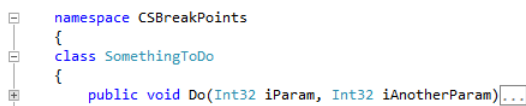
Click Anywhere in Area (Keyboard Shortcut)

Click anywhere in the area to be collapsed, and press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M.

Click Anywhere in Area (Menu Item)

Click anywhere in the area to be collapsed, and go to Edit | Outlining | Toggle Outlining Expansion on the menu bar.

After collapsing, the code area looks like this:




```
namespace CSBreakPoints
{
    class SomethingToDo
    {
        public void Do(Int32 iParam, Int32 iAnotherParam) [...]
```

06.34 Using Hide Selection

DEFAULT	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+H
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+H
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+H
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+H
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt, E, O, H
MENU	Edit Outlining Hide Selection
COMMAND	Edit.HideSelection
VERSIONS	2005 (C++ Only), 2008 (C++ Only), 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0036

Let’s say you have a chunk of code such as the following:



```
public void ValidateForCheckout() {  
    //Must have 1 or more items  
    if (this.Items.Count <= 0)  
        throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.OrderZeroItems);  
  
    //every order must have a shipping address - used for tax calcs  
    if (this.ShippingAddress == null)  
        throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.NoAddress);  
  
    //make sure there's a payment method  
    if (this.PaymentMethod == null)  
        throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.NoPaymentMethod);  
  
    if (this.PaymentMethod is CreditCard) {  
        CreditCard cc = this.PaymentMethod as CreditCard;  
  
        if (!cc.IsValid())  
            throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.InvalidCreditCard);  
    }  
}
```

Outlining allows you to collapse only the entire method by default (minus sign in the upper-left corner of the preceding illustration). What if you want to collapse only the if statements at the top? First, select the chunk of code you want to hide.



Note You don’t have to select entire lines for this feature to work. Just select as much or as little as you want to hide.

```
public void ValidateForCheckout() {  
    //Must have 1 or more items  
    if (this.Items.Count <= 0)  
        throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.OrderZeroItems);  
  
    //every order must have a shipping address - used for tax calcs  
    if (this.ShippingAddress == null)  
        throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.NoAddress);  
  
    //make sure there's a payment method  
    if (this.PaymentMethod == null)  
        throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.NoPaymentMethod);  
  
    if (this.PaymentMethod is CreditCard) {  
        CreditCard cc = this.PaymentMethod as CreditCard;  
  
        if (!cc.IsValid())  
            throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.InvalidCreditCard);  
    }  
}
```

Now either press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+H or go to Edit | Outlining | Hide Selection on your menu bar.

```
public void ValidateForCheckout() {  
  
    //make sure there's a payment method  
    if (this.PaymentMethod == null)  
        throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.NoPaymentMethod);  
  
    if (this.PaymentMethod is CreditCard) {  
        CreditCard cc = this.PaymentMethod as CreditCard;  
  
        if (!cc.IsValid())  
            throw new InvalidOperationException(Messages.InvalidCreditCard);  
    }  
}
```

You have successfully collapsed a selected region of code. Now you can expand and collapse the area as long as you like. Also, if you ever want to get rid of the new region, just press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+U or go to Edit | Outlining | Stop Hiding Current to remove the region.

06.35 Collapse to Definitions with Outlining

DEFAULT	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+O
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+O
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+O; Ctrl+M, O
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+O
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt, E, O, O
MENU	Edit Outlining Collapse to Definitions
COMMAND	Edit.CollapseToDefinitions
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0032

One of the features of outlining is the Collapse To Definitions option. This feature collapses the areas for all members. Let's suppose you have the following code:

```
public decimal TaxableGoodsSubtotal
{
    get
    {
        //one of the many reasons to love LINQ :)
        return this.Items.Where(x => x.Item.IsTaxable)
            .Sum(x => x.LineTotal);
    }
}

public decimal TotalWeightInPounds
{
    get
    {
        return this.Items.Sum(x => x.LineWeightInPounds);
    }
}

public string DiscountReason { get; set; }
public decimal DiscountAmount { get; set; }

public decimal SubTotal
{
    get
    {
        return this.Items.Sum(x => x.LineTotal)-DiscountAmount;
    }
}
```

You can press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+O, or you can go to Edit | Outlining | Collapse To Definitions on your menu bar to see the following result:

```
public decimal TaxableGoodsSubtotal[...]
public decimal TotalWeightInPounds[...]

public string DiscountReason { get; set; }
public decimal DiscountAmount { get; set; }

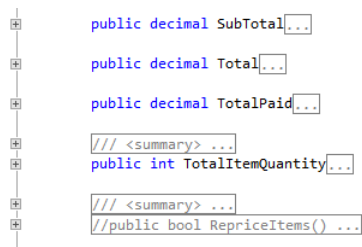
public decimal SubTotal[...]
```


06.36 Cut, Copy, and Paste Collapsed Code with Outlining

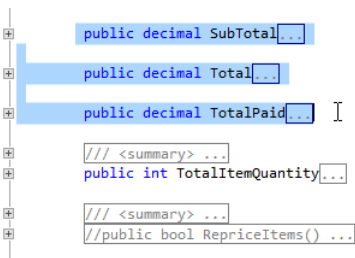
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0035

When working with outlining, you can perform many timesaving operations. One of these is the ability to take a piece of code and work with it in a collapsed state.

When you collapse code using outlining (click the minus sign to the left of the signature), you get the result shown in the following illustration.

A screenshot of a code editor showing several lines of code. The first three lines are 'public decimal SubTotal...', 'public decimal Total...', and 'public decimal TotalPaid...'. The next two lines are '/// <summary> ...' and 'public int TotalItemQuantity...'. The final two lines are '/// <summary> ...' and '//public bool RepriceItems() ...'. The first three lines and the 'public int TotalItemQuantity...' line are collapsed, indicated by a minus sign in the left margin. The '/// <summary> ...' lines are also collapsed, indicated by a minus sign in the left margin.

Now we can select all of that code in one compact unit:

A screenshot of the same code editor as before, but with a blue selection box highlighting the first three lines of code: 'public decimal SubTotal...', 'public decimal Total...', and 'public decimal TotalPaid...'. The selection box is a solid blue rectangle that covers the text of these three lines.

Then simply cut or copy the code, and paste it where you want.

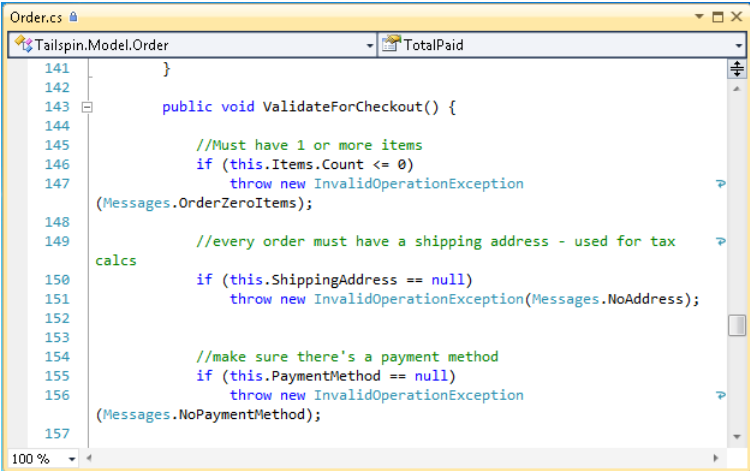
06.37 Understanding Word Wrap

DEFAULT	Ctrl+E, Ctrl+W
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+E, Ctrl+W; Ctrl+E, W
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+E, Ctrl+W
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+E, Ctrl+W
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+E, Ctrl+W
WINDOWS	Alt, E, V, R
MENU	Edit Advanced Word Wrap; Tools Options Text Editor All Languages General
COMMAND	Edit.ToggleWordWrap
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0022

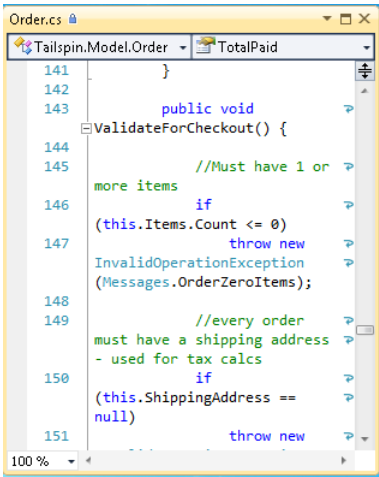
You can turn on or off the word wrap feature by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | All Languages | General and selecting or clearing the Word Wrap check box.

Word wrap automatically makes sure that your text is always in the visible space. So if you already have a lot of visible space, it probably doesn't need to wrap.

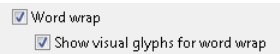
But if you have less space and wrap is turned on, it wraps automatically, as shown in the following illustration.



And, naturally, if you have almost no space, it still makes sure all the text is in the visible space.



The arrows on the far right of each line (see the preceding illustration) show that the lines are being wrapped. This can be turned on or off by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | All Languages | General and checking the Show Visual Glyphs For Word Wrap check box.



06.38 Properties Window Keyboard Shortcuts

DEFAULT	F4 (properties window); Shift+F4 (property pages)
VISUAL BASIC 6	F4 (properties window); Shift+F4 (property pages)
VISUAL C# 2005	F4 (properties window); Ctrl+W, Ctrl+P (properties window); Ctrl+W, P (properties window)
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+Enter (properties window); Ctrl+W (properties window); [no shortcut] (property pages)
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+Enter (properties window); [no shortcut] (property pages)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F4 (properties window); Shift+F4 (property pages)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, W (properties window); Alt,V, Y (property pages)
MENU	View Properties; View Property Pages
COMMAND	View.PropertiesWindow; View.PropertyPages
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0111

The Properties window allows you to view and change the design-time properties and events of selected objects that are located in editors and designers. You can also use the Properties window to edit and view file, project, and solution properties. The Properties window is available from the View menu.

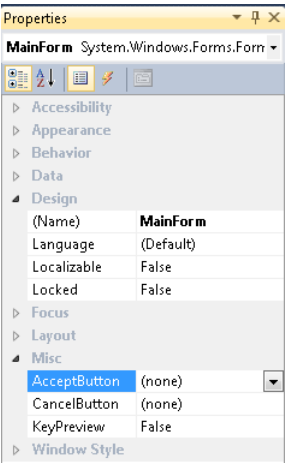
For more information, see “Properties Window” on MSDN at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms171352.aspx>.

Working with the Tool Window

The following table lists the keyboard shortcuts that you can use with the Properties window:

ACTION	SHORTCUT
Open / Show	F4 or Alt+Enter
Close	Shift+Esc

Working with Categories



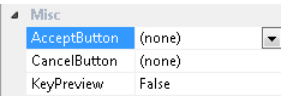
The following table lists the keyboard shortcuts that you can use when working with the categories in the Properties window:



Note The category needs to be selected as shown in the preceding illustration, using the Misc category. You can use your Arrow keys to select the node.

ACTION	SHORTCUT
Collapse	Left Arrow or - (minus)
Expand	Right Arrow or + (plus)
Show next set of properties	Page Up
Show previous set of properties	Page Down
Move to next item in list	Down or Left Arrow
Move to previous item in list	Up or Right Arrow
Move to first property	Home
Move to last property	End

Property Items



The following table lists the keyboard shortcuts that you can use when you are working with individual items in the Properties window:

ACTION	SHORTCUT
Cancel current changes	Esc
Show drop-down list	Alt+Down Arrow
Previous/next option in list	Up / Down Arrow
Cut selection	Ctrl+X
Copy selection	Ctrl+C
Paste	Ctrl+V
Undo	Ctrl+Z

06.39 Document Outline: Web Projects

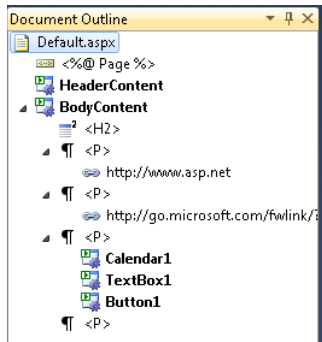
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+T; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+U; Ctrl+W, U
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+D
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+T
WINDOWS	Alt,V, E, D
MENU	View Other Windows Document Outline
COMMAND	View.DocumentOutline
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipTool0116

If you are working with web projects, you need to know about the Document Outline feature (Ctrl+Alt+T). It can be used to do the following:

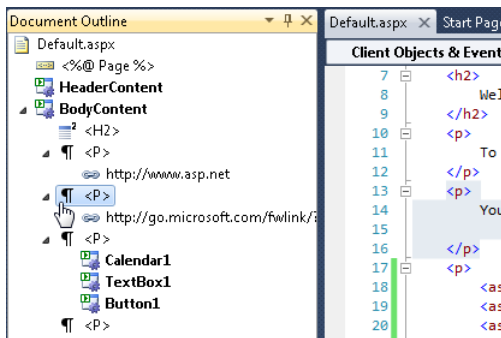
- View the logical structure of your document.
- Determine which elements are HTML elements and which ones are web server controls.
- Navigate to specific elements, in Design view and in Source view.

If you are working in Source view, it shows you the body element and the child elements of the head element, the page directive, and any script elements and code elements.

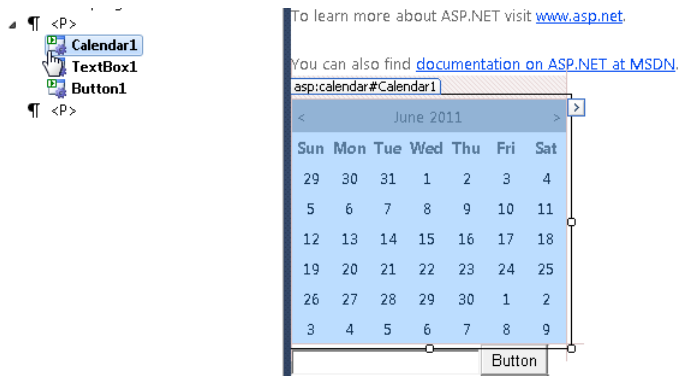
I created a default web application in Visual Studio 2010, added a couple of server controls, and switched to Source view. The following illustration shows what the Document Outline looks like.



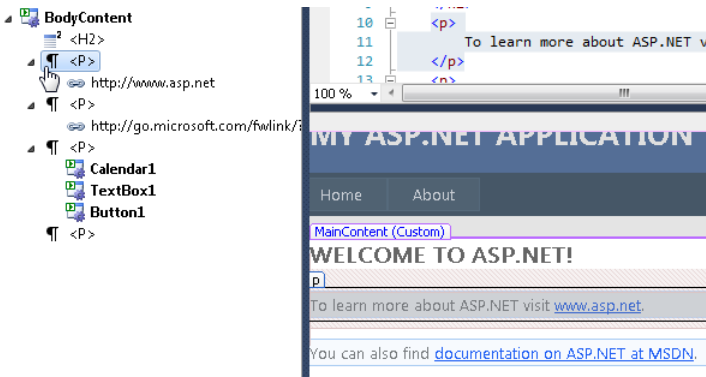
Notice that you can clearly distinguish between the HTML and server content (server content has the little gears in them). It can also be used to select items in the Source.



In Design view, it essentially does the same thing and allows you to get a bird's-eye view of the layout and can be used to select controls.



If you have a scenario with many controls, this makes getting to specific items very easy.



Additionally, many people like to use this feature with Split view so that it can show both Design and Source.

06.40 Inserting Code Snippets

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X; Ctrl+K, X
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, I
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Insert Snippet
COMMAND	Edit.InsertSnippet
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0051

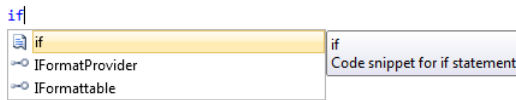
Even though these have been around for a while, a lot of people still don't fully understand snippets. Let's assume you are in the editor and you want to create an if statement. You can type it out, but that would be the hard way. Why not just use a snippet? You have several ways to do this.

Tab

Just type **if**, and press the Tab key twice.

C#

The paper-like icon, shown in the following illustration, indicates that this is a snippet in C#.

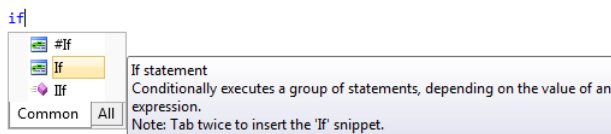


VB

In VB, you don't have the paper icon, but you do have a note in the tooltip that indicates this is a snippet.



Warning Don't be fooled by the `#if` directive. You want the `if` statement for this example.

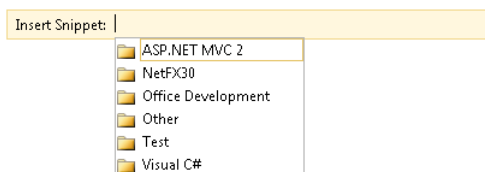


Keyboard Shortcut and Context Menu

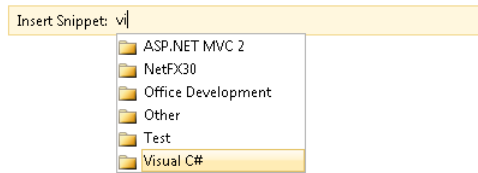
Press Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X or right-click and choose Insert Snippet, or go to Edit | IntelliSense | Insert Snippet on the menu bar.

C#

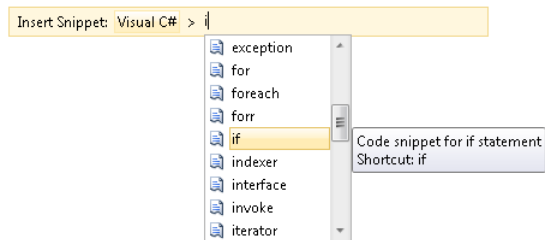
First you see a prompt to insert the snippet, as shown in the following illustration.



Choose Visual C# from the list, and then press Enter.

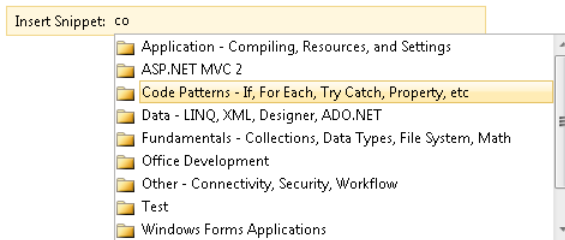


Then type **if**, and press Enter.

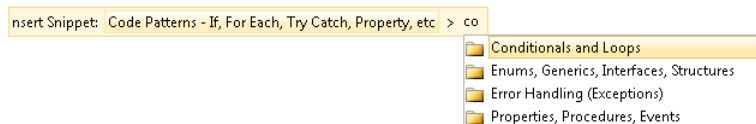


VB

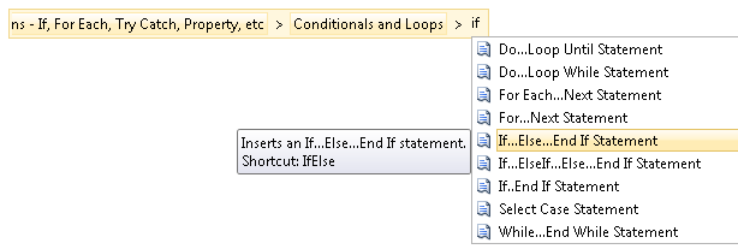
Similar to C#, you see a prompt to insert the snippet, but the path is different. From the list, choose Code Patterns – If, For Each, Try Catch, Property, Etc, and then press Enter:



Then choose Conditionals And Loops, and press Enter:



Finally, pick the if statement you want from the list:



Result

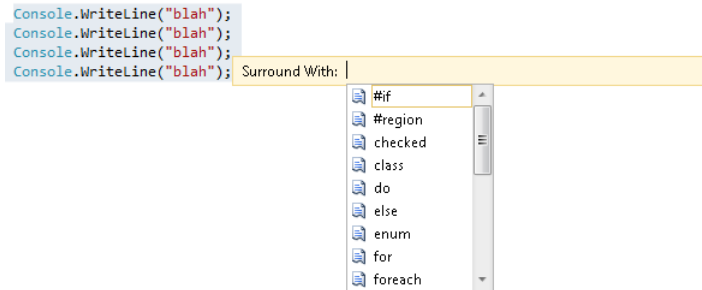
No matter which option you choose, the result is essentially the same. You can now type in your condition and the rest of your logic.

06.41 Surround with a Code Snippet

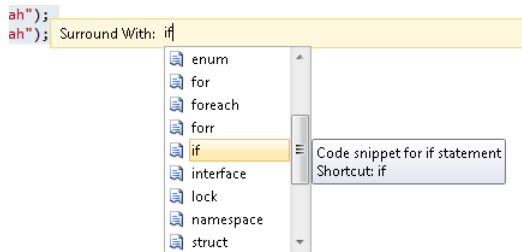
DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+S
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+S
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+S; Ctrl+K, S
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+S
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+S
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, S
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Surround With
COMMAND	Edit.SurroundWith
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#
CODE	vstipEdit0052

This is one that even people who know about snippets tend to forget. You can actually put a snippet around existing code, assuming you have some code selected.

Just press Ctrl+K, Ctrl+S:



Then type the statement you want to surround the code with. In this case, let's use an if statement:



Press your Tab key once, and you see the result shown in the following illustration.

```
if (true)
{
    Console.WriteLine("blah");
    Console.WriteLine("blah");
    Console.WriteLine("blah");
    Console.WriteLine("blah");
}
```

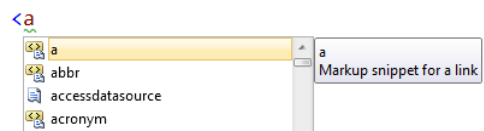
Now you can put in your condition and any additional logic you want.

06.42 Using Code Snippets

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X; Ctrl+K, X
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, I
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Insert Snippet
COMMAND	Edit.InsertSnippet
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipEdit0053

I thought it would be a good idea to review how to use snippets. This example uses tags in ASP.NET, but the concepts apply across the board to all snippets.

Let’s say you are in an ASP.NET application and you start to type an anchor tag, as shown in the following illustration.



You press Tab twice to insert a snippet and see the following result:

```
<a href="#">content</a>
```

Snippets have special areas that you can change the values in by pressing Tab to cycle through them. For example, the following snippet has two special areas. Let’s put in a URL:

```
<a href="http://blah.com">content</a>
```

Now press Tab to go to the next area, and type in some text as shown in the following illustration.

```
<a href="http://blah.com">this is cool</a>
```

You can keep pressing Tab to toggle between these two locations as much as you want. When you are done, you can press Enter to put the cursor at the end of the element and continue typing more code.

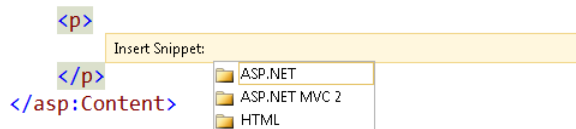
So, in a nutshell, that's how to work with snippets. They take a little getting used to, but they are great timesavers.

06.43 HTML Code Snippets

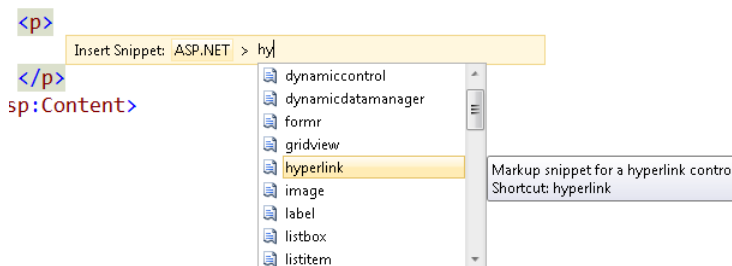
DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X; Ctrl+K, X
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, I
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Insert Snippet
COMMAND	Edit.InsertSnippet
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit0018

You might have used code snippets for a while now, but did you know that Visual Studio 2010 has added support for HTML snippets?

From any webpage, go to Edit | IntelliSense | Insert Snippet on the menu bar (Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X). You should see the Insert Snippet prompt:



Next, choose your category and the specific snippet you want:



Type in the details, pressing Tab if there are multiple areas where you need to put in details.

```
<p>  
  <a href="http://blah.com">content</a>  
</p>  
</asp:Content>
```

Press Enter when you are done, and continue putting in your code.



Note This is the long way to insert a snippet the quicker way, in most cases, is to just start typing an element and hit tab twice to insert the snippet for that element.

06.44 JavaScript Code Snippets

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, I
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Insert Snippet
COMMAND	Edit.InsertSnippet
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit19

Want to get that JavaScript code created more quickly? Use JavaScript snippets.

When you are inside any script block, go to Edit | IntelliSense | Insert Snippet on the menu bar (Ctrl+K, Ctrl+X), choose the JScript category, as shown in the following illustration, and then press Tab.

```
<script type="text/javascript">  
  
</script>
```

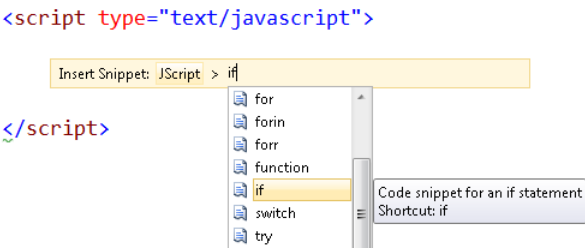
Insert Snippet: j

ASP.NET AJAX

JScript

XML Comments

Now pick what you want to do, and then press Tab again.



Now fill in any details, pressing Tab to cycle between details if needed.

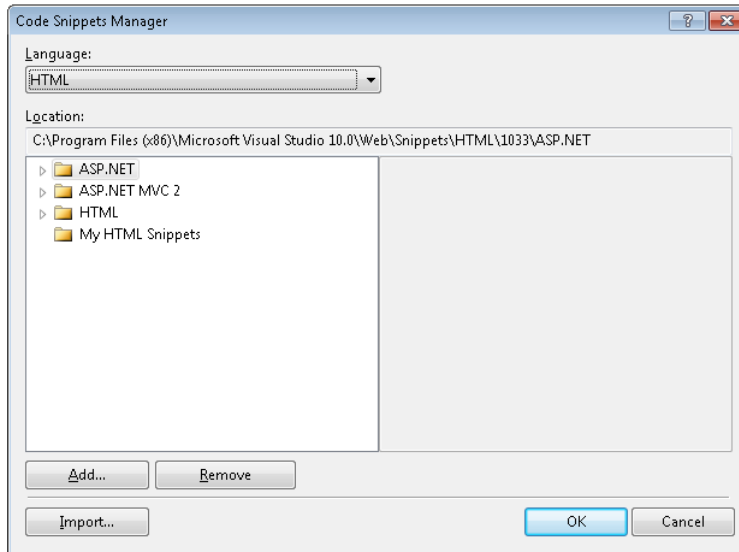
```
<script type="text/javascript">
    if (true) {
    }
</script>
```

Then press Enter when you are done, and keep typing your code.

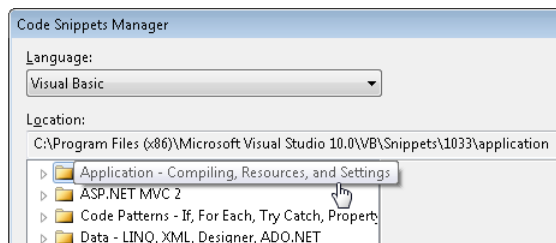
06.45 Using the Code Snippets Manager

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,T, T
MENU	Tools Code Snippets Manager
COMMAND	Tools.CodeSnippetsManager
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0015

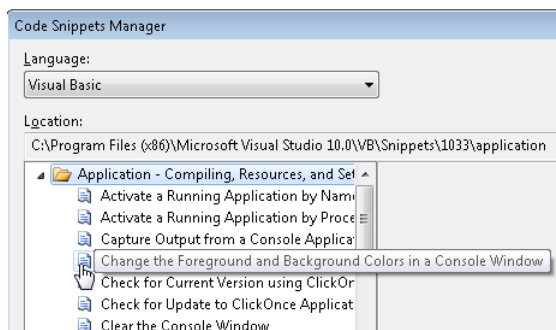
Ever wonder where you can get a list of code snippets just to browse? The Code Snippets Manager is your friend. Start by pressing Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B to see the following dialog box.



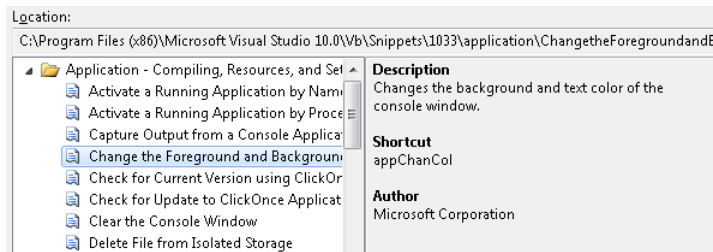
The first thing you need to do is pick the language you want to browse through. Go ahead and choose Visual Basic for this example. This action gives you several folders (categories) to choose from. Let's choose the Application – Compiling, Resources, And Settings folder, as shown in the following illustration.



From here, you can browse individual snippets and put your mouse over each of them to get the full description:



Click the Change The Foreground And Background Colors In A Console Window snippet. Notice that summary information about the snippet is provided:



To use this snippet, you have to copy the shortcut name, “appChanCol” in this case. Now click OK or Cancel to close the dialog box, and paste your shortcut name into the editor.

```
Sub Main()

    appChanCol|

End Sub
```

Finally, press Tab twice to get the results shown in the following illustration.



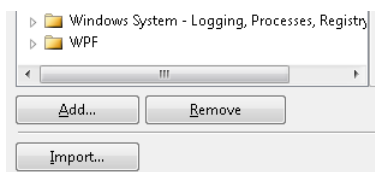
Note Technically, you have to press Tab only once in this case, but pressing it twice preserves muscle memory for the snippets and has no downside.

```
Sub Main()

    Console.BackgroundColor = ConsoleColor.DarkRed
    Console.ForegroundColor = ConsoleColor.Gray
    Console.Clear()

End Sub
```

But what about the buttons in the Code Snippet Manager we didn’t talk about?



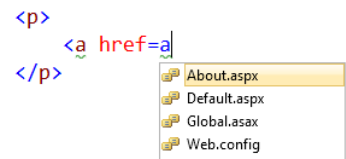
Following are quick descriptions of what they do.

- **Add**—Lets you pick a folder to add to the current list of folders for snippets. The folder can be any accessible location, including network drives. This is useful for shared snippets among team members where everyone uses snippets on a shared drive.
- **Remove**—Takes a folder out of the list but does not physically delete the folder.
- **Import**—Used for including individual .snippet files in the folder you are currently viewing.

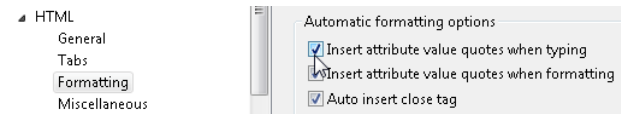
06.46 Insert Quotes When Typing Attribute Values

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0082

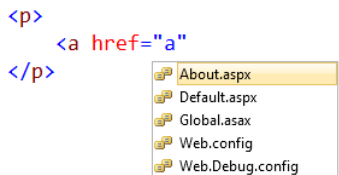
One of the more annoying things about web development in Visual Studio is that when you type in attributes it doesn't include the quotes automatically.



You can have quotes included automatically when you type in attributes if you go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | Formatting and select Insert Attribute Value Quotes When Typing:



From now on, you will see the quotes when you type in the attributes:



06.47 Format the Current Document or Selection (Web)

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+E (document); Ctrl+K, E (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection); Ctrl+E, Ctrl+F (selection); Ctrl+E, F (selection)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut] (document); Ctrl+Shift+F (selection); Ctrl+Alt+I (selection)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection); Alt+F8 (selection)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection); Alt+F8 (selection)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, A (document); Alt,E, V, F (selection)
MENU	Edit Advanced Format Document; Edit Advanced Format Selection
COMMAND	Edit.FormatDocument; Edit.FormatSelection
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0089

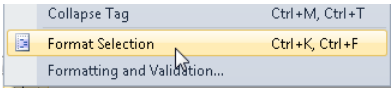
In vstipEdit0057 ("Format the Current Document or Selection," in Appendix B [<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>]), I showed you how to format code. I thought it would be a good idea to look at the same task from a web project perspective. Let's say you have the following HTML:

```
<div> something cool here </div>
```



Warning You need to have spaces around the <DIV> tags, as I have shown here, or the formatting will not work correctly.

But you want to clean it up a bit. Just select everything you want formatted, right-click, and choose Format Selection (Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F), as shown in the following illustration.



You see the following result:

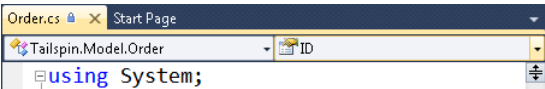
```
<div>
    something cool here
</div>
```

The formatting rules that govern this operation can be found at Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | Formatting. You can also format the entire document by going to Edit | Advanced | Format Document or using the shortcut Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D.

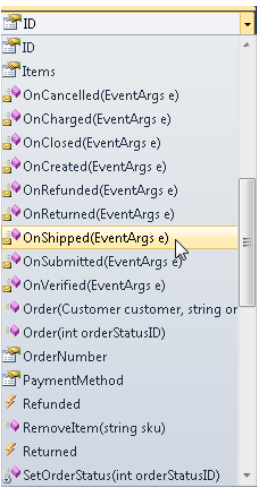
06.48 Using the Navigation Bar

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F2 (navigation bar); Tab (move between Objects and Members drop-down lists)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+F2 (navigation bar); Tab (move between Objects and Members drop-down lists)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F2 (navigation bar); Tab (move between Objects and Members drop-down lists)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F2 (navigation bar); Tab (move between Objects and Members drop-down lists)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+F8 (navigation bar);Tab (move between Objects and Members drop-down lists)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F2 (navigation bar); Tab (move between Objects and Members drop-down lists)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.MoveToNavigationBar
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0026

Ever notice the two drop-down lists just below the file tab channel? The one on the left is the Objects list (classes and objects), and the one on the right is the Members list.



You probably don't have much use for the Objects list unless you have a lot of classes in one file. The Members list is extremely useful when you want to jump around in your code. If you have a class with several functions, you can click the Members list to see them all:



Now you can just click a member to instantly go to that section in your code.

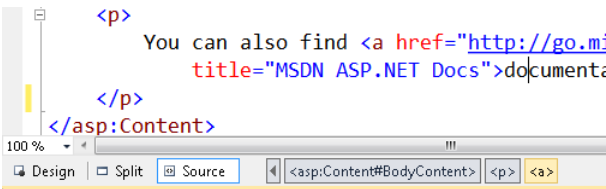
06.49 HTML Editor Tag Navigation

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0091

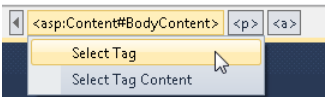
According to the documentation, “the tag navigator is a representation of the element that is currently selected in the document, along with the hierarchy of parent tags to which it belongs.”

For more detailed information, see the topic “HTML Editor Tag Navigation in Visual Web Developer” at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/b53y76zk.aspx>.

The tag navigator is particularly useful for working with deeply nested structures such as tables within tables. You can use the tag navigator to determine which element in the document has the focus.



In addition, you can use the tag navigator to move from the current element to an element that is located higher in the current hierarchy:

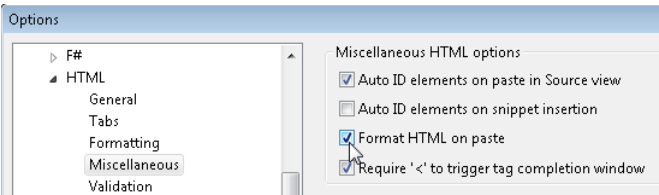


Note The tag navigator does not display all of the elements in the current document. Instead, it shows the path from the current element to the outermost parent. For information about how to see all of the elements in the document, see vstipTool0116 (“Document Outline: Web Projects,” page 251).

06.50 Format HTML on Paste

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor HTML Miscellaneous
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0092

If you find yourself copying and pasting unformatted HTML a lot, this tip is for you. Just go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | Miscellaneous, and select Format HTML On Paste.



From now on, when you paste it, your HTML is formatted according to the rules set up in Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | Formatting.

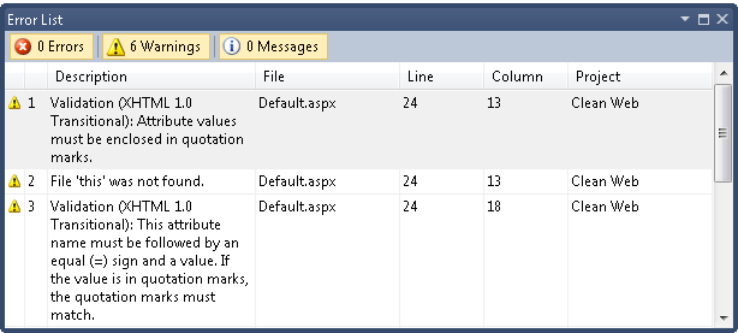
06.51 Display HTML/CSS Warnings as Errors

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor HTML Validation
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0084

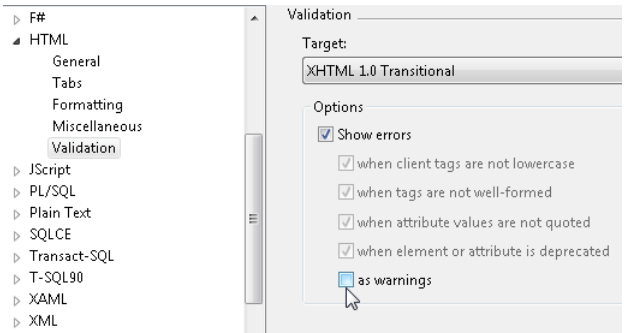
Normally, HTML and CSS syntax problems show up as warnings (green squiggles):

```
<a href=this is cool.aspx></a>
```

These syntax problems also show up as warnings in the Error List window:



This means that you can build and run the application if you choose to ignore the warnings. Or you can have them show up as errors instead, by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | Validation and clearing the As Warnings check box.



Now the green squiggles will be red:

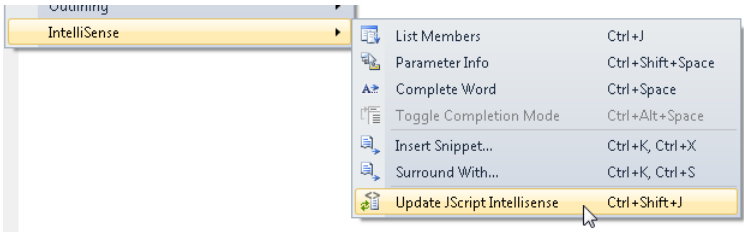
```
<a href=this is cool.aspx></a>
```

The previous warnings now show up as errors in the Error List window and you are notified when you try to build that a problem exists.

06.52 Updating JScript IntelliSense

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+J
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, J
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Update JScript IntelliSense
COMMAND	Edit.UpdateJScriptIntellisense
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0086

If you find that your IntelliSense isn't showing for JScript items you recently put in, you can update the JScript IntelliSense by going to Edit | IntelliSense | Update JScript IntelliSense or pressing Ctrl+Shift+J.



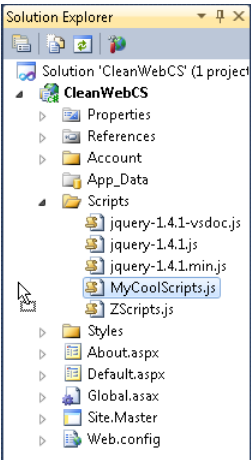
It goes by quickly, but you might see the "Updating JScript IntelliSense" message in the Status Bar at the lower-left corner of your screen.

When it is done, you should be able to see the newly added items.

06.53 Using JScript Libraries in Other JScript Files

VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0025

When you want to use your own custom JScript library, it's a very straightforward process. You just click and drag the file from Solution Explorer into your web page.



Then start using the library:

```
<script src="Scripts/MyCoolScripts.js" type="text/javascript">
  dosom|
</script>
```

An IntelliSense dropdown menu is shown below the code. It lists various DOM and utility methods. The method 'DoSomething' is highlighted in yellow, indicating it is the selected suggestion for the 'dosom' prefix. Other visible items include 'defaultStatus', 'delete', 'do', 'document', 'dw', 'else', 'encodeURIComponent', and 'encodeURIComponentComponent'.

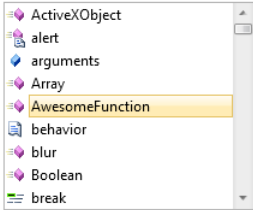
But what if you want to use the library in another JScript file? No problem. To have one file used by another, just click and drag the file name from the resource file into the consuming file.

When you do, it makes a reference automatically:

```
MyCoolScripts.js* x Default.aspx* Start Page
/// <reference path="ZScripts.js" />
```

And you can start using it right away with IntelliSense now aware of the resource contents:

```
function DoSomething() {
    awe
}
```

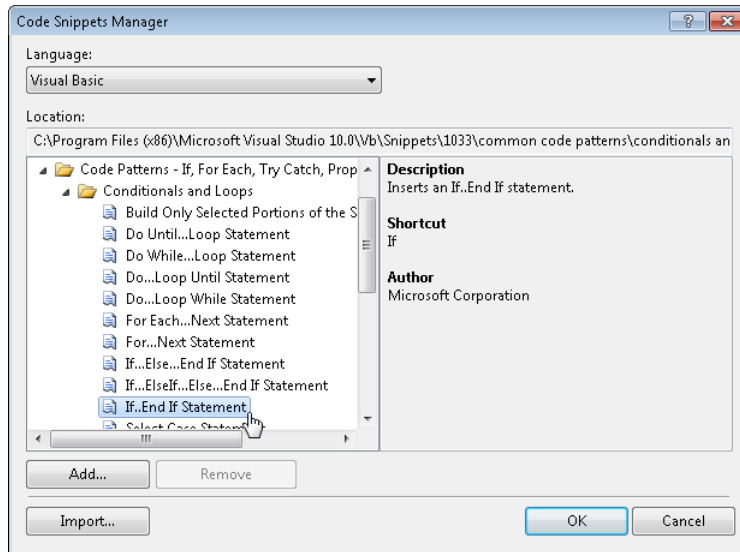


06.54 Create New Code Snippets from Existing Ones

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
WINDOWS	Alt,T, T
MENU	Tools Code Snippets Manager
COMMAND	Tools.CodeSnippetsManager
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0016

When you use snippets, you often need to change the default values. Naturally, you can modify the values after the snippet is used. But what if you want to permanently change the value and make a new snippet out of it?

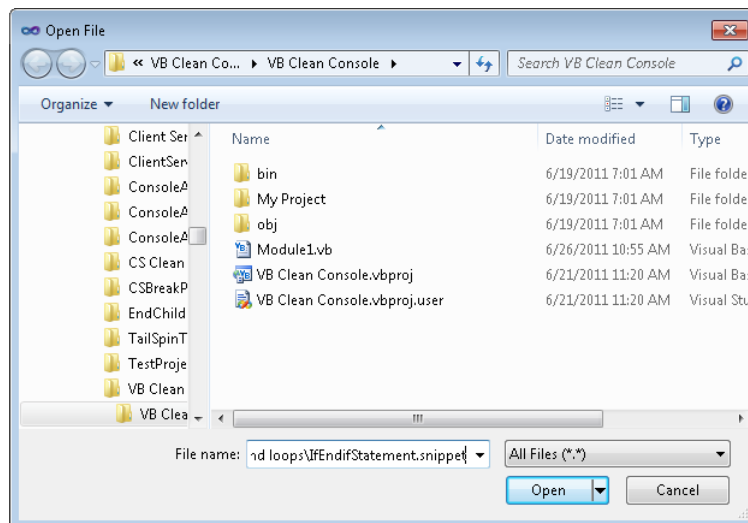
First, figure out which snippet you want to modify by finding it in the Code Snippets Manager (see vstipTool0015, "Using the Code Snippets Manager," in Appendix B [<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>]). In this case, let's modify the If..End If snippet for Visual Basic.



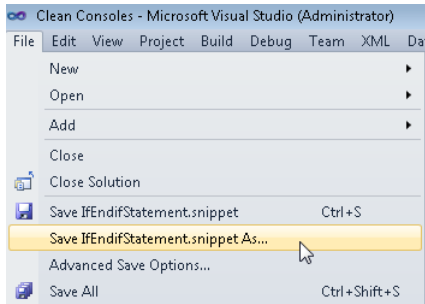
What you are after is the location of the snippet. See the path under Location in the following illustration. Select the path in the dialog box and Copy it (Ctrl+C).



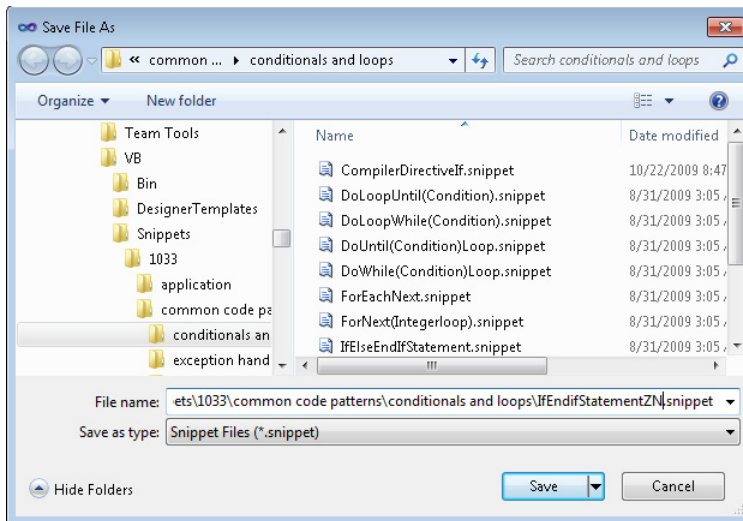
Now, go to File | Open | File, paste in the file path, and click Open.



This next part is really just to make sure we don't modify the original snippet. As you gain more experience doing modifications, you might choose to change the original, but for now, you want to make sure you can keep your existing set of snippets intact. Go to File | Save IfEndIfStatement.snippet As:



Now just save the file with the original file name and your initials appended to the end.



You are ready to modify the snippet. Start with the header information:

```
<Header>
<Title>If..End If Statement</Title>
<Author>Microsoft Corporation</Author>
<Description>Inserts an If..End If statement.</Description>
<Shortcut>If</Shortcut>
</Header>
```

For now, just change the Title and Shortcut to include your initials:

```
<Title>If..End If Statement (ZN)</Title>
```

```
<Shortcut>Ifzn</Shortcut>
```



Note The key here is the shortcut name. It is the name you will use most often to invoke this snippet so make it something that makes sense.

Because you are here to change the default value as well, locate the Default tag:

```
<Declarations>
  <Literal>
    <ID>Condition</ID>
    <Type>Boolean</Type>
    <ToolTip>Replace with an
    <Default>True</Default>
  </Literal>
</Declarations>
```

Change "True" to "False," and then save the file and close it.

You are ready to use your new snippet. Go into your code, type in your new snippet shortcut, and press Tab (once or twice, both work the same).

```
Sub Main()
    ifzn|
End Sub
```

And you get the following result:

```
Sub Main()
    If False Then
End If

End Sub
```

You now have a new snippet you can use. You can verify this by going back into the Code Snippets Manager (Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B) and finding your snippet in the list.

06.55 Understanding the Navigation Stack

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+8 (back); Ctrl+Shift+7 (forward)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut] (back); Ctrl+Shift+7 (forward)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+8 (back); Ctrl+Shift+7 (forward)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+8 (back); Ctrl+Num * (back); Ctrl+Shift+7 (forward)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Num * (back); Ctrl+Shift+7 (forward)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+8 (back); Ctrl+Shift+7 (forward)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	View.PopBrowseContext; View.ForwardBrowseContext
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++, C#
CODE	vstipEdit0078

Did you know that a dedicated stack is available to you, just for going to definitions? Let's look at a couple of examples.

Suppose you are looking at a method call, as shown in the following illustration.

```
Re(3.145 * jLocal);  
Doh();
```

You can press F12 to go to its definition:

```
public void Doh()  
{  
    Console.WriteLine("Hit da Doh!");  
}
```

How do you go back? Just press Ctrl+Shift+8, and it takes you back:

```
Re(3.145 * jLocal);  
Doh();
```

Pressing Ctrl+Shift+7 moves you to the definition again.

```
public void Doh()  
{  
    Console.WriteLine("Hit da Doh!");  
}
```

So what's going on? Well, every time you go to a definition it keeps track of where you come from. This works every time you go to definition so that you can always find your way back. The following illustrations show another example.

```
Mi("A me so la ti do");  
AddStuff(5, 3);
```

Press F12 (go to definition):

```
public int AddStuff(int a, int b)  
{  
    a += GetNumber();  
    return a + b;  
}
```

From here, you could press Ctrl+Shift+8 to go back. But what if you want to keep digging into definitions? In this example, let's say you've clicked in the GetNumber method:

```
public int AddStuff(int a, int b)  
{  
    a += GetNumber();  
    return a + b;  
}
```

Now press F12:

```
public int GetNumber()  
{  
    return 5;  
}
```

Now, if you want to go back, press Ctrl+Shift+8:

```
public int AddStuff(int a, int b)  
{  
    a += GetNumber();  
    return a + b;  
}
```

Then press Ctrl+Shift+8 again:

```
Mi("A me so la ti do");  
AddStuff(5, 3);
```

06.56 Navigate Backward and Navigate Forward Using Go Back Markers

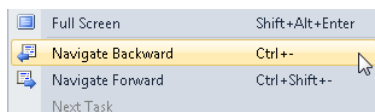
DEFAULT	Ctrl+- (back); Ctrl+Shift+- (forward)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+- (back); Ctrl+Shift+F2 (back); Ctrl+Shift+- (forward)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+- (back); Ctrl+Shift+- (forward)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+- (back); Ctrl+Shift+- (forward)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+- (back); Ctrl+Shift+- (forward)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+- (back); Ctrl+Shift+- (forward)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, B (back); Alt,V, F (forward)
MENU	View Navigate Backward; View Navigate Forward
COMMAND	View.NavigateBackward; View.NavigateForward
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0024

If you move in a single command more than several lines away from where you are currently working or if you edit in a particular location that is not adjacent to the last place you edited, the editor remembers locations. It does this by creating Go Back markers based on specific conditions. The goal is to remember interesting locations so that you can recall where you have been working without remembering so many locations that the feature is not useful (such as every character typed, or every line entering several new lines of code one right after the other).

A Go Back marker is dropped under the following conditions:

- An incremental search (including reverse) leaves a Go Back marker at the beginning of the search and another one at the end.
- A Go To Line action, like Ctrl+G, or a mouse-click that moves the cursor 11 lines or more from the current position drops a Go Back marker at the new location.
- A destructive action (like pressing backspace) after having moved the cursor to a new location drops a Go Back marker.
- Doing a search, like Ctrl+F, drops a Go Back marker at the found location.
- Opening a file drops a Go Back marker wherever the cursor was on the old file and drops another on the opened file.

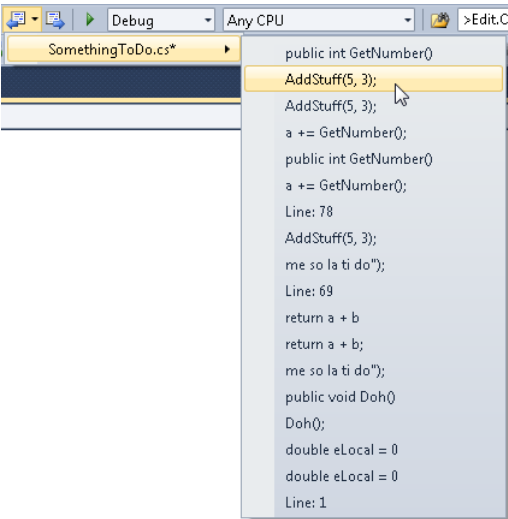
That now brings us to the navigation buttons on the Standard Toolbar (and keyboard shortcuts, too). These gems make travelling around your code much, much easier:



You can use the buttons to quickly navigate among the Go Back markers that have been dropped throughout Visual Studio. To quickly look at the list of places you can go, just click the drop-down arrow for the back button.



Note The navigation buttons in the Standard Toolbar are on the upper-left of the image below.



06.57

Select from the Current Cursor Location to the Last Go Back Marker

DEFAULT	Ctrl+=
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+=
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+=
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+=
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+=
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+=
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.SelectToLastGoBack
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0069

In vstipEdit0024 (“Navigate Backward and Navigate Forward Using Go Back Markers,” on page 277), we defined Go Back markers. In this tip, we look at how they can be useful for selecting text. Let’s say you are writing some code and want to quickly select a chunk of text. In the following illustration, the cursor is at your starting location (line 15).


```
15 Console.WriteLine("Blah");|
16 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
17 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
18 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
19 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
20 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
21 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
22 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
23 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
24 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
25 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
26 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
27 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
28 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
29 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
30 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
31
```

You click on a new location (line 27), which results in a Go Back marker (which you can't see) being placed at the starting location (line 15).

```
15 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
16 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
17 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
18 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
19 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
20 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
21 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
22 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
23 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
24 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
25 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
26 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
27 Console.WriteLine("Blah");|
28 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
29 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
30 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
31
```

Now we have the Go Back marker at the beginning of line 15 and the current cursor location at the end of line 27. In this case, you had to jump at least 11 lines to get your Go Back marker. To select from the current cursor location to the last Go Back marker, just press **Ctrl+=** and watch the magic happen.

```
15 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
16 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
17 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
18 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
19 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
20 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
21 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
22 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
23 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
24 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
25 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
26 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
27 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
28 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
29 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
30 Console.WriteLine("Blah");
31
```

06.58 Track Changes in the Editor

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0048

To use this feature, you need to go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | General and have Track Changes and Selection Margin checked.

Ever wonder how the colored lines to the left of your code (by the line numbers) actually work?

Let’s begin with a clean slate.

```
11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13
14 |
15
16
17 }
```

Let’s add a couple of lines of code, and now we see two vertical yellow (you’ll have to trust me on the colors) lines to the left of lines 14 and 15:

```
11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13
14 Console.WriteLine("blah");
15 Console.WriteLine("blah");
16
17 }
```

All new code will have a yellow line to show you what part of the document is unsaved. If we save the code, the yellow lines turn green to indicate code that has been saved.

The saved indicator remains as long as you have the file open. When you close and reopen the file, the line goes away:

```
11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13
14 Console.WriteLine("blah");
15 Console.WriteLine("blah");
16
17 }
```

In Visual Studio 2010, an orange indicator shows a change that is different from the saved version. This was added for the scenario where a user does an undo after saving the changes.

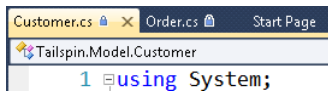
You can use the following grid to help keep the colors straight.

MARKER	DIFFERENT FROM FILE SAVED ON DISK?	DIFFERENT FROM FILE THAT WAS OPENED?
Nothing	No	No
Yellow	Yes	Yes
Green	No	Yes
Orange	Yes	No

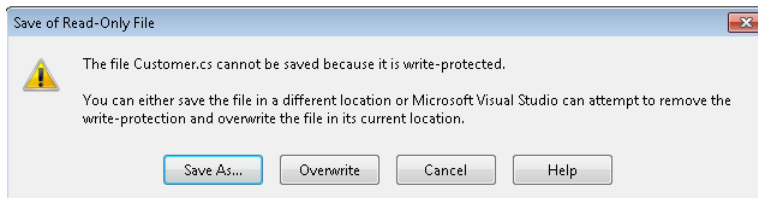
06.59 Edit Read-Only Files

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Documents
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0074

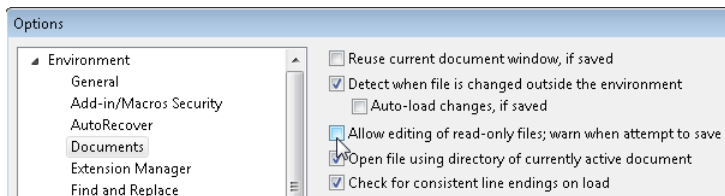
When you open a read-only document, you get an indicator that looks like a tiny lock on the file tab:



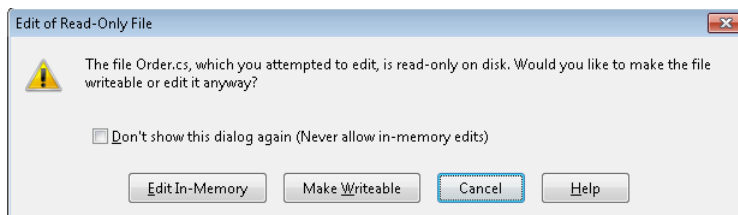
If you make changes and try to save them, you are (by default) met with the Save Of Read-Only File dialog box.



At this point, you can save your changes as another copy of the file, overwrite the existing file, or cancel. If you don't like these options, you can turn this feature off by going to Tools | Options | Environment | Documents and clear the Allow Editing Of Read-Only Files; Warn When Attempt To Save check box.



Now if you attempt to make any changes to a read-only file, you see the Edit of Read-Only File dialog box.



Edit In-Memory

Allows you to make edits and then display the Save Of Read-Only File dialog box when you save changes.

Make Writable

If possible, turns off the read-only attribute of the file so that it can be edited.

06.60 Choosing CSS Versions

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor HTML Validation (HTML Schema)
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010, 2010 SP1
CODE	vstipEdit0093

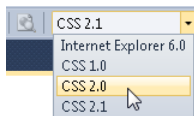
When working with Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), you often find yourself working with specific versions. In this tip, we look at how to set your CSS version for dedicated and embedded styles.



Note Visual Studio 2010 Service Pack 1 added limited support for HTML5 and CSS3. For more information, see <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/zainnab/archive/2011/04/12/vs2010-sp1-new-features-html-5-and-css-3-support.aspx>.

Dedicated Style Sheets

When you create a CSS file in Visual Studio, you can choose the version you want by selecting it from the Cascading Style Sheet Version For Validation drop-down list on the Style Sheet Toolbar:

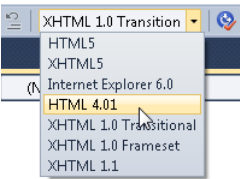


Note CSS3 doesn't show up in this list even after you install Visual Studio 2010 Service Pack 1.

Embedded Styles

It is recommended that you use dedicated style sheets; however, you might find that you want to embed styles in your HTML source.

When you do this, it might not be clear how you select the CSS version. Most people think it is the same as the version chosen for dedicated CSS files. This is not the case. It’s bound to the choice you make in the Target Schema For Validation drop-down list located on the HTML Source Editing Toolbar or at Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | Validation (HTML Schema).



The following table shows how the CSS version relates to the choices.

HTML SCHEMA	CSS SCHEMA
Internet Explorer 6.0	Internet Explorer 6.0
HTML 4.01	CSS 1.0
XHTML 1.0 Transitional	CSS 2.0
XHTML 1.0 Frameset	CSS 2.0
XHTML 1.1	CSS 2.1
HTML5 (limited)	CSS 3.0 (limited)
XHTML5 (limited)	CSS 3.0 (limited)

Finally

You have many good reasons to use dedicated style sheets, but if you do find yourself doing embedded CSS, make sure you understand which schema you are using based on your HTML schema choices.

06.61 Understanding Tag Specific Options

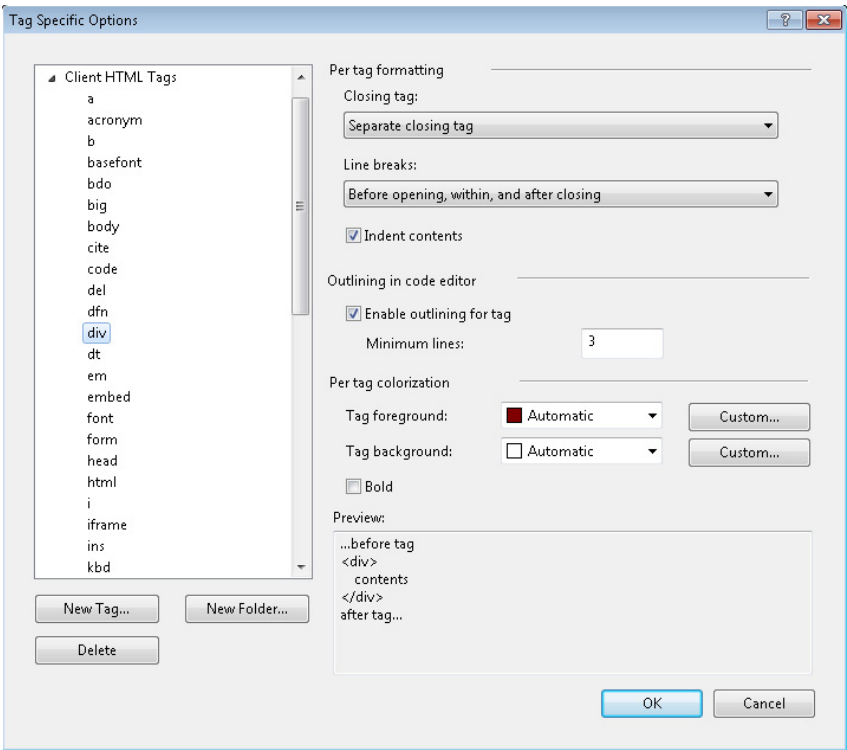
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor HTML Formatting
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0090

In vstipEdit0089 (“Format the Current Document or Selection HTML Designer,” on page 265), I showed you how to use selection formatting on a sample.

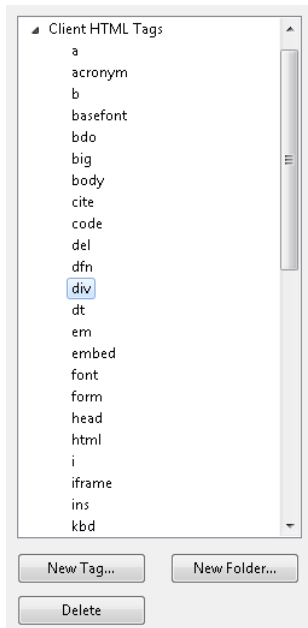
Let’s say you don’t like the way <DIV> tags are formatted. You can go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | Formatting and click the Tag Specific Options button.

Exploring the Tag Specific Options Dialog Box

This dialog box is somewhat complicated, so let’s go though it one area at a time. For reference, the following illustration provides a bird’s eye view to help us stay oriented as we go along.



Tree view



Allows you to select either the individual tag to format or a class of tags. By default, the tree contains the following nodes:

Default Settings

Expand this node to set default formatting options for a complete class of tags, such as all server tags that support contents.

Client HTML Tags

Expand this node to set custom formatting options for HTML elements.

ASP.NET Controls

Expand this node to set custom formatting options for ASP.NET server controls.

New Tag

Use to define new tags that aren't already listed.

New Folder

Create a new node on the tree for organizing custom tags.

Delete

Delete a tag or folder.



Note In the following examples, our working reference is the <DIV> tag from the Client HTML Tags section of the Tag Specific Actions dialog box.

Per tag formatting

Per tag formatting

Closing tag:
Separate closing tag

Line breaks:
Before opening, within, and after closing

☒ Indent contents

Per tag formatting works on a model with default settings for each tag. These settings provide the base rules by which the tag is formatted. The four categories of tags are as follows:

- Client tags that do not support contents, such as

- Client tags that support contents, such as <TABLE> or <H1>
- Server tags that do not support contents, such as asp:CheckBox
- Server tags that support contents, such as asp:Repeater

For each tag, the values from the appropriate category in the preceding list are used, unless an override is specified for that tag. By default, some overrides are supplied based on the common usage of the tags.

Closing tag

Indicates how the closing tag should look when automatically created.

Per tag formatting

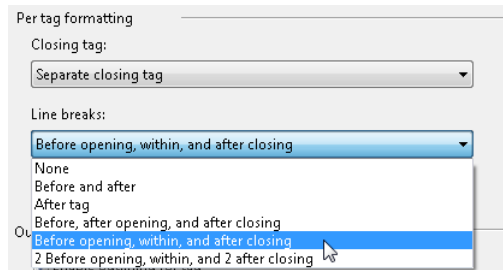
Closing tag:
Separate closing tag
No closing tag
Self-closing tag
Separate closing tag

Line breaks:
Before opening, within, and after closing

☒ Indent contents

Line breaks

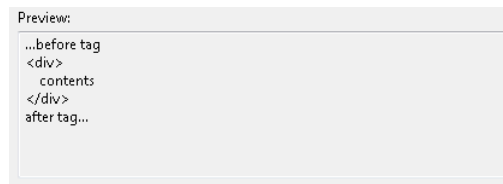
Directs the formatting to place line breaks as specific points in the entire element.



Indent contents

Indents the contents for the element, if appropriate.

Preview



The absolute *best* way to see how the per-tag formatting is going to look is to use the Preview area (bottom of the dialog box). It updates based on your choices so that you can make informed decisions on the formatting. Unfortunately it does not show color choices (described later).

Outlining in code editor



Enable outlining for tag

When outlining is enabled, the editor monitors the number of lines in the element and then applies outlining to the tag when the element exceeds the specified line threshold. (The editor does not automatically collapse the tag.) This feature is useful for collapsing long elements, such as large tables.

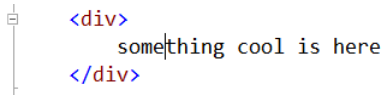


Note If outlining doesn't show up as expected try closing and re-opening the file to make it appear.

Minimum lines

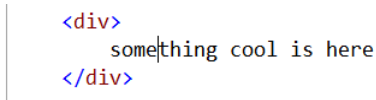
Number of lines before outlining is enabled for the element.

Example: The `<DIV>` has outlining enabled and minimum lines set to three. For three lines or more in an element, outlining, the minus sign to the left of the opening tag, is enabled for that element:



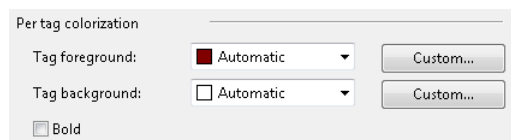
```
<div>  
    something cool is here  
</div>
```

Notice the outlining (the minus sign to the left of the opening `<DIV>` tag, shown in the preceding illustration) that has kicked in because we have the minimum number of lines. In this example, if the minimum lines are changed to five, outlining is not enabled and no minus sign appears:



```
<div>  
    something cool is here  
</div>
```

Per tag colorization



Tag foreground

The color of the text for the tags.

Tag background

The color of the text background.

Bold

Makes the tags bold.

Finally

You can see that there is much to learn about tag-specific options. Take your time as you explore the possibilities in the Tag Specific Options dialog box.

Chapter 7

Debugging

"It has been just so in all my inventions. The first step is an intuition—and comes with a burst, then difficulties arise. This thing that gives out and then that—'Bugs' as such little faults and difficulties are called show themselves and months of anxious watching, study and labor are requisite before commercial success—or failure—is certainly reached."

—Thomas Alva Edison
Letter to Theodore Puskas (18 Nov 1878)

As a developer, you spend a great deal of time debugging. Visual Studio has long provided great tools for helping find errors in your code. This chapter focuses on showing how to take full advantage of common items like the Locals and Autos windows as well as exploring more advanced techniques such as setting tracepoints in the Call Stack window.

Additionally, lots of great new features in Visual Studio 2010 can help with your troubleshooting efforts. Major changes have been made to the Breakpoints window, and new DataTips are available to provide information when and where you need it. There is no shortage of great techniques to cut down the time you spend finding problems in your code.

07.01 Setting a Breakpoint with Code

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0036

Sometimes you want to have clear breakpoints in your code that travel with the source. You can do this quite easily.

Compiler Directive

In C# and VB, you need to set a compiler option that hits the breakpoint only when debugging. If you don't, your release code continues to hit the code-based breakpoint, which is generally considered a bad thing. To do this, you set the #If DEBUG compiler option, as you can see in each of the following code samples.

C#

In C#, you set a breakpoint by using the `System.Diagnostics.Debugger.Break` method:

```
#if DEBUG
    System.Diagnostics.Debugger.Break();
#endif
```

VB

In VB, you set a breakpoint by using the `Stop` command:

```
#If DEBUG Then
    Stop
#End If
```

Now you can use code to set breakpoints. Just as an aside, breakpoints set in this way do not show up in the Breakpoints window.

C++

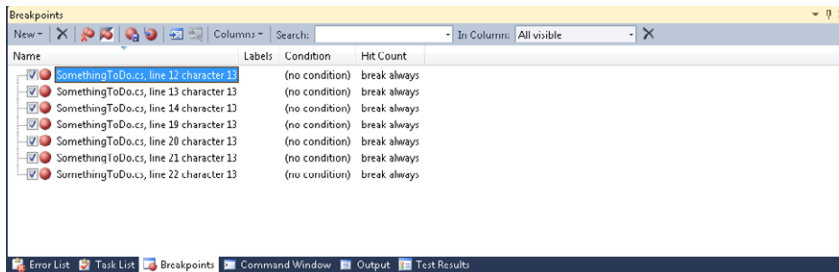
In C++, it's a very similar situation. Based on the type of C++ project you are creating, these commands can change slightly; but with native C++, you can use the `__debugbreak` command with the `#if _DEBUG` compiler option:

```
#if _DEBUG
    __debugbreak;
#endif
```

07.02 Using Ctrl+Alt+B to Open the Breakpoints Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+B
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+B
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+B; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+B; Ctrl+D, B
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+B; Ctrl+B
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; Alt+F9
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+B
WINDOWS	Alt, D, W, B
MENU	Debug Windows Breakpoints
COMMAND	Debug.Breakpoints
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0011

Use Ctrl+Alt+B to open the Breakpoints window or, if it is already open, to give it the focus.



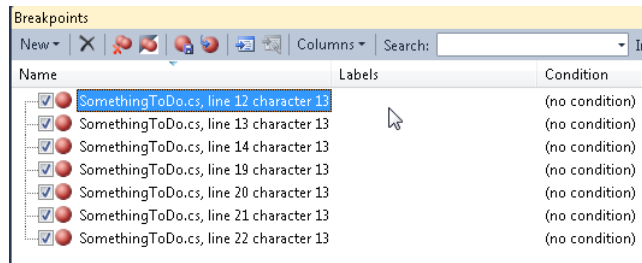
07.03 Adding Labels to Breakpoints

DEFAULT	Alt+F9, L
VISUAL BASIC 6	Alt+F9, L
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+F9, L
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+F9, L
VISUAL C++ 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+F9, L
WINDOWS	Shift+F10, A (inside Breakpoints Window)
MENU	[Context Menu] Edit Labels
COMMAND	EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.Breakpoint.BreakpointEditlabels
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0001

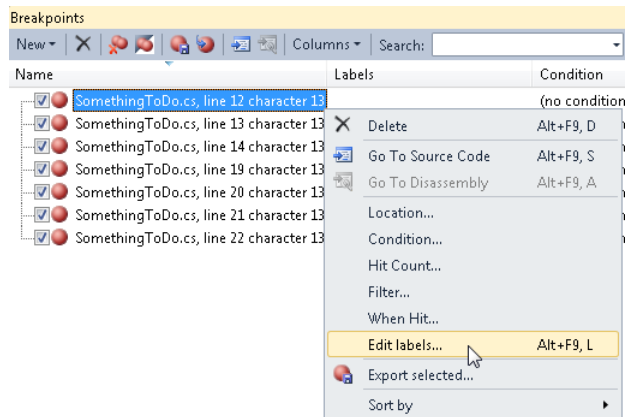
Did you know that breakpoints in Visual Studio 2010 support labels? This tip explains how you can use them. How do labels help you? Well, first, you can now have friendly names for breakpoints to make them easier to understand. Second, you can sort by the label names.

And, third, you can search the labels from the Breakpoints window. (See `vstipDebug0002`, “Searching Breakpoints,” on page 312.)

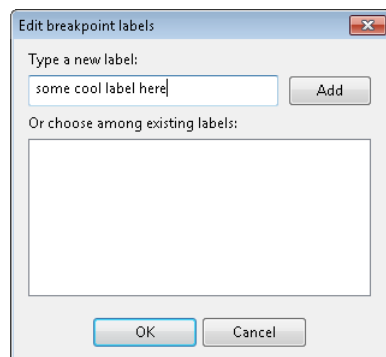
After setting one or more breakpoints in your code, open the Breakpoint window (`Ctrl+Alt+B`). Notice the new Labels column:



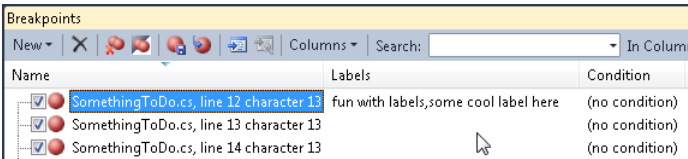
Right-click one or more selected breakpoints to bring up the context menu, and choose Edit Labels (`Alt+F9, L`):



You get the following dialog box:



You can type in one (or more) labels for the breakpoint and/or select one of the labels previously used, and then click OK. You should see now your label(s):



07.04 Enable or Disable All Breakpoints

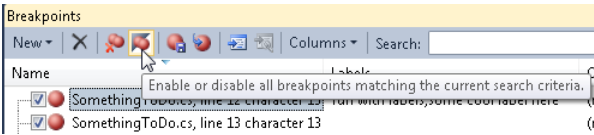
WINDOWS	Alt,D, N
MENU	Debug Disable All Breakpoints; Debug Enable All Breakpoints
COMMAND	Debug.DisableAllBreakpoints; Debug.EnableAllBreakpoints
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0018

There are times when you will want to quickly and temporarily turn off all or some of your breakpoints. This tip covers how to disable and enable your breakpoints.

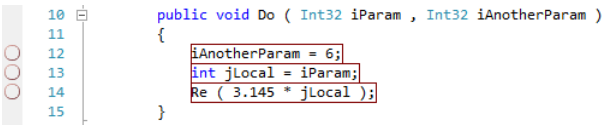
You can go to Debug | Disable All Breakpoints on the menu bar, or in the Breakpoints window, you can click the Enable Or Disable All Breakpoints button:



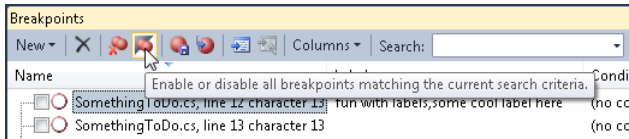
Note In Visual Studio 2010, only the breakpoints currently visible in the window are disabled when you use this option, so it is very useful for enabling or disabling a subset of your breakpoints when used with the Search feature.



The result, in either case, is the same. One or more breakpoints in the current project are disabled:



To enable them again, just go to Debug | Enable All Breakpoints on the menu bar, or click the Enable Or Disable All Breakpoints button in the Breakpoints window again:



07.05 TODO Comments in the Task List

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0029

Have you ever written some code and want to leave a reminder to yourself to do something? Did you know about the “To Do” comment feature? It is a great feature, and because the comment goes directly in the source, everyone can have access to the information when you check in code.

So here’s how it works.

VB

In VB, you just put any comment in that begins with “todo” (case doesn’t matter):

```
'TODO fix this connection string
```

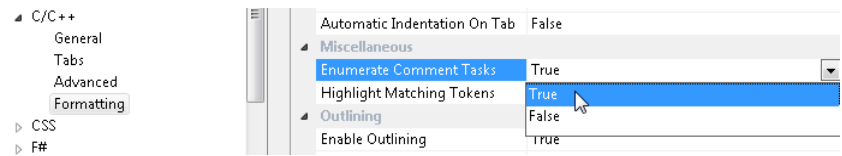
C#

In C#, it’s the same thing (again, case doesn’t matter):

```
//todo fix this connection string
```

C++

The C++ version looks just like C#, but you have to explicitly turn this feature on, and the “TODO” must be all uppercase. Go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | C/C++ | Formatting | Miscellaneous, and change Enumerate Comment Tasks to True:



Whichever language you use, the result is a nice entry in your Task List dialog box:

Task List - 1 task			
Comments			
!	Description	File	Line
	TODO fix this connection string	C++ Clean Console.cpp	9



Note To see these items, you have to click the drop-down list in the Task List dialog box and choose Comments, as shown in the preceding illustration.

Like all Task List items, comments are Solution-wide in scope, so you will see all the shortcuts for the entire solution in the Task List window.

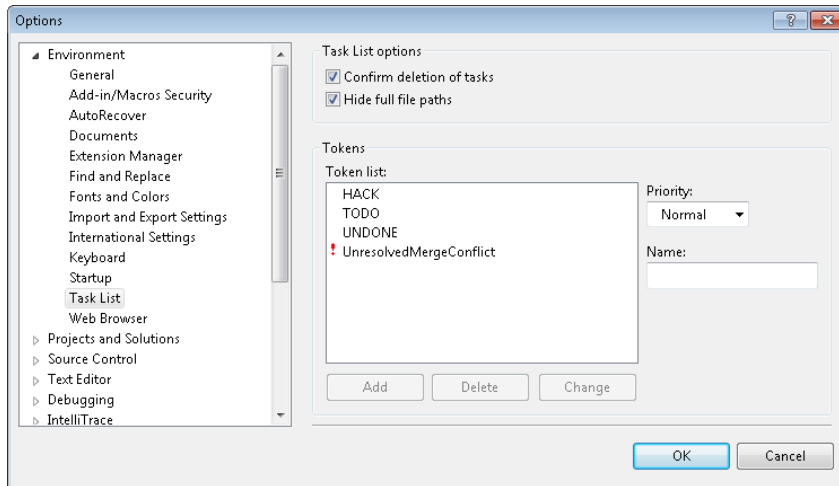
07.06 Create Custom Tokens for the Task List

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0032

In vstipTool0029 (“TODO Comments in the Task List,” page 296), I showed you how to create comments that show up in the Task List:

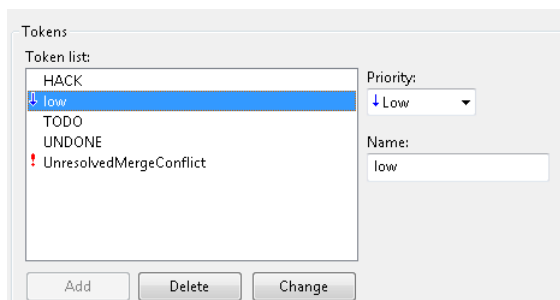
//todo fix this connection string			
Task List - 1 task			
Comments			
!	Description	File	
	todo fix this connection string	Program.cs	

The “TODO” part is known as a token. It’s a trigger to indicate that an item should be put in the Task List. Did you know you can create your own custom tokens? Go to Tools | Options | Environment | Task List | Tokens to see the following window:

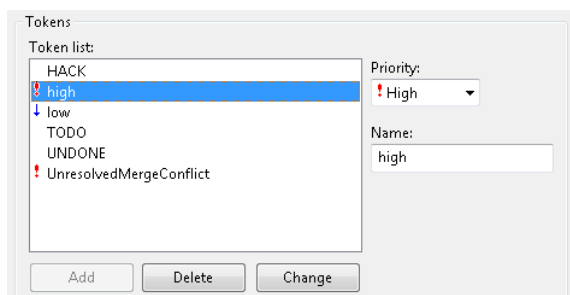


As shown in the preceding illustration, notice the following entries in this area: HACK, TODO, UNDONE, and UnresolvedMergeConflict. By the way, UnresolvedMergeConflict is not an error; it is an actual token that you can use.

For now, let's create a couple of our own. In the Name text box, type in the word **low**, set the priority to Low, and then click Add. You should see the following:



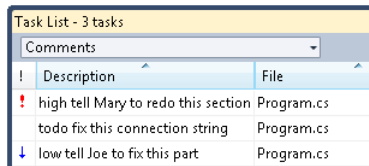
Now do the same thing again, this time using the word **high** and setting the priority to High:



You now have a couple of custom tokens. Add two comments to your existing code, and use the new “low” and “high” tokens:

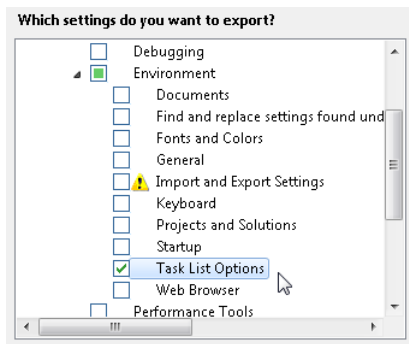
```
//todo fix this connection string
//low tell Joe to fix this part
//high tell Mary to redo this section
```

You now see the following in the Task List:



Sharing Tokens

You can create as many tokens as you want to suit your needs, so feel free to experiment with these. Unfortunately, the tokens aren’t shared unless you export them and then someone else imports them. Go to Tools | Import And Export Settings, and export the Task List Options found under All Settings, Options, Environment:



07.07 Create Code Shortcuts in the Task List

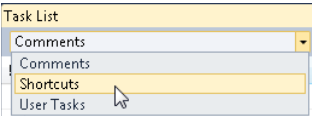
DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+H
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+H
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+H; Ctrl+E, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+E, T
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+H
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+H
WINDOWS	Alt,E, K, H
MENU	Edit Bookmarks Add Task List Shortcut
COMMAND	Command Edit.ToggleTaskListShortcut
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0030

In vstipTool0029 (“TODO Comments in the Task List,” page 296), I showed you how to create comments that show up in your Task List window. However, sometimes all you want is a shortcut to a line of code that you visit often. You can create shortcuts to any line of code. Just place the cursor on the line, and press Ctrl+K, Ctrl+H (toggles the shortcut on or off). This creates the shortcut glyph in the margin:

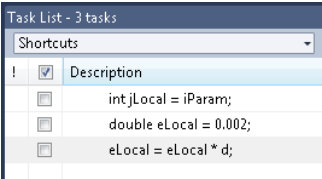
12
13
14

iAnotherParam = 6;
int jLocal = iParam;
Re (3.145 * jLocal);

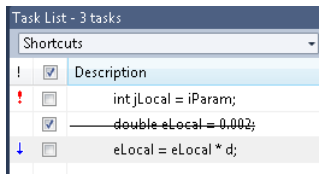
To see all your shortcuts, go to the Task List dialog (Ctrl+\, T), and choose Shortcuts from the drop-down list:



Now you should see all the shortcuts you created:



You can treat them like any other task, and you can set priority levels as well as mark them complete:



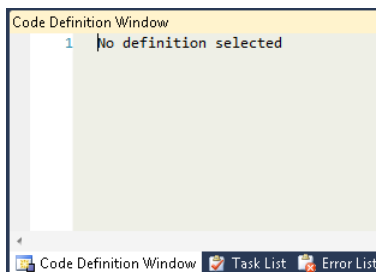
You can double-click any item to go to the line of code referenced in the shortcut, right-click, and then choose Delete to remove it from the list.

Like all Task List items, these are Solution-wide in scope, so you will see all the shortcuts for the entire solution in the Task List window.

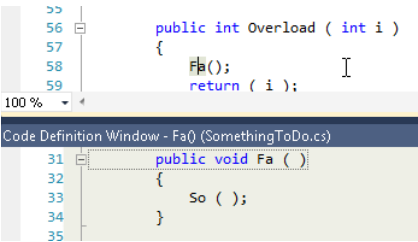
07.08 Code Definition Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+D; Ctrl+\\, D
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+D; Ctrl+\\, D
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+D; Ctrl+\\, D; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+D; Ctrl+W, D
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+D; Ctrl+\\, D
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+D; Ctrl+\\, D; Ctrl+Shift+V
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+D; Ctrl+\\, D
WINDOWS	Alt,V, D
MENU	View Code Definition Window
COMMAND	View.CodeDefinitionWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++, C#
CODE	vstipTool0012

Ever want to just click on a reference and see the definition as you go without having to use Go To Definition (F12)? For quite some time, the Code Definition window has been available to use just for this purpose. Go to View | Code Definition Window, and you see the following:



Now click on any symbol you would like to get a definition for, and you should get something like this:



The Code Definition window provides you with an instant, read-only view of your definition so that you don't have to look for it when you are looking at a symbol.

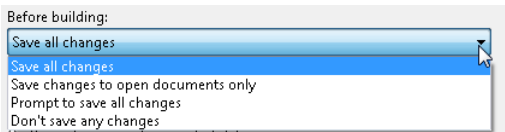
07.09 Save Changes Before Building

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects and Solutions Build and Run
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0015

In Tools | Options | Projects and Solutions | Build And Run, notice the Before Building option:



The default setting is to save all changes to the solution file and to save all project files that changed since the last build, but other options are also available:

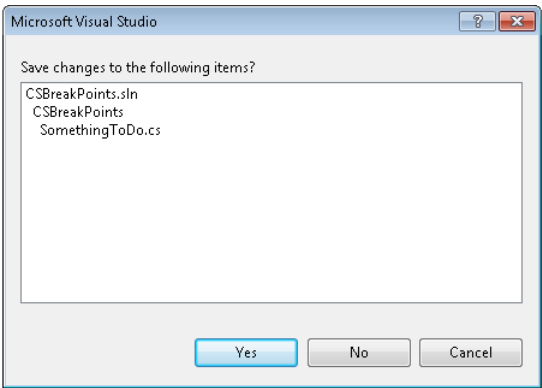


Save Changes To Open Documents Only

This option does what it says and saves changes to all open documents without any prompt.

Prompt To Save All Changes

This option prompts you with a choice about saving changes:



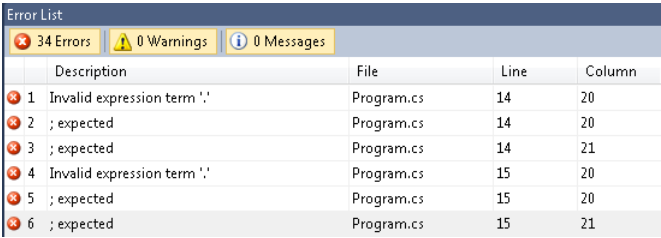
Don't Save Any Changes

This runs the code but does not save any of the changes you have made. Usually this is not a good idea, but it might be useful in some situations where you are testing many different code scenarios quickly.

07.10 Navigate Errors in the Error List

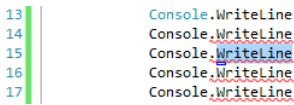
DEFAULT	F8 (next); Shift+F8 (previous)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	F8 (next); Shift+F8 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	F4 (next); Shift+F4 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 6	F8 (next); F4 (next)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F8 (next); F12 (next); Shift+F8 (previous); Shift+F12 (previous)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.GoToNextLocation; Edit.GoToPrevLocation
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0019

When checking out errors in the Errors window, you can easily navigate to the next error by pressing F8 or to the previous error by pressing Shift+F8. These actions rotate through all the errors in the direction of choice:



	Description	File	Line	Column
1	Invalid expression term ''	Program.cs	14	20
2	; expected	Program.cs	14	20
3	; expected	Program.cs	14	21
4	Invalid expression term ''	Program.cs	15	20
5	; expected	Program.cs	15	20
6	; expected	Program.cs	15	21

Additionally, as you cycle through, the location of each error in your code is selected:



```
13 Console.WriteLine
14 Console.WriteLine
15 Console.WriteLine
16 Console.WriteLine
17 Console.WriteLine
```

07.11

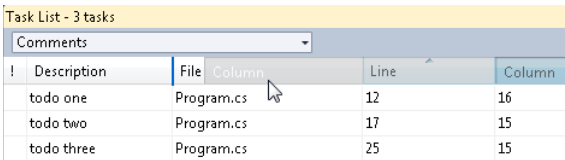
Ordering and Multicolumn Sorting in Tool Windows

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0021

When working with the various tool windows, you often need the ability to rearrange the information in different ways. With column ordering and column sorting, you have this ability.

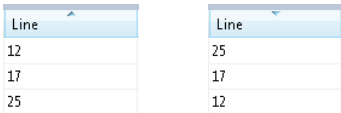
Column Ordering

This technique can be used in a variety of tool windows, most notably the Task List window. Let’s begin with reordering the columns. In tool windows where this is supported, you can drag the columns around to put them in the order you want:



! Description	File	Column	Line	Column
todo one	Program.cs		12	16
todo two	Program.cs		17	15
todo three	Program.cs		25	15

Additionally, you can sort by clicking on a column to make it sort ascending or descending, as shown in the following illustrations:



Line
12
17
25

Line
25
17
12

Multicolumn Sorting

But the best part is that you can have multicolumn sorting. So you can sort first by one column:

!	Description	Column	File
	todo one	16	Program.cs

Then just press Shift, and click on the next column you would like to sort by:

!	Description	Column	File
	todo one	16	Program.cs

If you want, you can continue to hold Shift and sort by more columns:

!	Description	Column	File
	todo one	16	Program.cs

07.12 Pin a DataTip to Source Code

COMMAND	EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.PinToSource
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0005

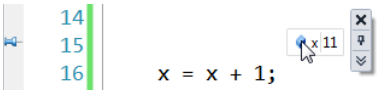
In Visual Studio 2010, you can now pin DataTips to source code. The purpose of pinned DataTips is to have the information stay with the line of code at all times, even after you scroll away from that line. To create one, just put your mouse pointer over any variable while debugging:

```
x = x + 1;
```

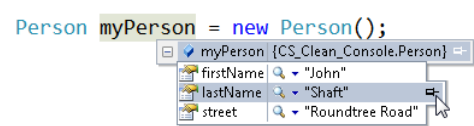
Notice the little pin at the end of the DataTip shown in the preceding illustration? If you click the pin, you have a pinned DataTip. The most obvious indicator of this is the pushpin that now shows up in the far left margin:

```
15
16 x = x + 1;
17
```

It is now, quite literally, pinned to a certain line of code. If you click the DataTip and drag it, you can change the line that the DataTip is pinned to:



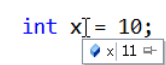
You can also drill down into objects and pin properties as well:



07.13 Create a Floating DataTip

VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0006

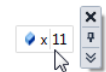
Floating DataTips are great for having information available where you want it. This tip shows how you use them. First, enter Break Mode, and pause your mouse pointer over a variable in the current scope; you should see something like the following:



Click the pin to create a pinned DataTip (see vstipDebug0005, “Pin a DataTip to Source Code,” on page 305). Now, to make it a floating tip, put your mouse over the pinned tip until you see the control panel shown in the following illustration.



Note The control panel might not come up exactly where the pinned tip is, so you might have to look around a bit to find it.



For this tip, our focus is on the pin in the middle:



Click it, and you should get a floating DataTip. (Notice the yellow color for floating DataTips.)



OK, so why should you care? Well, unlike pinned DataTips, floating DataTips don't follow the source code as you step through it. This is useful if you want to step through code and have one or more pieces of information. The control panel might not come up exactly where the pinned tip is, so you might have to look around a bit to find it.



myPerson	{CS_Clean_Console.Person}
myPerson.firstName	~ "John"
myPerson.lastName	~ "Shaft"
myPerson.street	~ "Roundtree Road"

07.14 Adding Comments to a DataTip

VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0007

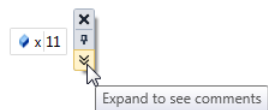
You might want to make a comment to remind yourself about something in a DataTip (pinned or floating), and now you can. First, enter Debug Mode, and then pause your mouse over a pinned (see vstipDebug0005, "Pin a DataTip to Source Code," on page 305) or floating tip (see vstipDebug0006, "Create a Floating DataTip," page 306) until you see the control panel shown in the following illustration.



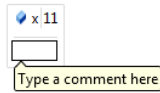
Note The control panel might not come up exactly where the pinned tip is, so you might have to look around a bit to find it.



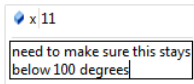
Click the chevron at the bottom:



You should see something like the following illustration on your DataTip:



Now you can put in comments that travel with the DataTip at all times:



At the time of this writing, no upper limit is assigned to the amount of text you can put into this area. I was able to successfully paste the entire text of "War and Peace" in here. While I don't suggest you do the same, the point is that you can be quite verbose with your comments if you need to be.

07.15 Use a DataTip to Edit a Value

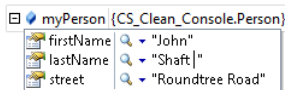
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0026

You can change a variable value on the fly in a variety of ways. One of them is through the DataTip. Just click the value for a simple variable to change it:

```
x = x + 1;
```



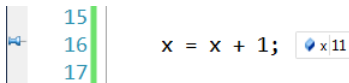
For more complex types, you might need to expand the variables and edit individual items:



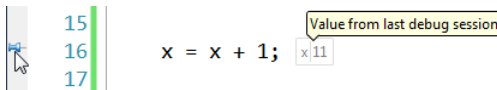
07.16 DataTip Value from the Last Debug Session

VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0012

Ever forget the values of variables you were just debugging? This is one of the coolest features of the DataTips in Visual Studio 2010. Let's assume that you have a pinned DataTip in your code (see vstipDebug0005, "Pin a DataTip to Source Code," on page 305):



Now you stop debugging. Even though you are not debugging, you can still view the value from the last debug session by simply resting your mouse pointer over the pin in the margin:



07.17 Import and Export DataTips

WINDOWS	Alt,D, X,X, Enter; Alt,D, P, P, Enter
MENU	Debug Export DataTips; Debug Import DataTips
COMMAND	Debug.ExportDataTips; Debug.ImportDataTips
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0013

Just as with breakpoints (see vstipDebug0003, "How to Import and Export Breakpoints," on page 329), you now have the ability to share your DataTips with team members by using the Export / Import features. Just go to Debug | Import (or Export) DataTips:

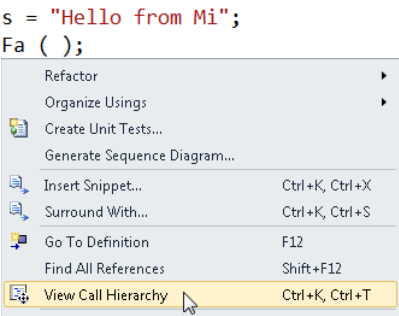


When you export the DataTips, they are exported as XML. You can version these files along with your source code so that other team members can have a copy of your DataTips.

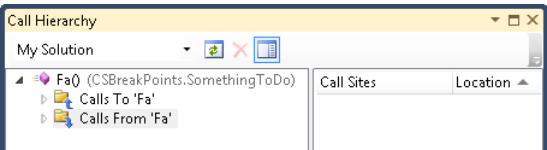
07.18 Using the Call Hierarchy

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+K, T
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
MENU	[Context Menu] View Call Hierarchy
COMMAND	EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.ViewCallHierarchy
VERSIONS	2010
LANGUAGES	C++, C#
CODE	vstipTool0005

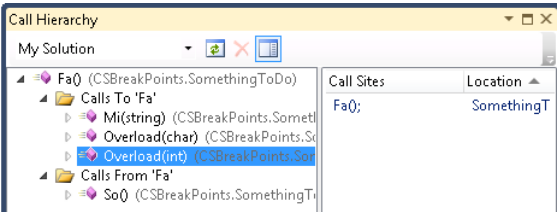
The Call Hierarchy window allows you to visualize calls to and from a selected method, property, or constructor. To see how it works, just right-click any method, property, or constructor in the editor and select View Call Hierarchy:



You should get a window similar to the following:



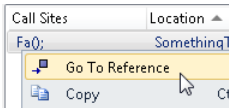
Notice the Calls To and Calls From areas related to your selection. You can expand them:



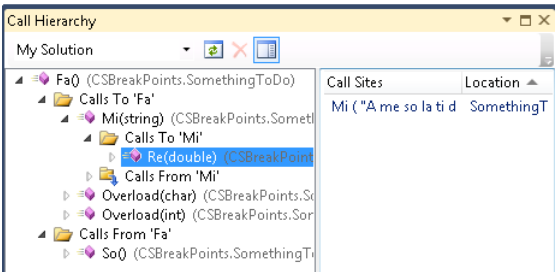
When you click on a node in the tree, the Call Sites pane updates so that you can visit the call if you want to:



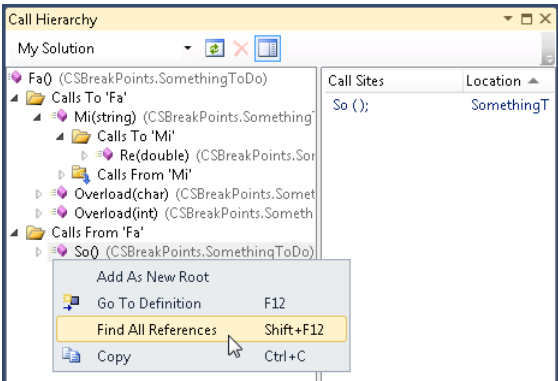
Note You can double-click on the call site to have it automatically take you to the reference.



You can continue expanding the hierarchy to see further Calls To and Calls From information:



The best part is that you can right-click a symbol and get several options:



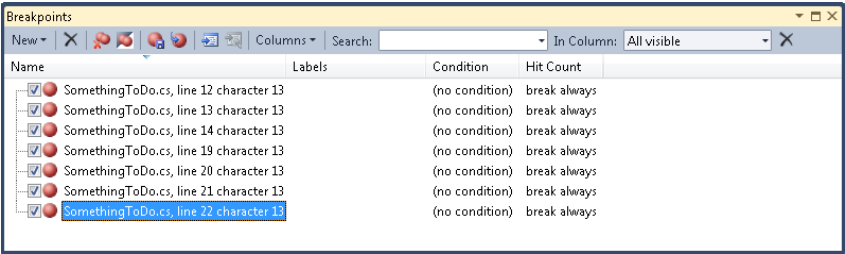
The following table describes some options you will come across as you use this feature:

CONTEXT MENU ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Add As New Root	Adds the selected node to the tree view pane as a new root node.
Remove Root	Removes the selected root node from the tree view pane. This option is available only from a root node. You can also use the Remove Root toolbar button to remove the selected root node.
Go To Definition	Runs the Go To Definition command on the selected node. This navigates to the original definition for a method call or variable definition. You can also press F12 to run the Go To Definition command on the selected node.
Find All References	Runs the Find All References command on the selected node. This finds all the lines of code in your project that reference a class or member. You can also use Shift+F12 to run the Find All References command on the selected node.
Copy	Copies the contents of the selected node (but not its subnodes).
Refresh	Collapses the selected node so that re-expanding it displays current information.

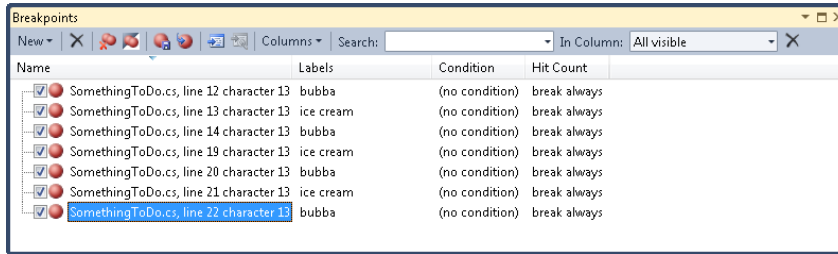
07.19 Searching Breakpoints

VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0002

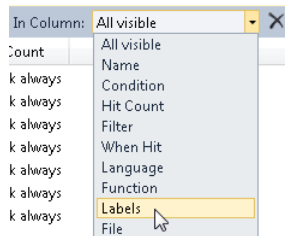
When working with larger sets of breakpoints, it is useful to be able to search and filter based on criteria you choose. In Visual Studio 2010, you finally have the ability to search breakpoints the way you want. The ability to search your breakpoints is critical to being able to take actions on groups of breakpoints because the Breakpoints window commands now act on breakpoints that match the current search criteria. First, set some sample breakpoints in your code, and then open the Breakpoints window (Ctrl+Alt+B):



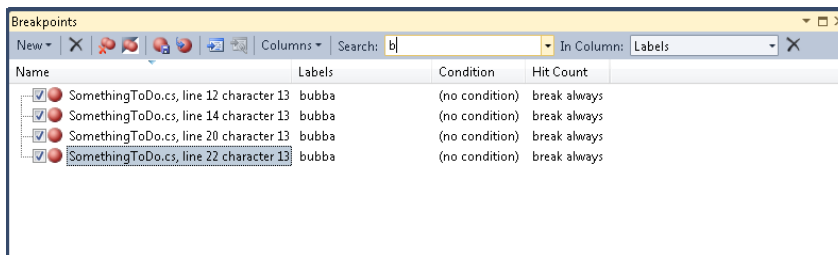
For this example, set some labels for your breakpoints (see vstipDebug0001, “Adding Labels to Breakpoints”, on page 293) that have values you would like to search on:



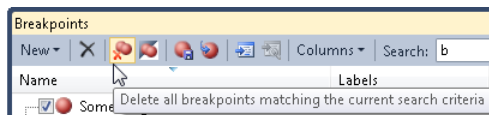
Select the column you want to search on (in this example, the Labels column):



Type the string you are looking for in the search box inside the Breakpoints window, and press Enter. In this example, I'll search for any label with the letter *b* anywhere in it. This yields the following result:



Now you can take actions on the breakpoints you can currently see. Most actions in the Breakpoints window now act on the results of the current search criteria:



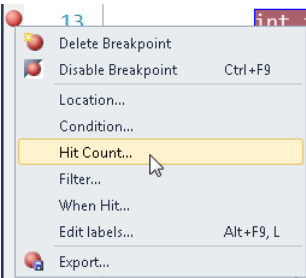
To clear the search so that you can see all the breakpoints, just click the Reset All Search Criteria So That All Breakpoints Are Shown button:



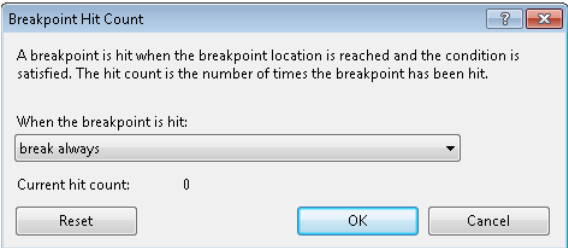
07.20 Breakpoint Hit Count

MENU	[Context Menu] Hit Count
COMMAND	EditorContextMenu.CodeWindow.Breakpoint.BreakpointHitCount
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0019

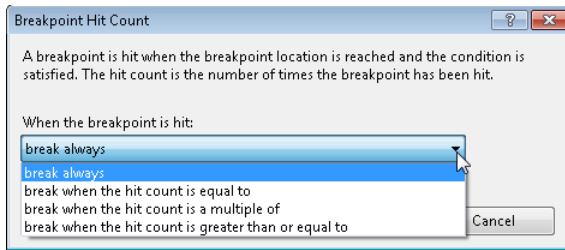
Sometimes you might not want a breakpoint to stop the first time it is encountered. This is particularly true when you are working with loops and want to stop after a number of iterations. You can set a breakpoint so that it does not break every time but only when it is hit a certain number of times. Just right-click any breakpoint, and click Hit Count:



The Breakpoint Hit Count dialog box appears:

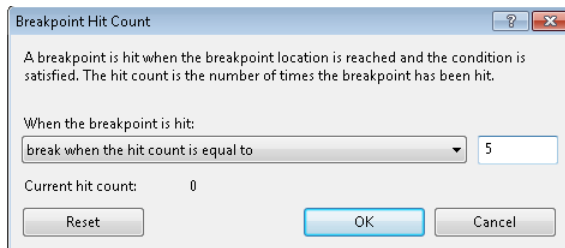


The default is to "break always," but you can change that to one of the following options:



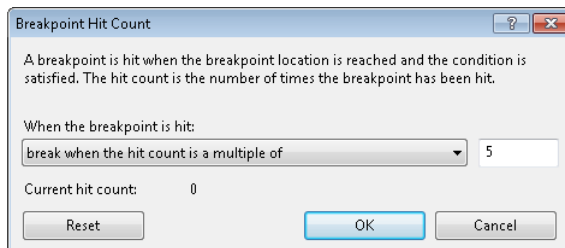
Break When The Hit Count Is Equal To

Choose this option if you want to break when the hit count reaches an exact value. So, in this example, if you put in a 5, the break does not occur until the breakpoint has been hit 5 times. This is useful when you know the number of hits you want before stopping.

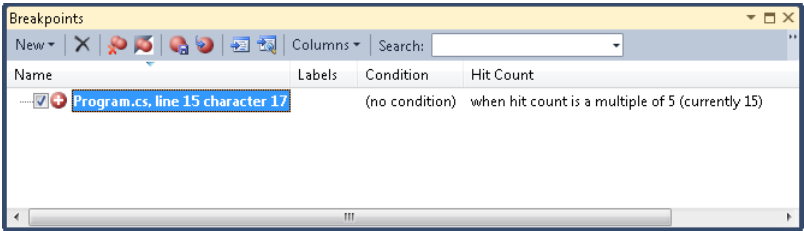


Break When The Hit Count Is A Multiple Of

This breaks every x number of times it is hit. So if you put in a 5, it breaks every 5th time (5, 10, 15, and so on). This helps when you aren't sure exactly where the problem is, so you want to skip in predefined increments as you look:

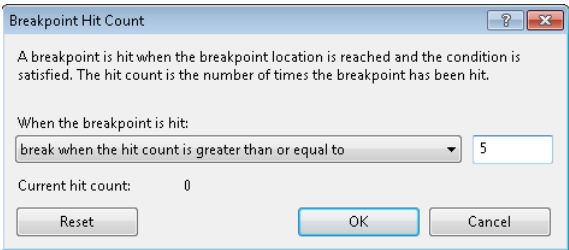


At any time, you can use the Breakpoints window to tell you the current hit count while you are debugging. In this example, the hit count is currently 15:



Break When The Hit Count Is Greater Than Or Equal To

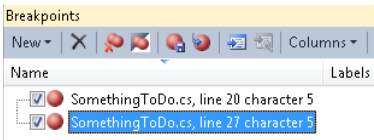
This option takes any number and stops when the hit count has reached that number or higher. Use this option when you aren't exactly sure what the value should be but want to stop when it reaches an upper bound:



07.21 Set a Breakpoint on a Function

DEFAULT	Ctrl+B
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+B
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+B; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+N; Ctrl+D, N
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+B
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,D, B, F
MENU	Debug New Breakpoint Break at Function
COMMAND	Debug.BreakatFunction
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0020

By default, breakpoints are based on line and character position:

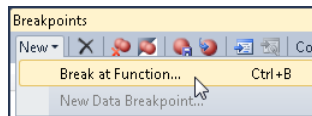


```
17 public void Re ( double d )
18 {
19     d = 0.667;
20     double eLocal = 0.002;
21     eLocal = eLocal * d;
22     Mi ( "A me so la ti do" );
23 }
24
25 public void Mi ( String s )
26 {
27     s = "Hello from Mi";
28     Fa ( );
29 }
```

But what if you don't want to break on a specific line but instead want to break when you hit a particular function? There are two ways to do this.

Breakpoints Window

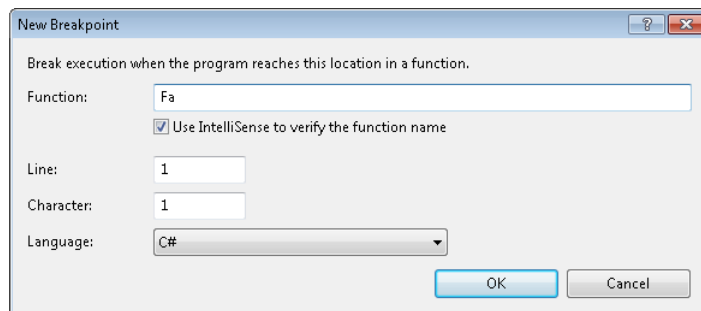
In the Breakpoints window, click New and choose Break At Function (or press Ctrl+B) to bring up the New Breakpoint dialog box.



In the New Breakpoint dialog box, type in the name of the function you want to break at, and then click OK.



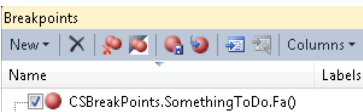
Warning To ensure that the correct function name is being used, always select Use IntelliSense To Verify The Function Name when you perform this action. Otherwise, the breakpoint might not work.



After you click OK in the New Breakpoint dialog box, you should see something similar to the following:

```
31 public void Fa ( )
32 {
33     So ( );
34 }
```

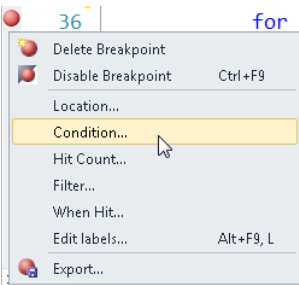
The next illustration shows what a function breakpoint looks like in the Breakpoints window:



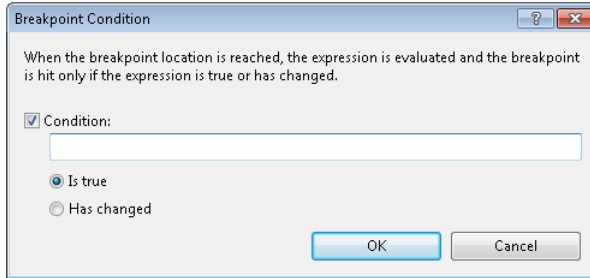
07.22 Set a Simple Breakpoint Condition

MENU	[Context Menu] Condition
COMMAND	EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.Breakpoint.BreakpointCondition
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0021

Conditional breakpoints are arguably the most powerful types of breakpoints you can set. Many steps are involved in using them correctly, and knowing what steps you need to take is half the battle. Start by right-clicking on any breakpoint and choosing Condition.



This gives us the Breakpoint Condition dialog box. Notice that the condition can be turned off by clearing the Condition check box. Additionally, two options are available for the condition that you set:



- **Is true**

Used for Boolean expressions that evaluate to true or false.

- **Has changed**

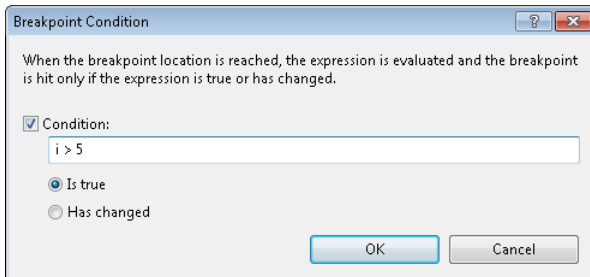
Used for detecting whether the value of an expression has changed at the breakpoint location.

Let's take a look at a couple of examples. Suppose we have the following For loop:

```
for ( i = 0 , m = 0 ; i < 10 ; i++ , m-- )
{
    sb.Length = 0;
    sb.AppendFormat ( "i = {0} m = {1}" , i , m );
    Trace.WriteLine ( sb.ToString ( ) );
}
```

Is True

We can set a simple "Is true" condition that says when the variable "i" is greater than 5, the code should stop:

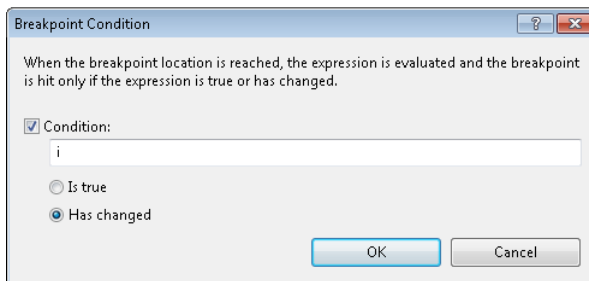


When we run the code and the breakpoint is hit, sure enough, it stops when the value of “i” is greater than 5:

```
i < 10 ;  
i | 6
```

Has Changed

This one is more interesting. Basically we set up something to watch. In this case, let’s just have it watch the “i” variable:



When the breakpoint is hit and the value of “i” has changed in any way, the code stops:

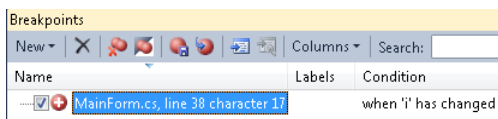
```
i < 10 ;  
i | 0
```

Special Notes

Anytime you set an advanced breakpoint, you get a new glyph (red sphere with a plus sign in it):

 38

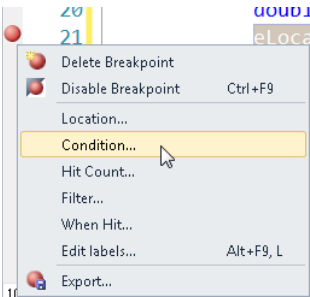
You can always tell what kind of breakpoint you have by pausing your mouse over the glyph and looking at the tooltip or by looking in the Breakpoints window:



07.23 Set a Complex Breakpoint Condition

MENU	[Context Menu] Condition
COMMAND	EditorContextMenu.CodeWindow.Breakpoint.BreakpointCondition
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0022

We previously discussed how to set simple conditions. (See vstipDebug0021, “Set a Simple Breakpoint Condition,” on page 318.) The real power of the Breakpoint Condition dialog box is the ability to execute any line of code from it:



For example, you can use it to call external methods. The following example illustrates this, but bear in mind that it’s a contrived example, designed to show how this works. The following illustration shows the code we want to execute:

```
public void Re(double d)
{
    d = 0.667;

    int x = 20;

    double eLocal = x + d;
    eLocal = eLocal * d;
    Mi("A me so la ti do");
}
```

Notice that a variable, x, is given a value. In this case, I hard-coded a value, but the value would presumably come as the result of some method execution. I want the breakpoint to stop only if the value of x is 20. I have a method that returns a Boolean value to test for the condition I want:

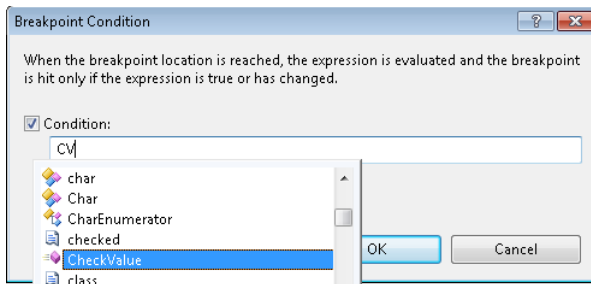
```

public bool CheckValue(int someValue)
{
    if (someValue == 20)
    {
        return true;
    }
    else
    {
        return false;
    }
}

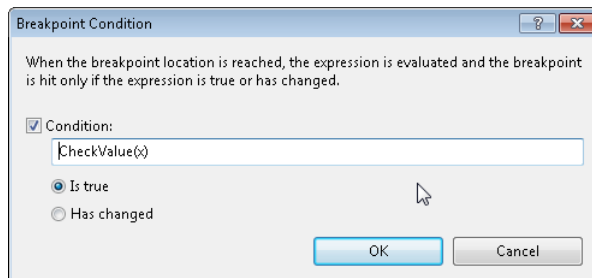
```

I won't get into the obvious debate about whether this is a good idea or not, how the method should be constructed, or if the average rainfall in the Amazon Basin is a factor here. I'll just call the method from the Breakpoint Condition dialog box.

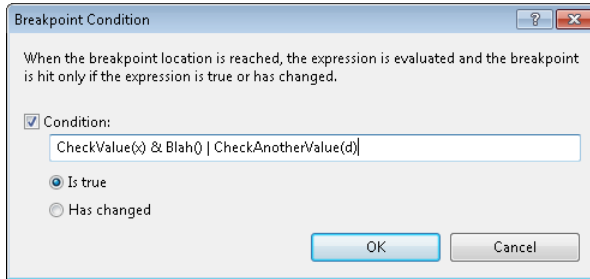
Notice that after typing a few characters, I use Ctrl+Space to get IntelliSense here if needed (see `vstipEdit0017`, "Using the New IntelliSense," on page 216):



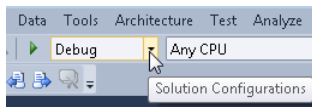
Make sure the Is True option is selected:



Now I have a conditional breakpoint that uses an external method to determine whether or not the code should stop. Naturally, you can add more Boolean logic here as well and include And / Or / Not / Xor:



Now the really interesting part is that you can have your checking code be available only for Debug builds:



By surrounding your code with conditional compilation directives, you can easily have checking code that is around only while debugging. Following is what the checking method would look like in C#:

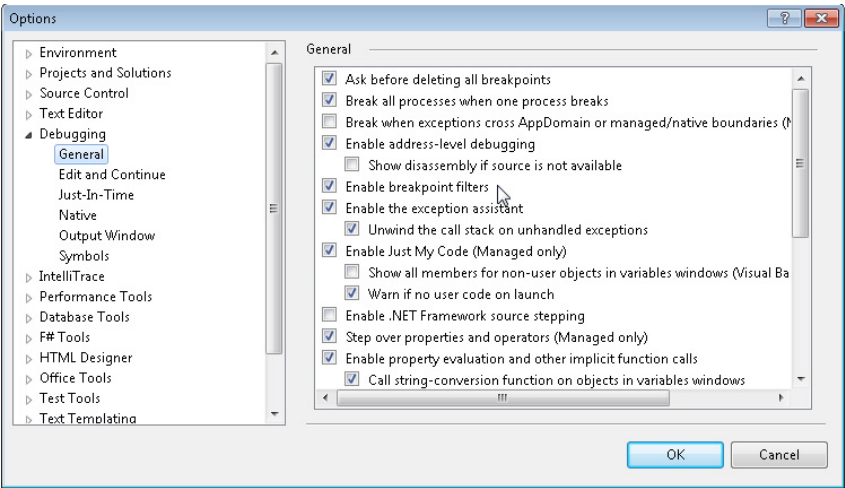
```
#if DEBUG
public bool CheckValue(int someValue)
{
    if (someValue == 20)
    {
        return true;
    }
    else
    {
        return false;
    }
}
#endif
```

Play with this feature some, and you can see why most people (including me) think that this is one of the most powerful breakpoint features around.

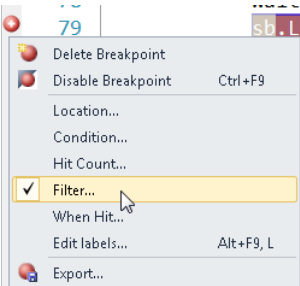
07.24 Setting a Breakpoint Filter

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O (options)
MENU	Tools Options; [Context Menu] Filter
COMMAND	Tools.Options; EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.Breakpoint.BreakpointFilter
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0024

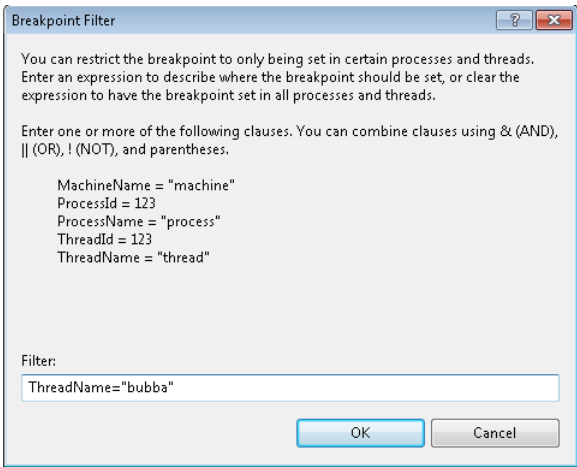
Breakpoint filters are used when you want to break based on thread, process, or machine information. This is particularly useful for debugging multithreaded applications. To make sure you can set them, go to Tools | Options | Debugging | General and select Enable Breakpoint Filters:



To make a breakpoint filter, just right-click any regular breakpoint and choose Filter:



You get the Breakpoint Filter dialog box:



As shown in the preceding graphic, I’ve decided to break whenever the breakpoint is hit and the thread name is “bubba.” The following illustration shows what it looks like in the Threads window when I actually run my code and the breakpoint is hit:

	1928	11		Worker Thread	Thread 2
	7912	12		Worker Thread	bubba
	7712	13		Worker Thread	Thread 4
	8648	14		Worker Thread	Thread 5

07.25 **Setting a Tracepoint in Source Code**

MENU	[Context Menu] When Hit
COMMAND	EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.Breakpoint.BreakpointWhenHit
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0010

Tracepoints give you the opportunity to unobtrusively print out information during application execution. This tip shows you how to use the IDE to create tracepoints, but for detailed information about how to do this in code, see “Tracing and Instrumenting Applications” at [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/zs6s4h68\(VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/zs6s4h68(VS.100).aspx).

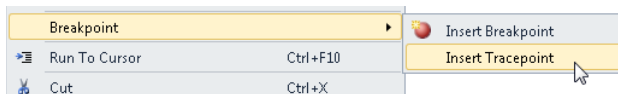
The best way to illustrate simple tracepoints is with a basic loop. I would suggest creating a new project and making a simple for loop to play with. Here is my sample code:

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    for (int i = 0; i < 10; i++)
    {
        Console.WriteLine("I'm doing something!");
    }
}
```

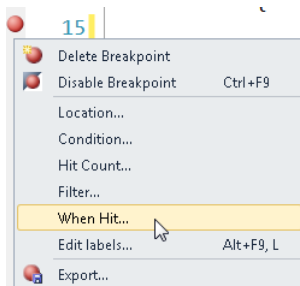
Setting Tracepoints

You have a couple of ways to set a tracepoint on a line of code.

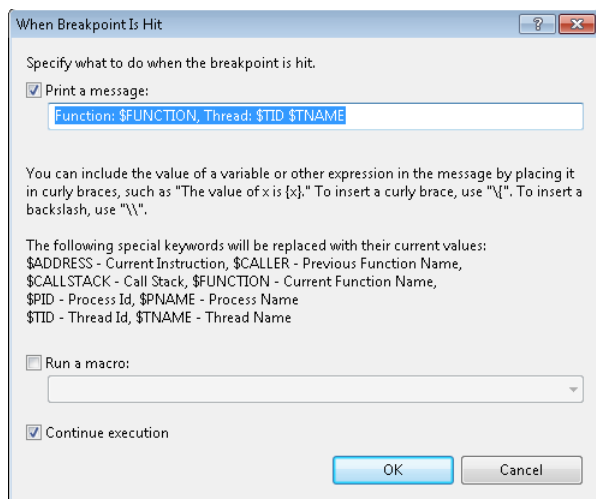
One way is to right-click on the line and choose Breakpoint | Insert Tracepoint.



Alternatively, you can set a breakpoint (F9) and then right-click on the breakpoint in the indicator margin and choose When Hit:



Whichever technique you use, the When Breakpoint Is Hit dialog box appears:



The When Breakpoint Is Hit dialog box provides three options.

Print a message

Used to print out any special variables (that begin with a \$), evaluated expressions (inside curly braces), or literal text.

Run a macro

Used to actually run a macro when this tracepoint is hit and can do extended processing or kick off some other task.

Continue execution

Makes the tracepoint unobtrusive and lets the application run. If you clear the Continue Execution check box, the tracepoint becomes a breakpoint.

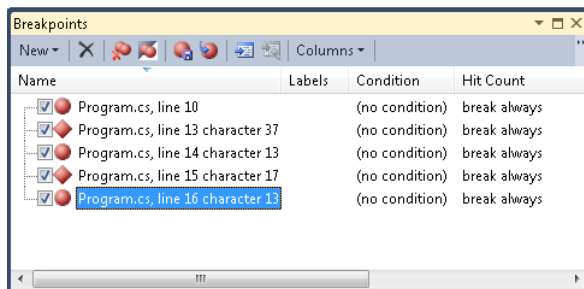
Click OK and notice something interesting. The normal round breakpoint indicator is now a diamond:



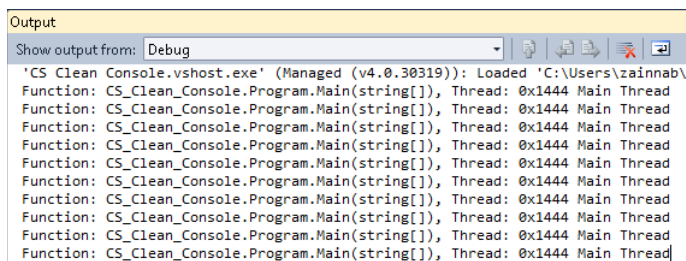
This is how we distinguish breakpoints (stop execution) from tracepoints (don't stop execution). For example, if I were to clear the Continue Execution check box in the When Breakpoint Is Hit dialog box, the breakpoint symbol would become round again:



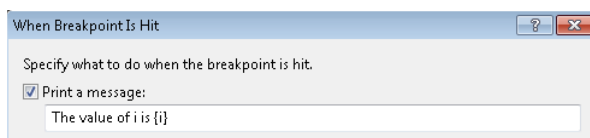
Tracepoints show up along with breakpoints in the Breakpoints window:



At this point, you have done enough to see tracepoints in action, so run your application. It should execute and then end. Open the Output window (Debug | Windows | Output), and notice the entries from our tracepoint:



The default message isn't very helpful in this case, so let's change it to something else. In this example, let's put **The value of i is {i}**. Notice that I put the expression to be evaluated (the variable i in this case) inside curly braces:



Now you should see the following in the Output window:

```

Output
Show output from: Debug
The value of i is 0
The value of i is 1
The value of i is 2
The value of i is 3
The value of i is 4
The value of i is 5
The value of i is 6
The value of i is 7
The value of i is 8
The value of i is 9

```

Change Default Message

There is a lot more to learn here, but you have a good start. One thing you might want to do is permanently change the default output message (currently "Function: \$FUNCTION, Thread: \$TID \$TNAME") that you get when you set a new tracepoint. This is useful if you find that you use a certain message often across projects. You can do this by going into the registry:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version>\Debugger



Warning Editing the registry can cause issues with Visual Studio, so perform these steps at your own risk.

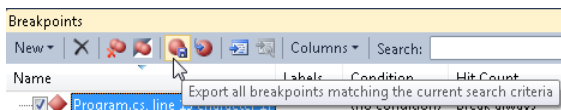
Then modify the string value called DefaultTracepointMessage to the new default you would like to have.

07.26 Import and Export Breakpoints

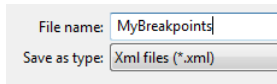
COMMAND	EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.Breakpoint.BreakpointExport; DebuggerContextMenus.BreakpointsWindow.Exportsselected
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0003

These next features are specifically designed so that you can share breakpoints with other team members. When you do this, make sure to version your exported breakpoints with your source code for sharing.

Set one or more breakpoints in your code, and open the Breakpoints window (Ctrl+Alt+B). Notice the new Export button. It's important to understand that it exports breakpoints *matching the current search criteria*. In other words, if you don't see the breakpoint in the Breakpoints window, it will not be exported:

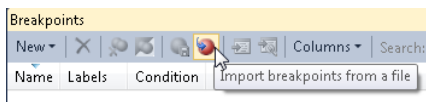


When you click the Export button, you get the classic Save As dialog box; notice that your breakpoints are saved as an XML file:



Put in some name for the file, and click Save. Give the file you created to your teammate or, if you are just practicing, you can delete your breakpoints.

Click on the new Import button:



Choose the XML file that was exported, and click Open to import your breakpoints.

07.27 Run to Cursor

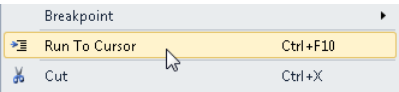
DEFAULT	Ctrl+F10
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+F10; Ctrl+F8
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F10
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F10; F7
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+F10
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F10
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
MENU	[Context Menu] Run To Cursor
COMMAND	Debug.RunToCursor
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0023

This is one that has been around a while but seems to get lost among all the other features that are out there. Basically, if you have some code and want to quickly run it and set a temporary breakpoint at the same time, this tip is for you.

Just put the cursor on the line you want to break on:

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    Console.WriteLine("Go!");
}
```

Press Ctrl+F10, or right-click and choose Run To Cursor:



The application starts and a temporary Breakpoint is set on the line where you were, *but you do not see any breakpoint indicator*. The next time the code hits that line, it enters break mode:

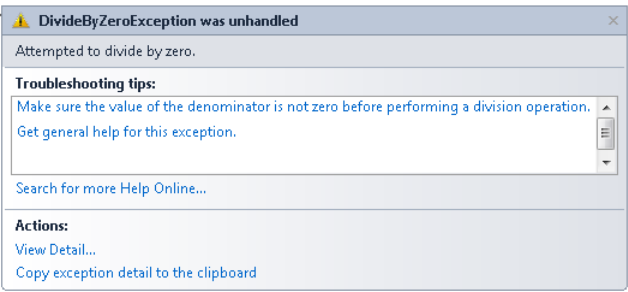
```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    Console.WriteLine("Go!");
}
```

Keep in mind that the application does not break until the line the temporary breakpoint is on is hit. If the line is never executed, the application will not break for debugging.

07.28 Using the Exception Assistant

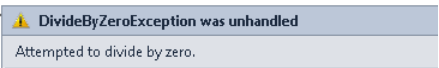
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0030

The Exception Assistant appears whenever a runtime exception occurs. It shows the type of exception, troubleshooting tips, and corrective actions as applicable:



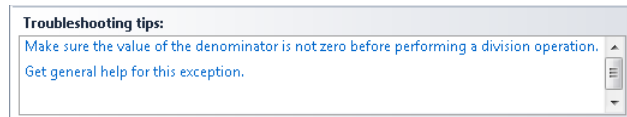
Exception Object and Description

The layout is pretty straightforward. First you have the exception object type and description:



Troubleshooting Tips

Then you have the Troubleshooting Tips area that provides advice about how to resolve the problem in a user-friendly format. The items are typically links to more information that can be found in the online or offline Help:

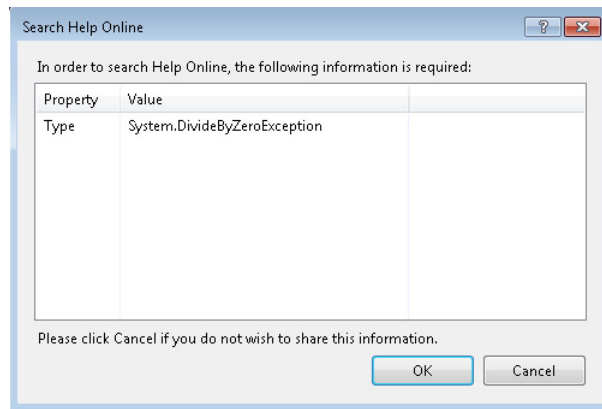


Help Online

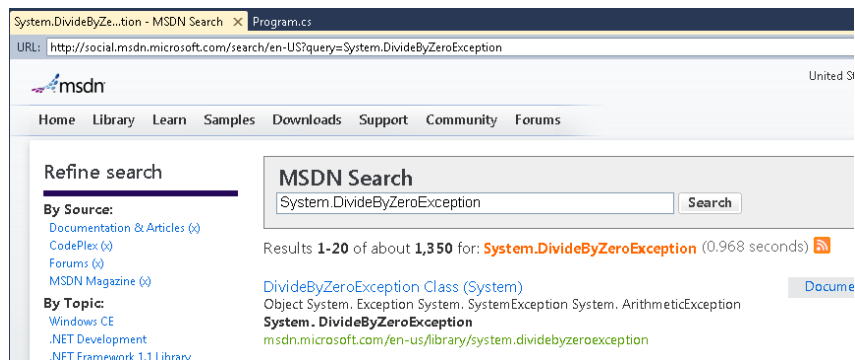
Search For More Help Online is pretty interesting when you click the link:

[Search for more Help Online...](#)

You get a dialog box asking permission to send information online:

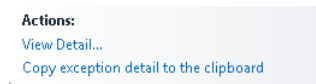


Clicking OK results in sending the information to MSDN online and performing a search:

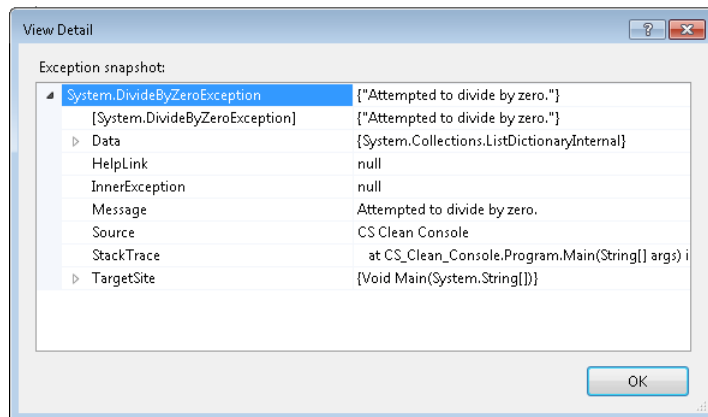


Actions

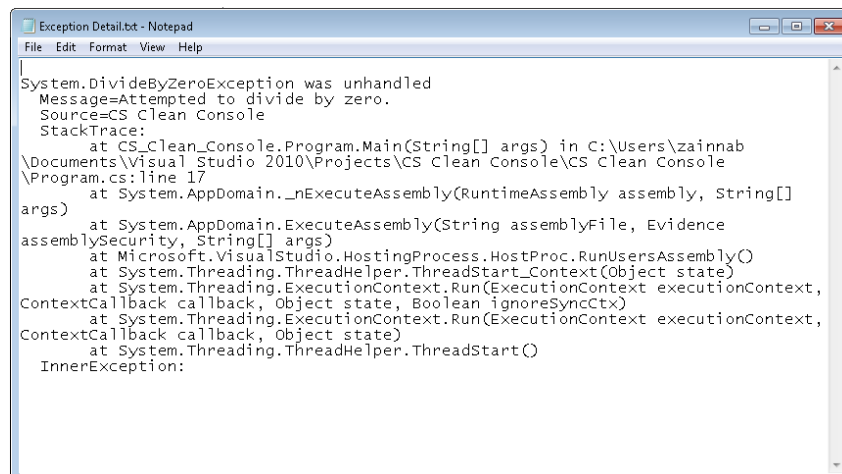
The Actions area lets you get information about the Exception Object:



The View Detail link opens a dialog box that exposes the details of the object for you to review:

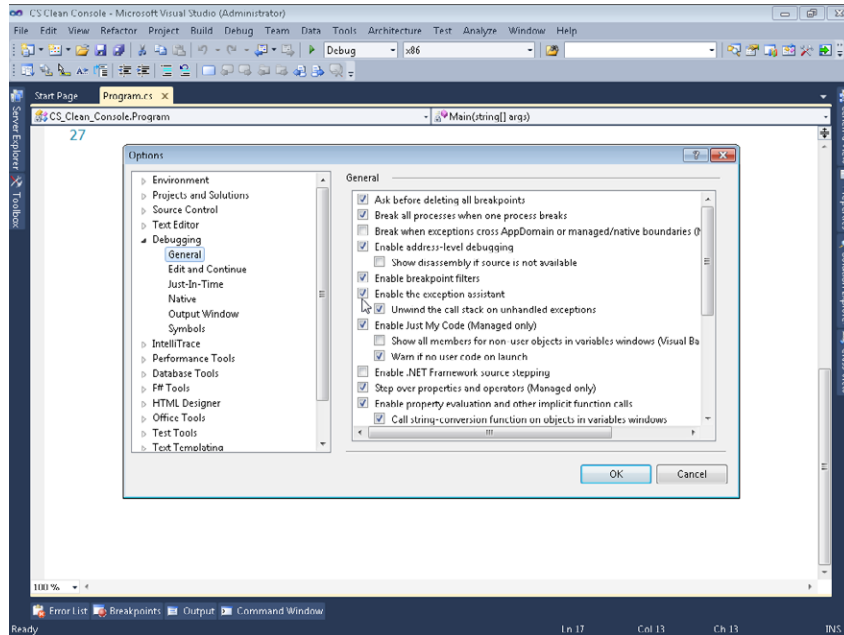


The Copy Exception Detail To The Clipboard link captures textual information you can put into any editor for analysis. It's not overly detailed but does provide a starting point for resolving the issue:

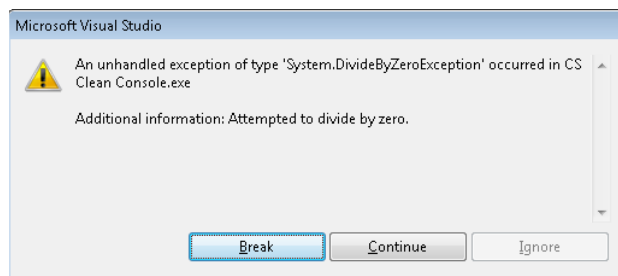


Turning Off the Exception Assistant

Although not suggested, you can actually turn this feature off. Just go to Tools | Options | Debugging | General, and clear the Enable The Exception Assistant check box:



The following illustration shows what the same error looks like with the Exception Assistant off:



Unwind The Call Stack On Unhandled Exceptions

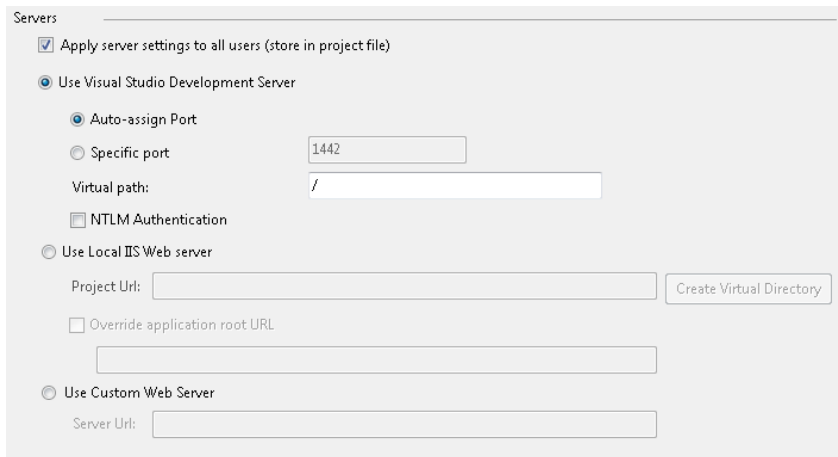
If you want more information about the details of this option, check out the great article by Bill Horst, at <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/vbteam/archive/2008/12/08/did-you-know-you-can-unwind-the-call-stack-from-exceptions-bill-horst.aspx>.

07.29 Use a Specific Port for the Development Server (Web Applications)

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0029

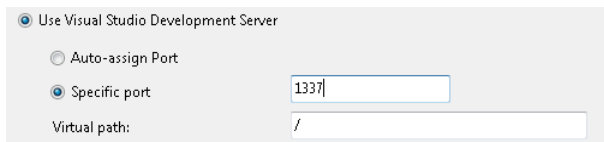
If you are using a firewall and want to use the same port while you do web development to accommodate a firewall rule, you can configure Visual Studio to use a fixed port. To do this, go to the project properties for any web application and click Web:

On the Web tab, go to the Servers area:



The screenshot shows the 'Servers' tab in the Visual Studio project properties. The 'Apply server settings to all users (store in project file)' checkbox is checked. Under 'Use Visual Studio Development Server', the 'Auto-assign Port' radio button is selected, and the 'Specific port' text box contains the value '1442'. The 'Virtual path' text box contains the value '/'. The 'NTLM Authentication' checkbox is unchecked. Under 'Use Local IIS Web server', the 'Project Url' text box is empty, and the 'Create Virtual Directory' button is visible. The 'Override application root URL' checkbox is unchecked, and its corresponding text box is empty. Under 'Use Custom Web Server', the 'Server Url' text box is empty.

In the Servers area, choose Specific Port, and then assign a port number to use:



This close-up screenshot focuses on the 'Use Visual Studio Development Server' section. The 'Specific port' radio button is now selected, and the text box next to it contains the value '1337'. The 'Virtual path' text box still contains the value '/'. The 'Auto-assign Port' radio button is now unselected.

The project now continues to use the port number assigned instead of automatically assigning one.

07.30 Application and Page Level Tracing

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0030

When debugging any project, it's good to have as much information as possible to help deal with any issues. Working with web projects is always a challenge no matter what IDE you use. Fortunately, the folks on the web team have provided a useful tool just for web developers: tracing. Tracing can be enabled at two levels: application and page.



Warning Generally, you should not enable tracing in an production website, because this can display sensitive configuration information to anyone who views pages in the website. Tracing is intended for debugging purposes only. If the `localOnly` attribute is true, trace information is displayed only for localhost requests. Additionally, if `<deployment retail=true>` is set in the Web.config file, tracing is disabled.

Application Level Tracing

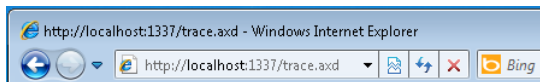
You can enable application tracing by going to Web.config and adding the `<trace>` element inside `<system.web>`:

```
<configuration>
  <system.web>

    <trace enabled="true" requestLimit="50" localOnly="true" />

  </system.web>
</configuration>
```

To access the application trace information, simply append "trace.axd" to the root of your website:



The following is a part of what you should see:

Requests to this Application					Remaining: 43
No.	Time of Request	File	Status Code	Verb	
1	6/23/2011 7:02:50 AM	Default.aspx	200	GET	View Details
2	6/23/2011 7:02:51 AM	Styles/Site.css	200	GET	View Details
3	6/23/2011 7:02:51 AM	WebResource.axd	200	GET	View Details
4	6/23/2011 7:02:51 AM	WebResource.axd	200	GET	View Details
5	6/23/2011 7:02:51 AM	favicon.ico	404	GET	View Details
6	6/23/2011 7:02:57 AM	Default.aspx	200	GET	View Details
7	6/23/2011 7:02:57 AM	favicon.ico	404	GET	View Details

Attributes

Several attributes can be applied when using trace, all of which are optional:

- enabled** (Boolean) Specifies whether tracing is enabled for an application. The default is false.
- localOnly** (Boolean) Indicates whether the trace information is available only on the host web server. If false, the trace is visible from any computer, which can be a security issue. The default is true.
- mostRecent** (Boolean) Shows whether the most recent application-level tracing output is displayed. If beyond the limits that are indicated by the requestLimit attribute, older trace data is discarded. If false, trace data is displayed for requests until the requestLimit attribute is reached. The default is false.
- pageOutput** (Boolean) Specifies whether trace output is rendered at the end of each page. If false, trace output is accessible through the trace utility only. The default is false.
- requestLimit** (Int32) Indicates the number of trace requests to store on the server. If the limit is reached and the mostRecent attribute is false, trace is automatically disabled. The maximum request limit is 10,000. If a value that is greater than 10,000 is specified, it is silently rounded down to 10,000 by ASP.NET. The default is 10.
- traceMode** The order in which to display trace information. The traceMode attribute can be one of two possible values:
 - SortByCategory** Trace information is displayed alphabetically by user-defined category.
 - SortByTime** Trace information is displayed in the order that the trace information is processed. The default is SortByTime.

- **writeToDiagnosticsTrace** (Boolean) Indicates whether ASP.NET trace messages are forwarded to the System.Diagnostics tracing infrastructure, for any listeners that are registered to display trace messages. The default is false.

You can find more information about trace element settings at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/6915t83k.aspx>.

Trace Details

Additionally, you can click on the View Details link of each item and see a great deal of information:

The screenshot shows the ASP.NET Trace.axd page in a web browser. The address bar shows `http://localhost:1337/Trace.axd?id=0`. The page title is "Request Details". Below the title, there is a section for "Request Details" with the following information:

Session Id:	dow40bst4gddakbbsz3mkgp	Request Type:	GET
Time of Request:	6/23/2011 7:02:50 AM	Status Code:	200
Request Encoding:	Unicode (UTF-8)	Response Encoding:	Unicode (UTF-8)

Below the request details, there is a section for "Trace Information" which is a table with the following columns: Category, Message, From First(s), and From Last(s).

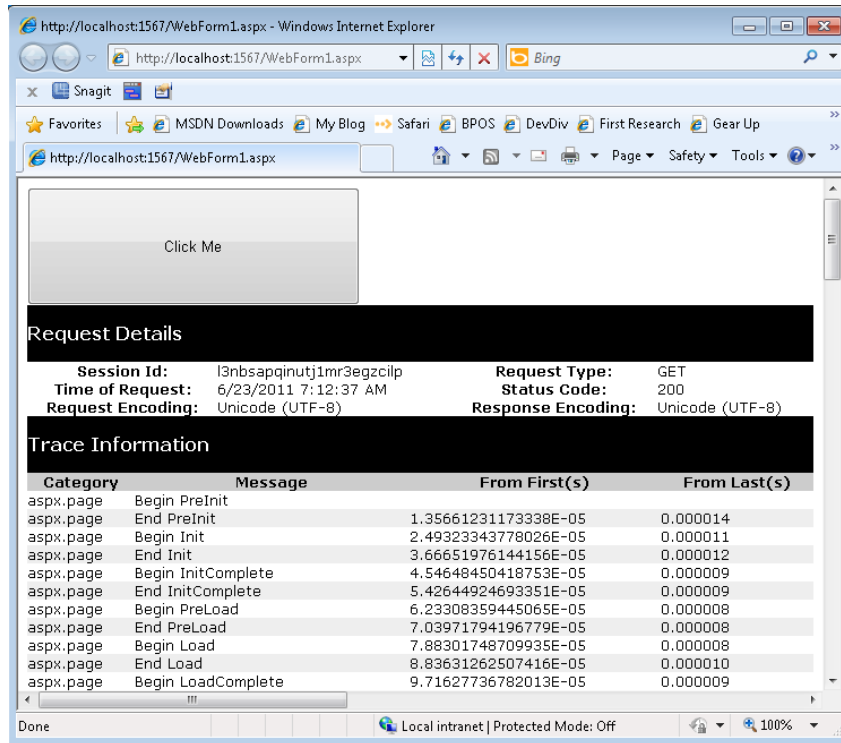
Category	Message	From First(s)	From Last(s)
aspx.page	Begin PreInit		
aspx.page	End PreInit	0.006050857562307	0.006051
aspx.page	Begin Init	0.00609448914746816	0.000044
aspx.page	End Init	0.00615022024784207	0.000056
aspx.page	Begin InitComplete	0.00615938654724567	0.000009
aspx.page	End InitComplete	0.00616965280257771	0.000010
aspx.page	Begin PreLoad	0.00617735249407674	0.000008
aspx.page	End PreLoad	0.00619128526917022	0.000014
aspx.page	Begin Load	0.00619971826462153	0.000008
aspx.page	End Load	0.00632767980429584	0.000128
aspx.page	Begin LoadComplete	0.00634014597148474	0.000012
aspx.page	End LoadComplete	0.00634931227088835	0.000009
aspx.page	Begin PreRender	0.00635664531041123	0.000007

Page Level Tracing

You might not want to have tracing enabled for the entire application for a variety of reasons, such as performance, wanting to focus in on just one page, and so on. Turning on tracing for a page is very simple. Just turn on tracing in your @Page directive, as in the following example:

```
<%@ Page Title="Home Page" Language="C#" MasterPageFile="~/Site.master"
AutoEventWireup="true"
CodeBehind="Default.aspx.cs" Inherits="WebApplication61._Default" Trace="true" %>
```

Now when you view that page, it shows the trace information on the page:



This is equivalent to setting `pageOutput` to `true` at the application level, but it affects only those pages where you have turned tracing on.

Combined Tracing

Tracing can get confusing, but the one thing to remember is that the page always wins when tracing is explicitly set. You can use the following table to help keep the tracing results in mind if you set both application and page level tracing.

APPLICATION	PAGE	RESULT FOR A PAGE
true	false	false
false	true	true

Finally

To say there is a lot going on here would be an understatement. I leave it to you to explore more of the details, which can be found at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb386420.aspx>.

07.31 The Watch Window: Watching and Changing Values

DEFAULT	Shift+F9 (QuickWatch); Ctrl+Alt+Q (QuickWatch)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+F9 (QuickWatch); Ctrl+Alt+Q (QuickWatch)
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+F9 (QuickWatch); Ctrl+Alt+Q (QuickWatch); Ctrl+D, Ctrl+Q (QuickWatch); Ctrl+D, Q (QuickWatch)
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+F9 (QuickWatch); Ctrl+Alt+Q (QuickWatch)
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+F9 (QuickWatch); Ctrl+Alt+Q (QuickWatch)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+F9 (QuickWatch); Ctrl+Alt+Q (QuickWatch)
WINDOWS	Alt,D, Q (QuickWatch)
MENU	Debug QuickWatch; [Context Menu] Add Watch
COMMAND	Debug.QuickWatch; Debug.AddWatch
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0104

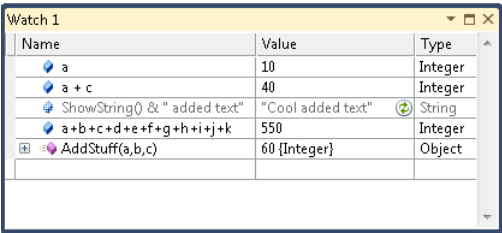
By definition, a watch expression does exactly what it sounds like it should do: It watches something and shows you the result so that you can monitor data as you are debugging. You can use any of the following techniques to create a watch expression:

- Type it in
- QuickWatch
- Add Watch

Let’s take a closer look.

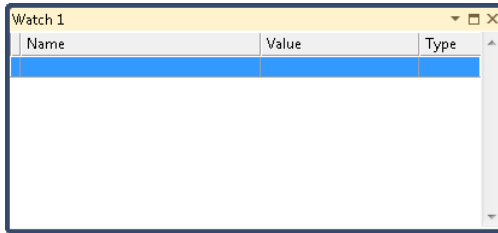
Watch Expressions

First we need to define what you can watch. Essentially, you can watch any valid expression. Some examples of valid watch expressions are shown in the following illustration:



Watch Window

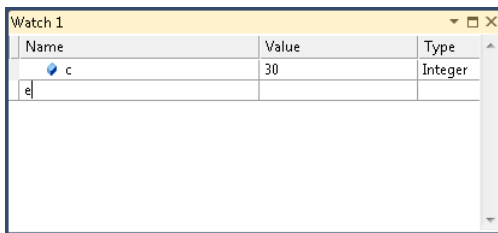
The easiest way to open the main Watch window is to press Ctrl+Alt+W,1 or go to Debug | Windows | Watch | Watch 1. You can have up to four Watch windows, so you can organize your watch expressions into groups if you want:



Creating a Watch Expression

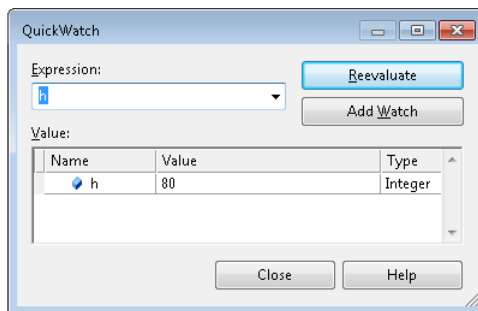
Type it in

One of the quickest ways to put in most watch expressions is just to type in the variable or expression you want to watch in the Watch window:



QuickWatch (Shift+F9)

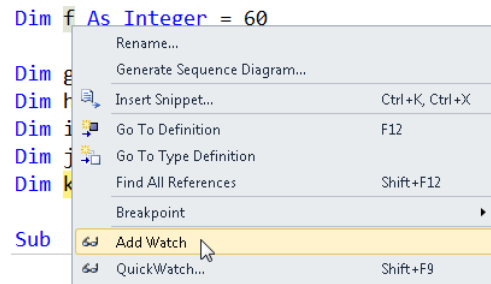
Despite the name, this is actually the longest way to set a watch expression. When you press Shift+F9 or go to Debug | QuickWatch, you get the following dialog box:



Type any expression in the Expression area, and then click Reevaluate to see the value appear in the Value area. If you are happy with what you see and want to add a watch expression to the QuickWatch window, just click Add Watch.

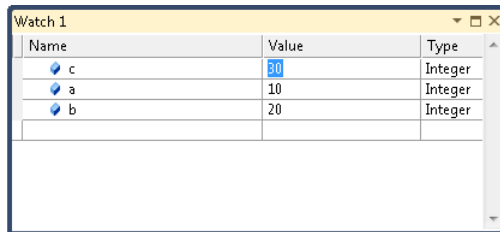
Add Watch

This is another pretty quick watch expression to set. Just right-click a variable or selected expression and instantly have it added to Watch 1:

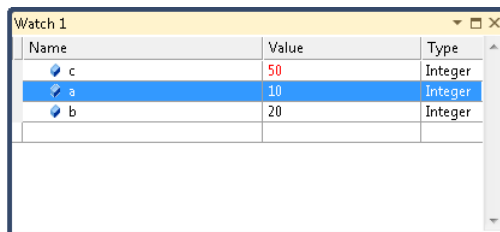


Changing Values

With any watch expression, you can change the value to suit your needs by just selecting the value you want to change:



Then type in a new value, and press Enter:



The value turns red to indicate it has changed. This makes it easy to track your changes.

07.32 Understanding QuickWatch

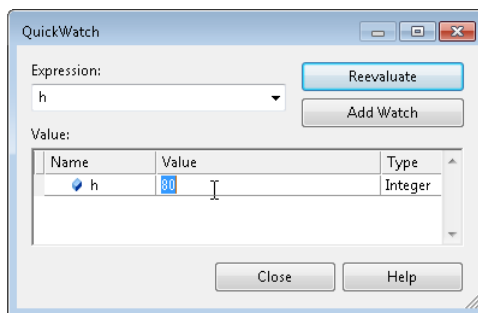
DEFAULT	Shift+F9; Ctrl+Alt+Q
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+F9; Ctrl+Alt+Q
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+F9; Ctrl+Alt+Q; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+Q; Ctrl+D, Q
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+F9; Ctrl+Alt+Q
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+F9; Ctrl+Alt+Q
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+F9; Ctrl+Alt+Q
WINDOWS	Alt, D, Q
MENU	Debug QuickWatch
COMMAND	Debug.QuickWatch
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0108

In vstipTool0104 (“The Watch Window: Watching and Changing Values,” page 340), I showed you how to use QuickWatch to get data into a Watch window. From that perspective, using QuickWatch is rather slow and cumbersome. However, QuickWatch doesn’t exist for only that reason, so it is worth another look.

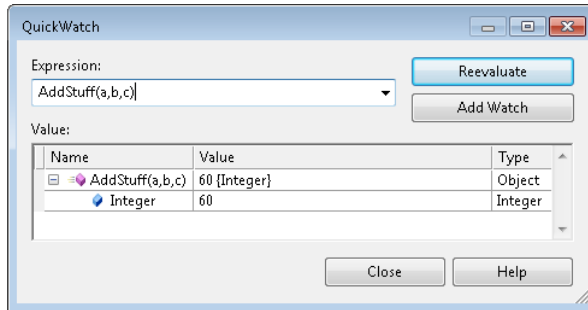
So, why does QuickWatch exist? It was actually created to be a dialog box that is a one-stop shop for quickly working with expressions. Think of it as a dialog box dedicated to a single watch expression. It’s a modal dialog box, so you need to close it before moving on with any other debugging. Bring it up by pressing Shift+F9 or going to Debug | QuickWatch on the Menu Bar.

What Does It Do?

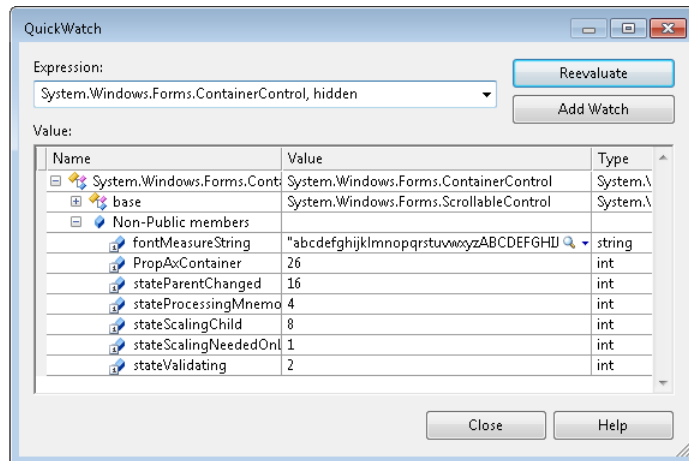
Like a normal watch expression, you can edit the value in it:



Also, you can change the expression and click Reevaluate to see a new value:



One big advantage to the QuickWatch window is the fact that it can be resized. It can be very useful when digging deep:



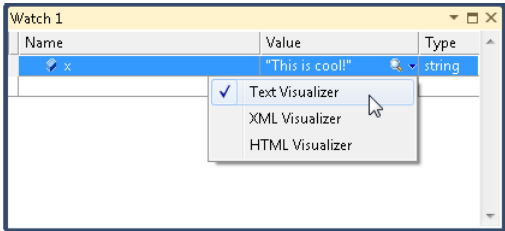
Other Options

While it is useful for specific scenarios, with the advent of DataTips (see [vstipDebug0005](#), "Pin a DataTip to Source Code," on page 305), the usefulness of the QuickWatch dialog box has diminished somewhat, so you might choose to use DataTips instead. It all comes down to personal preference.

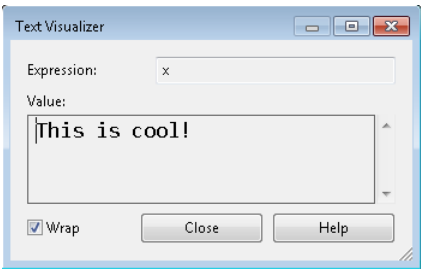
07.33 The Watch Window: Visualizers

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+W; Ctrl+D, W; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
WINDOWS	Alt+D, W, W, [1-4]
MENU	Debug Windows Watch Watch [1,2,3,4]
COMMAND	Debug.Watch[1,2,3,4]
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0106

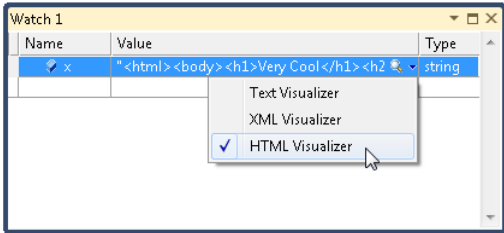
When using the Watch windows, you might come across visualizers. A visualizer is a debugger component that enables the debugger to display (visualize) the contents of a data object in a meaningful, understandable form. Visualizers are pretty easy to spot because they have a magnifying glass icon:



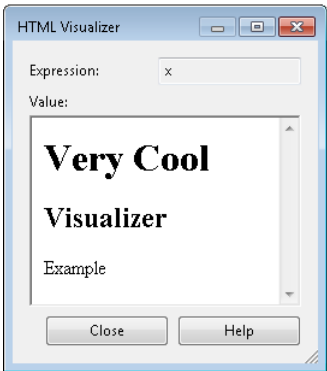
Notice that when you click on the magnifying glass, it gives you options (based on the data you are looking at) for a visualizer. If you select Text Visualizer, you get the following dialog box:



You might find it useful to leverage the power of visualizers when looking at different types of data. If this output were HTML, you would use the HTML Visualizer:



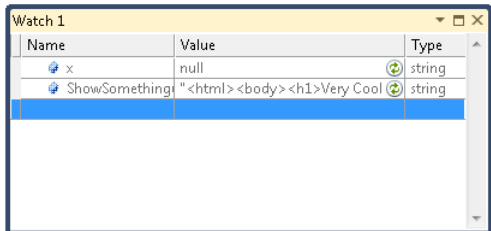
And you would see the following dialog box:



07.34 The Watch Window: Refreshing Data

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Debugging General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0107

When you evaluate an expression in one of the Watch windows, one of two refresh icons might appear in the Value column. One refresh icon is a circle that contains two wavy lines that resemble threads. The other icon is two circling arrows, as shown in the following example:



Refresh Icons

Following is what the documentation (<http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/z4ecfxd9.aspx>) has to say about these icons.

Circling arrows

If the circling arrows appear, the expression was not evaluated for one of the following reasons:

- An error occurred as the expression was being evaluated. For example, a time-out might have occurred, or a variable might have been out of scope.
- Evaluating the expression would have required evaluating a property or making an implicit function code. Evaluation of properties and implicit function calls can have side effects that affect the state of your program. Because these effects can make debugging more difficult, automatic evaluation of properties and implicit function calls by the debugger is often turned off. Occasionally, a programmer might unintentionally turn off automatic evaluation.

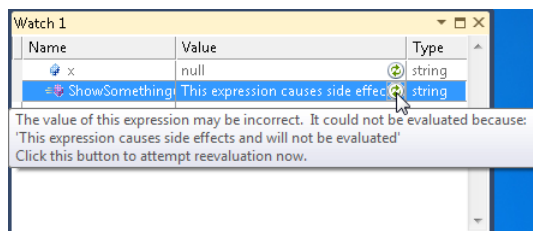
If you want to learn more about side effects, see the topic “Side Effects and Expressions” at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/a7a250bs.aspx>.

Two threads

If the two threads appear, the expression was not evaluated because of a potential cross-thread dependency. A cross-thread dependency means that evaluating the code requires other threads in your application to run temporarily. When you are in break mode, all threads in your application are typically stopped. Allowing other threads to run temporarily can have unexpected effects on the state of your program and causes the debugger to ignore events such as breakpoints.

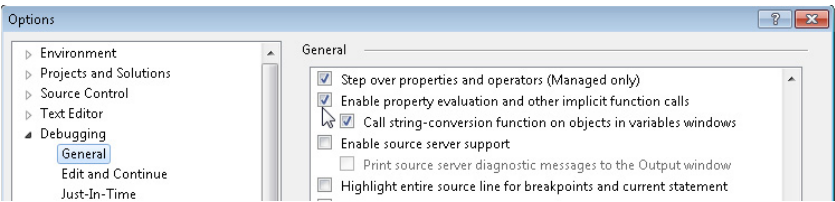
Refreshing the data

To refresh the data, just click the icon or press the Spacebar:



Turning It Off

Although not suggested, you can turn this feature off by going to Tools | Options | Debugging | General and clearing the Enable Property Evaluation And Other Implicit Function Calls check box:



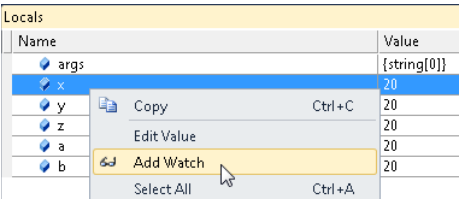
07.35

The Watch Window: Adding Watches from Variable Windows

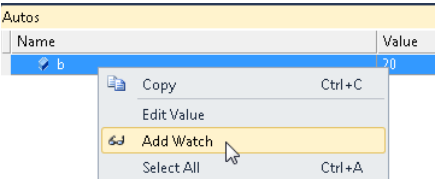
MENU	[Context Menu] Add Watch
COMMAND	Debug.AddWatch
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0109

The Locals, Autos, Watch, and QuickWatch windows are all known, collectively, as the Variable windows. Did you know that every Variable window supports the `Debug.AddWatch` command? This tip provides some examples.

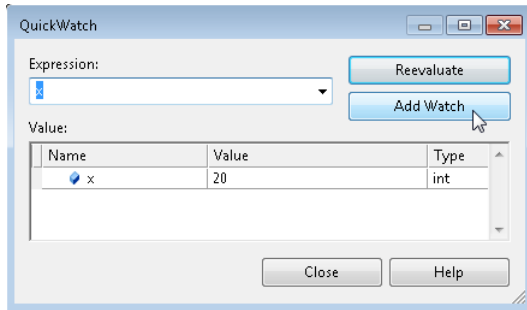
Locals Window



Autos Window

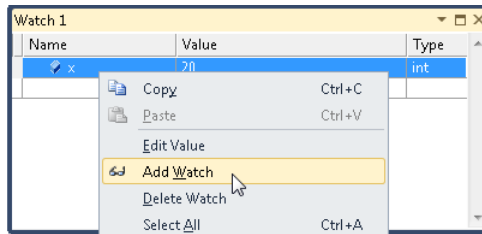


QuickWatch



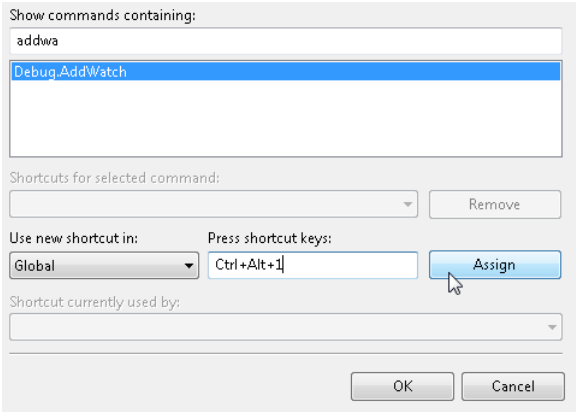
Watch [1, 2, 3, 4] Window

This is one you might not expect. The Watch windows actually have the ability to add watch expressions. Very useful if you have a complex expression and want to copy it to do a modification:



Keyboard Mapping

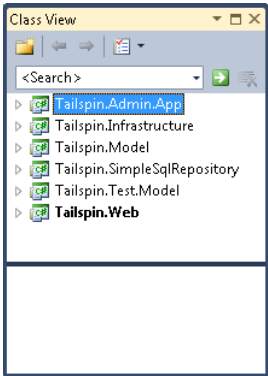
If you find yourself adding watch expressions frequently in break mode, you should consider mapping a keyboard shortcut. Go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard, and assign a shortcut to the `Debug.AddWatch` command:



07.36 Create Folders in Class View

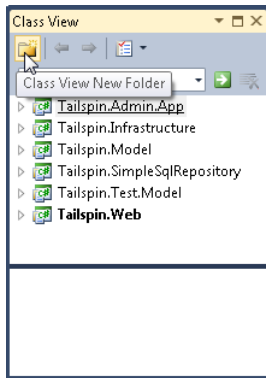
MENU	[Context Menu] New Folder
COMMAND	View.ClassViewNewFolder
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0072

Did you know that you can create folders to easily organize items in Class View? It's pretty easy to do. Just open the Class View dialog box (Ctrl+Shift+C):

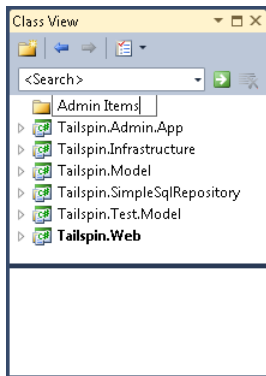


Create a New Folder

Click the Class View New Folder button:



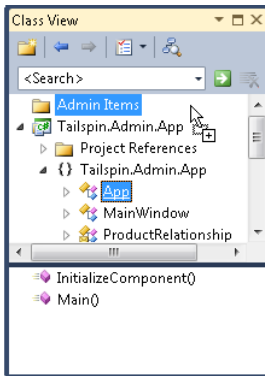
Give your new folder some logical name:



Note These folders are not created on the file system but are stored in your .suo file.

Putting Items into Your Folder

You can simply click and drag items into your new folder to organize them:



You can also copy and paste items into the folders as well. These operations are strictly organizational and don't actually make an extra copy of the item in your code.

Removing Items from Folders

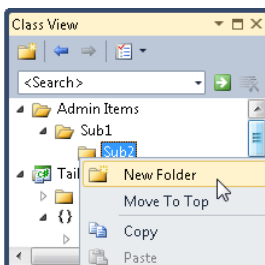
You can remove items from your folder at any time by deleting them (right-click or press the Delete key).



Note This deletes only the item from the Class View and doesn't actually delete your code.

Creating Subfolders

You can even nest the folder structure by creating a new folder inside an existing one:



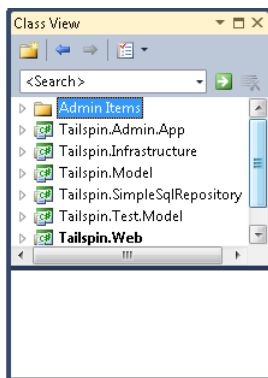
Deleting Folders

Naturally you can delete any folder by right-clicking it and choosing Delete.

07.37 Search in Class View

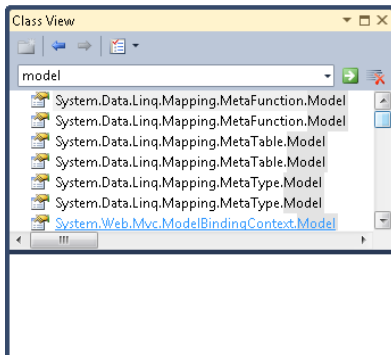
DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+V
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	View.ClassViewGoToSearchCombo; View.ClassViewSearch
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0073

The Class View window has a search capability that finds items quickly. Just go to the Class View Search Combo box (Ctrl+K, Ctrl+V):



Warning I've actually had the search combo box disappear on me before. Restarting Visual Studio should bring it back if this happens to you, too.

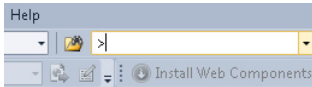
Type in the keyword to search for, and press Enter:



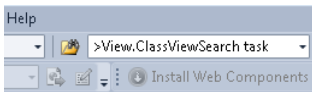
It searches for the keyword in items and shows the results while highlighting the last instance where the keyword was found in an item. The search is a contains operation, so it looks for anything that has the keyword anywhere in the result.

View.ClassViewSearch Command

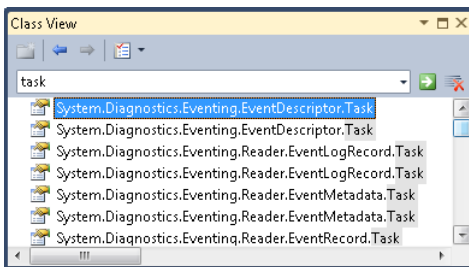
If you want a quick way to do this by running a command, you can use `View.ClassViewSearch` with any keyword(s). First, go someplace you can run a command. I prefer to use the Find Combo box with the command character (Ctrl+/) to run my commands (see `vstipTool0070`, “Understanding Commands: Running Commands,” on page 121, for more options):



Type in **`View.ClassViewSearch [keyword(s)]`**. In this case, let’s look for the word “task”:

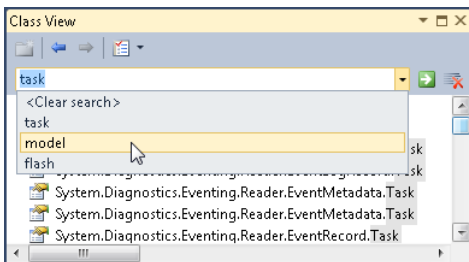


Just press Enter, and we get our results in the Class View:



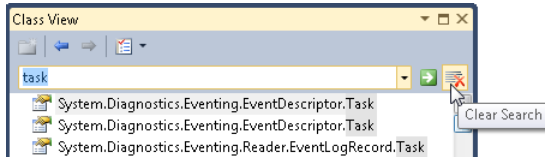
Use a Previous Search

You can repeat any previous search in Class View by using the drop-down list from the Search Combo box:



Clear Your Search

Whichever method you use, you can always clear your search by clicking the Clear Search button:

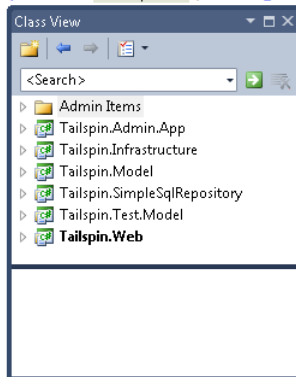


07.38 Synchronize Your Class View

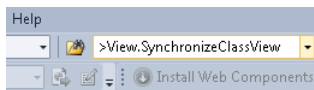
COMMAND	View.SynchronizeClassView
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0074

When you are in your code, sometimes you would like to have Class View synchronize with your code. By default, it doesn't do this.

```
public Customer(string u:
```

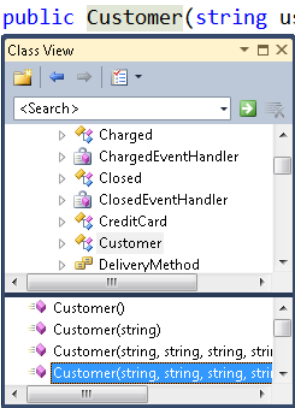


You can run the View.SynchronizeClassView command from the Find combo (Ctrl+/) to see how this works:



Note This command works only if the editor has the focus, so you need to run it from the Find drop-down box as shown in this example or assign a shortcut key to it. It does not work if you try to run it from the Command window.

It finds your current location in Class View:

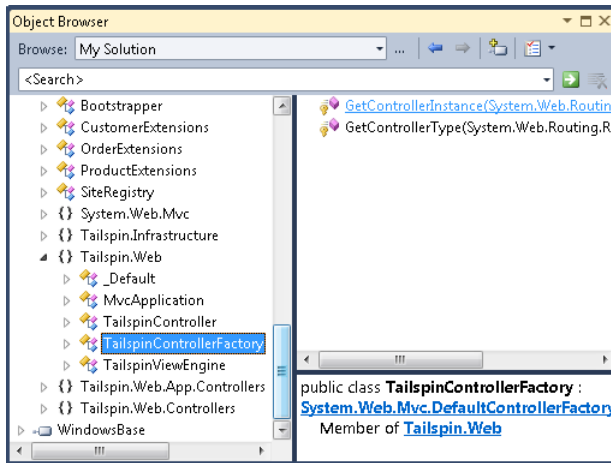


07.39

The Misnamed and Misunderstood Object Browser

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J; F2
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J; Ctrl+W, J
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+J; Shift+Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; F2
WINDOWS	Alt,V, J
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0077

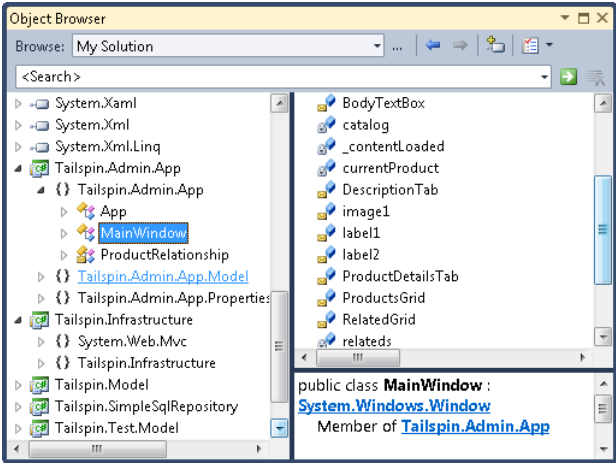
Many people often ask why they should use the Object Browser. First and foremost, it is a way to browse to find the correct class, object, property, method, interface, and so on that is useful for your needs as you code. But the Object Browser does much, much more than its name implies.



As you can see from the high-level view shown in the preceding illustration, the Object Browser is composed of several parts:

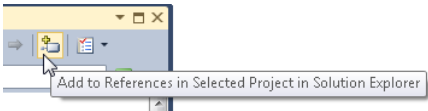
- **Toolbar** (very top) Contains various controls for manipulating the various functions available.
- **Objects pane** (left, top and bottom) Displays an expandable list of symbols whose top-level nodes represent components or namespaces available in the current browsing scope.
- **Members pane** (right, top) Displays the available members, if available, of any symbol selected in the Objects pane.
- **Description pane** (right, bottom) Displays detailed information about the currently selected object or member.

First, the name would have you think that it shows only objects. This is simply untrue. In fact, it shows many different types of symbols, which is better than just showing objects:



In this example, as shown in the preceding illustration, we see a couple of projects with several namespaces in them, in addition to some interfaces and classes. The classes with envelopes represent internal classes. The icons are explained in [vstipTool0076](#), “Class View and Object Browser Icons,” in Appendix B (<http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>).

Second, you might think that all you can do is browse items. Again, not true. For example, you can add references to your project from the Object Browser when you find something that you want to include:



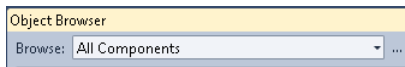
The next series of tips explore, in detail, the use of the Object Browser in your work.

07.40

The Object Browser: Setting the Browsing Scope

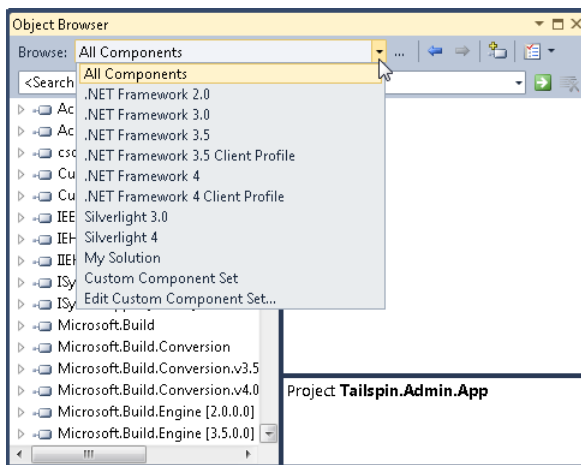
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J; F2
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J; Ctrl+W, J
VISUAL C++ 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Shift+Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; F2
WINDOWS	Alt, V, J
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0078

When you use the Object Browser, it's a good idea to know what components you are browsing. So let's start our examination at the top, with the Browse area:



Browse

The Browse drop-down box lets you specify the browsing scope (the list of items you see in the Objects pane):



All Components

The All Components drop-down quite literally lets you browse all components, including all of the .NET Framework, the current solution and its referenced components, and any other components that you have added by selecting Edit Custom Component Set. It's a massive dose of information overload, so be prepared.

.NET Framework X / Silverlight X

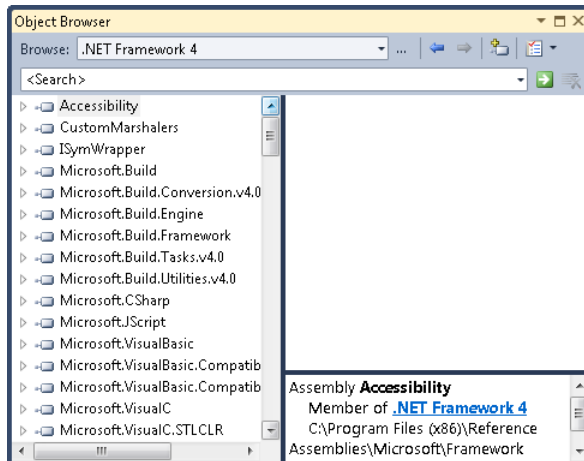
Sets the browsing scope to a specific version of the Framework.

My Solution

Shows items in the current solution and referenced components.

Custom Component Set

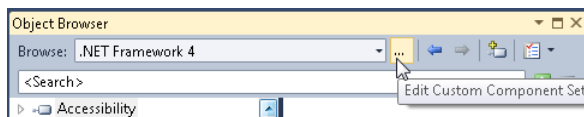
Sets browsing scope to the list of components identified by editing the Custom Component Set. For example, if I choose .NET Framework 4, I see the following:



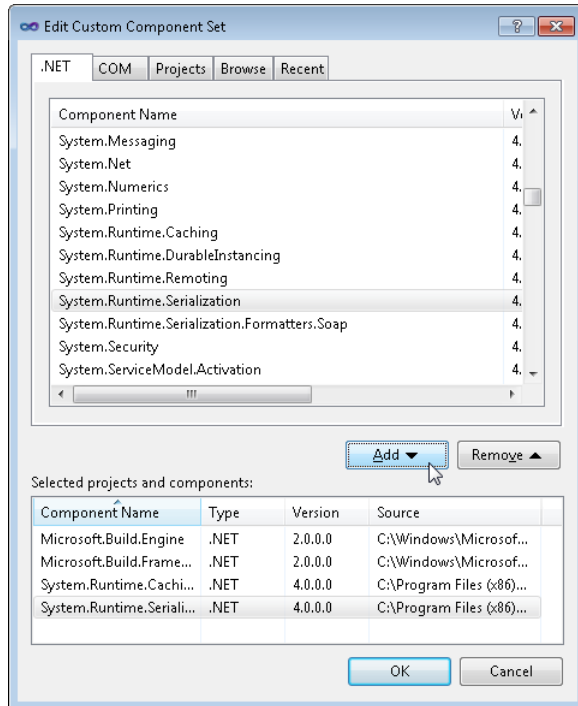
Edit Custom Component Set

You can edit the Custom Component Set to identify the components that create the browsing scope in two ways:

- Choose Edit Custom Component Set in the browse drop-down box.
- Click the "Edit Custom Component Set" button on the toolbar:

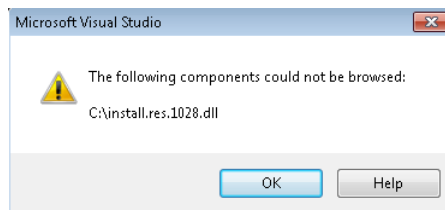


Regardless of the method used, you get the Edit Custom Component Set dialog box:

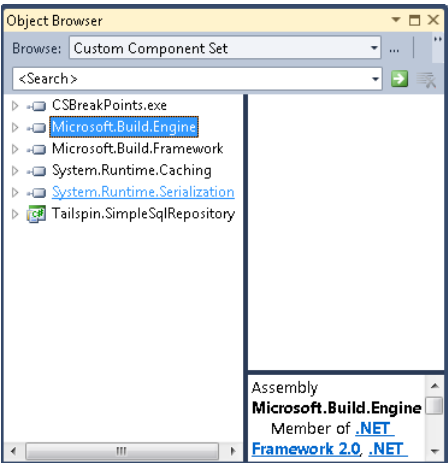


In the Edit Custom Component Set dialog box, you can add or remove components from a variety of sources. The browsing scope of the Custom Component Set is determined by the items listed in the Selected Projects And Components section of this dialog box. As you can see, information about the type, version, and source (location) is available here.

If you pick something that can't be browsed, you get the following message:



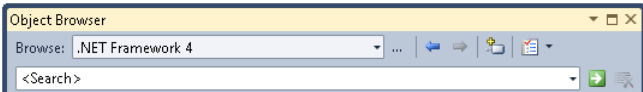
After you have successfully edited the Custom Component Set, it is automatically selected in the Browse drop-down box and becomes the current browsing scope:



07.41 The Object Browser: Navigation and References

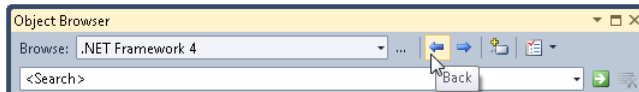
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J (view object browser); Alt+Right Arrow (forward); Alt+Left Arrow (back)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J (view object browser); F2 (view object browser); Alt+Right Arrow (forward); Alt+Left Arrow (back)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J (view object browser); Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J (view object browser); Ctrl+W, J (view object browser); Alt+Right Arrow (forward); Alt+Left Arrow (back)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+J (view object browser); Shift+Alt+F1 (view object browser); Alt+Right Arrow (forward); Alt+Left Arrow (back)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J (view object browser); Alt+Right Arrow (forward); Alt+Left Arrow (back)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B (view object browser); F2 (view object browser); Alt+Right Arrow (forward); Alt+Left Arrow (back)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, J (view object browser)
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser; View.Forward; View.Backward; View.ObjectBrowserAddReference
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0079

Continuing our look at the Object Browser, we now turn our attention to the toolbar buttons to the right of the Browse area:



Navigation

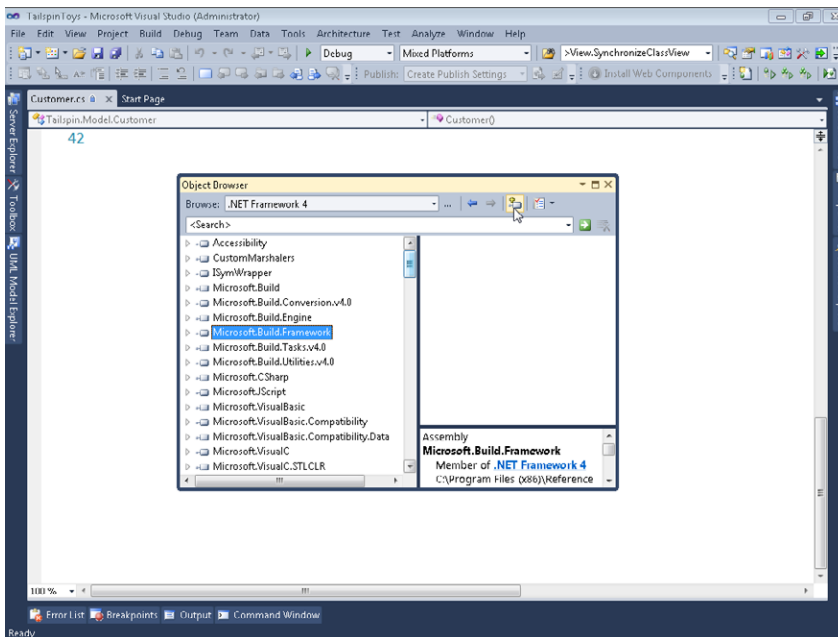
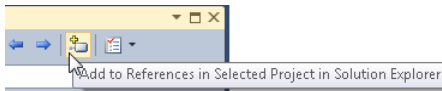
The Forward (Alt+Right Arrow) and Back (Alt+Left Arrow) buttons can be used to easily navigate among items in the Objects pane as you browse:



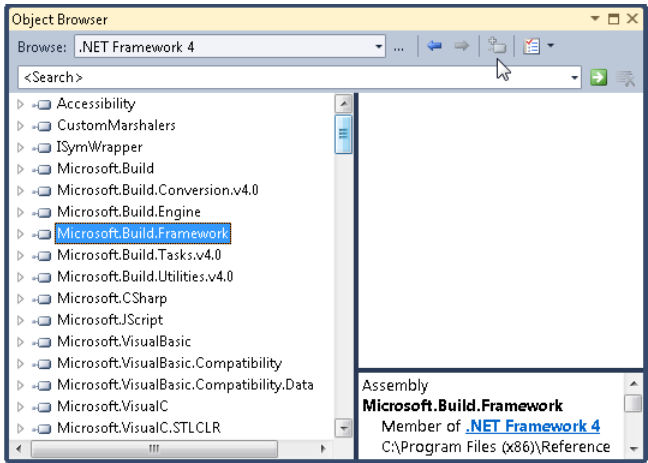
I haven't discovered any obvious upper limit to how many times you can go back. I have personally tested it to go back over 75 items, with no end in sight. The places are remembered (and more added) as long as Visual Studio remains open, regardless of which project or solution you are using.

References

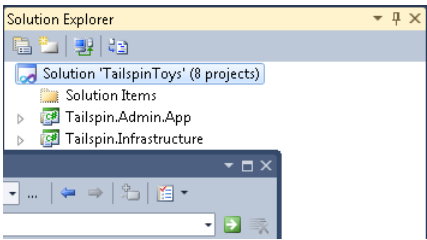
You can add a reference to the currently selected item in the Objects pane to your project:



Read the tooltip carefully. Notice that it says Add To References In *Selected Project In Solution Explorer*. This might confuse you when you try to use it for the first time because you can select a reference that you want to add and then find the button disabled (top right in the following illustration):



This is because you most likely don't have a project selected in Solution Explorer, as we do in the following example:



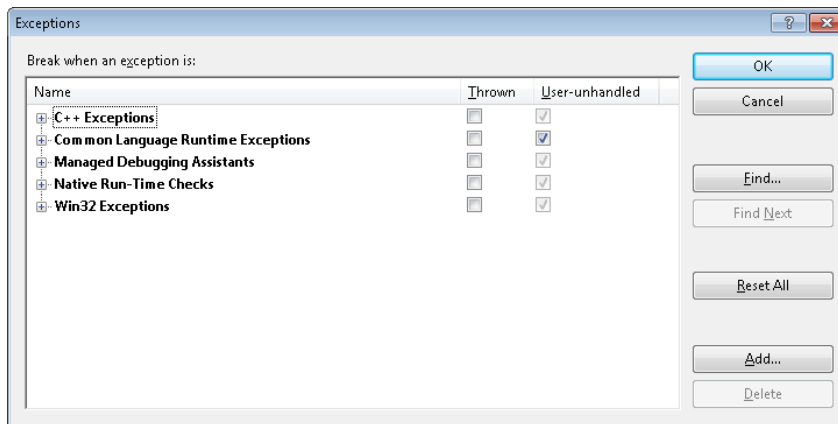
Simply click on (or in) any project, and the button becomes enabled so that you can add the reference to your project.

07.42 The Exceptions Dialog Box

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+E
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+E
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+E; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+E; Ctrl+D, E
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+E
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+E
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+E
WINDOWS	Alt,D, X
MENU	Debug Exceptions
COMMAND	Debug.Exceptions
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0039

By default, Visual Studio breaks only when an exception is not handled by user code. This can sometimes be problematic because the exception can bubble up through several calls far away from where the actual exception originally occurred, making it harder to find the problem.

You can use the Exceptions dialog box (Ctrl+Alt+E) to configure exceptions to break when they happen rather than checking to see whether they are unhandled:



The exceptions are divided up into five broad categories. Also, as shown in the preceding illustration, two options are provided: Thrown and User-Unhandled. When you check Thrown for any category or individual exception, it breaks when the exception occurs instead of waiting to see whether the user handles the exception.

Additionally, you can use the following buttons.

Find

Helps you search for a specific exception.

Reset All

Puts exceptions back to their default settings.

Add

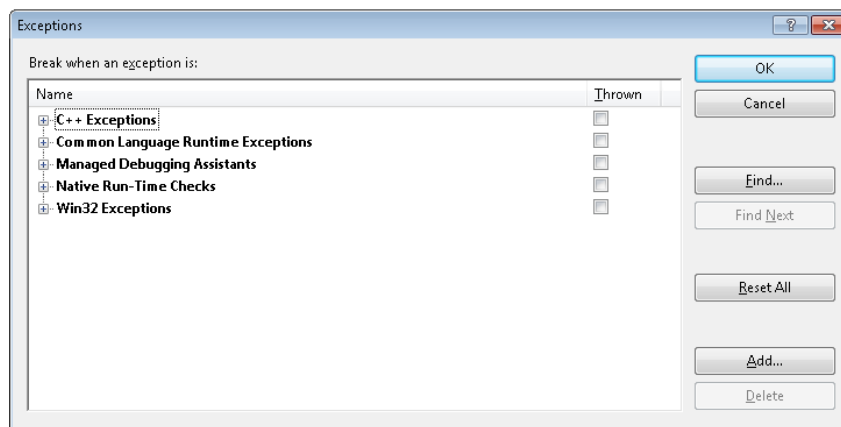
Allows you to add exceptions not currently in the list.

Delete

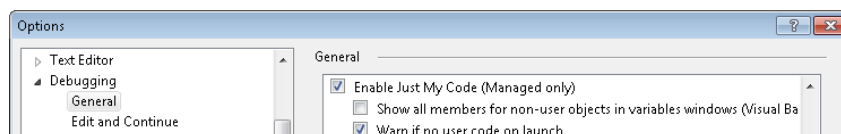
Lets you delete any added exceptions.

Special Case

You might find the User-Unhandled option missing from the Exceptions dialog box:



To get it back, go to Tools | Options | Debugging | General and select Enable Just My Code (Managed Only):



07.43 Setting a Breakpoint in the Call Stack Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+C
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+C; Ctrl+L
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+C; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+C; Ctrl+D, C
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+C; Ctrl+K; Alt+6
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+C; Alt+7
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+C
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, C
MENU	Debug Toggle Breakpoint
COMMAND	Debug.CallStack
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0008

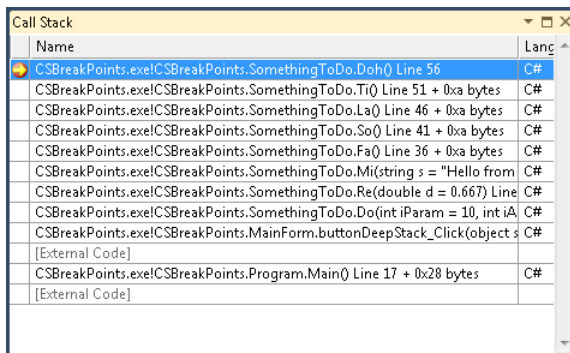
Did you know that breakpoints can be set inside the Call Stack window? This tip shows how to do it.

First, set a breakpoint deep in series of calls to get a nice call stack.

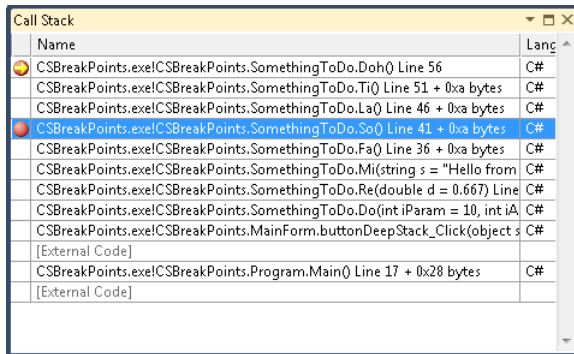


Note If you don't have a call stack handy, just make several methods called One, Two, Three, and so forth and have them call each other, as I have done in these examples.

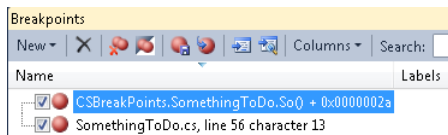
Run your code, and let it stop at the breakpoint. Bring up your Call Stack window (Ctrl+Alt+C or Debug | Windows | Call Stack):



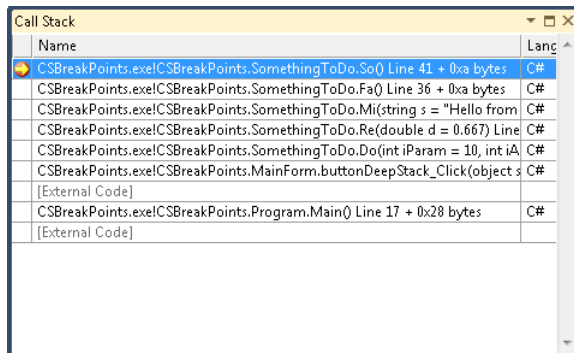
Click somewhere in the call stack you would like to stop at as it unwinds, and press F9:



It sets a breakpoint. You can verify this by looking in your Breakpoints window:



Now just press F5 to continue, and watch as the debugger stops at the place you told it to:



07.44 Setting a Tracepoint in the Call Stack Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+C
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+C; Ctrl+L
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+C; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+C; Ctrl+D, C
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+C; Ctrl+K; Alt+6
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+C; Alt+7
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+C
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, C
COMMAND	Debug.CallStack
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0009

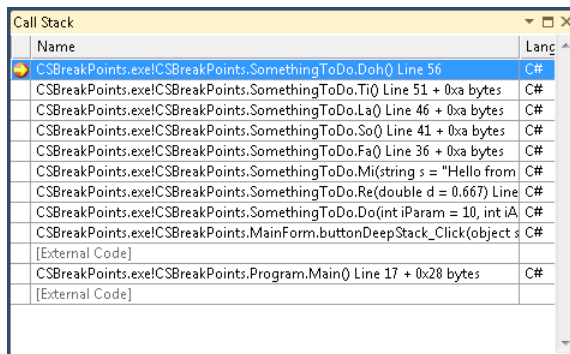
In vstipDebug0008 ("Setting a Breakpoint in the Call Stack Window," page 367), I showed you a classic technique of setting a breakpoint in the Call Stack window. The only problem is that breakpoints tend to be somewhat intrusive if all you want is information. So I thought it would be a good idea to also show how to set tracepoints. For more information about tracepoints, see vstipDebug0010 ("Setting a Tracepoint in Source Code," page 325).

1. Set a breakpoint deep in series of calls to get a nice call stack.

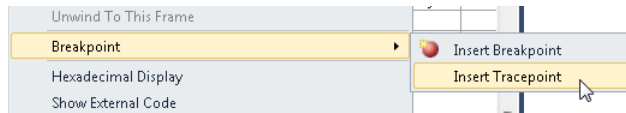


Note If you don't have a call series handy, just make several methods called One, Two, Three, and so forth, and have them call each other, as I have done in these examples.

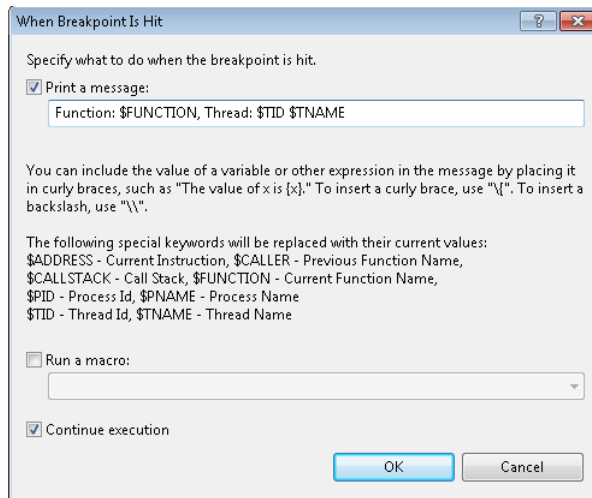
2. Run your code, and let it stop at the breakpoint.
3. Bring up your Call Stack window (Ctrl+Alt+C or Debug | Windows | Call Stack):



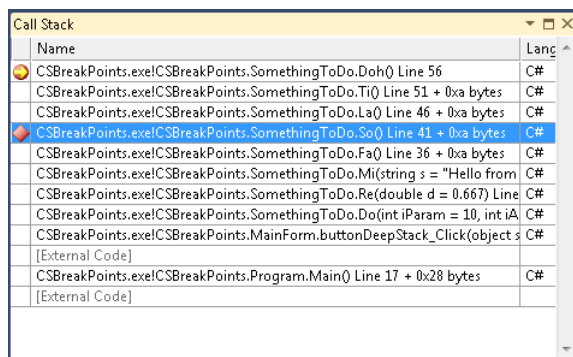
4. Right-click some place in the stack where you would like to set a tracepoint, and go to Breakpoint | Insert Tracepoint:



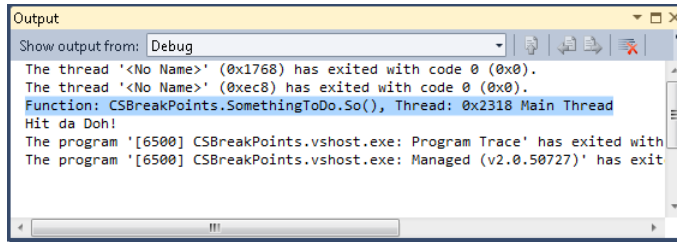
5. You get the When Breakpoint Is Hit dialog box:



6. You definitely want to get up to speed on the details of tracepoints if you aren't familiar with them (see `vstipDebug0010`, "Setting a Tracepoint in Source Code," on page 325), but for now, just click OK.
7. Now we get our tracepoint. (Notice the diamond glyph.)



8. Press F5 to continue the program and let the call stack unwind.
9. Now bring up your Output window (Debug | Windows | Output), and notice that the trace information is in there:



07.45 Using the WPF Tree Visualizer

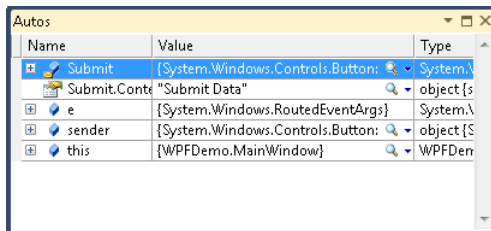
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0004

The WPF Tree Visualizer started out as a CodePlex project and ended up in the product itself as a visualizer. This tip shows how you can use it.

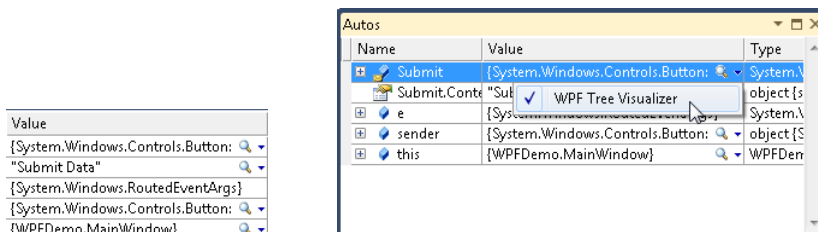


Note For those unfamiliar with WPF trees, you might want to review the article “Trees in WPF,” at [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms753391\(VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms753391(VS.100).aspx).

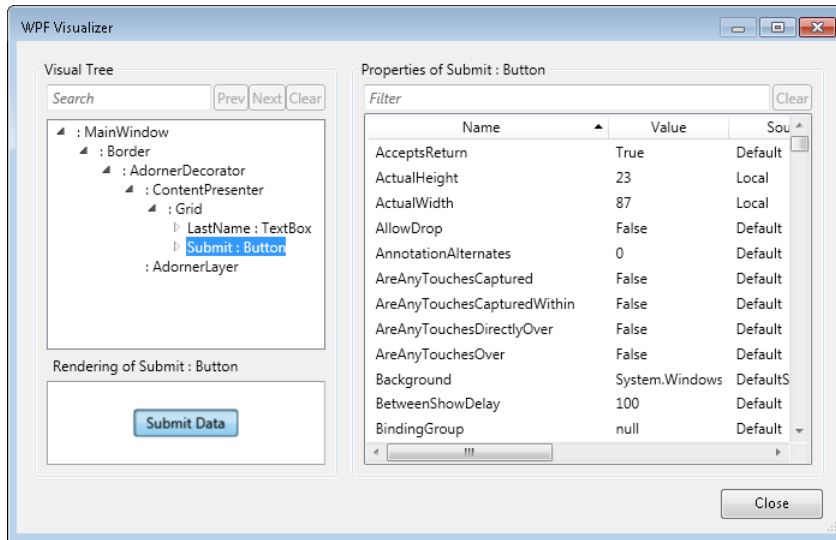
Enter Debug mode in any WPF project you have. Then take a look at a DataTip, the Watch window, the Autos window, or the Locals window. For this example, let’s use the Autos window:



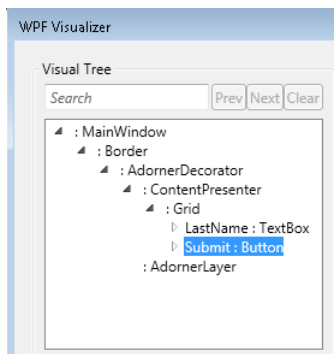
Choose any control in the Autos window, and then click the magnifying glass way over to the right of the control name:



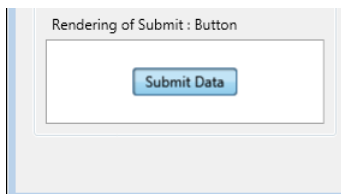
On the drop-down list, choose WPF Tree Visualizer to get the following dialog box:



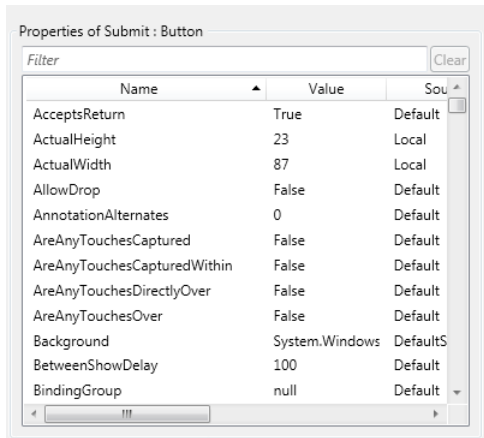
This dialog box has a lot of moving parts, so let's take a look at each one. First, the Visual Tree section shows you the hierarchy of the controls:



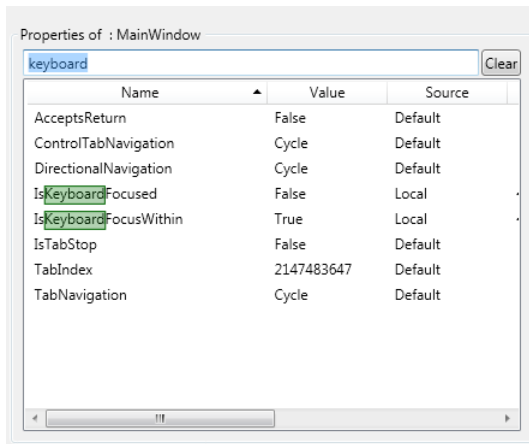
Clicking on any particular node of the tree shows you the rendering at the bottom:



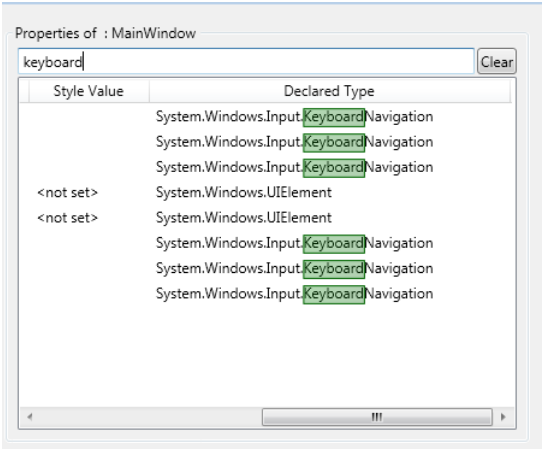
Also, the selected control has its properties displayed in the large area to the right:



In both the Visual Tree and the Properties area, you can search or filter the results by typing into the Search or Filter text boxes respectively:



Warning Watch out for the results because they might not be what you expect. See the extra items in the list that don't have the word "keyboard" in them? How did they get there? Well, if I scroll to the right and look at other properties, you can see how it happened. Currently, there is no way that I am aware of to change this behavior.



07.46

Understanding Break All Processes When One Process Breaks

MENU	Tools Options Debugging General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0029

In vstipEnv0015 (“Multiple Startup Projects,” page 48), we examined how to run multiple projects at the same time. Now let’s explore what happens when you go into break mode on the applications. By default, when you break one application, all the other applications break too. Let’s take a look at an example.

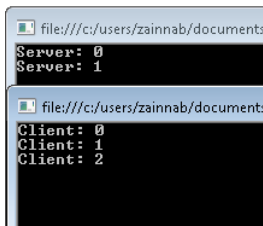
You set a breakpoint in your first application that has a hit counter on it (see vstipDebug0019, “Breakpoint Hit Count,” on page 314):

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    for (int counter = 0; counter <= 20; counter++)
    {
        Console.WriteLine("Server: " + counter);
        System.Threading.Thread.Sleep(1000);
    }
}
```

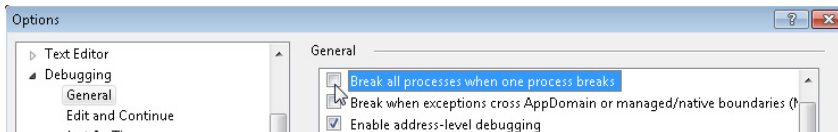

But you don't have any breakpoints in your second application:

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    for (int counter2 = 0; counter2 <= 20; counter2++)
    {
        Console.WriteLine("Client: " + counter2);
        System.Threading.Thread.Sleep(1000);
    }
}
```

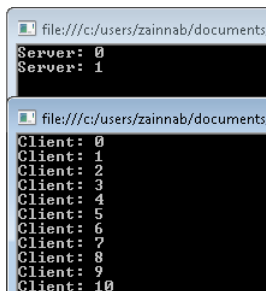
When you run the applications, you get the following:



Both applications stop when one of them stops. This behavior is set in Tools | Options | Debugging | General by selecting the Break All Processes When One Process Breaks check box:



If you turn this feature off and run your applications again, you see the following (predictable) result:



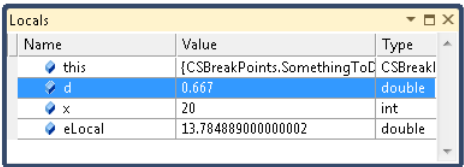
07.47 Changing Context in the Locals Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+V, L (locals); Ctrl+5 then Alt+Down Arrow (process combo); Ctrl+6 then Alt+Down Arrow (thread combo); Ctrl+7 then Alt+Down Arrow (stack frame combo)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, L (locals); Ctrl+5 then Alt+Down Arrow (process combo); Ctrl+6 then Alt+Down Arrow (thread combo); Ctrl+7 then Alt+Down Arrow (stack frame combo)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+V, L (locals); Ctrl+D, Ctrl+L (locals); Ctrl+D, L (locals); Ctrl+5 then Alt+Down Arrow (process combo); Ctrl+6 then Alt+Down Arrow (thread combo); Ctrl+7 then Alt+Down Arrow (stack frame combo)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+V, L (locals); Alt+3 (locals); Ctrl+5 then Alt+Down Arrow (process combo); Ctrl+6 then Alt+Down Arrow (thread combo); Ctrl+7 then Alt+Down Arrow (stack frame combo)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, L (locals); Alt+4 (locals); Ctrl+5 then Alt+Down Arrow (process combo); Ctrl+6 then Alt+Down Arrow (thread combo); Ctrl+7 then Alt+Down Arrow (stack frame combo)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, L (locals); Ctrl+Alt+L (locals); Ctrl+5 then Alt+Down Arrow (process combo); Ctrl+6 then Alt+Down Arrow (thread combo); Ctrl+7 then Alt+Down Arrow (stack frame combo)
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, L (locals)
MENU	Debug Windows Locals
COMMAND	Debug.Locals; Debug.LocationToolBar.ProcessCombo; Debug.LocationToolBar.ThreadCombo; Debug.LocationToolBar.StackFrameCombo
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0101

Most people are familiar with the Locals window. For those who aren't, it displays variables local to the current context or scope. Information often appears in the Locals window, but the information will not be current until the next time the program breaks.

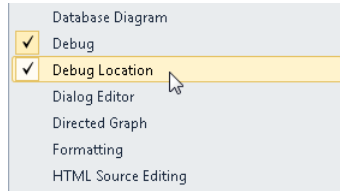
Even those who are familiar with the Locals window might not know that you can change the context. When you are in break mode, bring up the Locals window (Ctrl+Alt+V, L):

```
double eLocal = x + d;  
eLocal = eLocal * d;  
Mi("A me so la ti do");  
}
```



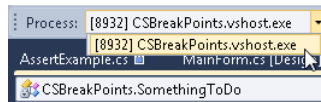
Debug Location Toolbar

You can use the Debug Location toolbar to change the context of the Locals window. If you don't have it up, you can right-click any toolbar and select Debug Location to make it appear:



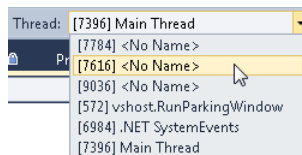
Process

If you have multiple processes running, you can use the Process combo box (Ctrl+5) to change between them. In this example, we only have one process running:



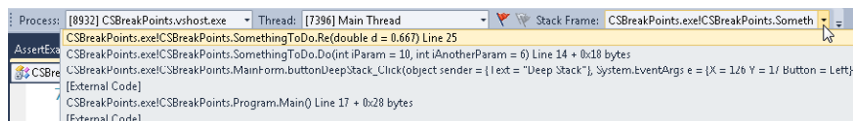
Thread

The Thread combo (Ctrl+6) lets you change the thread context to different threads. While not of much use in this example, it is very useful in debugging multithreaded applications:

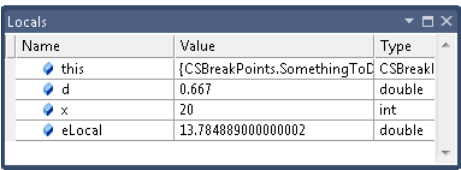


Stack Frame

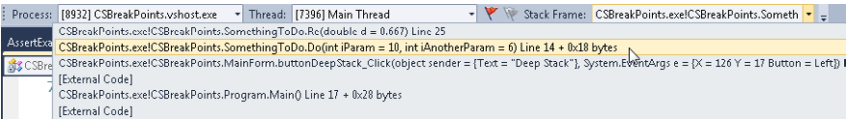
The stack frame is probably the more common item you use when dealing with the Locals window. The Stack Frame combo box (Ctrl+7) allows you to switch between items in the call stack:



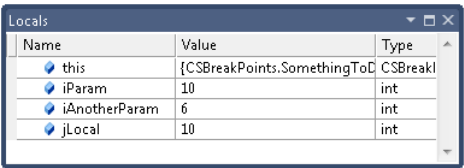
Currently, we're in the one method and the Locals window shows the following:



Let's change to another method in our code:



Now our Locals window shows the following:



Now you too can take advantage of the Debug Location toolbar to change your context and get new information in the Locals window.

07.48 Understanding the Autos Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+V, A
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, A
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+V, A; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+A; Ctrl+D, A
VISUAL C++ 2:	Ctrl+Alt+V, A
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, A
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, A
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, A
MENU	Debug Windows Autos
COMMAND	Debug.Autos
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0103

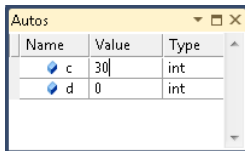
The Autos window looks a lot like the Locals window, but let's take a closer look. According to the MSDN website ([http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa290702\(VS.71\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa290702(VS.71).aspx)), here is what it does:

"The Autos window displays variables used in the current statement and the previous statement. (For Visual Basic, it displays variables in the current statement and three statements on either side of the current statement.)"

The current statement is the statement at the current execution location (the statement that will be executed next if execution continues). The debugger identifies these variables for you automatically, hence the window name."

Changing Values

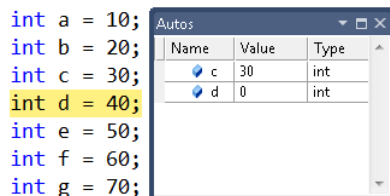
Just like the Locals window, you can change values in the Autos window:



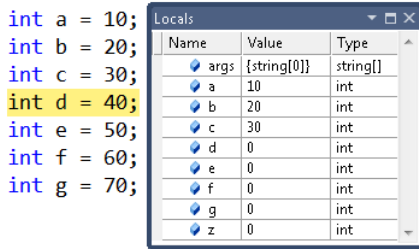
Current and Previous Statement

Simple Example

OK let's break this down. The Autos window does, in fact, show variables used in the current statement and previous statement. Following is a simple example in C# with some variables:



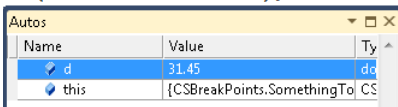
As you can see, it just shows the variable on the current line and the one before it—nothing else. Even though several lines have variables around them, the Autos window is not concerned with those variables. Now compare this to the Locals window that shows every variable in scope:



Another Example

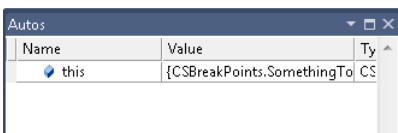
I thought it would be instructive to see, step-by-step, how this works. Here I have stopped in some code:

```
d = 0.667;
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
double eLocal = 0.002;
eLocal = eLocal * d;
Mi("A me so la ti do");
```



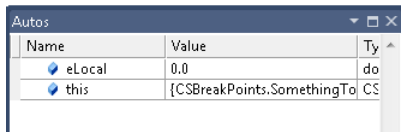
Notice that it shows the current variable and the object variable that exists all the time. Now I go down two lines:

```
d = 0.667;
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
Debug.WriteLine("blah");
double eLocal = 0.002;
eLocal = eLocal * d;
Mi("A me so la ti do");
```



All I'm left with is the object variable. I go down another three lines:

```
d = 0.667;  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
double eLocal = 0.002;  
eLocal = eLocal * d;  
Mi("A me so la ti do");
```

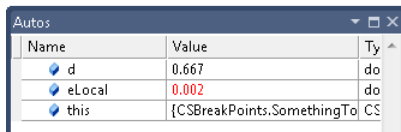


The Autos window displays the following data:

Name	Value	Type
eLocal	0.0	do
this	{CSBreakPoints.SomethingTo	CS

Now I can see that “eLocal” is about to be used, and I go down one more line:

```
d = 0.667;  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
Debug.WriteLine("blah");  
double eLocal = 0.002;  
eLocal = eLocal * d;  
Mi("A me so la ti do");
```



The Autos window displays the following data:

Name	Value	Type
d	0.667	do
eLocal	0.002	do
this	{CSBreakPoints.SomethingTo	CS

I can finally see that “eLocal” has changed, and “d” has shown up again because it is being used on the current line.

VB Shows Three Statements on Either Side

In versions prior to 2010, VB would, in fact, show three statements on either side of the current line. This is no longer true in Visual Studio 2010. The Autos window in Visual Basic acts just like the C++ and C# Autos windows and shows only the current line and the one prior.

Part II

Extensions for Visual Studio

In this part:

Chapter 8: Visual Studio Extensions. 385

Chapter 8

Visual Studio Extensions

The new code editor is one of the most impressive improvements of the Visual Studio 2010 Integrated Development Environment (IDE). Built on top of Windows Presentation Foundation (WPF) and the Managed Extensibility Framework, the combination of user interface–rich flexibility plus plug-in extensibility takes innovation within Visual Studio to the next level.

Introducing Visual Studio Extensions

In addition to the editor, the Visual Studio 2010 IDE introduces a new WPF-based shell. Many core user interface features are now WPF-based, including menus, window layouts, toolbars, start page, and so forth.

Even if you’ve never developed any applications for use within Visual Studio, it is important to know that the SDK tooling has significantly improved, paving the way for a much richer Visual Studio ecosystem.

Gone are the days of requesting a package load key or a shell load key to develop Visual Studio applications. No more having to make modifications to the registry to install a Visual Studio plug-in.

The goals of this chapter are twofold: to provide a basic overview on how to find and install extensions and to catalogue the “must-have” extensions available for free for the Visual Studio 2010 IDE.

Welcome to the new world of Visual Studio extensions.

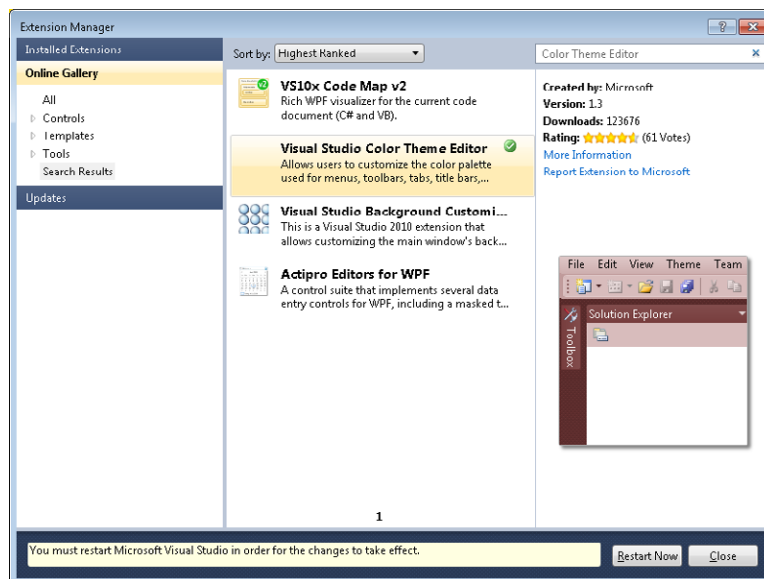
Installing an Extension

The development experience has greatly improved for Visual Studio 2010, providing additional ways for installing extensions. The preferred and most straightforward way to install an extension is through a new Visual Studio 2010 feature called the Extension Manager. Located within the IDE, the Extension Manager searches an online gallery, called the Visual Studio Gallery, for extensions. The Extension Manager also manages the installed and currently in-use extensions.

Installing from the Extension Manager

To open the Extension Manager from within Visual Studio, go to Tools | Extension Manager. To search for an extension online, select Online Gallery in the left navigation pane. Type in the name of the extension to search for within the Search Online Gallery text box. For example, you can search for “Color Theme Editor” to find the Visual Studio Color Theme Editor extension.

When the desired extension is found, click the Download button to install. When the install has completed, a message appears at the bottom of the Extension Manager dialog box, as shown in the following illustration.



A Visual Studio restart is required for all extensions, except for templates. Click Restart Now to restart Visual Studio and enable the extension.

Installing from the Visual Studio Gallery

Another addition to Visual Studio 2010 is the Visual Studio Gallery, a website that provides a catalog of free and commercial extensions for Visual Studio. Naturally, developers writing extensions have the option of hosting the extension on their own websites, but hosting in the Visual Studio Gallery greatly increases discoverability of the extension. Additionally, you can find a significant number of tools for all past Visual Studio IDE versions from 2002 onward in the Visual Studio Gallery.

The Visual Studio Gallery is located at www.visualstudiogallery.com. To browse for extensions built for Visual Studio 2010, click Browse and then select Visual Studio 2010 under Visual Studio Versions in the left navigation bar.

When the desired extension is found, click the Download image link to begin the download and installation.

Visual Studio Color Theme Editor Free

CREATED BY	Matthew Johnson [MSFT] (Microsoft)	LAST UPDATED
REVIEWS	☆☆☆☆☆ (61) Review	VERSION
SUPPORTS	Visual Studio 2010	SHARE
DOWNLOADS	Download (123,677)	FAVORITES
TAGS	theme , themes , Visual Studio 2010 , theming ,	

You can either open the .vsix file to begin the installation or save the file to install at a later time. If you chose to save the file, you can double-click the .vsix file at any time to start the installation. Otherwise, simply click Open to begin installing the extension. The Visual Studio Extension Manager prompts you to accept a license if one was provided with the extension.

A restart is required to finish installing the extension. The Extension Manager shows a “restart required” message at the bottom of the dialog box. A Visual Studio restart is required for all extensions, except for templates. Click Restart Now to restart Visual Studio and enable the extension.

Installing Through Xcopy

Because the SDK tooling has been greatly simplified, such that registry modifications are no longer necessary, it is possible to install an extension simply by copying the extension file into a specific Visual Studio folder. This method of installation through copying files is known as Xcopy deployment.

All installed extensions can be found in an unzipped format at the following location:

```
%LocalAppData%\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Extensions\<Company>\<Product>\<Version>
```

Extensions installed through the Xcopy method are disabled by default within Visual Studio. You must manually enable the extension, as described next.

To install an extension through this method, you must do the following:

1. Unzip the .vsix file.
2. Copy the .vsix raw folder into the Extensions folder.
3. Start Visual Studio, and enable the extension in the Extension Manager.

Conversely, you can uninstall any extension simply by deleting its corresponding folder from the %LocalAppData%\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Extensions directory.

Inside a .vsix File

Although creating extensions is beyond the scope of this book, it's important to be aware how content written by members of the community is installed and run on your computer, especially in the case where you need to troubleshoot a faulty extension.

All Visual Studio extensions use the .vsix file extension. A .vsix file is a .zip file (with its file extension renamed to .vsix) that uses the Open Packaging Convention to package the code and manifest for the extension. You can read more about the contents of a .vsix file on Quan To's blog at <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/quanto/archive/2009/05/26/what-is-a-vsix.aspx>.

As described on Quan To's article, the .vsix file is derived from the Visual Studio Installer found in the Visual Studio 2005 and 2008 versions. The original .vsi file launches the Content Installer from these past Visual Studio versions. The .vsi file represented many various types of content for the Visual Studio IDE (macros, add-ins, toolbox controls, code snippets, and so forth). To make the distinction clearer from this previous method of installing content, an 'x' was placed at the end of the extension, hence a .vsix file.

For more information about the Open Packaging Convention, please see the article titled "A New Standard For Packaging Your Data," at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/magazine/cc163372.aspx>.

Disabling an Extension

If you need to disable an extension for any reason—for example, the Visual Studio performance is slower than expected, the IDE crashes repeatedly, or the extension is simply not working—you can disable an extension via Extension Manager.

Select Installed Extensions in the left navigation pane of the Extension Manager, and then click Disable on any extension in the list. Again, a restart is required to disable the extension.



Note You can disable or re-enable multiple extensions at the same time within the Extension Manager, requiring only one restart of the Visual Studio IDE.

Uninstalling an Extension

The most straightforward way to uninstall an extension is through the Extension Manager. Select Installed Extension in the left navigation pane of the Extension Manager, and then click Uninstall on any extension in the list. Again, a restart is required to remove the extension.



Note You can uninstall or reinstall multiple extensions at the same time within the Extension Manager, requiring only one restart of the Visual Studio IDE.

The other way to uninstall an extension is to delete the contents of the extension from the Visual Studio extension folder on your hard drive. Simply delete the extension .vsix file from the %LocalAppData%\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Extensions directory, and restart Visual Studio.

Resources for Developing Extensions

As noted, creating and developing extensions are beyond the scope of this book. However, many great resources are available, such as the following:

- **Visual Studio Extensibility Developer Center**—<http://msdn.com/vsx>
- **Extensibility samples**—<http://code.msdn.microsoft.com/vsx>

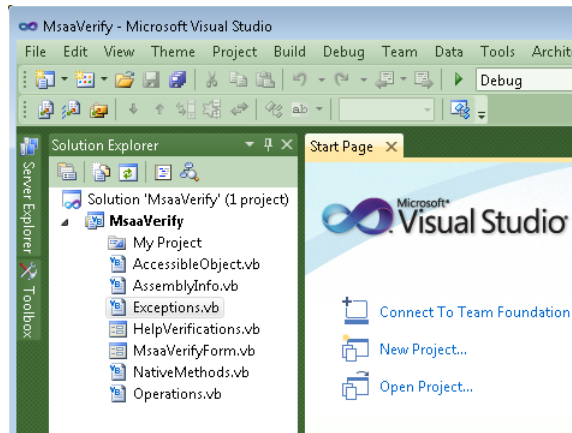
08.01 Create Themes Using All Visual Studio Elements

NAME	Visual Studio Color Theme Editor
CREATED BY	Matthew Johnson (Microsoft)
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/20cd93a2-c435-4d00-a797-499f16402378?SRC=Home

You can use the Visual Studio Color Theme Editor to create themes consisting of colors that go beyond those listed in the Tools | Options | Fonts And Colors page.

Visual Studio Color Theme Editor

The most useful feature of the Visual Studio Color Theme Editor extension is that it provides a central location for controlling almost all possible colors in the IDE. No more having to edit individual fonts and colors options under Tools | Options. Refer to the “To Customize” section later in this section for more information about how to use this feature.

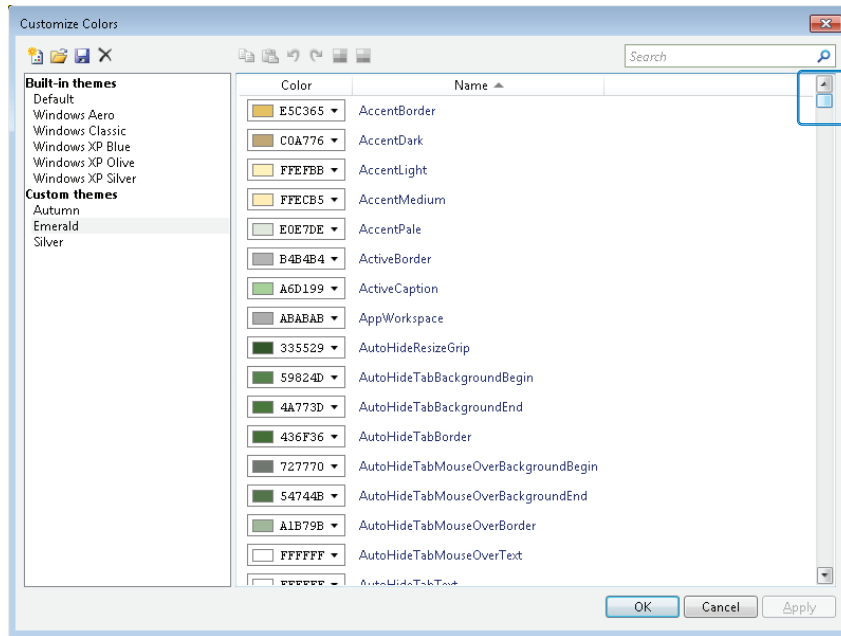


To Use

A Theme menu option is located on the Visual Studio file menu. The Theme menu lists multiple themes for you to choose from, including the Windows Classic look.

To Customize

You can create your own themes by clicking Theme | Customize Colors and choosing from hundreds of customized colors. This list of colors is significantly longer than the list found on the Tools | Options | Fonts And Colors page, because this extension lists every user interface element that implements the Visual Studio color service.



You can create new themes by clicking the Save button located in the toolbar in the upper-left corner. All themes are saved as .xml files, using the .vstheme file extension name. You can share a .vstheme file with others.

More Information

Make sure you check out the extension developer's blog post at <http://blogs.msdn.com/visualstudio/archive/2010/01/04/changing-visual-studio-s-color-palette.aspx> for an in-depth overview of the extension.

08.02 Insert Images into Your Code

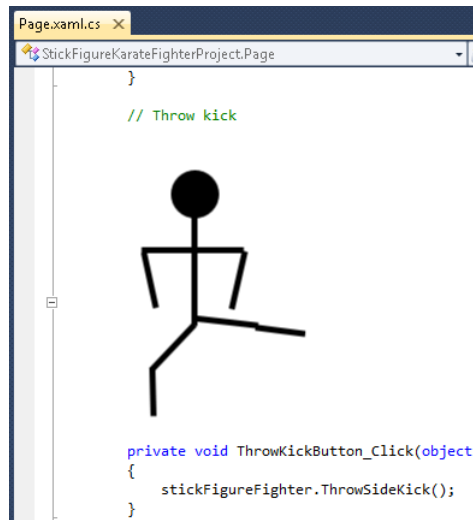
NAME	Image Insertion
CREATED BY	Microsoft
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/793d16d0-235a-439a-91df-4ce7c721df12

The Image Insertion tool allows you insert images, such as a UML diagram, directly into your code. Another example is including user interface designs within your code for documentation purposes.

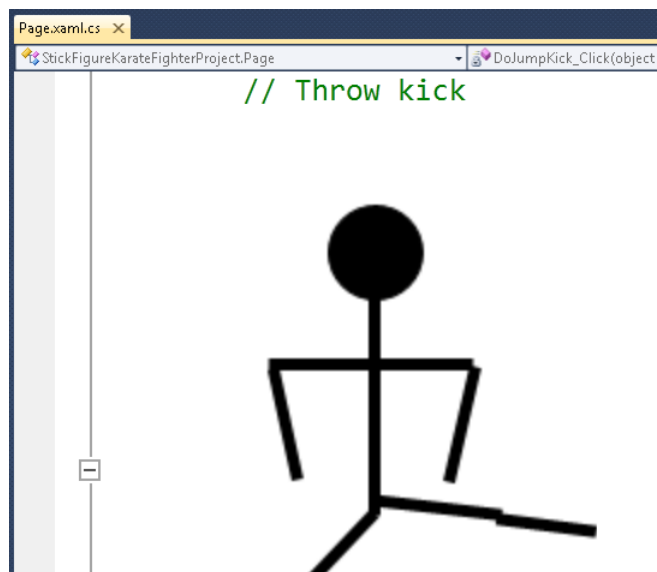
Image Insertion

Regardless of usage, the Image Insertion extension demonstrates that the Visual Studio 2010 editor is new and that creative extensions are possible.

Recall that the Visual Studio code editor is written using the Windows Presentation Foundation (WPF). The following illustration shows a Silverlight illustration of a hand-drawn stick figure at 100 percent zoom.



When the editor zoom is increased to 200 percent, notice how both the text *and the stick figure image* increase at the same ratio.



It is worth mentioning that this is not a separate designer built solely for this purpose. This is the actual Visual Studio code editor displaying the image.

To Use

Select an image from either a Windows Explorer window or Solution Explorer, and drag the image onto the editor surface. To successfully insert the image, you must see the blue placeholder line, as shown in the following illustration. Also note that Visual Studio inserts the image directly *above* the blue line.



To remove the inserted image, place the mouse directly over the image until a Close button appears. Click the X button in the upper-right corner to remove the inserted image. The user interface is sensitive, so it is best to move the mouse slowly towards the X button to avoid having the controls disappear.

To resize the inserted image, use the mouse to grip the arrow controls, just as you would resize any standard window.

To Save

The images are not saved as part of the code file. The images are saved in a separate .resx file. In this example, because the image is inserted in a Page.xaml.cs file, the image is saved in a Page.xml.Images.resx file, which is viewable in Solution Explorer. Most source control management systems allow users to customize whether .resx files should be included in a source code check-in.

To Customize

Although this extension doesn't come with any options to configure, the source code is available for tweaking at <http://editorsamples.codeplex.com>.

08.03 Add Visual Guidelines to Your Code

NAME	Editor Guidelines, Editor Guidelines UI
CREATED BY	Paul Harrington (Microsoft)
LOCATIONS	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/0fbf2878-e678-4577-9fdb-9030389b338c http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/7f2a6727-2993-4c1d-8f58-ae24df14ea91

The Editor Guidelines displays vertical lines within your code to help you visualize regions, end of printable margins, and so forth.

Editor Guidelines

Although this feature has been in many previous versions of Visual Studio, it was necessary to modify the registry to use the feature. This extension brings the guidelines feature back to Visual Studio 2010 and includes options within the Visual Studio IDE to modify the guidelines.

```
#Region "Public Methods"
' get the control's hwnd
Public ReadOnly Property Hwnd() As IntPtr
    Get
        If Me.m_hwnd.ToInt32 = 0 Then
            Dim handle As IntPtr

            ' get a handle from the accessible object we have
            NativeMethods.WindowFromAccessibleObject(m_msaa, handle)

            ' create an accessible object
            Dim msaa As New AccessibleObject(Me.IAccessible)

            ' cache the hwnd for future use
            m_hwnd = handle

            Return handle
        Else
            Return Me.m_hwnd
        End If
    End Get
End Get
```

To Install

The Editor Guidelines extension consists of two extensions:

- **Editor Guidelines** (<http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/0fbf2878-e678-4577-9fdb-9030389b338c>)—This extension brings back the guidelines feature; however, it requires modifications to the registry to use the guidelines.
- **Editor Guidelines UI** (<http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/7f2a6727-2993-4c1d-8f58-ae24df14ea91>)—This extension provides options within Visual Studio to use the guidelines, instead of manually editing the registry



Note The Editor Guidelines UI extension is an extension of the Editor Guidelines extension. The ability to extend an extension from another extension is a feature of the Managed Extensibility Framework. To install the Editor Guidelines UI extension, the Editor Guidelines extension must be installed first; otherwise, the Extension Manager displays an error message.

To Use

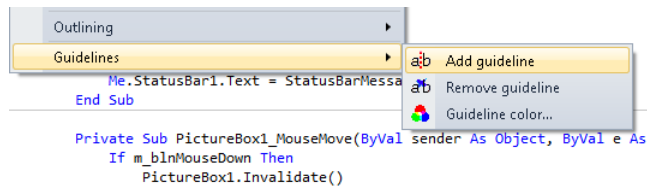
If you plan to use only the first extension, you need to manually edit the registry, so use at your own risk! The registry key for the guidelines feature is the same as in previous versions of Visual Studio: [HKEY_CURRENT_USER]\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Text Editor.

You need to create a new REG_SZ string called “Guides” to store the information for the guideline. For example, the string “RGB(0,255,0) 100” sets a green guideline on column 100. To add additional guidelines, add the other column numbers to the Guides value separated by commas, such as RGB(0, 255, 0) 5, 60, 100.

If you have the Editor Guidelines UI extension installed, things are a lot simpler.

Right-click wherever you wish to place the guideline, and from the context menu, select **Add Guideline**.

To remove the guideline, place your cursor on the column where you wish to remove the guideline, right-click, and select **Remove Guideline**.



To Customize

To customize the colors for the guideline, select **Guideline Color** from the context menu, and select colors from the color palette window.

08.04 Get More IntelliSense in Your XAML Editor

NAME	XAML IntelliSense Presenter
CREATED BY	Karl Shifflett
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/1a67eee3-fdd1-4745-b290-09d649d07ee0

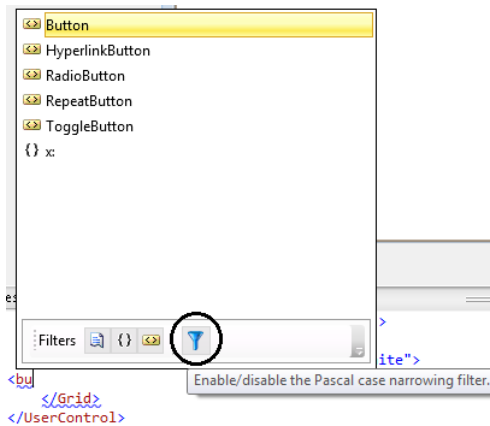
The XAML IntelliSense Presenter extension allows you to use the new Pascal casing and list filtering IntelliSense features in your XAML code.

XAML IntelliSense Presenter

If you’ve grown accustomed to the new Pascal casing and list filtering features in IntelliSense, you’ll be happy to know that the Visual Studio 2010 XAML Editor IntelliSense extension gives you these features and more in the XAML editor.

To Use

Start typing in any XAML editor to bring up IntelliSense. As you start typing, you can see the Pascal case narrowing the available selection. The Pascal case narrowing filter option is enabled by default, as circled in the following illustration.



You can also toggle whether code snippets, namespaces, or element tags appear in IntelliSense.

For More Information

Check out the developer’s blog post for this extension: <http://karlshifflett.wordpress.com/2010/03/21/visual-studio-2010-xaml-editor-intellisense-presenter-extension>.

08.05 Sync the Solution Explorer to the Current File

NAME	Solution Explorer Tools
CREATED BY	Chris McGraph
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/ef4ac3e9-d056-4383-8ca2-11721bd879b4

The Solution Explorer Tools extension provides you with greater control over how and when the Solution Explorer syncs to the currently opened document.

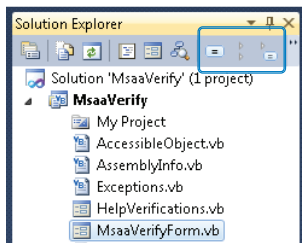
Solution Explorer Tools

The Solution Explorer Tools extension provides additional features on the Solution Explorer toolbar for controlling the opened solution.

To Use

For this extension to work properly, you must *uncheck* the Track Active Item in Solution Explorer option found on the Tools | Options | Projects and Solutions | General page.

When the Tools extension is installed, several new buttons appear on the Solution Explorer toolbar, as shown in the following illustration.



The following list describes the buttons from left to right:

- **Sync Item**—This command places the active selection in the Solution Explorer to the currently opened document.
- **Collapse All**—This command recursively collapses everything in the Solution Explorer.
- **Collapse to Item**—This command combines the two previous commands by placing the active selection in the Solution Explorer to the currently opened item and collapsing everything else in the Solution Explorer.

You can also assign keyboard shortcuts to each of the following commands on the Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard page:

- Project.SyncItem
- Project.Collapseall
- Project.CollapseToItem

08.06 Add PowerCommands Options to the IDE

NAME	PowerCommands
CREATED BY	Microsoft
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/e5f41ad9-4edc-4912-bca3-91147db95b99

The PowerCommands extension provides additional tweaks for customizing the IDE.

PowerCommands for Visual Studio 2010

The PowerCommands have been a popular add-in for the past several previous versions of Visual Studio.

To Use

The PowerCommands extension provides additional options for customizing the IDE. These options are found on the Tools | Options | PowerCommands | General and Commands pages.

The following is a list of each of the PowerCommands options to help you discover all the ways you can further customize the IDE:

- **Format Document On Save**—Saving the file automatically formats the document.
- **Remove And Sort Usings On Save**—Saving the file automatically removes any unused using statements. This option automatically sorts all using statements in alphabetical order.
- **Remove and Sort Usings**—This command can be found on the Solution Explorer context menu at both the Solution level and at the individual project levels. It preforms the same functionality as the previous command.
- **Clear All Panes**—This command clears all Output Window subwindows at once. The Clear All Panes button is located just to the right of the Show Output From drop-down list on the Output Window toolbar.
- **Copy Path**—This command copies the full file path of the currently selected item in the Solution Explorer to the clipboard. It works with the solution node, a project node, any project item node, and any folder.
- **Email Code Snippet**—Select code in the editor, right-click to open the context menu, and select Email Code Snippet to email the code snippet. The subject of the generated email is based on the file name—for example, “Subject: CodeSnippet from Program.cs”.
- **Insert Guid Attribute**—To add a GUID attribute to a class, right-click anywhere within the class and select Insert Guid Attribute from the context menu.

- **Show All Files** This option places an additional Show All Files button on the Solution Explorer toolbar. The leftmost Show All Files button is for the current project, and the rightmost Show All Files button is for the entire solution.
- **Undo Close** To reopen the most-recently closed document, go to Edit | Undo Close. The keyboard shortcut is Ctrl+Shift+Z. The cursor is placed at its last known position. To see a list of all the most-recently closed documents, go to View | Other Windows | Undo Close Window.
- **Collapse Projects** To collapse everything under a project node, including any sub-nodes (this being the key difference from the standard Windows behavior), right-click and select Collapse Project from the Solution Explorer context menu. This command works for solutions, projects, and solution folders.
- **Copy Class / Paste Class** To copy and paste a class, select a project item (usually a class file) on the Solution Explorer that you want to copy. Right-click and select Copy Class from the context menu. Navigate to the project node, and right-click to see the Paste Class command.
- **Copy As Project Reference** Found on the Solution Explorer context menu, this command copies a project (from its project node) and pastes it into another project node as a project reference.
- **Edit Project File** The Edit Project File option unloads a project and automatically opens the file in the editor for editing.
- **Open Containing Folder** Similar to the command found on the file tabs and in the Solution Explorer for a node, this command opens the containing folder for an item in the Solution Explorer.
- **Open Command Prompt** This option opens a Visual Studio command prompt directly from the Solution Explorer.
- **Unload Projects / Reload Projects** Similar to the built-in command for unloading a project, the Unload Projects command (found on the Solution Explorer context menu for a project node) unloads all the projects in a solution.
- **Extract Constant** Found under the Refactor menu, the Extract Constant creates a constant based on the selected text.
- **Clear Recent File List** This command removes specified recent files. In past versions of Visual Studio, this clearing required manual modifications to the registry. The command is found on the File | Recent Files menu as Clear Recent File List. This command opens a window for you to specify which files to clear.
- **Clear Recent Project List** Similar to the Clear Recent File List, this command removes projects specified by the user.

- **Close All** Found on the file tab context menu, this command closes all open documents.

For More Information

For more information about the PowerCommands extension, you can read the following blog post: <http://saraford.net/2010/09/07/power-commands-for-visual-studio-2010-extension-8>.

08.07 Use Emacs Commands in the Editor

NAME	Emacs Emulation
CREATED BY	Microsoft
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/09dc58c4-6f47-413a-9176-742be7463f92

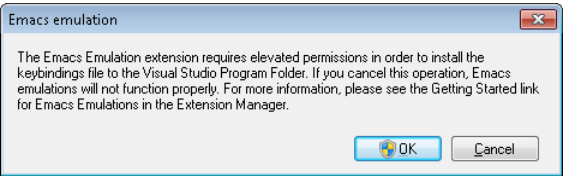
The Emacs Commands extension provides basic support for Emacs keybindings and text editing commands.

Emacs Emulation

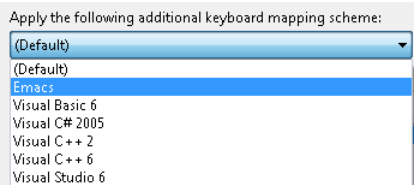
This extension brings back the Emacs commands for the Visual Studio 2010 editor.

To Use

To finish installing the extension, you must open a project or create a new project. Opening a project prompts you for elevated permissions to finish installing the Emacs.vsk file (the Emacs keyboard shortcut file) to the Visual Studio IDE folder located under Program Files directory. Elevated permissions are required because only user accounts with administrator privileges can reach this folder by default in Windows.



Select **Emacs** in the Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard page's scheme drop-down list to enable the Emacs emulation experience.



To Uninstall

When you disable or uninstall the extension, the Emacs option remains selected in the Tools | Options | Keyboard list. You must go back to the Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard page and select the “(Default)” key bindings or your preferred keyboard mapping scheme.

If you forget to change the keyboard mapping scheme, you’ll notice a great many commands and keyboard shortcuts not working in the editor, such as Ctrl+F for the Find window.

Because administrator rights were required to add this file, you also need administrator rights to remove it. Unlike the install scenario for opening or creating a project, there isn’t an opportunity for the extension to prompt you to remove the .vsk file. For example, the extension cannot prompt you the next time you open a project (as in the install scenario) because the extension itself is already gone.

You can manually delete the Emacs.vsk file at your own risk, but there is no impact to Visual Studio if you decide to keep the file.

More Information

You can find more information about all the Emacs keyboard shortcuts supported by the extension at the following location: <http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/09dc58c4-6f47-413a-9176-742be7463f92>.

08.08 Submit to “The Daily WTF”

NAME	The Daily WTF
CREATED BY	Inedo.com
LOCATION	http://inedo.com/Downloads/SubmitToWTF.aspx
SOURCE CODE LOCATION	http://code.google.com/p/submittotdwtf
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010

Have you ever inherited source code so poorly written that you’ve asked a colleague to come into your office to take a look? If so, this extension is for you.

Share Bad Code with the World

Started in May 2004, “The Daily WTF” (also known as “The Daily Worse Than Failure”) is a blog dedicated to poorly written code, poor project management decisions, and bizarre interview stories.

This extension allows you to submit a code snippet directly from your code editor to “The Daily WTF.” It is the equivalent of using the website’s contact form to submit a code suggestion.

It is a little-known fact that Sara Ford's writing style for the "Visual Studio 2008 Tip of the Day" series was inspired by Alex Papadimoulis' writing style for "The Daily WTF." The idea of providing personal commentary alongside factual information was very appealing for a daily tip series. (Thank you, Alex!)

To Install

At the time of this writing, this extension is not located on the Visual Studio Gallery.

You can download the extension from <http://inedo.com/Downloads/SubmitToWTF.aspx>. Links for both Visual Studio 2010 and Visual Studio 2005/2008 appear on the page. After you have downloaded the extension, unzip the folder and double-click the SubmitToWTF2010.vsix file.

To Use

Select code within a code editor, and open the context menu to see the Submit To TDWTF command appear. Click the Submit To TDWTF command to open a dialog box that requests additional information about the code snippet. Additionally, there is an option to request that the code snippet is not published.

More Information

You can find more information about The Daily WTF at <http://thedailywtf.com>.

08.09 Diff Files Using the Editor

NAME	CodeCompare
CREATED BY	Devart Software
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/dace3633-0b51-4629-85d4-c59cdce5bb3b
VERSIONS	2008, 2010

You can compare code side-by-side within the Visual Studio Editor by using the CodeCompare extension.

CodeCompare

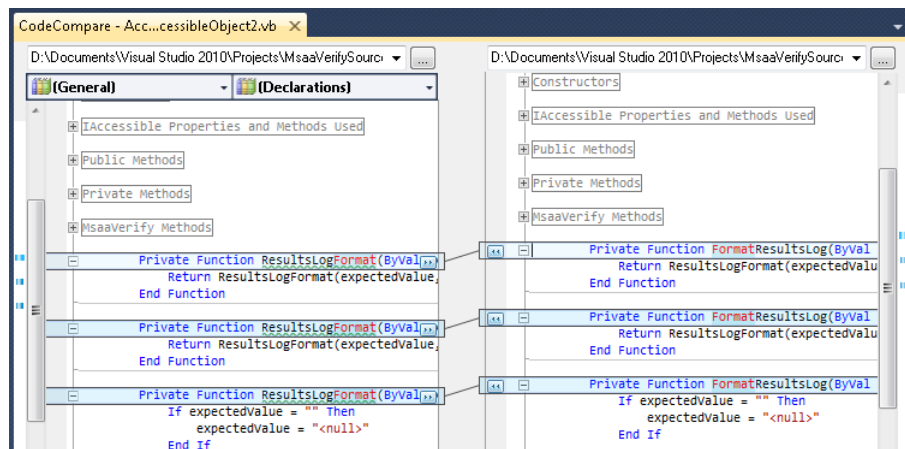
The CodeCompare tool uses the Visual Studio code editor to compare two files side-by-side, allowing you to continue using all the Visual Studio code editor functionality, like syntax coloring, IntelliSense, Ctrl+Mouse Wheel zooming, and so on.

To Install

The CodeCompare tool does not use the new Visual Studio Extensibility model, so it is not found in the Extension Manager. To install, run the executable file hosted on the Visual Studio Gallery and follow the instructions in the setup wizard.

To Use

To start the CodeCompare tool, go to Tools | CodeCompare | New Comparison. This action opens a new code comparison view alongside your code files using the Visual Studio code editor. Simply select two different files to compare to start seeing a visual representation of the differences between the files.



Features

CodeCompare is a fully functional code comparing tool, but a few features are worth mentioning, including the following:

- **Merge Code** Move code from one comparison view to the other. Each indicated line that is different per view has a << or a >> symbol that illustrates it is possible to merge that line or block of code to the other file.
- **Structure Comparison** Compare code by its structure, namely its classes, fields, and methods. This comparison is shown in the Difference Explorer. Oddly enough, in the free version of CodeCompare, attempting to click within the Difference Explorer clears its contents. The cursor focus must remain within the code editor for the Difference Explorer to show the structural differences between the code files.

- **New Folder Comparison** Compare code at the file level. Select two folders, and the compare tool shows you which files are different or not included. Double-click a file to do a code comparison at the file level in a new window.

To Uninstall

Go to Windows Control Panel | Uninstall A Program window, and select the Devart CodeCompare application. Click the Uninstall command on the menu to uninstall CodeCompare.

More Information

You can find more information about CodeCompare at <http://www.devart.com/codecompare>.

08.10 Run Windows PowerShell Within the IDE

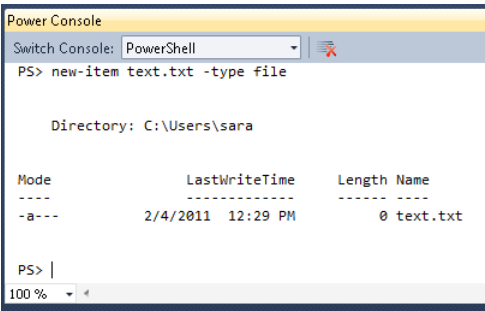
NAME	PowerConsole
CREATED BY	Jianchun Xu (Microsoft)
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/67620d8c-93dd-4e57-aa86-c9404acbd7b3
VERSIONS	2010

You can use the PowerConsole extension to run both Windows PowerShell commands and Visual Studio object model (DTE) commands within the IDE.

To Use

To open the Power Console tool window, go to View | Other Windows | Power Console.

The Power Console allows you to run more than just Windows PowerShell commands. Additionally, you can call the Visual Studio object model (DTE), access Visual Studio services, interact with Visual Studio MEF components, and host your own scripting language within the Power Console.



More Information

You can find more information about the Power Console at <http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/67620d8c-93dd-4e57-aa86-c9404acbd7b3>.

08.11 Visualize OData in a Graphical View

NAME	Open Data Protocol Visualizer
CREATED BY	Microsoft
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/f4ac856a-796e-4d78-9a3d-0120d8137722

You can use the Open Data Protocol Visualizer extension to get a graphical view of an OData service.

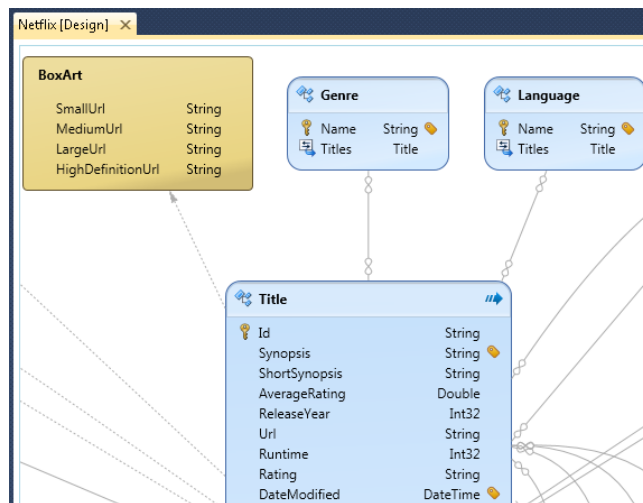
Open Data Protocol Visualizer

The Open Data Protocol Visualizer provides a read-only graphical view of the types and relationships provided by a WCF Data Service.

To Use

Create a service reference through the Add Service Reference dialog box. Open the context menu for the service reference in the Solution Explorer, and select the new View In Diagram command to open the visualizer.

At the bottom of the visualizer, select the elements you want to view, or select “all” to visualize everything. You can also browse elements by using the Open Data Protocol Model Browser found under the View menu.



More Information

You can find a video explaining how to use the Open Data Protocol Visualizer extension located at <http://odataprimer.com/ODataVisualizerExtensionForVS2010Screencast.ashx>.

You can also find a list of OData services at <http://www.odata.org/producers>.

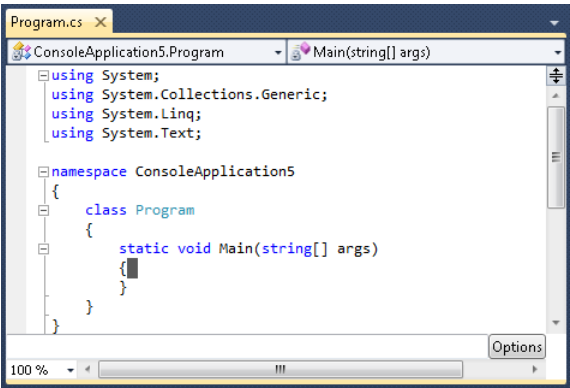
08.12 Run VIM Commands in the Editor

NAME	VsVim
CREATED BY	Jared Parsons (Microsoft)
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/59ca71b3-a4a3-46ca-8fe1-0e90e3f79329
SOURCE CODE	http://github.com/jaredpar/VsVim

The VsVim extension provides a Vim editing experience within the Visual Studio editor.

To Use

When enabled, the VIM extension immediately prompts you at the top of the editor to customize how many Visual Studio keyboard shortcut defaults you want to use. You can make additional modifications by clicking the Options button at the bottom of the editor next to the VIM extension status bar, as shown in the following illustration.



More Information

You can find a frequently asked question list for the VIM extension located at <https://github.com/jaredpar/VsVim/wiki/faq>.

08.13 Check Spelling in Your Code

NAME	Spell Checker
CREATED BY	Noah Richards with Roman Golovin and Michael Lehenbauer
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/7c8341f1-ebac-40c8-92c2-476db8d523ce

You can check for spelling errors in your code by using the Spell Checker extension.

Spell Checker

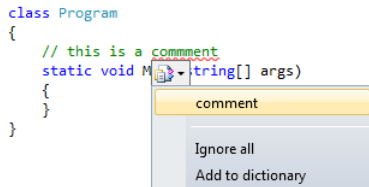
The Spell Checker extension provides a spell checker within the Visual Studio editor.

To Use

The Spell Checker extension provides spelling corrections for plain text files, comments and strings in source code, and text that isn't included within HTML tags in .html and .aspx files.

The Spell Checker uses Smart Tags, meaning that you can simply press Ctrl+. to invoke the Smart Tag window.

If you want to change the color of the red squiggles so that spelling errors are not confused with syntax errors, you can go to the Tools | Options | Environment | Fonts And Colors page, and under Display Items, select Spelling Error and change the Item Foreground color to the appropriate color.



08.14 Zoom Across All Files

NAME	Presentation Zoom
CREATED BY	Chris Granger (Microsoft)
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/6a7a0b57-7059-470d-bcfa-60ceb78dc752

You can maintain a consistent zoom percentage across all open files using the Presentation Zoom extension.

Presentation Zoom

By default, the new Presentation Zoom extension in Visual Studio 2010 works only for the current file. Additional files are not affected by the zoom. This is especially noticeable when giving presentations, where the presenter has to zoom each file separately.

This extension provides a global zoom level, so all open files can share the same zoom level.

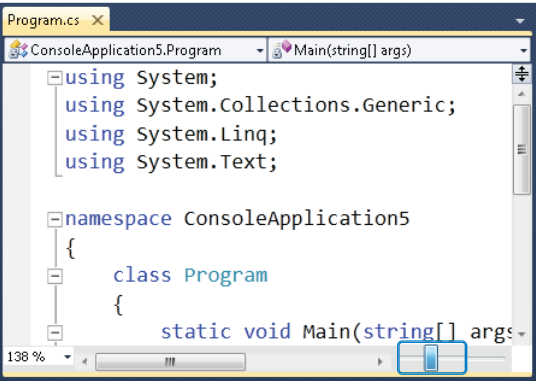
To Use

Simply use the zoom feature, either by Ctrl+Mouse wheel or updating the zoom percentage at the bottom-left corner of the editor. The next file opened or navigated to persists the same zoom percentage.

Control Zooming with a Slider Using the ZoomEditorMargin Extension

NAME	ZoomEditorMargin
CREATED BY	Benjamin Gopp
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/c271d574-a481-4974-b7dd-f319404de898

Similar to the Presentation Zoom extension discussed in the preceding section, the ZoomEditorMargin extension provides a slider control in the bottom-right corner of the editor for specifying the zoom percentage for the file in view. The ZoomEditorMargin extension works in conjunction with the Presentation Zoom extension.



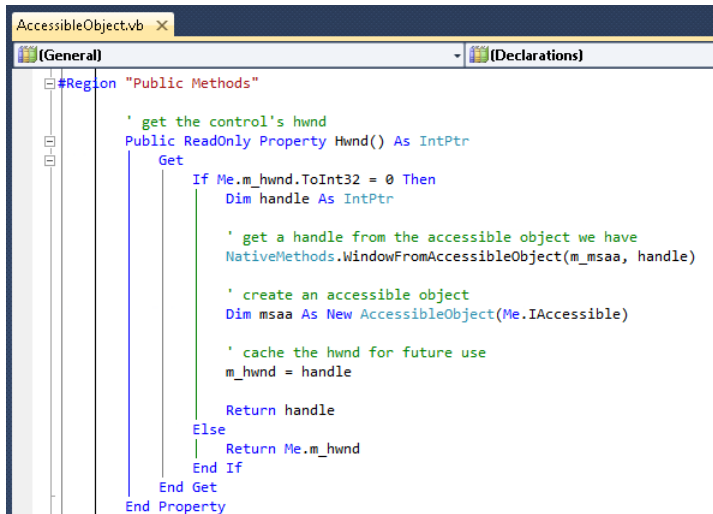
08.15 View Code Blocks Using Vertical Lines

NAME	StructureAdornment
CREATED BY	David Pugh (Microsoft)
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/203f22f4-3e9f-4dbb-befc-f2606835834e

The StructureAdornment extension displays vertical lines in the editor to show the block structure of the code file.

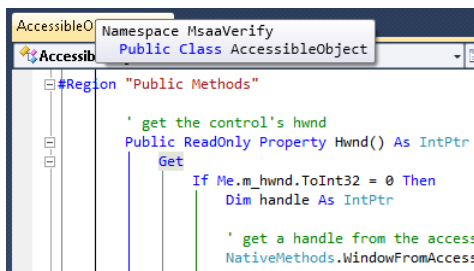
StructureAdornment

The StructureAdornment extension uses different colors to indicate different blocks.



To Use

By default, vertical lines appear in the editor. To see the beginning of a particular code block that is outside the view, mouse-over the vertical line to display the beginning of that particular code block.



To Customize

This extension does not have a page in Tools | Options; however, you can manually edit the registry settings for the extension. The following editor options are stored in the registry under HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Text Editor:

- **StructureAdornment/LineWidth** Width of the lines used to show the various scopes.
- **StructureAdornment/ClassColor** Color used to show the scope of class definitions as ARGB.
- **StructureAdornment/ConditionalColor** Color used to show the scope of conditionally executed code as ARGB.
- **StructureAdornment/LoopColor** Color used to show the scope of loop bodies as ARGB.
- **StructureAdornment/MethodColor** Color used to show the scope of method bodies as ARGB.
- **StructureAdornment/UnknownColor** Color used to show the scope of unknown blocks as ARGB.
- **StructureAdornment/MethodSeparatorColor** Color used draw a horizontal separator line at the end of a method as ARGB (off by default).
- **StructureAdornment/Enabled** Show structure adornments.

Modifications made to the extension appear the next time a code editor is opened.

To Uninstall

This extension installs five separate extensions. To completely remove this extension, you need to remove the following extensions:

- BlockTagger
- BlockTaggerImpl
- SettingsStore
- SettingsStoreImpl
- StructureAdornment

You can uninstall all five extensions at the same time within the Extension Manager. If prompted about a Dependence Alert, click Uninstall Anyways to continue uninstalling all extensions.

08.16 Get a Bird's-Eye View of Your Code in an Editor Margin

NAME	AllMargins
CREATED BY	David Pugh (Microsoft)
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/465a0d53-5133-4edd-a0cd-94484fe3d853

The AllMargins extension provides a complete overview of your code to improve navigation.

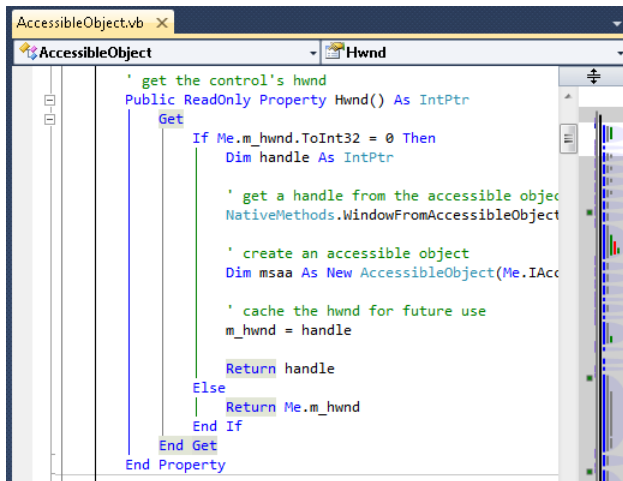
AllMargins

The AllMargins extension installs multiple extensions. The two most notable are the OverviewMargin extension, a bird's-eye view of the logical layout of your code all within an editor margin, and the StructureAdornment extension, which displays vertical lines in the editor, representing structural code blocks.

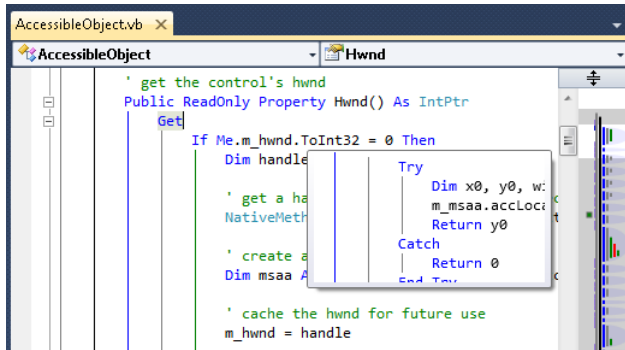
See the extension “View Code Blocks Using Vertical Lines” for more information about the StructureAdornment extension.

To Use

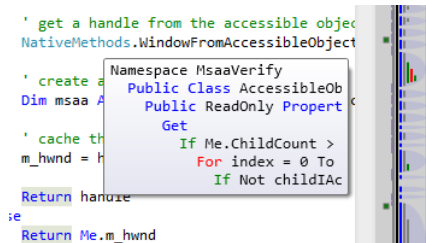
By default, both the StructureAdornment extension and the OverviewMargin extension are visible in the editor. The OverviewMargin appears on the right side of the editor.



Mouse-over the left side of the OverviewMargin to see a code snippet for that particular section of code.



Mouse-over the right side of the OverviewMargin to see the structural code block in a condensed form.



To Uninstall

This extension installs 12 separate extensions. To completely remove this extension, you need to remove the following:

- AllMargins
- BlockTagger
- BlockTaggerImpl
- CaretMargin
- ErrorsToMarks
- MarkersToMarks
- OverviewMargin
- OverviewMarginImpl
- SettingsStore
- SettingsStoreImpl
- StructureAdornment

- StructureMargin

You can uninstall all 12 extensions at the same time within the Extension Manager. If prompted about a Dependence Alert, click Uninstall Anyways to continue uninstalling all extensions.

08.17 Build Projects from the Windows 7 Taskbar

NAME	Win7 Taskbar Extension
CREATED BY	Dmitry Sitnikov
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/0c92dd87-50ac-489e-882b-b99de7624502

You can use the Win7 Taskbar Extension to start a build or debug session directly from the Windows 7 taskbar.

Win7 Taskbar Extension

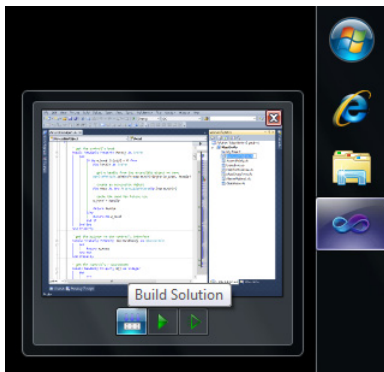
The Win7 Taskbar Extension allows you to start a build or debug session for the specified Visual Studio application directly from the Windows 7 taskbar. This extension can save you time when you need to build different projects located in multiple instances of Visual Studio.

To Install

The Win7 Taskbar Extension tool is an extension of the Windows 7 taskbar, so it is not found in the Extension Manager. To install, run the executable file hosted on the Visual Studio Gallery location and follow the instructions in the setup wizard.

To Use

Mouse-over any Visual Studio window in the Windows 7 taskbar to see the extension appear. Simply click the corresponding button for Build, Start Debugging, or Start Without Debugging.



To Uninstall

Open the Windows Control Panel | Uninstall a Program window, and select the Visual Studio Win7 Taskbar Add-in application. Click the Uninstall command listed on the menu to remove the extension.

08.18 Triple-Click to Select an Entire Line

NAME	Triple Click
CREATED BY	Noah Richards
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/2bbdc70c-32f7-4b69-8cff-d8190cae0cc7
SOURCE CODE	https://github.com/NoahRic/TripleClick

You can use the Triple Click extension to quickly select a line of code.

Triple Click

The Triple Click extension selects an entire line of code when the left mouse button is triple-clicked.

```
' get the control's hwnd
Public ReadOnly Property Hwnd() As IntPtr
    Get
        If Me.m_hwnd.ToInt32 = 0 Then
            Dim handle As IntPtr

            ' get a handle from the accessible object we have
            NativeMethods.WindowFromAccessibleObject(m_msaa, handle)

            ' create an accessible object
            Dim msaa As New AccessibleObject(Me.IAccessible)

            ' cache the hwnd for future use
            m_hwnd = handle

            Return handle
        Else
            Return Me.m_hwnd
        End If
    End Get
End Property
```

More Information

For more information, please see the extension author's blog post at <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/noahric/archive/2009/10/19/beta-2.aspx>.

08.19 Create Regular Expressions Within Your Code

NAME	Regex Editor
CREATED BY	Microsoft
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/55c24bf1-2636-4f94-831d-28db8505ce00
SOURCE CODE	http://editorsamples.codeplex.com

The Regex Editor helps you write regular expressions faster and easier.

Regex Editor

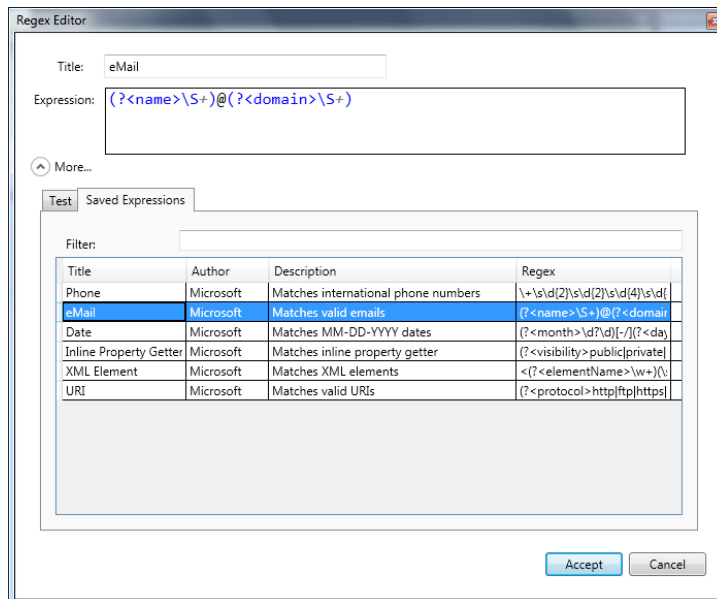
The Regex Editor extension is an aid for creating, testing, and saving regular expressions.

To Use

To invoke the Regex Editor window, you need to create a new Regex class within your code. For example, type in the following:

```
Regex r = new Regex(
```

This opens the Regex Editor window, shown in the following illustration.



More Information

For more information, please visit the project's homepage at <http://editorsamples.codeplex.com>.

08.20 Get More Productivity Tools in the IDE

NAME	Visual Studio Productivity Power Tools
CREATED BY	Microsoft
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/d0d33361-18e2-46c0-8ff2-4adea1e34fef

The Visual Studio Productivity Power Tools are a collection of extensions intended to maximize a developer’s productivity.

To Use

The tools include a variety of IDE productivity tweaks, such as the following:

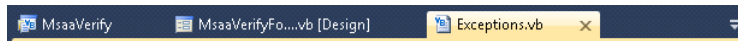
- **Tools Options Support** Allows for all of the included tools to be turned on or off by selecting Tools | Options | Productivity Power Tools.
- **Document Tab Well User Interface** Customize the look and functionality of open Visual Studio tabs.
- **Searchable Add Reference Dialog** Replace the default Add Reference Dialog with a dialog box that includes a substring search of the current pane.
- **Quick Access** Search and execute common Visual Studio tasks.
- **Auto Brace Completion** Improve code productivity by automatically inserting the matching closing code construct for the following characters: (), {}, [], "", and "".
- **Highlight Current Line** Highlight the line in the code editor where the caret is located.
- **HTML Copy** Copy code to the Windows Clipboard using the HTML Clipboard format, which makes it easy to retain code formatting.
- **Triple Click** Triple-click anywhere on a line to select the entire line.
- **Fix Mixed Tabs** Fix files that have a mix between tabs and spaces.
- **Ctrl+Click Go to Definition** Jump quickly to a symbol definition via Ctrl+Click.
- **Align Assignments** Increase code readability by aligning variable assignments. To use, press Ctrl+Alt+J.
- **Move Line Up/Down Commands** Hold down the Alt key while tapping the Up/Down arrow to move the current line of code up or down.
- **Column Guides** Everyone’s favorite Visual Studio registry modification, adding a vertical line guide to the code editor, can be set via the code editor context menu.
- **Colorized Parameter Help** Add syntax color coding to Parameter Help.

To Customize the Document Tab Well User Interface

By default, the extension changes the Document Tab Well by coloring and grouping tabs based on their project, which is helpful when working with large solutions. You can customize these default settings by selecting Tools | Options | Productivity Power Tools | Document Tab Well.

Several preset configurations are available, including the following: Visual Studio 2008, Visual Studio 2010, Web Browser, Scrollable Tab Well, Vertical Tab Well, and Dynamic Tab Well.

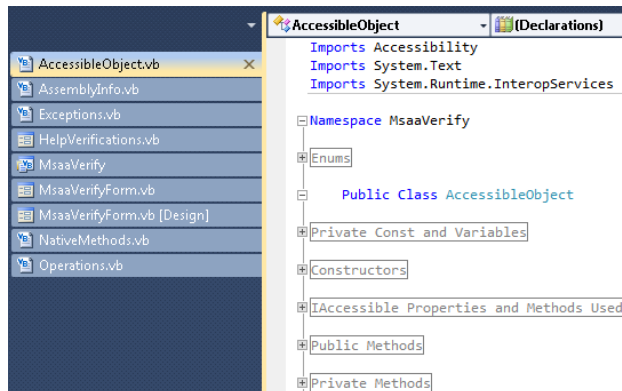
- The Visual Studio 2008 and 2010 configurations act exactly as their names imply, causing the default tab well to behave like those versions of the IDE.
- Both the Web Browser and Dynamic Tab Wells add file type icons to what would otherwise be a typical Visual Studio 2010 tab. The difference between the two is that the Dynamic Tab Well closes the least-recently used tab when there is no more space available in the file tab channel.



- The Scrollable Tab Well is the default for the extension.



- The Vertical Tab Well has the same characteristics as the Scrollable Tab Well but places the tabs vertically, allowing for more viewable tabs.



It is possible to tweak all of the configurations. The ability to *pin tabs* is probably the most useful customization. For example, you probably often want to view the contents of many files while actually working on only one or two. The ability to pin specific tabs that you are focusing on, to keep them from falling out of focus, is a huge time-saver. When you pin many tabs, you can use the Show Pinned Tabs In A Separate Row/Column option. This keeps the pinned tabs from taking up too much space.



The biggest tab productivity boost comes in the form of added keyboard navigation. In Windows, Ctrl+Tab switches to the next child window for a given program. It's known that many users do not prefer the Ctrl+Tab window that appears in Visual Studio. The Productivity Power Tools extension offers the option of moving backward and forward in visual order via Ctrl+Alt+Page Down/Up. Even more exciting, you can jump to a pinned tab via Ctrl+Num Pad 1 through 0. Talk about keyboard efficiency!

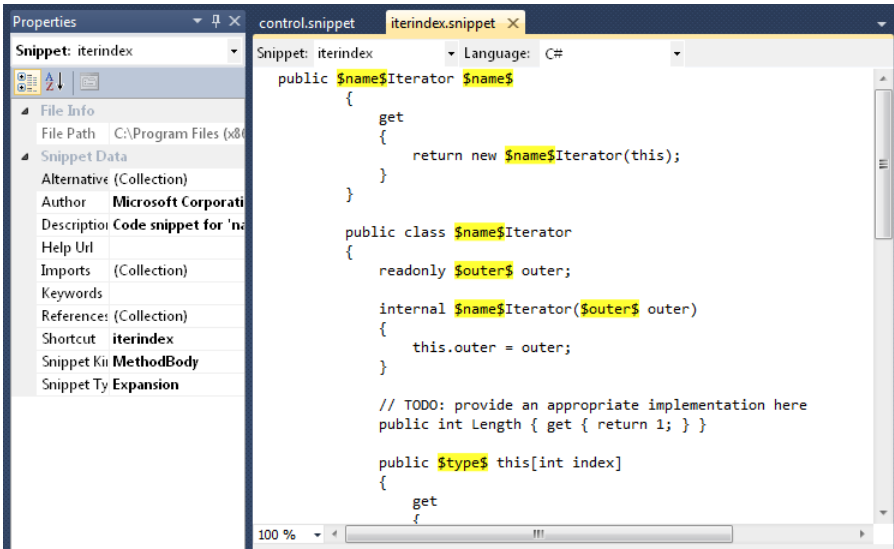
08.21 Create and Find Code Snippets

NAME	Snippet Designer
CREATED BY	Matt Manela
LOCATION	http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/B08B0375-139E-41D7-AF9B-FAEE50F68392

The Snippet Designer is an open source extension for Visual Studio that makes it easier to create and manage code snippets.

Snippet Designer

The Snippet Designer extension adds both an editor for .snippet files as well as a tool window to search for existing code snippets.



To Use

You can interact with the Snippet Designer within Visual Studio in several different ways, including the following:

- You can create a new code snippet from scratch by launching the new file dialog box (File | New File) and then choosing Snippet Designer | Code Snippet. This launches the Snippet Editor, which lets you enter the code snippet, create variable replacements, and set metadata about the snippet.
- You can create a snippet from existing code in your editor (for C#, Visual Basic, JavaScript, SQL, XML, or HTML) by highlighting the text and choosing Export As Snippet from the context menu. This launches the Snippet Editor prepopulated with the highlighted code.
- You can search for existing code snippets by launching the Snippet Explorer tool window at View | Other Windows | Snippet Explorer. This tool window enables you to perform text search on all the code snippets on your computer. From this window, you can easily preview, edit, and delete any code snippet.

More Information

For more information about the Snippet Designer extension, including documentation, source code, issue tracker, and forum discussions on its CodePlex page, visit <http://snippetdesigner.codeplex.com>.

08.22 Document Your Code with Three Keystrokes

NAME	GhostDoc
CREATED BY	SubMain
LOCATION	http://submain.com/download/ghostdoc

GhostDoc generates XML comments for your code by using a simple rules engine.

GhostDoc

Pairing this tool with a documentation generator such as NDoc (<http://ndoc.sourceforge.net>) or SandCastle (<http://www.sandcastledocs.com>) can automate much of the work of documenting your API.

To Use

GhostDoc adds a Document This command both to the Tools | GhostDoc menu and to the code editor context menu. By default, this command is available using the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Shift+D.

When you invoke the command on a code element, the element's name, parameters, and context information are passed through the GhostDoc rules engine. The rules engine performs a few linguistic tricks to produce a documentation comment that makes sense in the context of your code.

GhostDoc can produce documentation comments for classes, interfaces, structs, enums, constructors, finalizers, methods, properties, fields, events, indexers, and delegates.

The generated documentation comments are not complete, but they do provide a great starting point. The documentation comments in the code below were generated by GhostDoc and have not been edited from the original output:

```

/// <summary>
///
/// </summary>
public class Request : IDisposable
{
    /// <summary>
    /// Initializes a new instance of the <see cref="Request"/> class.
    /// </summary>
    public Request() {}

    /// <summary>
    /// Performs application-defined tasks associated with
    /// freeing, releasing, or resetting unmanaged resources.
    /// </summary>
    public void Dispose() {}

    /// Gets the status for user.
    /// </summary>
    /// <param name="userId">The user id.</param>
    /// <returns>
    /// <see cref="API.RequestStatus"/> The request status
    /// </returns>
    public RequestStatus GetStatusForUser( string userId ) { /* ... */ }

    /// <summary>
    /// Gets a value indicating whether this instance is passive.
    /// </summary>
    /// <value>
    /// <c>true</c> if this instance is passive; otherwise, <c>false</c>.
    /// </value>
    public bool IsPassive { get; private set; }

    /// <summary>
    /// Gets or sets the timeout.
    /// </summary>
    /// <value>
    /// The timeout.
    /// </value>
    public TimeSpan Timeout { get; set; }
}

```

Some conventions and niceties that drive GhostDoc:

- Code symbols, such as parameter and member names, are split into words by case changes. For example, "userId" becomes "user id."
- Certain common members, such as the Dispose method and equality members, are recognized and documented with specific verbiage.
- Method names are assumed to be describing an activity. For example, GetStatusForUser is interpreted as "Gets the status for user." When the method name contains only a verb, such as Check, GhostDoc assumes the action applies to the class and documents the method as "Checks this instance."
- Property names that start with certain words, such as "Is," "Has", "Can", and so on, are documented as state verifications. Property names containing a single word are documented as states. The documentation comment respects modifiers on property accessors, so read-only properties are documented as such.
- GhostDoc is smart enough to add references to types used in member signatures.
- Documentation comments applied to base types and members are inherited in deriving types.

To Customize

You can customize the way GhostDoc treats individual code element from the Tools | GhostDoc | Options page. The options for code-matching rules are extensive enough to adapt to any coding culture that relies on consistent naming conventions.

From the GhostDoc options dialog box, you can also configure linguistic operations and export or import your GhostDoc settings.

More Information

For more information about the GhostDoc extension, see <http://submain.com/products/ghostdoc.aspx>.

08.23 Customize Visual Studio Using Windows PowerShell

NAME	StudioShell
CREATED BY	Code Owls LLC
LOCATION	http://studioshell.codeplex.com

StudioShell is a deeply integrated Windows PowerShell module that simplifies access to many of the extensibility features of Visual Studio.

StudioShell

Using StudioShell, with only a few lines of PowerShell script you can perform activities that typically require an add-in.

To Use

StudioShell ships with a hosted PowerShell console available from the main menu at View | StudioShell. By default, this console is available using the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Shift+Enter.

You can use StudioShell features in other hosted PowerShell consoles, such as NuGet (<http://nuget.codeplex.com>) or PowerGUI VSX (<http://powerguivsx.codeplex.com>). From these consoles, enter the following command in your console to activate StudioShell:

```
Import-Module StudioShell
```

StudioShell exposes many of the extensibility features of Visual Studio as a drive named “DTE.” This drive lets you explore and access the extensibility features as if they were a file system on your local computer, using the same PowerShell commands you would use to manipulate files, the registry, and so on.

For example, you can see a list of existing Visual Studio window configurations by typing:

```
get-childitem dte:/windowConfigurations
```

You can create a new named window configuration by arranging your user interface and then entering:

```
new-item dte:/windowConfigurations -name MyConfig
```

You can apply the new window configuration at any time using:

```
invoke-item dte:/windowConfigurations/MyConfig
```

The standard PowerShell item commands apply to every area of the DTE drive. For example, you can use the same new-item command to create new project items:

```
new-item dte:/solution/projects/myProject -name MyClass.cs -type class
```

The Visual Studio features exposed on the DTE drive include the following:

- **User interface elements**—Manipulate windows, modify menus, add custom commands implemented in PowerShell, manage items to the task and error lists, and drop data into the output pane.
- **Visual Studio settings**—Script custom font and color settings for different environments.

- **Solutions and Projects**—Create new projects and project items, explore and manipulate your code model, or add and remove project references.
- **Breakpoints and the Debugger**—Create and remove breakpoints, set tracepoint conditions, write minidumps, or explore the current stack trace from the console.

StudioShell adds new features to Visual Studio as well, including the following:

- **Simple grid, chart, and graphing output windows usable from the console**—For example, use the console to get a list of code metrics and drop them in a graph.
- **Profile scripts for environment customization**—For example, import any other PowerShell modules you use regularly.
- **Solution script modules for per-solution environment customization**—Modify your menus and windows on a solution-by-solution basis.

To Get Help

StudioShell documentation is available within the console. To get started, type:

```
get-help about_studioshell
```

For information about using standard PowerShell commands on the DTE drive, navigate to the area of the drive where you want to work and use the **get-help** command to retrieve help for the command you want to use:

```
cd dte:/debugger/breakpoints  
get-help new-item
```

To Customize

StudioShell settings are available from the Tools | Options dialog in the StudioShell pane. You can indicate a specific console to use when StudioShell is invoked, including the default StudioShell hosted console, the process console, or no console (for example, if you want to use StudioShell from NuGet). In addition, you can change the profile script behavior of StudioShell and enable startup activity logging.

You can customize your console session with any PowerShell module or script. To find scripts relevant to your needs, visit the PowerShell Code Repository at <http://www.poshcode.org>.

More Information

For more information about the StudioShell module, see <http://studioshell.codeplex.com> and <http://www.beefycode.com/post/Announcing-StudioShell.aspx>.

Appendix A

Visual Studio Keyboard Shortcut Posters

Microsoft produces keyboard shortcut posters tailored for both general use and for each major language. Knowing these shortcuts can dramatically help you in your day-to-day work. Get these now. Seriously...*now!* This appendix lists the locations where you can find the posters:

Visual Studio 2010 Shortcuts

- **All Languages 2010** <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=220091>

Visual Studio 2008 Shortcuts

- **C# 2008** <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=220094>
- **VB 2008** <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=220111>
- **C++ 2008** <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=220112>

Visual Studio 2005 Shortcuts

- **C# 2005** <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=220113>
- **VB 2005** <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=220114>
- **C++ 2005** <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=220115>



Note Wow! You've read all the tips in the book, and that's super cool! As a thank you, we would like to offer you even more tips online in the form of traditional New Orleans-style lagniappe—a little something extra on the side. Make sure to download the appendix full of lagniappe tips, free of charge, at <http://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?Linkid=223758>.

Index

A

- accelerators, keyboard. *See* keyboard accelerators
- Actions area (Exception Assistant), 333–334
- Actions folder (VS Image Library), 149
- Active Files area (IDE navigator), 161
- active items, tracking in Solution Explorer, 52–53
- Active Tool Windows area (IDE navigator), 161
- Add Command dialog box, 34–35
- Add New Item dialog box, 77
- Add Or Remove Buttons (toolbars), 27
- aliases
 - command aliases, 113–115
 - Command Window
 - Aliases, 143–145
 - creating from commands, 118
- All Components option (Look In dialog), 197
- AllMargins extension (VS), 411–413
- All tab/Common tab in statement completion, 226
- ampersand (&) for accelerator keys, 142
- animations
 - Animations folder (VS Image Library), 150
 - tool window, changing, 14–15
- Annotations_Buttons folder (VS Image Library), 150–151
- application-level tracing, 336–339
- arguments and switches (commands), 115–119
- asterisk (*)
 - to expand Toolbox, 87
 - for undoing Quick Replace, 179
 - for wildcard searches, 105
- attributes, trace, 337–338
- auto-hide all tool windows, 99–100
- Auto Hide Channel, 100–101
- Automatically Adjust Visual Experience Based On Client Performance check box, 13
- auto-populating, stopping Toolbox from, 136

- AutoRecover feature, 10–13, 57
- Autos window, 348, 379–382

B

- Begin A Group option (Modify Selection), 36
- blank lines
 - accidentally copying, 211
 - inserting above/below current line, 218
- Boolean expressions, 319
- Boolean logic, 323
- box selections
 - pasting content
 - between, 238–239
 - pasting single selection into, 239–240
 - replacing text with, 237–238
 - zero-length box selection, 240–241
- braces, moving/selecting between matching, 224–225
- Break All Processes When One Process Breaks, 374–376
- breakpoints
 - adding labels to, 293–294
 - enabling/disabling all, 295–296
 - hidden Breakpoints tool window, 86
 - Hit Count, 314–316
 - importing/exporting, 329
 - searching, 312–313
 - setting complex conditions for, 321–323
 - setting filters for, 324–325
 - setting in Call Stack window, 367–368
 - setting on functions, 316–317
 - setting simple conditions of, 318–320
 - setting with code, 291–292
 - window, opening with Ctrl+Alt+B, 293
- buttons
 - Buttons area (customize dialog box), 33–34
 - Code Snippets Manager, 264
 - Quick Find, 176
 - Replace in Files, 193–194

C

- Call Hierarchy window, 310–312
- call stacks, unwinding on unhandled exceptions, 334
- Call Stack window
 - setting breakpoints in, 367–368
 - setting tracepoints in, 369–371
- characters, transposing, 219–220
- Char variables (customizing search results), 208
- Choose Search Folders option (Find What combo box), 189
- Choose Settings To Export dialog box, 7
- circling arrows icon, 347
- C# language
 - setting breakpoints in, 292
 - TODO comments in, 296
- C++ language
 - setting breakpoints in, 292
 - TODO comments in, 296
- Class Diagrams, 125
- Classic view (Visual Studio 2010 Online Help), 5–6
- Class View
 - “Class View and Object Browser Icons”, 199
 - creating folders in, 350–352
 - searching in, 353–355
 - synchronizing, 355
- Clear All command (Find Symbol), 203
- Clear All option (Find Results window), 191
- click and drag for docking/undocking tool windows, 107–109
- client projects, launching, 50
- Clipboard Ring, cycling through, 220–221
- Close On Exit option (Initial Directory), 140
- closing current document window, 158
- closing tool windows, 87
- code
 - adding visual guidelines to, 394–396
 - CodeCompare extension (VS), 402–404
 - Code Definition window, 301
 - Code view, 236

code (*continued*)

- Code Window option (Editor Context Menu), 32
- collapsing with outlining, 242–243
- commenting/uncommenting in web pages, 217–218
- creating Regular Expressions within, 415–416
- documenting with 3 keystrokes, 419–421
- drag and drop into Toolbox, 229
- Hide Selection, 244–246
- inserting images into, 391–393
- setting breakpoints with, 291–292
- spell-checking, 407–408
- Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300–301
- viewing code blocks with vertical lines, 409–411
- code snippets
 - Code Snippets Manager, 261–263
 - HTML, 259–260
 - inserting, 253–256
 - JavaScript, 260–261
 - new, creating from existing, 271–273
 - Snippet Designer, 418–419
 - surrounding existing code with, 256–257
 - using, 258–259
- codes, vstip
 - arguments and switches (commands), 115
 - auto-hide all tool windows, 99
 - auto-populating, stopping
 - Toolbox from, 136
 - AutoRecover function, 10–13
 - Autos window, 379
 - blank lines, accidentally copying, 211
 - blank lines, inserting above/below current line, 218
 - box selections, pasting content between, 238
 - box selections, zero-length, 240
 - Break All Processes When One Process Breaks, 374
 - breakpoint filters, setting, 324
 - breakpoint Hit Count, 314–316
 - breakpoints, adding labels to, 293–294
 - breakpoints, enabling/disabling all, 295–296
 - breakpoints, importing/exporting, 329
 - breakpoints, setting in Call Stack window, 367
 - breakpoints, setting on functions, 316
 - breakpoints, setting with code, 291–292
 - breakpoints window, opening, 293
 - browsers for web development, 96
 - Call Hierarchy window, 310
 - Call Stack window, setting trace-points in, 369
 - changing templates in New Project/Items dialogs, 80
 - changing visual experience in Visual Studio 2010, 12
 - changing Visual Studio color schemes, 17
 - Class View, creating folders in, 350
 - Class View, searching in, 353
 - Class View, synchronizing, 355
 - Clipboard Ring, cycling through, 220–221
 - closing current document window, 158
 - closing only specified files, 164
 - closing tool windows, 87
 - Code Definition window, 301
 - code snippets, creating new from existing, 271–273
 - code snippets, inserting, 253
 - Code Snippets Manager, 261
 - code snippets, surrounding existing code with, 256
 - code snippets, using, 258
 - Collapse To Definitions with outlining, 246
 - column ordering in tools window, 304
 - command aliases, 113
 - command prompt history, 104
 - command prompt tab completion, 105–107
 - commands, simple, 110–113
 - Commands tab, customizing (toolbars), 30
 - commenting/uncommenting code in web pages, 217–218
 - comments, adding to DataTips, 307–308
 - Common tab/All tab in statement completion, 226
 - conditional breakpoints, setting, 318
 - conditional breakpoints, setting complex, 321
 - creating Web Applications/Virtual Directories in IIS, 46–47
 - CSS versions, choosing, 283
 - current line, cutting/deleting, 213
 - custom file extension associations, 168
 - custom item templates, organizing, 68
 - custom project templates, organizing, 71–74
 - cut/copy/paste collapsed code with outlining, 247
 - cycling through open tool windows, 86
 - DataPoints, importing/exporting, 309
 - DataTips, editing values with, 308
 - DataTips, pinning to source code, 305–306
 - DataTip values, viewing from last debug session, 309
 - default item templates, reorganizing, 74
 - default New Project location, 50
 - default project templates, reorganizing, 77
 - default view in HTML editor, changing, 236
 - Design and Source views in web projects, 235
 - Design view, toggling, 236
 - development servers, using specific port for, 335
 - displaying HTML/CSS warnings as errors, 268
 - docking floating tool windows to previous location, 85
 - docking/undocking tool windows, 107
 - Document Outline (web projects), 251
 - documents on multiple monitors, 155–156
 - editing read-only files, 282–283
 - Esc for returning to Editor return to, 237
 - Exception Assistant, 331–333
 - Exceptions dialog box, 365
 - exporting environment settings, 6
 - exporting external tools list, 143
 - exporting window layouts, 134
 - Export Template Wizard, 64
 - external tools, running, 136–140
 - file open location, 165
 - Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182
 - Find in Files, 186, 190
 - Find in Files search results, customizing, 206
 - finding keyboard shortcuts in Visual Studio, 122
 - Find Symbol, 196–200

- Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
- floating DataTips, 306–307
- formatting documents/selections for HTML, 265
- formatting on HTML paste, 268
- Go Back markers, navigating with, 277
- Go To Definition for CSS, 194
- Guide Diamond, rearranging windows in Visual Studio 2010 with, 83
- Hide Selection, 244
- HTML code snippets, 259
- HTML Editor tag navigation, 267–268
- IDE navigator, 160
- Image Library (Visual Studio), 147
- importing/changing environment settings, 14
- incremental search, 184
- inserting documents to right of existing tabs, 153
- inserting quotes when typing attribute values, 264
- Intellisense keywords, 215–216
- Intellisense, making transparent, 212
- invoke statement completion, 225
- item templates, creating, 57
- JavaScript code snippets, 260
- JScript Intellisense, updating, 269
- JScript libraries, using in JScript files, 270
- keyboard accelerators for external tools, 141
- keyboard access to tool window toolbar, 103
- Keyboard Mapping Schemes, 125
- Locals window, changing context in, 376
- logging commands, 132
- macros, creating/using, 144–146
- matching braces, selecting/moving between, 224
- moving tool windows with keyboard, 102
- multiple start-up projects, 48–50
- multiple views of same document, 163
- Navigate To dialog, 195
- navigating among tabs in Toolbox, 89
- navigating errors in Errors List, 303
- navigating open document windows, 157
- navigating property tabs in project properties, 55
- Navigation Bar, using, 266
- navigation stack, 275
- Object Browser navigation/references, 362
- Object Browser overview, 356
- Object Browser scope settings, 359
- opening file location from file tab, 158
- outlining, collapsing code with, 242
- parameter information, 227
- Pascal case (Intellisense), 216
- pasting single selection into box selections, 239
- pinning projects to Recent Projects list, 56
- Properties window, 249
- Quick Find, 172
- Quick Info option, 228
- Quick Replace (searching), 176–178
- QuickWatch, 343–345
- recent files, 154
- Recent Project templates in New Project dialog, 44
- reference highlighting, 223
- removing projects from Recent Projects list, 9
- repeating last search in VS, 171–172
- Replace in Files basic options, 192
- ResetSettings switch, 39–41
- resetting all keyboard shortcuts, 131
- running commands, 121
- running multiple versions of Visual Studio side-by-side, 3
- Run To Cursor, 330
- saving changes before building, 302
- searching breakpoints, 312–313
- searching currently selected string without Find window, 185
- searching for project templates, 43–45
- searching in Toolbox, 88
- selecting from current cursor to last Go Back marker, 278
- shortcuts, creating new, 127
- showing hidden tool windows with Auto Hide Channel, 100–101
- show previous file versions, 166
- Solution Folders, 54
- tagged expressions (Replace in Files), 203–206
- Tag Specific options, 285
- Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300
- Task Lists, creating custom tokens for, 297–300
- temporary projects, creating, 56
- testing commands, 119
- text, replacing text with box selection, 237
- TODO comments in Task List, 296
- Toolbars tab, customizing, 27
- tabs in Toolbox, 93
- Toolbox, drag and drop into, 229–230
- Toolbox, expanding/collapsing all in, 87
- tool window animations, changing, 14
- tracepoints, setting in source code, 325
- tracing, application/page level, 336–339
- tracking active items in Solution Explorer, 52
- tracking changes in Editor, 280–281
- transposing lines/words/characters, 219–220
- type-ahead selection support in Solution Explorer, 52–53
- Undo Quick Replace/Replace in Files, 179
- Undo/Redo global actions, 222
- Undo/Redo stack, 221
- using older frameworks with multi-targeting, 46
- using smart tags from keyboards, 231–232
- using statements, organizing (C#), 232
- visualizers (Watch windows), 345
- Visual Studio logging, 37–38
- Visual Studio Online Help, table of contents in, 4
- watches, adding from variable windows, 348
- Watch window, 340
- white space, viewing, 241
- window layouts, 90, 91
- word completion, 229
- word wrap, 248–249
- WPF Tree Visualizer, 371–373
- zoom in/out of text with Editor, 209
- code, writing
 - blank lines, avoiding copying, 211–212
 - blank lines, inserting above/below current line, 218
 - Clipboard Ring, cycling through, 220–221
 - code snippets. *See* code snippets

code, writing (*continued*)

- Collapse to Definitions with outlining, 246–247
- collapsing code with outlining, 242–243
- commenting/uncommenting in web pages, 217–218
- CSS versions, choosing, 283–285
- current line, cutting/deleting, 213–214
- cut/copy/paste collapsed code with outlining, 247
- default view, changing in HTML editor, 236–237
- Design and Source views, switching between, 235
- Design view, toggling, 236
- Document Outline (web projects), 251–253
- documents/selections, formatting for HTML, 265–266
- drag and drop into Toolbox, 229–230
- editing read-only files, 282–283
- Esc to return to Editor, 237
- formatting HTML on paste, 268
- Hide Selection, using, 244–246
- HTML/CSS warnings, displaying as errors, 268–269
- HTML Editor tag navigation, 267–268
- inserting quotes when typing attribute values, 264
- JScript Intellisense, updating, 269
- JScript libraries, 270–271
- keywords (Intellisense), 215
- matching braces, moving/selecting between, 224–225
- moving between Common tab/All tab in statement completion, 226
- navigating backwards/forwards with Go Back markers, 277–278
- Navigation Bar, using, 266–267
- navigation stack, 275–276
- parameter information, using, 227–228
- Pascal case (Intellisense), 216
- pasting contents between box selections, 238–239
- pasting single selections into box selection, 239–240
- Properties window keyboard shortcuts, 249–250
- Quick Info, using, 228–229
- reference highlighting, 223–225
- replacing text with box selection, 237–238
- selecting from current cursor to last Go Back marker, 278–279
- smart tags, using from keyboard, 231–232
- statement completion, invoking, 225–226
- Tag Specific options. *See* Tag Specific Options dialog box
- text, zooming in/out in Editor, 209–211
- tracking changes in Editor, 280–281
- transposing lines/words/characters, 219–220
- Undo/Redo global actions, 222
- Undo/Redo stack, using, 221–222
- using statements, organizing, 232–235
- white space, viewing, 241–242
- word completion, 229
- word wrap, 248–249
- zero-length box selection, 240–241
- collapsing code
 - collapse to definitions with outlining, 246–247
 - cut/copy/paste with outlining, 247
 - with outlining, 242–243
- colors
 - Color Theme Editor extension (Visual Studio), 389–391
 - importing, 17–21
- color schemes, changing
 - colors, importing, 21–24
 - obtaining fonts and colors, 17–21
 - resetting colors, 24
- column ordering in tools window, 304–305
- combo box, Zoom, 210
- command prompt
 - history, 104–105
 - tab completion, 105–107
- commands
 - aliases, 113–115
 - arguments and switches, 115–119
 - Commands tab, customizing (toolbars), 30–31
 - hidden Command tool window, 86
 - logging, 132–134
 - running, 121–123
 - simple, 110–113
 - testing, 119–121
 - “Understanding Commands: Aliases”, 119
 - “Understanding Commands: Running Commands”, 120
- Command Window
 - aliases, exporting, 143–145
 - aliases, setting, 16
 - defined, 122
- comments
 - adding to DataTips, 307–308
 - commenting/uncommenting code in web pages, 217–218
 - Comment/Uncomment items (Modify Selection), 35
- Common Elements source files (VS Image Library), 148–149
- Common tab/All tab in statement completion, 226
- %comspec% variable, 138
- conditional breakpoints, 318–320, 321–323
- controls
 - Control box (Visual Studio 2010), 108
 - Controls area for modifying menus/toolbars, 32–33
 - Controls dialog box (Commands tab), 36
 - custom (Toolbox), 95
- copying
 - blank lines accidentally, 211
 - Copy (Ctrl+C) command (Find Symbol), 203
 - Copy Exception Detail To The Clipboard link (Exception Assistant), 333
 - cut/copy/paste collapsed code with outlining, 247
- “Create a Shortcut Key for a Macro”, 146
- CSS (Cascading Style Sheets)
 - Go To Definition for, 194
 - versions, choosing, 283–285
 - warnings, displaying as errors, 268–269
- current and previous statements (Autos window), 379
- Current Project action
 - Find What combo box, 189
 - Quick Find, 173
- Custom Component Set
 - editing, 360–362
 - options (Look In dialog), 198
- customizing
 - Commands tab, 30–37
 - custom controls (Toolbox), 95
 - custom file extension associations, 168–169
 - custom item templates, organizing, 68–71

- “Customize How Find In Files Results Are Displayed in the Find Results Window”, 191
- Customize dialog box, 29
- custom project templates, organizing, 71–74
- Document Tab Well user interface, 417–418
- Find in Files search results, 206–208
- GhostDoc extension (VS), 421
- StructureAdornment extension (VS), 410–411
- StudioShell module, 423
- Toolbars tab, 27–29
- Visual Studio with Windows PowerShell, 421–423
- cutting
 - current line, 213–214
 - cut/copy/paste collapsed code with outlining, 247
- cycling through Clipboard Ring, 220–221

D

- data, refreshing (Watch window), 346–347
- DataTips
 - adding comments to, 307–308
 - creating floating, 306–307
 - editing values with, 308
 - importing/exporting, 309
 - pinning to source code, 305–306
 - values, viewing from last debug session, 309
- debugging
 - application-level/page-level tracing, 336–339
 - Autos window, 379–382
 - Break All Processes When One Process Breaks, 374–376
 - breakpoints. *See* breakpoints
 - Call Hierarchy window, 310–312
 - Call Stack window, setting breakpoints in, 367–368
 - changing context in Locals window, 376–379
 - Class View, creating folders in, 350–352
 - Class View, synchronizing, 355
 - Code Definition window, 301
 - column ordering in tools window, 304–305
 - Debug.AddWatch command, 349
 - Debug Location toolbar, 377
 - Debug Mode (window layouts), 90, 92

- development server, using specific port for, 335
- Exception Assistant, 331–333
- Exceptions dialog box, 365–367
- multicolumn sorting, 305
- navigating errors in Errors List, 303–304
- Object Browser. *See* Object Browser
- QuickWatch, 343–345
- refreshing data (Watch window), 346–347
- Run To Cursor, 330
- saving changes before building, 302–303
- searching in Class View, 353–355
- setting tracepoints in source code, 325–328
- Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300–301
- Task Lists, creating custom tokens for, 297–300
- TODO comments in Task List, 296–297
- tracepoints, setting in Call Stack window, 369–371
- visualizers (Watch windows), 345–346
- watches, adding from variable windows, 348–350
- Watch window, 340–343
- WPF Tree Visualizer, 371–373
- dedicated style sheets (CSS), 283
- default browsers, changing, 97
- default development settings, 26
- DefaultFileOpenLocation (registry), 166
- default item templates, reorganizing, 74–78
- default New Project location, changing, 50–51
- default project templates, reorganizing, 77–80
- default toolbars, 29
- DefaultTracepointMessage string value, 329
- deleting
 - aliases (commands), 115
 - browsers, 98
 - current line, 213–214
 - custom toolbars, 29
 - folders in Class View, 352
 - projects from Recent Projects list, 9
 - Solution Folders, 55
 - tabs (Toolbox), 95
 - unused using directives, 232–234
- <deployment retail=true> setting, 336

- design
 - Designer, viewing code in, 124–125
 - Design Mode (window layouts), 91
- Design View
 - toggling, 236
 - window layouts, 90
- detachable document windows, 155
- development servers, using specific port for, 335
- development settings, resetting, 25–28
- devenv.com command, 76, 79
- “Disable Mouse Wheel Zoom” extension, 210
- Display File Names Only (Find Results window), 191
- /doc or /d switch, 117
- docking
 - Dock As Tabbed Document option, 156
 - docking floating tool window to previous location, 85
 - docking/undocking tool windows, 107–110
 - Dock menu, 102
- documents
 - closing current document window, 158
 - closing only specified, 164–165
 - custom document extension associations, 168–169
 - “Document Outline: Web Project”, 267
 - document open location, 165–166
 - Document Outline (web projects), 251–253
 - Document Tab Well user interface, 417–418
 - Document This command, 419
 - editing read-only, 282–283
 - formatting for HTML, 265–266
 - IDE navigator, 160–162
 - inserting to right of existing tabs, 153–154
 - multiple views of same document, 163–164
 - navigating open document windows, 157–158
 - on multiple monitors, 155–156
 - recent, 154–155
 - saving changes to open, 302
 - show previous versions, 166–167
- drag and drop code into Toolbox, 229–230
- Dynamic Tab Wells, 417

E

editing

- Custom Component Set, 360–362
- Edit Custom Component Set dialog box, 198
- Edit.Find command, 116–117
- read-only files, 282–283
- values with DataTips, 308
- Editor
 - Editor Context Menu (toolbars), 32
 - Editor Guideline extension (VS), 394–396
 - running VIM commands in, 406–407
 - tracking changes in, 280–281
 - using Emacs commands in, 400–401
 - using Esc to return to, 237
 - zoom in/out of text with, 209–211
- Emacs Commands extension (VS), 400–401
- embedded styles (HTML), 284–285
- Enable Rich Client Visual Experience option, 13
- environment settings
 - exporting, 6–9
 - importing/changing, 14–16
- errors
 - displaying HTML/CSS warnings as, 268–269
 - Error List tool window, 86
 - navigating in Errors List, 303–304
- Esc for returning to Editor, 237
- Exception Assistant, 331–333
- Exceptions dialog box, 365–367
- exporting
 - breakpoints, 329
 - Command Window aliases, 143–145
 - DataPoints, 309
 - environment settings, 6–9
 - “Export Your Window Layouts”, 39
 - “Exporting Your Environment Settings”, 27
 - Export Selected Environment Settings, 134, 143
 - Export Template Wizard, 58–60, 64–67
 - external tools list, 143–145
 - Import and Export Settings Wizard, 25
 - Window Layouts, 134–136
- expressions
 - Expression Builder, 174, 204
 - Regular Expressions. *See* Regular Expressions

- “Side Effects and Expressions”, 347
- tagged (Replace in Files), 203–206
- watch, 340–343
- extensions
 - file, 168–169
 - Visual Studio. *See* Visual Studio extensions
- external tools
 - creating keyboard accelerators for, 141–142
 - exporting list, 143–145
 - External Tools List setting, 16
 - running, 136–140
 - “Using External Tools”, 141

F

files

- closing only specified, 164–165
- current, syncing Solution Explorer to, 396–397
- custom file extension associations, 168–169
- Display File Names Only (Find Results window), 191
- editing read-only, 282–283
- File menu, 154
- filename argument (logging), 133–134
- file open location, 165–166
- File variables (customizing search results), 207
- File View (window layouts), 90
- Find In Files, 190–191
- Go To File (Find/Command box), 183
- opening file menu drop-down list from keyboard, 159
- opening location from file tab, 158
- recent, 154–155
- recovered. *See* AutoRecover feature
- Replace in Files, 180–182, 192–194, 203–206
- show previous versions, 166–167
- Skip File button (Replace in Files), 193
- Visual Studio Image Library, 147–148
- filters, setting for
 - breakpoints, 324–325
- finding. *See also* searching
 - “Find Command” documentation, 116
 - “Find Keyboard Shortcuts”, 121
 - Find All option (Find Symbol), 199

- Find And Replace dialog box, 116
- Find Combo box, 120, 122, 171, 182–184
- Find/Command box, 182
- Find In Files, 186–190, 190–191
- Find In Files search results, customizing, 206–208
- finding keyboard shortcuts (Visual Studio), 122–125
- Find Next button (Quick Find), 176
- Find Next button (Quick Replace), 178
- Find Next button (Replace in Files), 193
- Find options (Find Symbol), 199
- Find options (Replace in Files), 192
- Find Result Format string (registry), 207
- Find Results windows, 190
- Find What area (Quick Replace), 177
- Find What combo box, 187–190
- Find What field, 197
- Quick Find. *See* Quick Find
- Find Symbol
 - basics, 196–200
 - results shortcuts, 200–203
- floating DataTips, 306–307
- floating tool window, docking to previous location, 85
- folders
 - creating in Class View, 350–352
 - Solution Folders, 54–55
- fonts, importing, 17–21
- Ford, Sara, 402
- Foreground And Background Colors In A Console Window snippet, 263
- formatting
 - documents/selections for HTML, 265–266
 - HTML on paste, 268
- forward slash (/) to collapse Toolbox, 87
- frameworks
 - Framework X/Silverlight X option (Look In dialog), 198
 - older, using with multi-targeting, 46
- Friendly Name field (browsers), 97
- Full Screen Mode (window layouts), 93
- Full Screen View (window layouts), 90
- functions, setting breakpoints on, 316–317

G

GhostDoc tool (VS), 419–421
 global actions, Undo/Redo, 222
 Go Back markers, 277–278, 278–279
 Gopp, Benjamin, 408
 Go To Declaration (Ctrl+F12), 201
 Go To Definition (F12), 200
 Go To Definition for CSS, 194
 Go To File (Find/Command box), 183
 Go To Line (Find/Command box), 183
 Go To Reference (Shift+F12), 201–202
 Granger, Chris, 407
 Guide Diamond, 83–84
 guidelines, adding to code, 394–396

H

Harrington, Paul, 37, 394
 Has Changed condition (breakpoints), 319–320
 Help Library Manager, 4
 Help Online area (Exception Assistant), 332–333
 Hide External Items option (Navigate To), 196
 Hide Selection (code), 244–246
 highlighting, reference, 223–225
 history, command prompt, 104–105
 Hit Count, breakpoint, 314–316
 Horst, Bill, 334
 “How to Customize What Files to Search with Find in Files”, 189
 HTML (Hypertext Markup Language)
 code snippets, 259–260
 editor, changing default view in, 236–237
 embedded styles, 284–285
 formatting documents/selections for, 265–266
 formatting on paste, 268
 HTML Editor tag navigation, 267–268
 HTML Visualizers, 345
 warnings, displaying as errors, 268–269

I

Icon Image field (Export Template Wizard), 61, 66
 icons, refresh, 347–348
 IDE navigator, 160–162

#If DEBUG compiler option, 292
 IIS (Internet Information Services), 46–47
 illustrations
 4 modes of window layouts, 90
 Add New Item dialog box, 77
 AllMargins extension, 411–412
 animating environment tools, 14
 auto-hide all tool windows, 99–100
 AutoRecover, 10–11
 Autos window, 379–381
 blank lines, accidentally copying, 211
 blank lines, inserting above/below current line, 218
 box selections, pasting content between, 238–239
 box selections, pasting single selection into, 239–240
 box selections, replacing text with, 238
 box selections, zero-length, 240–241
 Break All Processes When One Process Breaks, 374–375
 breakpoint filters, setting, 324
 breakpoint Hit Count, 314–315
 breakpoints, adding labels to, 294
 breakpoints, enabling/disabling all, 295–296
 breakpoints, importing/exporting, 329
 breakpoints, setting in Call Stack window, 368
 breakpoints, setting on functions, 316–317
 breakpoint windows, opening, 293
 browsers for web development, 96–98
 Call Hierarchy, 310–311
 Call Stack window, setting trace-points in, 369
 Choose Settings To Export dialog box, 7
 Classic view (VS 2010 Online Help), 5–6
 Class View, creating folders in, 350–352
 Class View, searching in, 353–354
 Class View, synchronizing, 355
 Clipboard Ring, cycling through, 220–221
 CodeCompare extension (VS), 403
 Code Definition Window, 301
 code snippets, creating new from existing, 272–273

Code Snippets, inserting, 253–255
 Code Snippets Manager, 262–263
 code snippets, surrounding existing code with, 256–257
 color schemes, resetting, 24
 column ordering in tools window, 304–305
 commands, running, 118–119
 Commands tab, customizing (toolbars), 30–37
 Command Window, 113
 commenting/uncommenting code in web pages, 217–218
 comments, adding to DataTips, 307
 conditional breakpoints, setting, 318–320
 conditional breakpoints, setting complex, 321–323
 custom file extension associations, 168
 custom item templates, organizing, 68–70
 custom project templates, organizing, 71–72
 DataTips, pinning to source code, 305–306
 DataTip values, viewing from last debug session, 309
 Debug Mode (windows layouts), 92
 default item templates, reorganizing, 74–76
 default project templates, reorganizing, 78–80
 default view in HTML editor, changing, 236–237
 Design and Source views in web projects, 235–236
 Design Mode, 91
 development servers, using specific port for, 335
 development settings, resetting, 25–28
 docking floating tool window to previous location, 85
 Document Outline (web projects), 252–253
 documents on multiple monitors, 155–156
 document window, closing current, 158
 editing read-only files, 282–283
 Editor Guidelines extension (VS), 394–395
 Exception Assistant, 331–333
 Exceptions dialog box, 365–366

illustrations (*continued*)

- exporting Command Window
 - Aliases/External Tools List, 143–145
- exporting environment settings, 6–8
- Export Template Wizard, 58, 65–67
- external tools, running, 136–140
- file menu drop-down list, opening from keyboard, 159
- file open location, 165–166
- files, closing only
 - specified, 164–165
- files, recent, 154–155
- Find And Replace dialog box, 116
- Find in Files, 186–190
- Find in Files search results, customizing, 206–208
- finding keyboard shortcuts, 122–125
- Find Symbol, 197
- Find Symbols results
 - shortcuts, 200–202
- floating DataTips, 306–307
- Guide Diamond, 84
- Help Library Manager, 4–6
- Hide Selection, 244–245
- HTML code snippets, 259–260
- HTML/CSS warnings, displaying as errors, 268
- HTML Editor tag
 - navigation, 267–268
- IDE navigator, 160–162
- Image Insertion tool (Visual Studio), 392–393
- Import And Export Settings Wizard, 6–7
- importing/changing environment settings, 14–16
- importing colors, 21–24
- incremental search, 184–185
- inserting documents to right of existing tabs, 153–154
- Intellisense keywords, 215–216
- Intellisense, making transparent, 212
- invoke statement completion, 226
- item templates, 63
- JavaScript code snippets, 260–261
- JScript Intellisense, updating, 269
- JScript libraries, 270–271
- keyboard accelerators for external tools, 141–142
- Keyboard Mapping Schemes, 125–127
- keyboard shortcuts, resetting, 131–133
- Local Internet Information Server dialog, 46
- Locals window, changing context in, 376–378
- logging commands, 133–134
- macros, creating/using, 144–146
- multiple Startup Projects, 48–49
- multiple versions of Visual Studio, running side-by-side, 3
- multiple views of same document, 163–164
- navigating errors in Errors List, 304
- navigating open document windows, 157–158
- Navigation Bar, using, 266–267
- navigation stack, 275–276
- New Item dialog box, 74
- New Project dialog box, 44–46, 72
- New Project locations, changing default, 51
- Object Browser navigation/references, 362–364
- Object Browser
 - overview, 357–358
- Object Browser scope settings, 359–362
- outlining, collapsing code with, 242–243
- parameter information, 227
- Pascal case (Intellisense), 216
- Quick Find, 172–176
- Quick Replace, 176–178
- Quickwatch, 343–345
- quotes, inserting when typing attribute values, 264
- Recent Projects list, 56
- Recent Projects list, removing projects from, 9
- reference highlighting, 223–224
- Regex Editor, 415
- repeating last search in VS, 171–172
- Replace in Files basic options, 192–194
- /ResetSettings switch, 39–40
- Run To Cursor, 330
- safe mode (Visual Studio), 38
- saving changes before building, 302–303
- searching breakpoints, 312–313
- searching currently selected string without Find window, 185
- searching in Toolbox, 88
- selecting from current cursor to last Go Back marker, 278–279
- selecting/moving between matching braces, 224–225
- Settings To Export dialog box, 7
- shortcuts, creating new, 128–130
- Show Previous Versions option (documents), 166–167
- simple commands, 110–113
- smart tags, using from keyboards, 231–232
- Snippet Designer, 418
- Solution Explorer Tools extension, 397
- StructureAdornment extension (VS), 409
- tabs in Toolbox, 93
- tagged expressions (Replace in Files), 203–206
- Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300
- Task Lists, creating custom tokens for, 297–300
- templates in New Project/Item dialogs, changing, 81–82
- testing commands, 120–121
- TODO comments in Task List, 296–297
- Toolbars tab, customizing, 27–29
- Toolbox, 87
- Toolbox, drag and drop code into, 229–230
- tracepoints, setting in source code, 325–328
- tracing, application/page level, 336–338
- tracking active items in Solution Explorer, 52
- tracking changes in Editor, 280–281
- transposing lines/words/characters, 219–220
- type-ahead selection support in Solution Explorer, 53
- Undo Quick Replace/Replace in Files, 179–182
- Undo/Redo global actions, 222
- Undo/Redo stack, 221–222
- using statements, organizing, 232–235
- visualizers, 345–346
- Visual Studio 2010, changing visual experience in, 12
- Visual Studio 2010 Online Help, table of contents in, 4–6
- Visual Studio color schemes, changing, 18–21
- Visual Studio Image Library, 147–152
- Visual Studio logging, 37
- watch expressions, 340
- white space, viewing, 242

- word completion, 229
- word wrap, 248–249
- WPF Tree Visualizer, 371–373
- zoom in/out of text with editor, 210–211
- images. *See also* Images Library (Visual Studio)
 - Image Insertion tool, 391–393
- Immediate Window, 122
- importing
 - breakpoints, 329
 - colors, 17–21, 21–24
 - DataPoints, 309
 - fonts, 17–21
- Import and Export settings, 16
- Import and Export Settings Wizard, 6, 14, 25
- importing or changing environment settings, 14–16, 135
- Import Selected Environment Settings option, 22
- includes operations, 195
- Include Sub-Folders option (Find What combo box), 189
- incremental search, 184–185
- Initial Directory, 139
- Insert Documents To The Right Of Existing Tabs option, 153
- installing
 - CodeCompare extension (VS), 403
 - Editor Guidelines extension (VS), 394
 - “Installing Visual Studio Versions Side-by-Side”, 3
 - Visual Studio extensions, 385–387
 - Win7 Taskbar Extension, 413
- Intellisense
 - JScript Intellisense, updating, 269
- keywords, 215–216
- making transparent, 212
- Pascal case and, 216
- Use IntelliSense To Verify The Function Name, 317
- XAML Intellisense Presenter extension, 395–396
- invoke statement
 - completion, 225–226
- Is True condition (breakpoints), 319–320
- items
 - active, tracking in Solution Explorer, 52–53
 - adding to custom tabs (Toolbox), 94–95
 - New Items dialog, changing templates in, 80–82

- item templates
 - creating, 57–64
 - custom, organizing, 68–71
 - default, reorganizing, 74–78
 - in Items dialog, changing, 80–82

J

- JavaScript code snippets, 260–261
- Johnson, Matthew, 389
- JScript
 - Intellisense, updating, 269
 - libraries, using in JScript files, 270–271

K

- Keep Modified Files Open After Replace All option, 181, 191, 193
- keyboard accelerators, 141–142
- keyboard shortcuts
 - Additional Keyboard Mapping Schemes, 125–127
 - arguments and switches (commands), 115
 - auto-populating, stopping
 - Toolbox from, 136
 - AutoRecover function, 10–13
 - Autos window, 379
 - blank lines, accidentally copying, 211
 - blank lines, inserting above/below current line, 218
 - box selections, pasting content between, 238
 - box selections, zero-length, 240
 - breakpoints, adding labels to, 293–294
 - breakpoints, enabling/disabling all, 295–296
 - breakpoints, setting in Call Stack window, 367
 - breakpoints, setting on functions, 316
 - breakpoints window, opening, 293
 - Call Hierarchy window, 310
 - changing visual experience in Visual Studio 2010, 12
 - Class View, searching in, 353
 - Clipboard Ring, cycling through, 220–221
 - Code Definition window, 301
 - code snippets, inserting, 253
 - Code Snippets Manager, 261
 - code snippets, surrounding existing code with, 256

- code snippets, using, 258
- Collapse To Definitions with outlining, 246
- command aliases, 113
- command prompt history, 104
- commands, running, 121
- Commands tab, customizing (toolbars), 30
- Common tab/All tab in statement completion, 226
- CSS versions, choosing, 283
- current document window, closing, 158
- current line, cutting/deleting, 213
- DataPoints, importing/exporting, 309
- default view in HTML editor, changing, 236
- Design and Source views in web projects, 235
- Design view, toggling, 236
- development settings, resetting, 25
- docking floating tool windows to previous location, 85
- docking/undocking tool windows, 107
- Dock menu, 102
- Document Outline (web projects), 251
- documents on multiple monitors, 155–156
- Esc for returning to Editor return to, 237
- Exceptions dialog box, 365
- exporting environment settings, 6
- exporting external tools list, 143
- exporting window layouts, 134
- Export Template Wizard, 64
- external tools, running, 136–140
- file extension associations, custom, 168
- files, closing only specified, 164
- files, recent, 154
- “Find Keyboard Shortcuts”, 121
- Find Combo box, 182–184
- Find In Files, 186, 190
- Find In Files search results, customizing, 206
- finding (Visual Studio), 122–125
- Find Symbol, 196–200
- Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
- Go Back markers, navigating with, 277
- Go To Definition for CSS, 194
- Guide Diamond, rearranging windows in Visual Studio 2010 with, 83
- Hide Selection, 244

keyboard shortcuts (*continued*)

- HTML code snippets, 259
- HTML/CSS warnings, displaying as errors, 268
- HTML, formatting documents/ selections for, 265
- importing/changing environment settings, 14
- incremental search, 184
- inserting documents to right of existing tabs, 153
- inserting quotes when typing attribute values, 264
- Intellisense keywords, 215–216
- Intellisense, making transparent, 212
- invoke statement completion, 225
- item templates, creating, 57
- JavaScript code snippets, 260
- JScript Intellisense, updating, 269
- keyboard accelerators for external tools, 141
- Keyboard Mapping Schemes, 125
- “Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts”, 112
- “Keyboard Shortcuts Reset All Your Shortcuts”, 131
- Locals window, changing context in, 376
- macros, creating/using, 144–146
- matching braces, selecting/moving between, 224
- moving tool windows with, 102–103
- multiple start-up projects, 48–50
- multiple views of same document, 163
- multi-targeting, using older frameworks with, 46
- Navigate To dialog, 195
- navigating errors in Errors List, 303
- navigating property tabs, 55
- Navigation Bar, using, 266
- navigation stack, 275
- New Project location, changing default, 50
- Object Browser navigation/ references, 362
- Object Browser overview, 356
- Object Browser scope settings, 359
- outlining, collapsing code with, 242
- parameter information, 227
- Pascal case (Intellisense), 216
- pasting single selection into box selections, 239
- posters, 425
- Properties window, 249–250
- Quick Find, 172
- Quick Info option, 228
- Quick Replace (searching), 176–178
- QuickWatch, 343–345
- read-only files, editing, 282
- Recent Projects list, removing projects from, 9
- Recent Project templates in New Project dialog, 44
- reference highlighting, 223
- repeating last search in VS, 171–172
- Replace in Files basic options, 192
- Run To Cursor, 330
- saving changes before building, 302
- searching currently selected string without Find window, 185
- searching for project templates, 43–45
- selecting from current cursor to last Go Back marker, 278
- shortcuts, creating new, 127, 127–131
- shortcuts, resetting all, 131–133
- smart tags, using from keyboards, 231–232
- Solution Folders, 54
- System menu, 102
- tagged expressions (Replace in Files), 203–206
- Tag Specific options, 285
- Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300
- Task Lists, creating custom tokens for, 297–300
- temporary projects, creating, 56
- testing commands, 119
- text, replacing with box selection, 237
- Toolbars tab, customizing, 27
- tool window animations, changing, 14
- tool window toolbar, access to, 103
- tracking active items in Solution Explorer, 52
- tracking changes in Editor, 280–281
- transposing lines/words/ characters, 219–220
- type-ahead selection support in Solution Explorer, 52–53
- Undo Quick Replace/Replace in Files, 179
- Undo/Redo global actions, 222
- Undo/Redo stack, 221
- for using smart tags, 231–232
- using statements, organizing (C#), 232
- Visual Basic 6. *See* Visual Basic 6 keyboard shortcuts
- visualizers (Watch windows), 345
- Visual Studio 6. *See* Visual Studio 6 keyboard shortcuts
- Visual Studio 2010 Online Help, table of contents in, 4
- Visual Studio color schemes, changing, 17
- Watch window, 340
- Web Applications/Virtual Directories, creating in IIS, 46–47
- white space, viewing, 241
- word completion, 229
- word wrap, 248–249
- for zooming, 211
- zoom in/out of text with editor, 209
- keywords, Intellisense, 215–216
- Kurata, Deborah, 164

L

- labels, adding to breakpoints, 293–294
- layouts, window. *See* Window Layouts
- Lightweight view (VS 2010 Online Help), 5
- lines
 - blank, accidentally copying, 211
 - blank, inserting above/below current line, 218
 - cutting/deleting current, 213–214
 - transposing, 219–220
- lists, opening from keyboard, 159
- loading Visual Studio, 37–38
- Locals window, 348, 376–379
- Location variables (customizing search results), 207
- logging (Visual Studio), 37–38, 132–134
- Look at These File Types option (Find What combo box), 189
- Look In area (Quick Find), 173–174
- Look In dialog (Find Symbol), 197–199
- Look in drop-down list (Find What combo box), 189

M

- Macro Explorer, 146
- macros, creating/using, 144–146
- Manela, Matt, 418
- Mapping Schemes,
 - Keyboard, 125–127
- /markall or /m switch, 117
- Match Case option
 - Find Symbol, 199
 - Find What combo box, 187
 - Quick Find, 174
- matching braces, moving/selecting between, 224–225
- Match option (Find Symbol), 199
- Match Whole Word option
 - Find What combo box, 187
 - Quick Find, 174
- Members list, 266–267
- menu/command references
 - arguments and switches (commands), 115
 - auto-hide all tool windows, 99
 - auto-populating, stopping
 - Toolbox from, 136
 - AutoRecover function, 10–13
 - Autos window, 379
 - blank lines, accidentally copying, 211
 - blank lines, inserting above/below current line, 218
 - box selections, pasting content between, 238
 - box selections, zero-length, 240
 - Break All Processes When One Process Breaks, 374
 - breakpoint filters, setting, 324
 - breakpoint Hit Count, 314–316
 - breakpoints, adding labels to, 293–294
 - breakpoints, enabling/disabling all, 295–296
 - breakpoints, importing/exporting, 329
 - breakpoints, setting in Call Stack window, 367
 - breakpoints, setting on functions, 316
 - breakpoints window, opening, 293
 - browsers for web development, 96
 - Call Hierarchy window, 310
 - Class View, creating folders in, 350
 - Class View, searching in, 353
 - Class View, synchronizing, 355
 - Clipboard Ring, cycling through, 220–221
 - Code Definition window, 301
 - code snippets, inserting, 253
 - Code Snippets Manager, 261
 - code snippets, surrounding existing code with, 256
 - code snippets, using, 258
 - Collapse To Definitions with outlining, 246
 - command aliases, 113
 - commands, running, 121
 - Commands tab, customizing (toolbars), 30
 - commenting/uncommenting code in web pages, 217–218
 - Common tab/All tab in statement completion, 226
 - conditional breakpoints, setting, 318
 - conditional breakpoints, setting complex, 321
 - CSS versions, choosing, 283
 - current line, cutting/deleting, 213
 - cycling through open tool windows, 86
 - DataPoints, importing/exporting, 309
 - DataTips, pinning to source code, 305–306
 - default New Project location, changing, 50
 - default view in HTML editor, changing, 236
 - Design and Source views in web projects, 235
 - Design view, toggling, 236
 - development settings, resetting, 25
 - docking floating tool windows to previous location, 85
 - docking/undocking tool windows, 107
 - Document Outline (web projects), 251
 - documents on multiple monitors, 155–156
 - document windows, closing current, 158
 - Editor, tracking changes in, 280–281
 - Esc for returning to Editor, 237
 - Exceptions dialog box, 365
 - exporting environment settings, 6
 - exporting external tools list, 143
 - exporting window layouts, 134
 - Export Template Wizard, 64
 - external tools, running, 136–140
 - file extension associations, custom, 168
 - file location, opening from file tab, 158
 - file open location, 165
 - files, closing only specified, 164
 - Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182
 - Find In Files, 186, 190
 - Find In Files search results, customizing, 206
 - finding keyboard shortcuts in Visual Studio, 122
 - Find Symbol, 196–200
 - Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
 - formatting on HTML paste, 268
 - Go Back markers, navigating with, 277
 - Go To Definition for CSS, 194
 - Guide Diamond, rearranging windows in, 83
 - Hide Selection, 244
 - HTML code snippets, 259
 - HTML/CSS warnings, displaying as errors, 268
 - HTML, formatting documents/selections for, 265
 - IDE navigator, 160
 - importing/changing environment settings, 14
 - incremental search, 184
 - inserting documents to right of existing tabs, 153
 - inserting quotes when typing attribute values, 264
 - Intellisense keywords, 215–216
 - invoke statement completion, 225
 - item templates, creating, 57
 - JavaScript code snippets, 260
 - JScript Intellisense, updating, 269
 - keyboard accelerators for external tools, 141
 - Keyboard Mapping Schemes, 125
 - keyboard shortcuts, resetting all, 131
 - Locals window, changing context in, 376
 - logging commands, 132
 - macros, creating/using, 144–146
 - matching braces, selecting/moving between, 224
 - moving tool windows with keyboard, 102
 - multiple start-up projects, 48–50
 - multiple views of same document, 163
 - multi-targeting, using older frameworks with, 46
 - Navigate To dialog, 195
 - navigating errors in Errors List, 303

menu/command references

(continued)

- navigating open document windows, 157
- Navigation Bar, using, 266
- navigation stack, 275
- Object Browser navigation/ references, 362
- Object Browser overview, 356
- Object Browser scope settings, 359
- outlining, collapsing code with, 242
- parameter information, 227
- Pascal case (Intellisense), 216
- pasting single selection into box selections, 239
- Properties window, 249
- Quick Find, 172
- Quick Info option, 228
- Quick Replace (searching), 176–178
- QuickWatch, 343–345
- read-only files, editing, 282
- recent files, 154
- Recent Projects list, removing projects from, 9
- Recent Project templates in New Project dialog, 44
- reference highlighting, 223
- Replace in Files basic options, 192
- Run To Cursor, 330
- saving changes before building, 302
- searching currently selected string without Find window, 185
- searching for project templates, 43–45
- searching in Toolbox, 88
- selecting from current cursor to last Go Back marker, 278
- shortcuts, creating new, 127
- smart tags, using from keyboards, 231–232
- Solution Explorer, tracking active items in, 52
- Solution Folders, 54
- tagged expressions (Replace in Files), 203–206
- Tag Specific options, 285
- Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300
- Task Lists, creating custom tokens for, 297–300
- temporary projects, creating, 56
- testing commands, 119
- text, replacing text with box selection, 237
- Toolbars tab, customizing, 27
- tabs in Toolbox, 93
- tool window animations, changing, 14
- tool windows, closing, 87
- tracepoints, setting in source code, 325
- transposing lines/words/ characters, 219–220
- type-ahead selection support in Solution Explorer, 52–53
- Undo Quick Replace/Replace in Files, 179
- Undo/Redo global actions, 222
- Undo/Redo stack, 221
- using statements, organizing (C#), 232
- visualizers (Watch windows), 345
- Visual Studio 2010, changing visual experience in, 12
- Visual Studio 2010 Online Help, table of contents in, 4
- Visual Studio color schemes, changing, 17
- Visual Studio, repeating last search in, 171–172
- watches, adding from variable windows, 348
- Watch window, 340
- white space, viewing, 241
- word completion, 229
- word wrap, 248–249
- zoom in/out of text with editor, 209
- menus, rearranging, 32
- Microsoft namespace, 234
- Microsoft WindowsClient.NET site, 13
- minus sign (-) to collapse area of code, 243–244
- Misc category (Properties window), 250
- Modify Selection area (customize dialog box), 34–37
- Modify Selection option (toolbars), 29
- monitors, multiple documents on, 155–156
- mouse wheel, zooming in/out of text with, 209–210
- moving
 - between Common tab and All tab in statement completion, 226
 - and selecting between matching braces, 224–225
- multicolumn sorting, 305
- multiple monitors, documents on, 155–156

- multiple Startup Projects, 48–50
- multiple versions of VS, running side-by-side, 3
- multiple views of same document, 163–164
- multi-targeting, using older frameworks with, 46
- My Solution option (Look In dialog), 198

N

- namespaces, System, 234
- naming
 - custom toolbars, 29
 - tabs (Toolbox), 95
- navigating
 - backwards/forwards with Go Back markers, 277–278
 - errors in Errors List, 303–304
 - Find Results list, 190
 - HTML Editor tag navigation, 267–268
 - IDE navigator, 160–162
 - Navigate To dialog, 195–196
 - Navigation Bar, using, 266–267
 - navigation stack, 275–276
 - Object Browser navigation, 362–364
 - open document windows, 157–158
 - property tabs in project properties, 55
 - reference highlighting and, 223 among tabs in Toolbox, 89
- .NET Framework, older versions of, 46
- “A New Standard For Packaging Your Data”, 388
- New Item dialog box, 74–75, 80–82
- New Project location, changing default of, 50–51
- New Projects dialog, 43–45, 56, 72, 80–82
- n minutes/n days options (AutoRecover), 10

O

- Object Browser
 - Browse Definition command, 202–203
 - navigation and references, 362–364
 - “The Object Browser: Browsing Scope”, 198
 - overview, 356–357
 - setting browsing scope, 359–362

- using for web
 - development, 96–98
- Object images (VS Image Library), 151
- /on /off argument (logging), 133
- Online Help, table of contents in (Visual Studio 2010), 4–6
- Open Data Protocol Visualizer extension (VS), 405–406
- opening
 - file location from file tab, 158
 - file menu drop-down list from keyboard, 159
 - Open File Using Directory Of Currently Active Document option, 166
- Open Packaging Convention, 388
- “Optimizing Visual Studio 2010 and WPF Applications for Remote Desktop”, 13
- ordering, column (tool windows), 304–305
- Organize Usings menu (editor), 232
- outlining
 - Collapse to Definitions with, 246–247
 - collapsing code with, 242–243
 - cut/copy/paste collapsed code with, 247
- output files (Visual Studio Image Library), 147
- Output Location (Export Template Wizard), 61, 66
- Output window option (Initial Directory), 140
- OverviewMargin extension (VS), 411–413
- /overwrite argument (logging), 133

P

- page-level tracing, 336–339
- Papadimoulis, Alex, 402
- parameter information, 227–228
- Parsons, Jared, 406–407
- Pascal Case, 196, 216
- pasting
 - content between box selections, 238–239
 - cut/copy/paste collapsed code with outlining, 247
 - formatting on HTML paste, 268
 - single selection into box selection, 239–240
- performance, improving by changing visual experience (VS 2010), 12–13

- pinning
 - DataTips to source code, 305–306
 - projects to Recent Projects list, 56
 - tabs, 417
- posters of keyboard shortcuts, 425
- Power Commands extension (VS), 398–400
- PowerConsole extension (VS), 404–405
- PowerShell (Windows), 421–423
- Prefix option (Find Symbol), 199
- Presentation Zoom extension (VS), 211, 408–409
- Preview Image field (Export Template Wizard), 61, 66
- Process combo box (Locals window), 377
- Productivity Power Tools (VS), 416–418
- projects
 - creating temporary, 56–57
 - default templates,
 - reorganizing, 77–80
 - multiple startup, 48–50
 - navigating property tabs in project properties, 55
 - New Project location, changing default of, 50–51
 - pinning projects to Recent Projects list, 56
 - removing from Recent Projects list, 9
- project templates
 - creating with Export Template Wizard, 64–67
 - custom, organizing, 71–74
 - in New Project dialog,
 - changing, 80–82
 - Recent Project templates in New Project dialog, 44
 - searching for, 43–45
- properties
 - project, navigating property tabs in, 55
 - Properties window keyboard shortcuts, 249–250
- Pugh, David, 409, 411

Q

- question mark (?) for wildcard searches, 105
- Quick Find
 - buttons, 176
 - dialog box, 117–118
 - Find Next button, 176

- Find Options area, 174–176
- Find What field, 173
- Look In area, 173–174
- overview, 172–173
- Quick Info option, 228–229
- Quick Replace, 176–178, 179–180
- QuickWatch
 - fundamentals of, 343–345
 - setting watch expressions with, 341
 - window, 348
- quotes, inserting when typing attribute values, 264

R

- read-only files, editing, 282–283
- rearranging menus/toolbars, 32
- recent files, 154–155
- Recent Projects list
 - pinning projects to, 56
 - removing projects from, 9
- Recent Project templates in New Project dialog, 44
- recovered files. *See* AutoRecover feature
- Redo/Undo global actions, 222
- Redo/Undo stack, 221–222
- reference highlighting, 223–225
- references, Object
 - Browser, 362–364
- refreshing data (Watch window), 346–347
- Regex Editor extension (VS), 415–416
- registry, editing, 207, 329, 395, 410
- Regular Expressions
 - creating within code, 415–416
 - Find What combo box and, 188–189
 - Quick Find and, 175
- Remote Desktop, improving performance over, 13
- renaming code snippets, 230
- repeating last search in VS, 171–172
- Replace All buttons (Quick Replace), 178
- Replace buttons (Replace in Files), 193–194
- Replace in Files operation
 - basic options, 192–194
 - tagged expressions, 203–206
 - undoing, 180–182
- Replace With area (Quick Replace), 177

Replace With field (Replace in Files), 192–193

resetting

- color schemes, 24
- development settings, 25–28
- all keyboard shortcuts, 131–133

Reset All option (Modify Selection), 34

Reset button (tools), 130

ResetSettings switch (Visual Studio), 39–41

Result options

- Find in Files, 190–191
- Replace in Files, 193

results shortcuts (Find Symbol), 200–203

Richards, Noah, 414

Run command (Find/Command box), 182

running commands, 121–123

Run To Cursor, 330

S

safe mode (Visual Studio), 38

saving

- changes before building, 302–303
- color schemes, 23
- current settings, 25
- images in .resx files, 393
- Save AutoRecover Information
- Every check box, 10

Script Editor, 168

ScriptFree view (VS 2010 Online Help), 5

Scrollable Tab Wells, 417

searching. *See also* finding

- breakpoints, 312–313
- in Class View, 353–355
- currently selected string without Find window, 185–186
- Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182–184
- Find in Files, 186–190, 190–191
- Find Symbol, 196–200
- Find Symbol results
- shortcuts, 200–203
- for project templates in New Project dialog, 43–45
- Go To Definition for CSS, 194
- incremental search, 184–185
- Navigate To dialog, 195–196
- Quick Find. *See* Quick Find
- Quick Replace, 176–178
- repeating last search, 171–172
- Replace in Files, 180–182, 192–194, 203–206

- search results, customizing (Find In Files), 206–208
- Search Results (Find Symbol), 199–200
- Search Up option (Quick Find), 174
- simple searches for files, 105–106
- in Toolbox, 88
- Undo Quick Replace and Replace in Files, 179–182
- wildcard searches, 105–106

selecting

- from current cursor to last Go Back marker, 278–279
- formatting for HTML
- selections, 265–266
- Hide Selection, 244–246
- and moving between matching braces, 224–225
- Selection Comment/Selection Uncomment, 35

Server projects, launching, 50

settings

- default development, 26
- development, resetting, 25–28
- environment, exporting, 6–9
- environment, importing/
- changing, 14–16
- Set a Breakpoint (Find/Command box), 183
- “Setting a Breakpoint in the Call Stack Window”, 369
- “Setting a Tracepoint in Source Code”, 369
- Settings To Export dialog box, 7

sharing tokens, 299–300

Shifflett, Karl, 395

shortcuts

- creating new, 127–131
- keyboard. *See* keyboard shortcuts
- for running commands, 121–122

Show Commands Containing area, 111

Show Previous Versions option (documents), 166–167

“Side Effects and Expressions”, 347

Sitnikov, Dmitry, 413

Skip File button (Replace in Files), 193

smart tags, using from keyboard, 231–232

snippets, code

- inserting, 253–256
- Snippet Designer extension (VS), 418–419
- surrounding existing code
- with, 256–257
- using, 258–259

Solution Explorer

- Properties button, 48
- Solution Explorer Tools extension (VS), 396–397
- tracking active items in, 52–53
- type-ahead selection support
- in, 52–53

Solution Folders, 54–55

sorting

- multicolumn sorting, 305
- using statements, 234–235

Source and Design views in web projects, 235–236

source files (Visual Studio Image Library), 147

Spell Checker extension (VS), 407–408

Split view, 235

stack frame (Locals window), 377

Startup Projects, multiple, 48–50

statement completion

- invoking, 225–226
- moving between Common tab/All tab in, 226

statements, using, 232–235

Status Bar, 89

StructureAdornment extension (VS), 409–411

StudioShell extension (VS), 421–423

styles, embedded (HTML), 284–285

style sheets, dedicated (CSS), 283

Substring option (Find Symbol), 199

switches and arguments (commands), 115–119

symbols

- Find Symbols results
- shortcuts, 200–203
- searching for, 196–200

synchronizing Class View, 355

syntax for logging, 132

System menu, 102

System namespaces, 234

T

table of contents in Visual Studio 2010 Online Help, 4–6

tabs

- command prompt tab
- completion, 105–107
- inserting documents to right of existing, 153–154
- moving between Common tab and All tab in statement completion, 226
- navigating in Toolbox, 89
- opening file location from file tab, 158

- organizing in Toolbox, 231
- pinning, 417
- in Toolbox, 93–95
- tagged expressions (Replace in Files), 203–206
- tags
 - HTML Editor tag
 - navigation, 267–268
 - Tag Specific options. *See* Tag Specific Options dialog box
 - using smart tags from
 - keyboards, 231–232
- Tag Specific Options dialog box
 - ASP.NET Controls, 286
 - Bold setting, 289
 - Client HTML Tags, 286–287
 - closing tag option, 287–288
 - Default Settings, 286
 - Delete option, 286
 - Enable Outlining for Tag, 288
 - Indent Contents, 287
 - Line Breaks, 287
 - Minimum lines setting, 288
 - New Folder option, 286
 - New Tag option, 286
 - Outlining in Code Editor, 288
 - overview, 285–286
 - Per Tag Colorization, 289
 - Per Tag Formatting, 286
 - Preview option, 287
 - Tag Background/Foreground settings, 289
 - Tree view, 286
- Task Lists
 - creating code shortcuts
 - in, 300–301
 - creating custom tokens
 - for, 297–300
 - TODO comments in, 296–297
- templates
 - custom item, organizing, 68–71
 - default item, reorganizing, 74–78
 - default project,
 - reorganizing, 77–80
 - item, creating, 57–64
 - in NewProject/Items dialogs,
 - changing, 80–82
 - project, creating with Export Template Wizard, 64–67
 - project, organizing custom, 71–74
 - project, searching for, 43–45
 - Recent Project in New Project dialog, 44
- temporary projects, creating, 56–57
- testing commands, 119–121
- text
 - replacing with box
 - selection, 237–238

- Text variables (customizing search results), 207
- Text Visualizers, 345
- zoom in/out with Editor, 209–211
- “The Daily WTF” extension (VS), 401–402
- themes, creating with VS Color Theme Editor, 389–391
- Thread combo (Locals window), 377
- Threads window, 325
- Title Bar, 85
- TODO comments in Task List, 296–297
- toggle Design view, 236
- tokens, creating custom for Task Lists, 297–300
- toolbars, customizing
 - Commands tab, 30–37
 - Toolbars tab, 27–29
- Toolbox
 - context menu, 136
 - drag and drop code into, 229–230
 - expanding/collapsing all in, 87
 - navigating among tabs in, 89
 - searching in, 88
 - stopping from
 - auto-populating, 136
 - tabs in, 93–95
- tools
 - exporting external tools
 - list, 143–145
 - running external, 136–140
- tools window
 - animations, changing, 14–15
 - auto-hide all, 99–100
 - closing, 87
 - column ordering in, 304
 - docking floating to previous
 - location, 85
 - docking/undocking, 107–110
 - keyboard access to toolbar, 103
 - moving with keyboard, 102–103
 - open, cycling through, 86
 - showing hidden with Auto Hide Channel, 100–101
- To, Quan, 388
- tracepoints
 - setting in Call Stackwindow, 369–371
 - setting in source code, 325–328
- tracing
 - application-level/
 - page-level, 336–339
 - “Tracing and Implementing Applications”, 325
- tracking
 - active items in Solution Explorer, 52–53

- changes in Editor, 280–281
- transposing lines/words/
 - characters, 219–220
- “Trees in WPF”, 371
- Triple Click extension (VS), 414–415
- Troubleshooting Tips area
 - (Exception Assistant), 332
- two threads icon, 347
- type-ahead functionality, 159
- type-ahead selection support in
 - Solution Explorer, 52–53

U

- uncommenting/commenting code
 - in web pages, 217–218
- “Understanding Commands:
 - Running Commands”, 120
- “Understanding Commands:
 - Aliases”, 119
- undocking single tool
 - windows, 107–108
- Undo Quick Replace/Replace in
 - Files, 179–182
- Undo/Redo global actions, 222
- Undo/Redo stack, 221–222
- unhandled exceptions, unwinding
 - call stacks on, 334
- Unicode, 140
- universal zoom, 211
- UnresolvedMergeConflict
 - token, 298
- updating JScript Intellisense, 269
- Use Defaults option (color schemes), 24
- Use Hardware Graphics Acceleration
 - If Available option, 13
- Use option
 - Find What combo box, 187
 - Quick Find, 174–175
- “Using External Tools”, 141
- using statements (C#), 232–235

V

- variables
 - for customizing search
 - results, 207–208
 - Variable windows, adding watches
 - from, 348–350
- Vertical Tab Well, 417
- views
 - Classic (Visual Studio 2010 Online Help), 5–6
 - multiple views of same
 - document, 163–164
 - “View Code Blocks Using Vertical Lines”, 411

views (*continued*)

- View.ClassViewSearch
 - command, 354–355
- viewing assigned aliases (commands), 114
- viewing white space, 241–242
- window layout, 90
- Virtual Directories, creating in IIS, 46–47
- Visual Basic
 - Autos window and, 381
 - setting breakpoints in, 292
 - TODO comments in, 296
 - users in VS 2010, 163
- Visual Basic 6 keyboard shortcuts
 - commands, running, 121
 - current line, cutting/deleting, 213
 - Design view, toggling, 236
 - file location, opening from file tab, 158
 - Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182
 - Find In Files (Result options), 190
 - Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
 - Go Back markers, navigating with, 277
 - Go To Definition for CSS, 194
 - IDE navigator, 160
 - incremental search, 184
 - macros, creating/using, 144–146
 - multi-targeting, using older frameworks with, 46
 - navigating errors in Errors List, 303
 - navigation stack, 275
 - Object Browser navigation/ references, 362
 - Object Browser overview, 356
 - Object Browser scope settings, 359
 - parameter information, 227
 - Quick Info option, 228
 - Recent Project templates in New Project dialog, 44
 - Run To Cursor, 330
 - searching for project templates, 43–45
 - transposing lines/words/ characters, 219–220
 - type-ahead selection support in Solution Explorer, 52–53
 - Undo/Redo stack, 221
 - white space, viewing, 241
 - word wrap, 248–249
- Visual C++ 2 keyboard shortcuts
 - breakpoints, setting in Call Stack window, 367
 - breakpoints, setting on functions, 316
 - breakpoints window,
 - opening, 293
 - Call Hierarchy window, 310
 - Class View, searching in, 353
 - code snippets, inserting, 253
 - Code Snippets Manager, 261
 - code snippets, surrounding existing code with, 256
 - code snippets, using, 258
 - Collapse To Definitions with outlining, 246
 - commands, running, 121
 - commenting/uncommenting code in web pages, 217–218
 - current line, cutting/deleting, 213
 - cycling through open tool windows, 86
 - Design view, toggling, 236
 - docking floating tool windows to previous location, 85
 - docking/undocking tool windows, 107
 - Document Outline (web projects), 251
 - Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182
 - Find In Files (Result options), 190
 - Find Symbol, 196–200
 - Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
 - Go To Definition for CSS, 194
 - Hide Selection, 244
 - HTML code snippets, 259
 - HTML, formatting documents/ selections for, 265
 - IDE navigator, 160
 - Intellisense keywords, 215–216
 - invoke statement completion, 225
 - JavaScript code snippets, 260
 - Locals window, changing context in, 376
 - matching braces, selecting/moving between, 224
 - navigating errors in Errors List, 303
 - navigating open document windows, 157
 - navigation stack, 275
 - Object Browser navigation/ references, 362
 - Object Browser overview, 356
 - Object Browser scope settings, 359
 - outlining, collapsing code with, 242
 - Pascal case, 216
 - Properties window, 249
 - Quick Find, 172
 - Quick Info option, 228
 - rearranging windows in Visual Studio 2010 with Guide Diamond, 83
 - Run To Cursor, 330
 - Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300
 - type-ahead selection support in Solution Explorer, 52–53
 - Undo/Redo stack, 221
 - visualizers (Watch windows), 345
 - white space, viewing, 241
- Visual C++ 6 keyboard shortcuts
 - breakpoints, adding labels to, 293–294
 - breakpoints window,
 - opening, 293
 - Clipboard Ring, cycling through, 220–221
 - Code Definition window, 301
 - commands, running, 121
 - current line, cutting/deleting, 213
 - Design view, toggling, 236
 - Document Outline (web projects), 251
 - Esc for returning to Editor return to, 237
 - Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182
 - Find Symbol, 196–200
 - Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
 - HTML, formatting documents/ selections for, 265
 - Intellisense keywords, 215–216
 - invoke statement completion, 225
 - Locals window, changing context in, 376
 - multiple start-up projects, 48–50
 - navigating errors in Errors List, 303
 - Navigation Bar, using, 266
 - navigation stack, 275
 - Pascal case, 216
 - Properties window, 249
 - text, replacing with box selection, 237
 - white space, viewing, 241
- Visual C# 2005 keyboard shortcuts
 - arguments and switches (commands), 115
 - Autos window, 379
 - breakpoints, setting on functions, 316
 - breakpoints window,
 - opening, 293
 - Code Definition window, 301
 - code snippets, inserting, 253
 - code snippets, surrounding existing code with, 256

- code snippets, using, 258
- Collapse To Definitions with outlining, 246
- command aliases, 113
- commands, running, 121
- commenting/uncommenting code in web pages, 217–218
- current line, cutting/deleting, 213
- Design view, toggling, 236
- Document Outline (web projects), 251
- Exceptions dialog box, 365
- Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182
- Find In Files (Result options), 190
- Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
- HTML code snippets, 259
- HTML, formatting documents/selections for, 265
- Intellisense keywords, 215–216
- invoke statement completion, 225
- JavaScript code snippets, 260
- Locals window, changing context in, 376
- Object Browser navigation/references, 362
- Object Browser overview, 356
- Object Browser scope settings, 359
- outlining, collapsing code with, 242
- parameter information, 227
- Pascal case, 216
- Properties window, 249
- Quick Info option, 228
- QuickWatch, 343–345
- searching in Toolbox, 88
- Solution Explorer, type-ahead selection support in, 52–53
- Task Lists, creating code shortcuts in, 300
- testing commands, 119
- visualizers (Watch windows), 345
- Visual Studio 2010 Online Help, table of contents in, 4
- Watch window, 340
- white space, viewing, 241
- word completion, 229
- word wrap, 248–249
- visual experience, changing in VS 2010, 12–13
- visualizers, 345–346
- Visual Studio
 - changing color schemes in. *See* color schemes, changing
 - changing visual experience in, 12–13
 - customizing with Windows PowerShell, 421–423
 - Guide Diamond, rearranging windows with, 83–84
 - Image Library, 147–152
 - logging, 37–38
 - Online Help, table of contents in, 4–6
 - project templates stored in, 77
 - ResetSettings switch, 39–41
 - running multiple versions side-by-side, 3
 - in safe mode, 38
 - storage of item templates, 75
 - “Visual Studio Commands with Arguments”, 115
 - Visual Studio Gallery, 386–387
- Visual Studio 6 keyboard shortcuts
 - breakpoints, setting on functions, 316
 - breakpoints window, opening, 293
 - Collapse To Definitions with outlining, 246
 - commands, running, 121
 - current line, cutting/deleting, 213
 - Design view, toggling, 236
 - Find Combo box keyboard shortcuts, 182
 - Find In Files, 186
 - Find In Files (Result options), 190
 - Find In Files search results, customizing, 206
 - Find Symbol results shortcuts, 200
 - Go To Definition for CSS, 194
 - Hide Selection, 244
 - HTML, formatting documents/selections for, 265
 - incremental search, 184
 - Intellisense keywords, 215–216
 - Locals window, changing context in, 376
 - macros, creating/using, 144–146
 - multi-targeting, using older frameworks with, 46
 - navigating errors in Errors List, 303
 - navigating open document windows, 157
 - Object Browser navigation/references, 362
 - Object Browser overview, 356
 - Object Browser scope settings, 359
 - outlining, collapsing code with, 242
 - parameter information, 227
 - Pascal case, 216
- Properties window, 249
- Quick Info option, 228
- Recent Project templates in New Project dialog, 44
- searching for project templates, 43–45
- Solution Explorer, type-ahead selection support in, 52–53
- Visual Studio extensions
 - AllMargins extension, 411–413
 - CodeCompare extension, 402–404
 - Color Theme Editor extension, 389–391
 - disabling, 388
 - Editor Guideline extension, 394–396
 - Emacs Commands extension, 400–401
 - GhostDoc tool, 419–421
 - Image Insertion tool, 391–393
 - installing from Extension Manager, 386
 - installing from Visual Studio Gallery, 386–387
 - installing through Xcopy, 387
 - Open Data Protocol Visualizer extension, 405–406
 - overview, 385
 - OverviewMargin extension, 411–413
 - Power Commands extension, 398–400
 - PowerConsole extension, 404–405
 - Presentation Zoom extension, 408–409
 - Productivity Power Tools, 416–418
 - Regex Editor extension, 415–416
 - resources for developing, 389
 - Snippet Designer extension, 418–419
 - Solution Explorer Tools extension, 396–397
 - Spell Checker extension, 407–408
 - StructureAdornment extension, 409–411
 - StudioShell extension, 421–423
 - “The Daily WTF” extension, 401–402
 - Triple Click extension, 414–415
 - uninstalling, 389–390
 - VsVim extension, 406–407
 - Win7 Taskbar Extension, 413–414
 - XAML Intellisense Presenter extension, 395–396
 - ZoomEditorMargin extension, 408–409

.vsix files, 388
 .vssettings files, 21, 135
 VsVim extension (VS), 406–407

W

Watch windows
 column ordering and, 304
 visualizers and, 345–346
 watches, adding from variable windows, 348–350
 watching and changing values, 340–343

Web Applications, creating in IIS, 46–47

web development, different browsers for, 96–98

web pages, commenting/uncommenting code in, 217–218

web projects, switching between Design and Source views in, 235–236

websites, for downloading
 CodeCompare extension (VS), 404
 “Disable Mouse Wheel Zoom” extension, 210
 posters of keyboard shortcuts, 425
 “Presentation Zoom” extension, 211
 “The Daily WTF”, 402

websites, for further information
 Autos window, 379
 Emacs keyboard shortcuts, 401
 “Export Template Wizard” documentation, 68
 “Find Command” documentation, 116
 GhostDoc extension (VS), 421
 “HTML Editor Tag Navigation in Visual Web Developer”, 267
 Image Insertion tool, customizing, 393
 “Installing Visual Studio Versions Side-by-Side”, 3
 MSDN documentation, 110
 Open Data Protocol Visualizer, 406
 Open Packaging Convention, 388
 “Optimizing Visual Studio 2010 and WPF Applications for Remote Desktop”, 13
 Power Commands extension (VS), 400
 Power Console extension (VS), 405
 Properties Window, 249
 reference highlighting, 223
 Regex Editor, 415
 Regular Expressions, 175
 “Side Effects and Expressions”, 347
 Snippet Designer extension (VS), 419
 StudioShell module, 423
 “The Daily WTF” extension (VS), 402
 trace element settings, 338
 tracing, 339
 “Tracing and Implementing Applications”, 325
 “Trees in WPF”, 371
 Triple Click extension (VS), 414
 unwinding call stacks on unhandled exceptions, 334
 VIM extension (VS), 406
 “Visual Studio Commands with Arguments”, 115
 Visual Studio, documentation for, 37
 Visual Studio extension developer’s blog post, 391
 Visual Studio extensions, development resources for, 389
 Visual Studio Gallery, 386
 .vsix file, 388
 Wildcard searches, 175
 WPFPerf tool, 13
 XAML Intellisense Presenter, 396

When Breakpoint Is Hit dialog box, 327

white space
 adding extra in code, 218
 viewing, 241–242

Whole Word option (Find Symbol), 199

/wild or /I switch, 117

wildcard searches, 105–106, 175, 188

Win7 Taskbar Extension (VS), 413–414

Window Layouts
 Debug Mode, 92
 Design Mode, 91
 exporting, 39, 134–136
 four modes of, 90–91
 Full Screen Mode, 93

windows
 auto-hide all tool windows, 99–100
 Autos, 348
 Breakpoints, 317
 browser window size, 98
 Call Hierarchy window, 310–312
 closing current document window, 158
 closing tool windows, 87
 Code Definition window, 301
 Command Window, 122
 detachable document windows, 155
 docking/undocking tool windows, 107–110
 floating tool window, docking to previous location, 85
 Immediate Window, 122
 Locals, 348
 moving tool windows with keyboard, 102–103
 navigating open document windows, 157–158
 QuickWatch window, 348
 rearranging with Guide Diamond (VS 2010), 83–84
 searching currently selected string without Find window, 185–186
 showing hidden tool windows with Auto Hide Channel, 100–101
 Threads window, 325
 tool windows, cycling through open, 86
 Watch. *See* Watch windows

Windows, Microsoft
 Windows PowerShell, 421–423
 Windows Presentation Foundation (WPF), 13

words

transposing, 219–220
 word completion, 229
 word wrap, 248–249
 WPFPerf tool (Windows SDK), 13
 WPF Tree Visualizer, 371–373

X

XAML Intellisense Presenter extension (VS), 395–396
 Xcopy, installing VS extensions through, 387
 XML, exporting DataTips as, 309
 Xu, Jianchun, 404

Z

zero-length box selections, 240–241
 ZoomEditorMargin extension (VS), 408–409
 zoom in/out of text with Editor, 209–211

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Table of Contents for This Appendix

Additional Tips from Chapter 1

AX.01	Getting Help Samples.	A7
AX.02	Make the Start Page Go Away.	A8
AX.03	Bringing Back the Start Page	A8
AX.04	Show All Settings with Visual Basic	A9
AX.05	Find Your Development Settings	A10
AX.06	Settings Automatically Saved On Exit	A11
AX.07	Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2008: Toolbars Tab	A12
AX.08	Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2008: Commands Tab	A15
AX.09	Hide or Show Default Buttons on a Toolbar	A20
AX.10	Reset Toolbars	A21

Additional Tips from Chapter 2

AX.11	Sorting Templates in the New Project Dialog Box	A23
AX.12	Toggle Icon Size in the New Project Dialog Box	A24
AX.13	Choosing the StartUp Project	A25
AX.14	Linked Items in Projects	A26
AX.15	Using the Miscellaneous Files Project	A27
AX.16	Change the Order of Your Application Settings	A28
AX.17	Hide or Show the Solution File in Solution Explorer	A32
AX.18	New Project Dialog Preferred Language	A33
AX.19	Optimizing Your Project Code	A35

Additional Tips from Chapter 3

AX.20	Full Screen Mode.	A38
AX.21	Split Your Windows Horizontally	A39
AX.22	Sorting Items in the Toolbox.	A40
AX.23	Icon vs. List View in the Toolbox.	A41
AX.24	Hide the Status Bar	A43
AX.25	Remove the Navigation Bar.	A43
AX.26	Show Any Toolbar	A44
AX.27	Changing Auto-Hide Behavior for Tool Windows.	A45
AX.28	Closing a Tool Window Tab Group.	A47
AX.29	Copy and Paste with the Command Prompt	A47

AX.30	Customize the Command Prompt	A50
AX.31	Show All Toolbox Controls.	A57
AX.32	Server Explorer: Data Connections.	A58
AX.33	Server Explorer: Server Event Logs.	A62
AX.34	Server Explorer: Server Management Classes	A65
AX.35	Window Layouts: File View	A68
AX.36	Rearrange Your Toolbars	A70
AX.37	Create a Shortcut Key for a Macro	A71
AX.38	How to Run External Executables from the Command Window	A73

Additional Tips from Chapter 4

AX.39	Close All But This on the File Tab Channel	A75
AX.40	Copy a File's Full Path from the File Tab	A75
AX.41	Understanding the File Tab Channel Drop-Down Button	A76
AX.42	How to Disable the IDE Navigator	A77
AX.43	Thumbnail Previews in the IDE Navigator.	A79
AX.44	Changing Editors Using Open With.	A80

Additional Tips from Chapter 5

AX.45	Using a Simple Quick Find	A84
AX.46	Using the Find Combo Box	A85
AX.47	Customize the Files to Search with Find In Files	A87
AX.48	How to Show and Hide Find Messages	A89
AX.49	How to Not Automatically Search for the Currently Selected Word	A91
AX.50	Setting Bookmarks	A91
AX.51	Organizing Bookmarks.	A93
AX.52	Navigating Bookmarks.	A94

Additional Tips from Chapter 6

AX.53	Turn On Line Numbers	A97
AX.54	Go to a Line Number	A98
AX.55	Comment and Uncomment Code	A99
AX.56	Select the Current Word	A100
AX.57	Delete Through the Beginning or End of a Word	A101
AX.58	Click and Drag Text to a New Location	A101
AX.59	Make Selection Uppercase or Lowercase	A104
AX.60	Brace Matching Rectangle.	A104

AX.61	Automatic Delimiter Highlighting	A105
AX.62	Move or Select to the Top or Bottom of the Current View in the Editor.	A107
AX.63	Format the Current Document or Selection	A108
AX.64	Use F6 to Jump Between Split Windows	A109
AX.65	Turn Off Single-Click URL Navigation in the Editor	A109
AX.66	Hide the Vertical and/or Horizontal Scroll Bars	A110
AX.67	How to Convert Tabs to Spaces and Vice Versa	A111
AX.68	Delete Horizontal White Space	A113
AX.69	Expanding Your Code with Outlining	A114
AX.70	Collapsing or Expanding All Your Code with Outlining	A115
AX.71	Turn Off or Turn On Outlining	A116
AX.72	Understanding Virtual Space	A117
AX.73	Document Outline: WPF and Silverlight Projects	A118
AX.74	Document Outline: Windows Form Projects	A121
AX.75	Change the Tooltip Font Size	A124
AX.76	Change the Statement Completion Font Size	A125
AX.77	Vertical Split View for Web Projects	A126
AX.78	Open JScript Braces on a New Line	A127
AX.79	Insert Spaces vs. Keep Tabs	A127
AX.80	View in Browser	A129
AX.81	Detect When a File Is Changed Outside the Environment	A130
AX.82	Turn Off the Selection Margin	A131
AX.83	Reuse the Same Editor Window When Opening Files	A132
AX.84	Sharing Snippets with Your Team	A133
AX.85	Swap the Current Anchor Position	A135
AX.86	Guidelines: A Hidden Feature for the Visual Studio Editor	A135
AX.87	Insert File as Text	A138
AX.88	Indenting: Smart vs. Block vs. None	A139
AX.89	Change CSS Formatting	A140
AX.90	How to Turn Off Automatic IntelliSense	A142
AX.91	Disable HTML, CSS, or JScript IntelliSense	A142
AX.92	Design and XAML on Different Document Tabs	A143
AX.93	Using Generate from Usage	A145
AX.94	IntelliSense Suggestion Mode	A148
AX.95	Turn Off Automatic Symbol Renaming When You Rename a File in Solution Explorer	A149
AX.96	Mark Methods and Types as Hidden from IntelliSense and the Object Browser	A150

Additional Tips from Chapter 7

AX.97	Set or Remove a Breakpoint	A153
AX.98	Enable or Disable a Breakpoint.	A154
AX.99	Start Debugging vs. Start Without Debugging	A155
AX.100	Set As Start Page	A157
AX.101	Enable Debugging in Web.Config	A159
AX.102	View the Error List Window	A160
AX.103	Show Error Help from Errors List Window	A161
AX.104	Hide or Show Error List When the Build Finishes with Errors	A161
AX.105	Show the Output Window During Build	A162
AX.106	Navigate Among Errors in the Output Window	A163
AX.107	Customize the Output Window	A164
AX.108	Step Out of or Over a Method	A165
AX.109	Clearing Your DataTips	A167
AX.110	Create User Tasks in the Task List	A169
AX.111	Show the Full File Path in the Task List	A172
AX.112	Disable the Prompt for Deleting Items from the Task List.	A173
AX.113	Navigate Task List Entries with the Keyboard	A174
AX.114	Navigating Between Output Window Panes with the Keyboard	A175
AX.115	The Watch Window: Moving Values Between Watch Windows	A176
AX.116	The Immediate Window: Simple Printing and Changing Values.	A178
AX.117	The Immediate Window: Working with Members	A179
AX.118	The Immediate Window: Design-Time Breakpoints	A181
AX.119	The Immediate Window: Running Commands	A182
AX.120	Class View and Object Browser Icons	A183
AX.121	Output Window vs. Immediate Window.	A185
AX.122	The Object Browser: Settings	A186
AX.123	The Object Browser: Search.	A192
AX.124	The Object Browser: Objects Pane	A195
AX.125	The Object Browser: Members Pane	A203
AX.126	The Object Browser: Description Pane	A205
AX.127	The Object Browser: Creating a Keyboard Shortcut for Add To References	A206

AX.128	The Object Browser: Type-Ahead Selection	A208
AX.129	The Object Browser: Exporting Your Settings	A209
AX.130	The Immediate Window: Implicit Variables	A211
AX.131	Show External Code	A213
AX.132	Understanding Just My Code	A215
AX.133	Attach To Process (Tools vs. Debug Menu).....	A218
AX.134	The Immediate Window: Running WinDbg and SOS (Son of Strike) Commands	A219
AX.135	Creating a Class Diagram from Class View	A224
AX.136	Placing the Call Stack and Call Hierarchy Windows	A224
AX.137	Delete All Breakpoints	A226
AX.138	Make Object ID	A229
AX.139	Change Values from the Locals Window.....	A231
AX.140	Debug Executable Without Using Attach to Process	A232
AX.141	The Watch Window: Hexadecimal Display	A234
AX.142	Edit And Continue.....	A235
AX.143	Print with Line Numbers	A237
AX.144	Printing the File Path in the Page Header.....	A238
AX.145	Printing in Different Fonts and Colors.....	A238
AX.146	Get Rid of the Splash Screen.....	A239
AX.147	Understanding Check Accessibility	A240
AX.148	Automatic vs. Default in Fonts and Colors	A242
AX.149	Visual Studio Permissions Needed on Windows Vista or Later.....	A248
AX.150	Show Advanced Build Configurations	A251
AX.151	Emacs Emulation	A252
AX.152	ViM Emulation	A253

Appendix B

Additional Tips

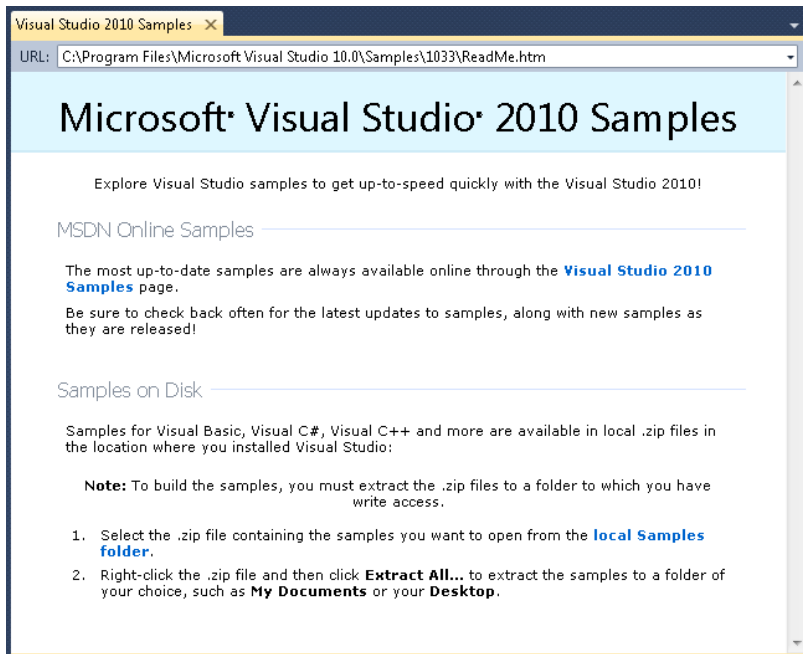
Additional Tips from Chapter 1

AX.01 Getting Help Samples

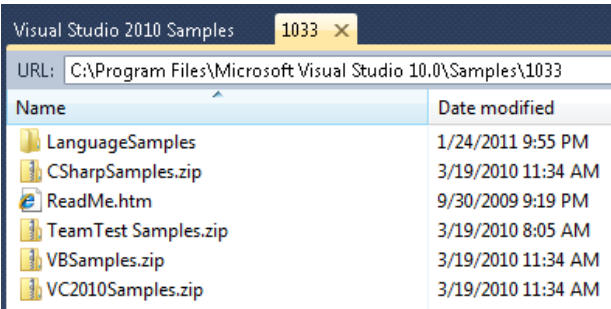
WINDOWS	Alt,H, L
MENU	Help Samples
COMMAND	Help.Samples
VERSIONS	2008,2010
CODE	vstipEnv0002

This is another one of those things that is always there but that developers tend to forget about. You can get sample code from within Visual Studio itself. Just select Help | Samples from your menu bar.

What you see next is version-specific—for example, in Visual Studio 2010, you will see the page shown below:



Click the Local Samples Folder link, and you see the folder shown in the following image:



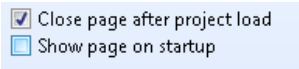
From here, you just unzip the code samples for the language you are interested in.

AX.02 Make the Start Page Go Away

WINDOWS	Alt,V, G
MENU	View Start Page
COMMAND	View.StartPage
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0002

Does the Start Page appearing every time you start Visual Studio annoy you? You can set up Visual Studio so that the Start Page doesn't load when you start Visual Studio. Just look in the lower-left corner, and clear the Show Page On Startup check box.

From now on, the Start Page shows up only when you want it to.



AX.03 Bringing Back the Start Page

WINDOWS	Alt,V, G
MENU	View Start Page
COMMAND	View.StartPage
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0001

You might have noticed that when you open up a Solution or Project, the Start Page goes away. This is the new default behavior in Visual Studio 2010.








To change it, look in the lower-left corner of the new and improved Start Page, and clear the Close Page After Project Load check box. From now on, the Start Page sticks around until you close it yourself.

- ☐ Close page after project load
- ☒ Show page on startup

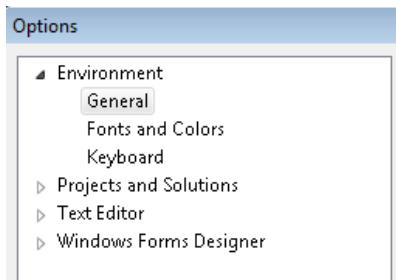
AX.04 Show All Settings with Visual Basic

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	VB
CODE	vstipEnv0042

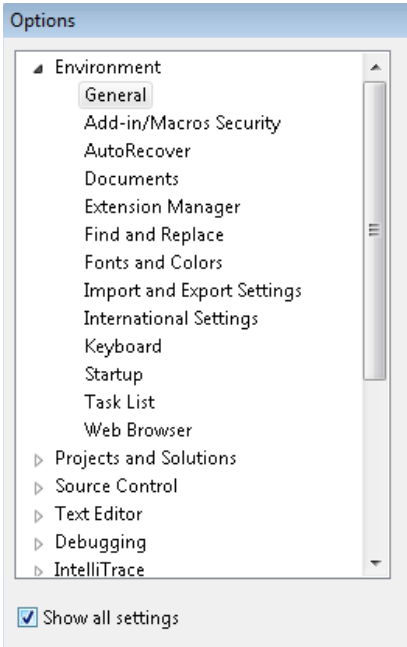
Did you choose the Visual Basic settings during your install?

-  General Development Settings
-  Project Management Settings
-  Visual Basic Development Settings
-  Visual C# Development Settings
-  Visual C++ Development Settings
-  Visual F# Development Settings
-  Web Development
-  Web Development (Code Only)

If so, you might notice, when you open the Tools | Options menu, that the options are not all there:



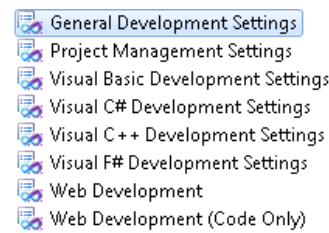
To bring them back, just select Show All Settings at the bottom-left of the dialog box, and all the available settings will reappear:



AX.05 Find Your Development Settings

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0020

Development settings determine quite a bit when you use Visual Studio. For example, they determine how you see the installed templates and what options you see initially in the Tools | Options dialog box. You probably remember the following choices when you installed Visual Studio:




If you happen to forget what choice you made, you can quickly get a reminder by going to the registry key HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version>\Profile.



Warning Don't make any changes in the Registry for this tip; just view the data.

So, for Visual Studio 2010, the path would be HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Profile, and then you would look at the "LastResetSettingsFile" string:

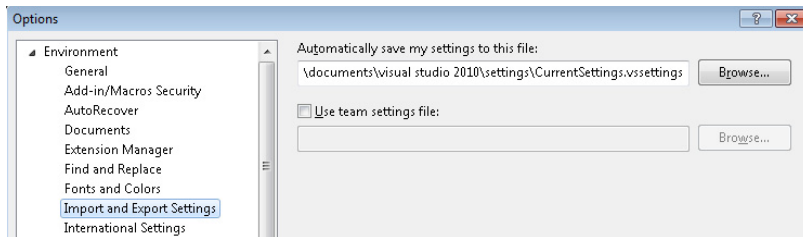
 LastResetSettingsFile REG_SZ %vsspv_vs_install_directory%\Common7\IDE\Profiles\General.vssettings

Assuming you haven't reset the settings via Tools | Import And Export Settings lately, this value should have the name of the settings file you chose at first launch. In my case, as shown in the preceding graphic, I chose the "General Development Settings" (General.vssettings) option.

AX.06 Settings Automatically Saved On Exit

WINDOWS	Alt,T,I
MENU	Tools Options Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0026

Visual Studio automatically saves your settings every time it is closed. To see where this file is located (or to change the location), go to Tools | Options | Import And Export Settings and locate the Automatically Save My Settings To This File area:

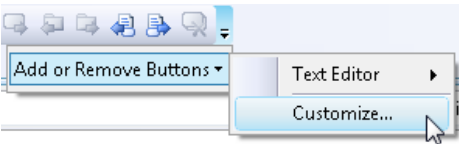


The nice thing is that you can use this to "undo" any changes you have made during a session. So if you made some changes to Visual Studio but don't want to keep them, you can import the CurrentSettings.vssettings (default name) file to bring back your settings from the last time Visual Studio was closed.

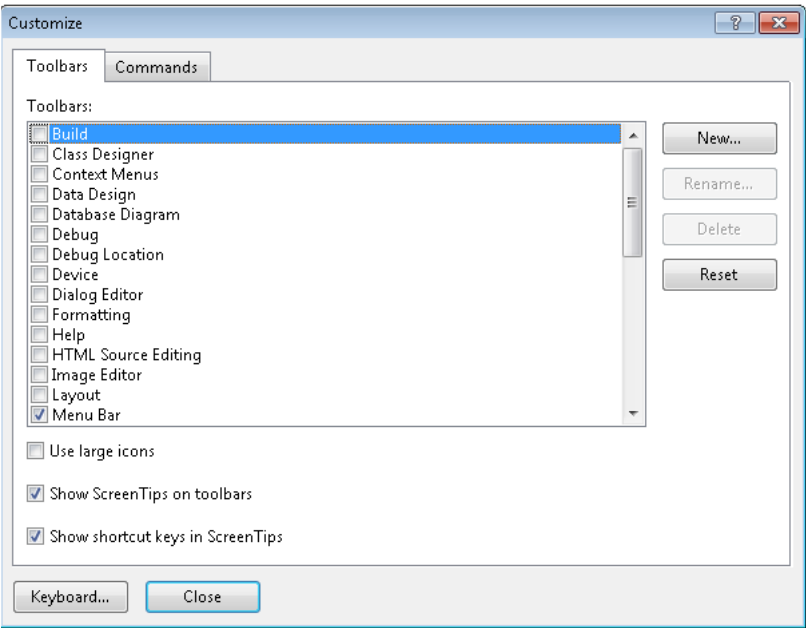
AX.07 Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2008: Toolbars Tab

WINDOWS	Alt,T, C
MENU	Tools Customize
COMMAND	Tools.Customize
VERSIONS	2008
CODE	vstipEnv0032

You can customize any toolbar in Visual Studio 2008. Just click the drop-down arrow to the right of any toolbar, click Add Or Remove Buttons, and choose Customize:

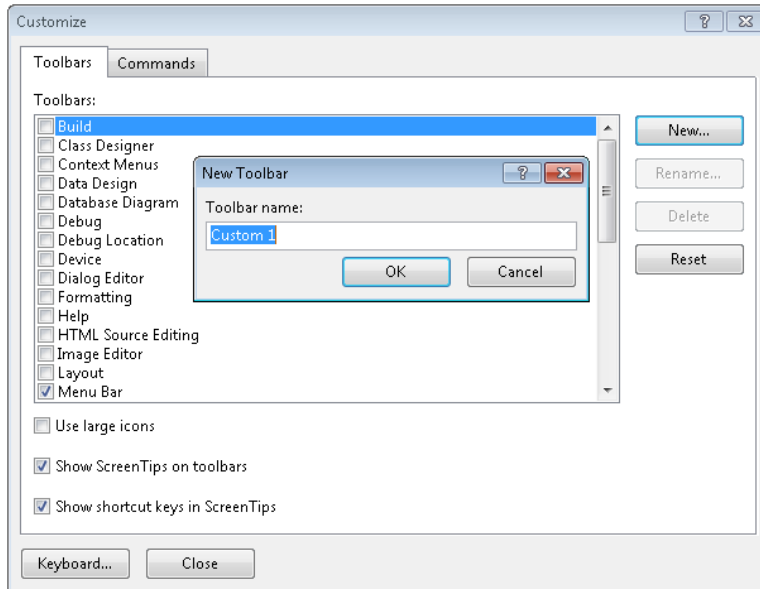


Whichever option you choose opens the Customize dialog box:

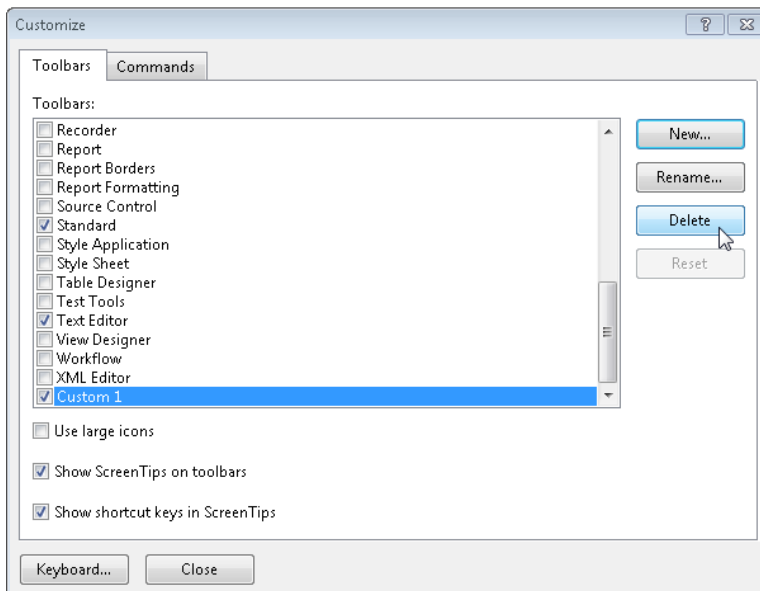


Custom Toolbars

Notice that the Toolbars tab lists all the available toolbars. When you click New to create a customized toolbar, you are prompted to give the new toolbar a name:

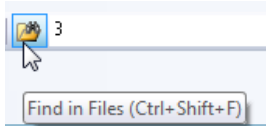


After you name it, you can delete the custom toolbar by clicking Delete, or you can rename it by clicking Rename:

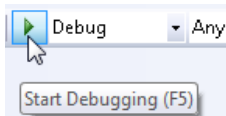


Additionally, you can take advantage of the following options at the bottom of the dialog box:

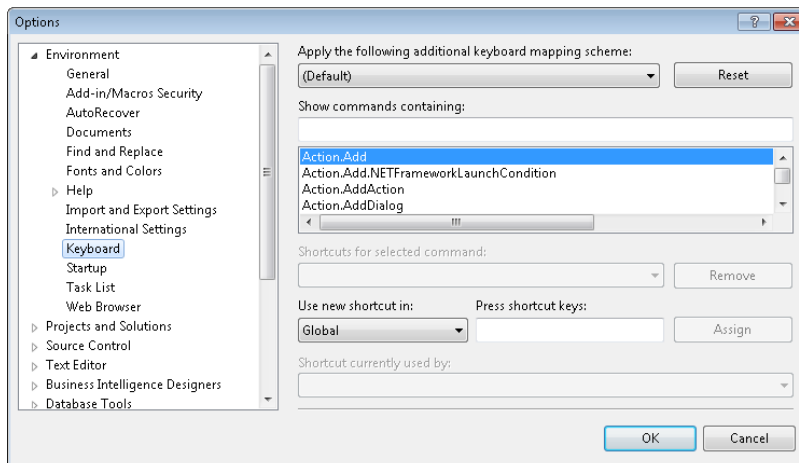
- **Use Large Icons** Shows larger icons on toolbars in your environment.
- **Show ScreenTips On Toolbars** Indicates whether you see a tooltip for the toolbar items:



- **Show Shortcut Keys In ScreenTips** Shows the shortcut key combinations in the tooltips for items that have them.



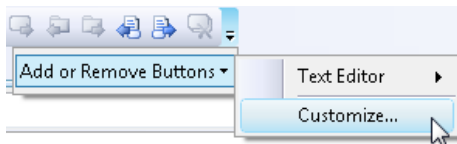
Clicking the Keyboard button at the bottom of the Customize dialog box is just the same as going to Tools | Options | Keyboard (see vstipTool0063, "Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts," on page 127 for details):



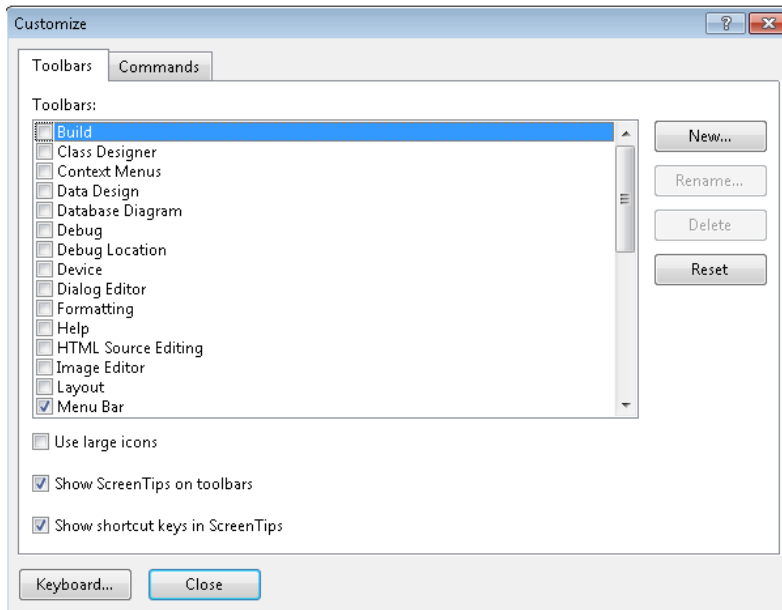
AX.08 Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2008: Commands Tab

WINDOWS	Alt,T, C
MENU	Tools Customize
COMMAND	Tools.Customize
VERSIONS	2008
CODE	vstipEnv0033

You can customize any toolbar in Visual Studio 2008. Just click the drop-down arrow to the right of any toolbar, click Add Or Remove Buttons, and choose Customize:



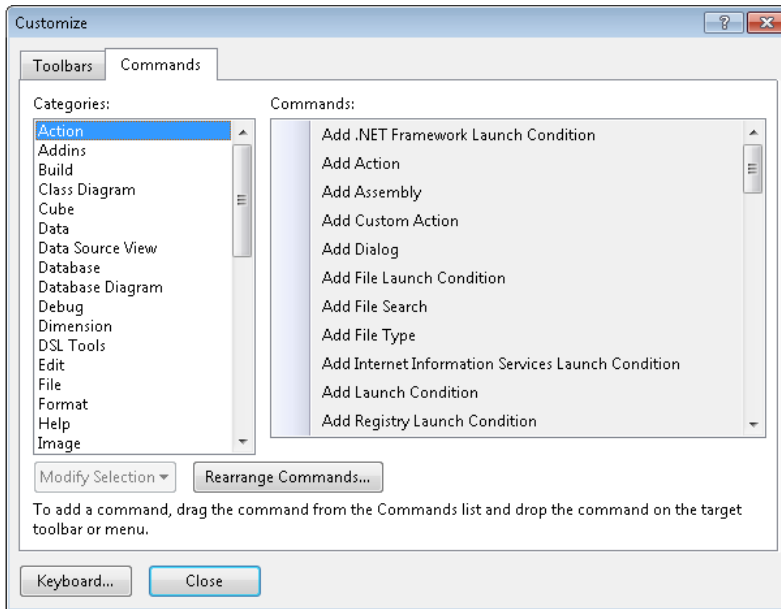
Alternatively, you can go to Tools | Customize on the menu bar. Whichever option you choose opens the Customize dialog box:



In this case, let's look at the Commands tab:

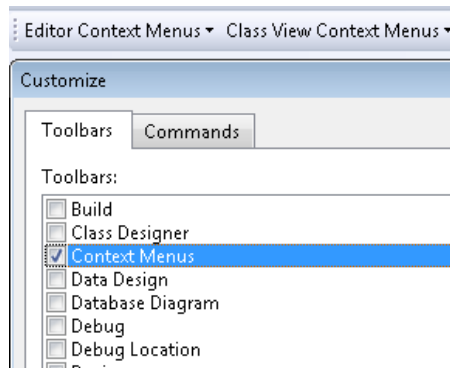


Note To learn more about the Toolbars tab, see vstipEnv0032, "Customize Your Toolbars in Visual Studio 2008 Toolbars Tab," on page A12.

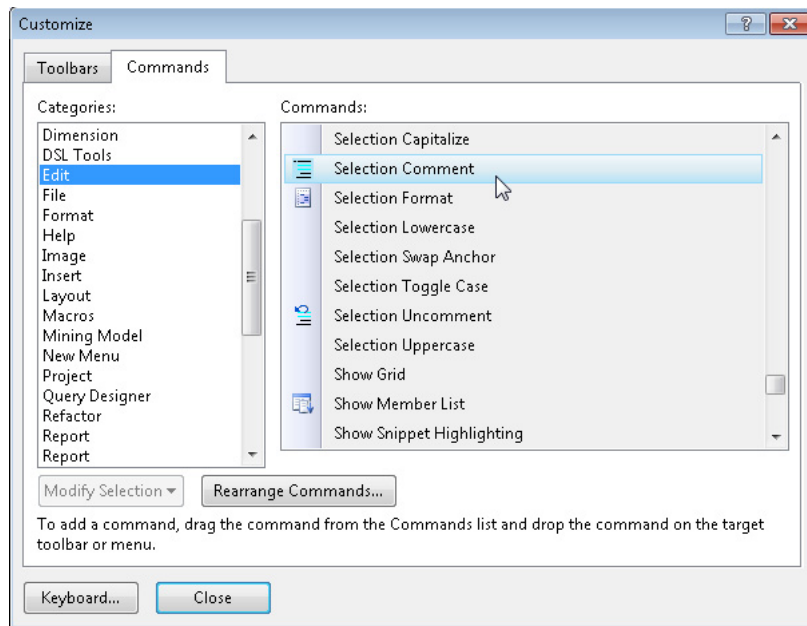


The best way to learn how to customize menus and toolbars is to work through an example. For our purposes, we want to add the ability to select some code, right-click, and comment or uncomment the code.

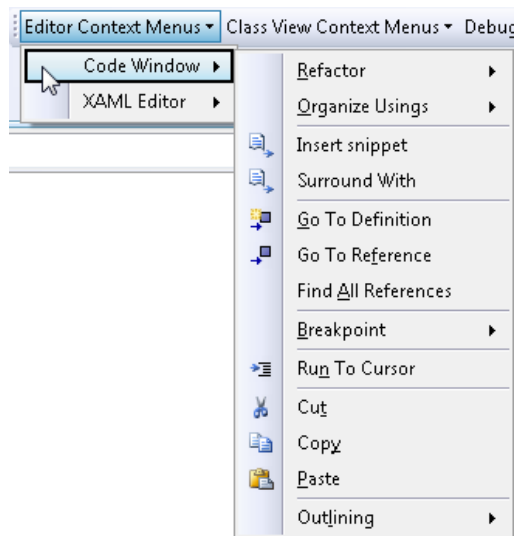
First, we have to go back to the Toolbars tab and pick the menu or toolbar we want to modify. For our example, let's choose Context Menus:



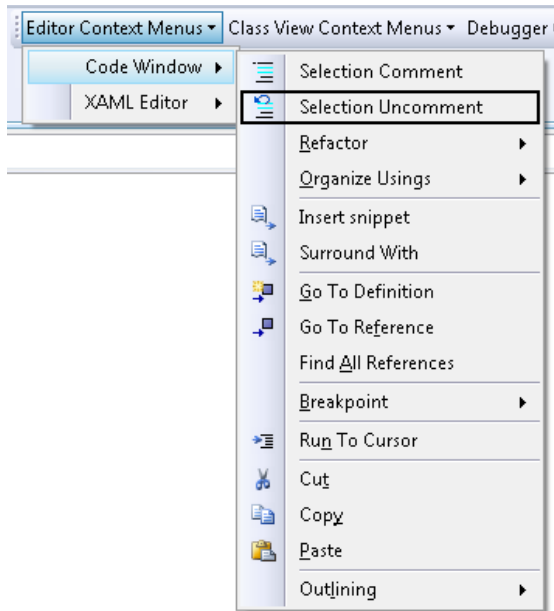
Now we click the Commands tab and locate the items we want to add. In this case, we dig a bit and find Selection Comment and Selection Uncomment in the Edit category:



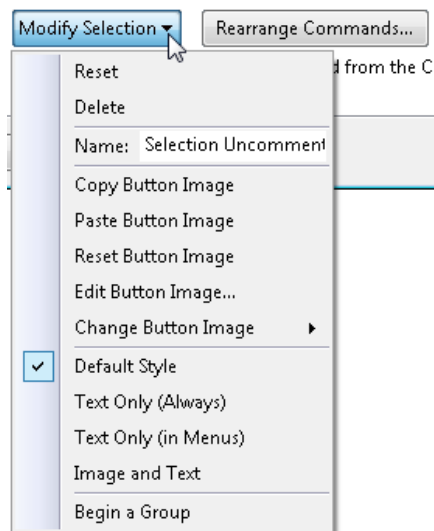
Now we have to see which menu we want to modify. Let's navigate to Editor Context Menus | Code Window to see where we want our items to go:



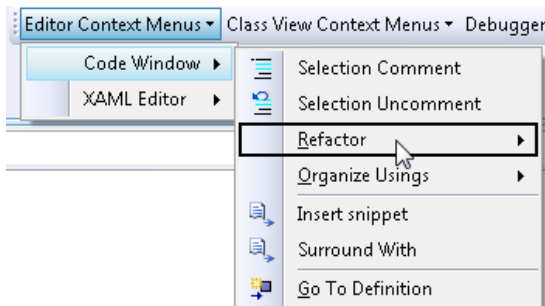
Now we drag the items where we want them on the menu:



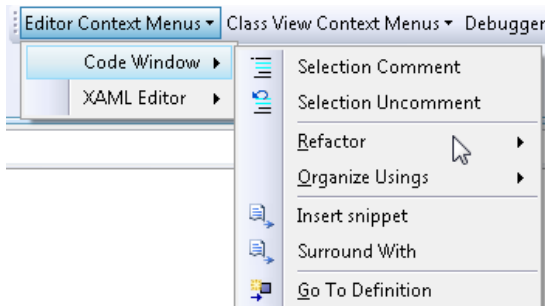
If we want, we can click Modify Selection to reset, delete, modify the name, modify the button image, change the way the item is displayed, or begin a new group:



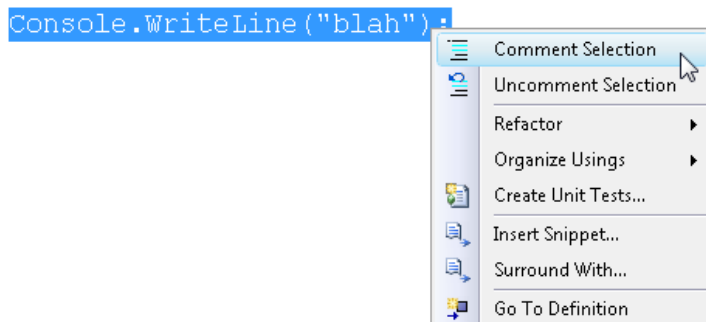
We would like the new buttons to be in their own group, so we click the item just *below* where we want our group to be:



Now we click Modify Selection and choose Begin A Group to get a new group line:



Close the Customize dialog box, select some code, and right-click to see whether our items show up:



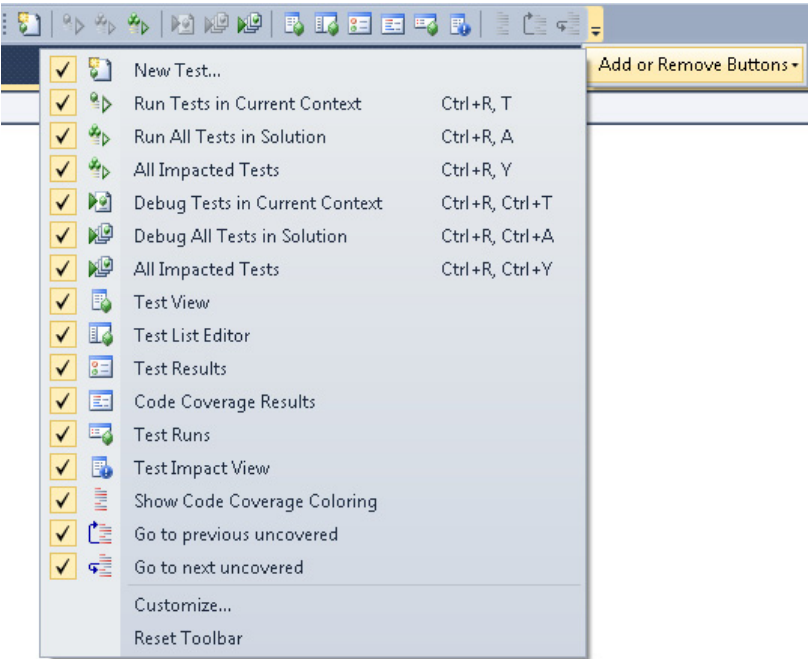
AX.09 Hide or Show Default Buttons on a Toolbar

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0028

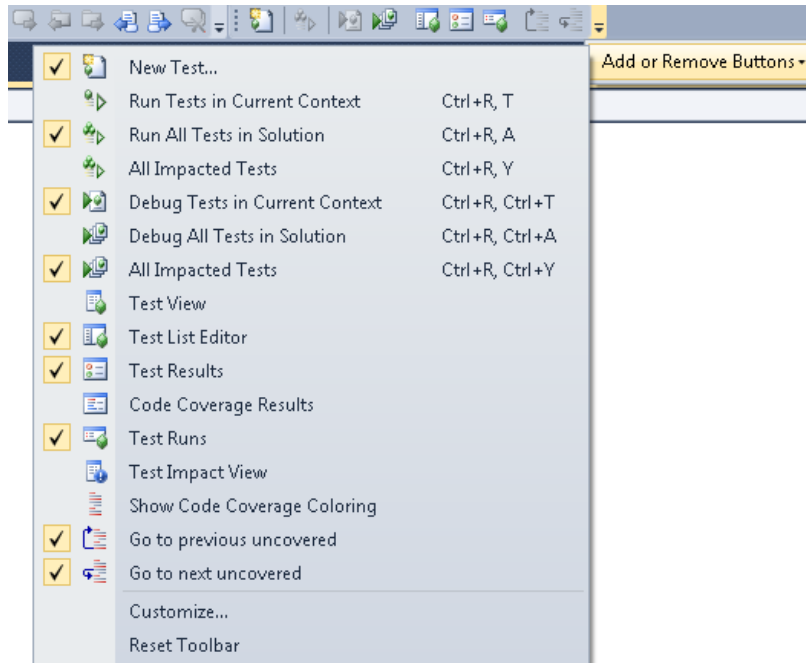
You can pick and choose which default buttons you want to show on any toolbar. Just click the drop-down arrow to the right of the toolbar:



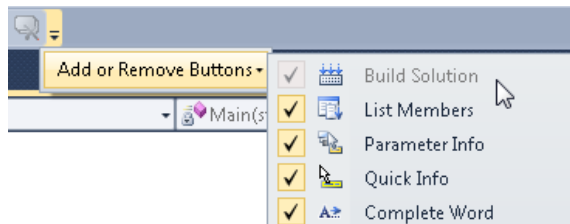
Then click Add or Remove Buttons:



As you can see, this gives you a list of the buttons currently being viewed. You can uncheck some of them to create a customized look for your toolbar:



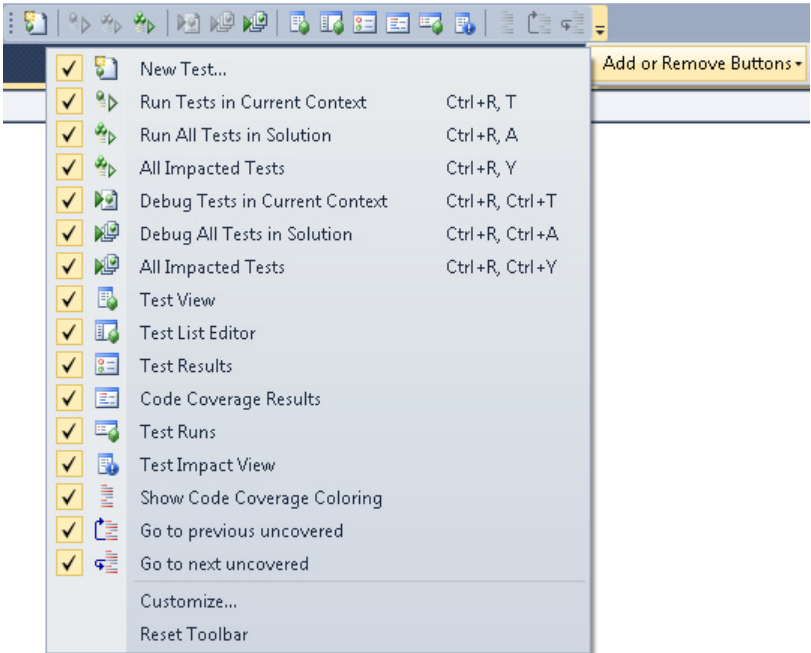
Unfortunately, if you have added customized buttons, they can't be hidden in this way:



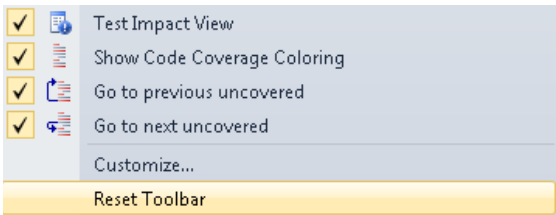
AX.10 Reset Toolbars

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0029

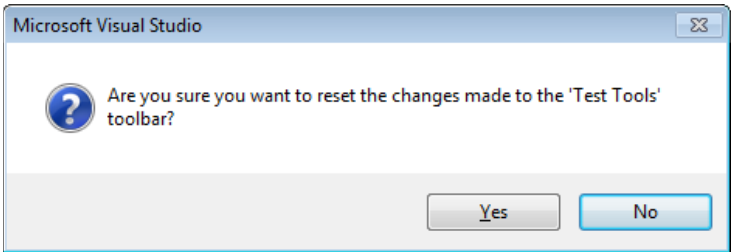
You can reset any toolbar to its default settings. Just click the drop-down arrow to the right of any toolbar, and then click Add or Remove Buttons:



Click Reset Toolbar:



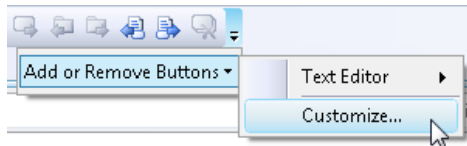
You now see the following dialog box:



Click Yes to remove any custom buttons and to reset the toolbar to its default settings.



Note In Visual Studio 2008, you have to go through an extra menu to get to the Reset Toolbar option:

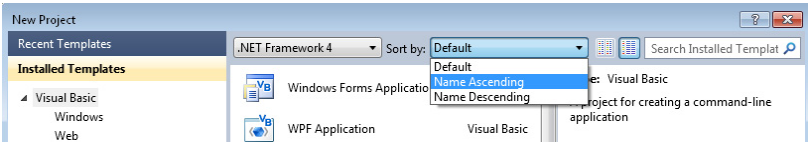


Additional Tips from Chapter 2

AX.11 Sorting Templates in the New Project Dialog Box

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+N; Ctrl+N
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+N
WINDOWS	Alt,F, N, P (new project); Alt,F, D, N (add new project)
MENU	File New Project; File Add New Project
COMMAND	File.NewProject; File.AddNewProject
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipProj0003

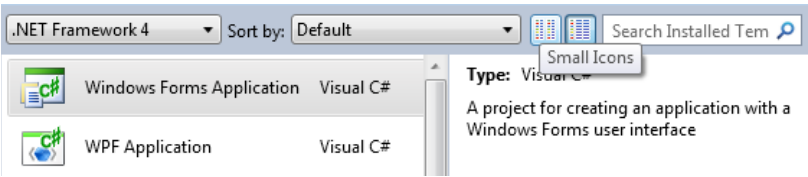
Ever just want to have an alphabetical list of templates in the New Project dialog box? Just use the new Sort By drop-down list:



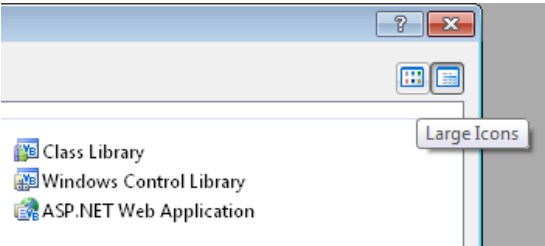
AX.12 Toggle Icon Size in the New Project Dialog Box

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+N; Ctrl+N
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+N
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+N
WINDOWS	Alt, F, N, P (new project); Alt, F, D, N (add new project)
MENU	File New Project
COMMAND	File.NewProject
VERSIONS	2005,2008,2010
CODE	vstipProj0007

When you create a new project (or add a new item) in Visual Studio, you can change the icon size from small to medium (called *large* in Visual Studio 2008). To do this, you need to find the buttons that change the icon to your desired size and then click them. Unfortunately, these buttons appear in different places, depending on your Visual Studio version. In Visual Studio 2010, for example, the buttons are located toward the middle-right of the New Project or Item dialog box, next to the Sort By field:



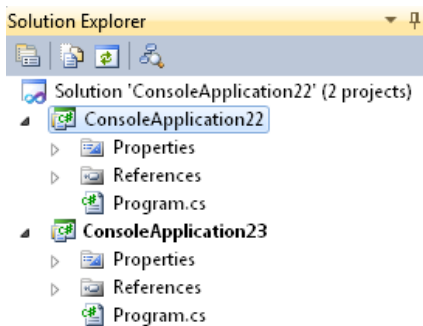
In Visual Studio 2005 and Visual Studio 2008, the buttons are at the far right, as shown in the following illustration:



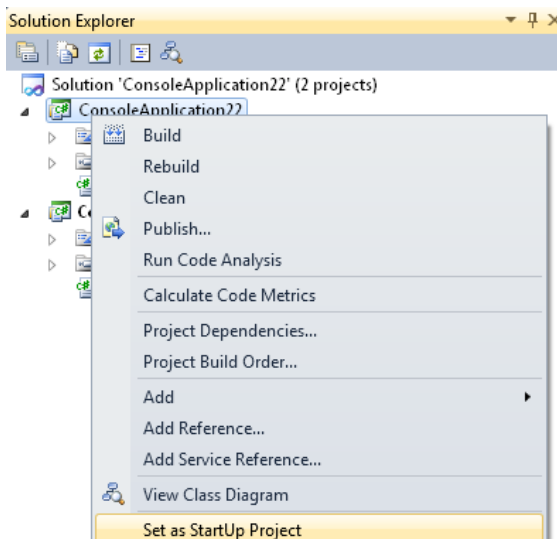
AX.13 Choosing the StartUp Project

WINDOWS	Alt,P, A (with project selected in Solution Explorer); Shift+F10, A (with project selected in Solution Explorer)
MENU	Project Set as StartUp Project; [Right-Click a project in Solution Explorer] Set as StartUp Project
COMMAND	Project.SetasStartUpProject
VERSIONS	2005,2008,2010
CODE	vstipEnv0014

When you work with multiple projects, one is usually the StartUp Project. That's the one that starts up first when you start (with or without debugging). It's easy to spot the current StartUp Project because its name appears in bold type in Solution Explorer:



To quickly change the Startup Project, just right-click a project in Solution Explorer and choose Set As StartUp Project from the context menu:

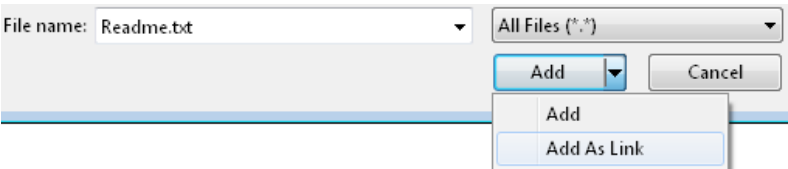


AX.14 **Linked Items in Projects**

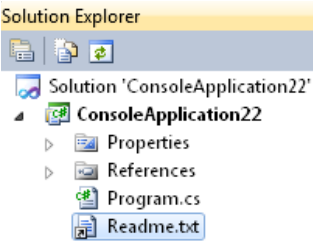
DEFAULT	Shift+Alt+A; Ctrl+Shift+D
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+D; Shift+Alt+A
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Alt+A
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Alt+A
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Alt+A
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Alt+A; Ctrl+Shift+D
WINDOWS	Alt, P, G
MENU	Project Add Existing Item
COMMAND	Project.AddExistingItem
VERSIONS	2005,2008,2010
CODE	vstipProj0022

You sometimes have a shared resource that you want to include in your project. Traditionally, you would add the existing item (Shift+Alt+A), and Visual Studio would make a copy for you.

However, did you know you can just link to the item instead? You would typically do this if you had a shared resource on, say, a network drive that you want to include but don't want to have a copy in your project. To do this, go to the Add Existing Item dialog box (Shift+Alt+A) and choose Add As Link from the Add drop-down list.



Now a link to the file is added to your project rather than a copy:



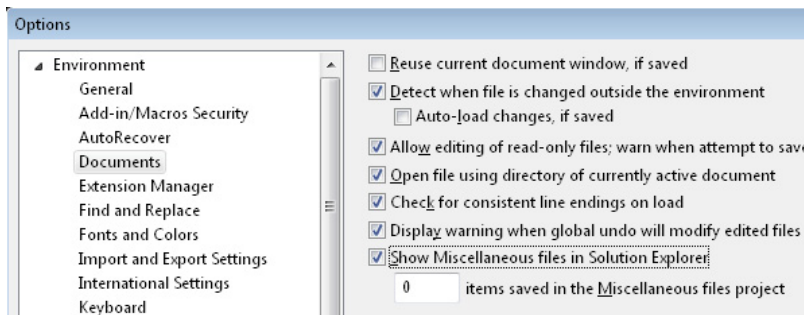
You can tell a file is a link because it has an arrow indicator in the icon, as shown in the preceding graphic—much like the arrow you see on shortcut icons in Windows. The usual caveats apply here, just as they do to any shortcut. For example, for Visual Studio to use the file, you need to make sure that the path to the linked file is accessible.

AX.15 Using the Miscellaneous Files Project

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Documents
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2008,2010
CODE	vstipProj0012

Did you know that Solution Explorer can display a Miscellaneous Files project for files that you do not want to permanently associate with a project or solution? Maybe you still want to track and be able to open certain files quickly—but not associate them with the project or solution. For example, you can create and edit files by using the Visual Studio editors without creating a project. You can also work on files that you want to use temporarily—such as files in which you keep development notes while you work on your solution.

To get the Miscellaneous Files folder to show up, go to Tools | Options | Environment | Documents and select the Show Miscellaneous Files In Solution Explorer option:

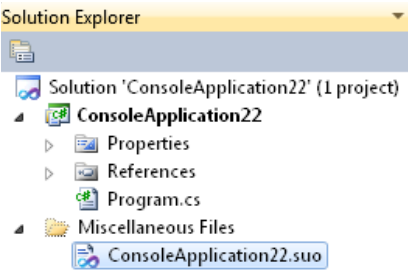


Pay particular attention to the Items Saved In The Miscellaneous Files Project field, which is initially set to zero. Leaving this value set to zero shows only extra files you currently have open; however, setting it to another number indicates how many files you want to remember at any given time. If you aren't sure about what this value should be, to get started, I suggest setting this value to at least five.



Note The Miscellaneous Files Project does not show up until you open up at least one file that goes in it.

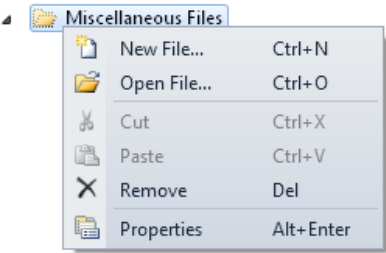
After you open a file that doesn't belong to the solution, the folder shows up, as shown in the following illustration:



With the folder now showing, you can right-click and open, create, or remove files:



Note Removing files from this folder doesn't delete them permanently.



AX.16 Change the Order of Your Application Settings

VERSIONS	2008,2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipProj0024

When working in your project properties, you might sometimes find yourself using a variety of application settings (I'm assuming you know how to create and use application settings; if not, you can find more information at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/a65txexh.aspx>):

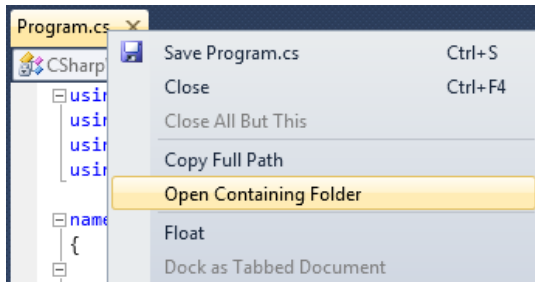
Resources	Name	Type	Scope	Value
Services	BackgroundCol...	System.Dra...	User	0, 51, 204
Settings*	ForegroundColor	System.Dra...	User	204, 102, 153
Reference Paths	Path	string	Application	..\..\stuff
Signing	WindowColor	System.Dra...	User	255, 80, 80
Security	SettingsName	string	User	Bubba's Stuff
	Setting	string	User	

But what if you want to organize these settings? For example, suppose you want the WindowColor setting to appear with the other color settings. You can change the sequence to your preference.

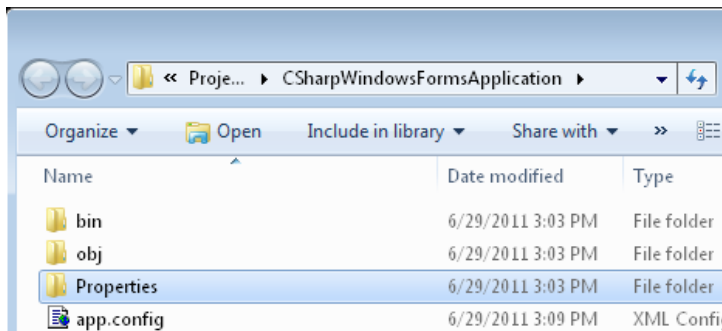


Warning Changing a setting requires you to manually edit your settings file—which could get you into trouble if you make a mistake, so do this at your own risk. Also, make a copy of your settings file before editing it so that you can recover if a problem occurs.

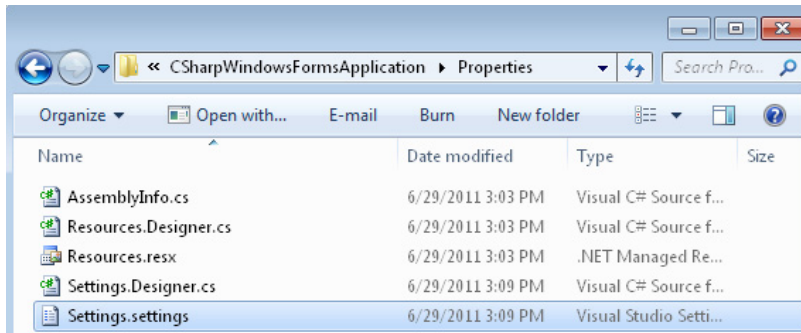
First, save any pending changes, and close the Properties window. Now open up the project location:



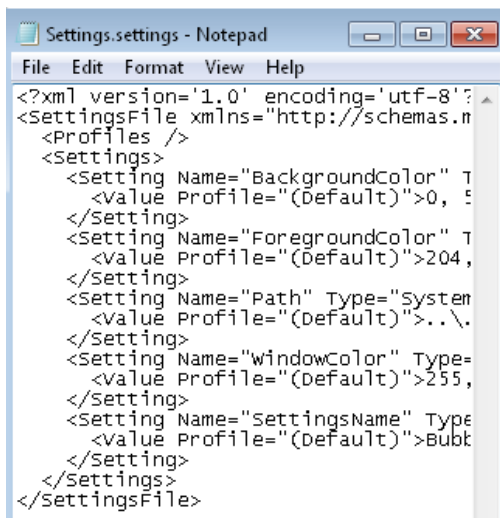
Locate your Properties folder:



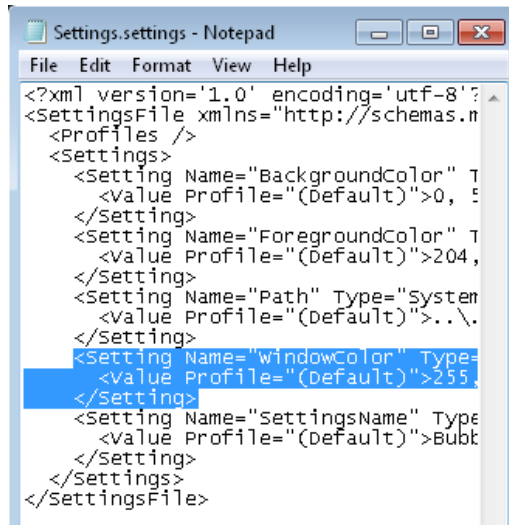
Locate your Settings file, named Settings.settings in this example:



Open the Settings.settings file with a plain text editor such as Notepad. Notice that the file is an XML file:

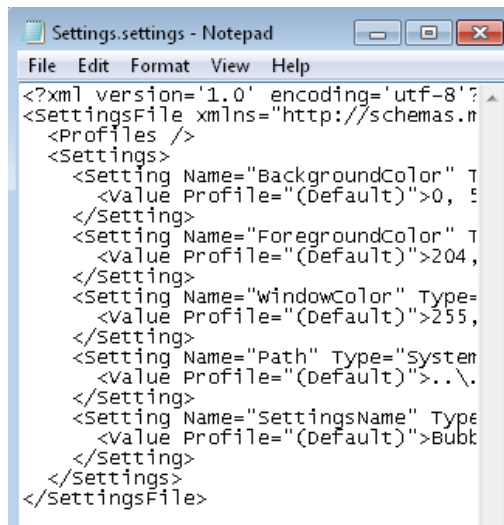


As you see in the preceding illustration, each setting resides in a <Setting> element. You just need to rearrange the elements in the order you want them. In this case, select the <Setting> element whose name attribute is WindowColor, as shown in the following illustration:



```
<?xml version='1.0' encoding='utf-8'?
<SettingsFile xmlns="http://schemas.m
  <Profiles />
  <Settings>
    <Setting Name="BackgroundColor" T
      <value Profile="(Default)">0, 5
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="ForegroundColor" T
      <value Profile="(Default)">204,
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="Path" Type="System
      <value Profile="(Default)">..\
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="windowColor" Type=
      <value Profile="(Default)">255,
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="SettingsName" Type
      <value Profile="(Default)">Bubb
    </Setting>
  </Settings>
</SettingsFile>
```

Next just cut and paste it where you want the setting to show up. For this example, place it just after the `ForegroundColor` `<Setting>` element:



```
<?xml version='1.0' encoding='utf-8'?
<SettingsFile xmlns="http://schemas.m
  <Profiles />
  <Settings>
    <Setting Name="BackgroundColor" T
      <value Profile="(Default)">0, 5
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="ForegroundColor" T
      <value Profile="(Default)">204,
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="windowColor" Type=
      <value Profile="(Default)">255,
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="Path" Type="System
      <value Profile="(Default)">..\
    </Setting>
    <Setting Name="SettingsName" Type
      <value Profile="(Default)">Bubb
    </Setting>
  </Settings>
</SettingsFile>
```

Save your changes and close the file. Now, when you go back into your Project properties, you'll see the settings arranged in their new order:

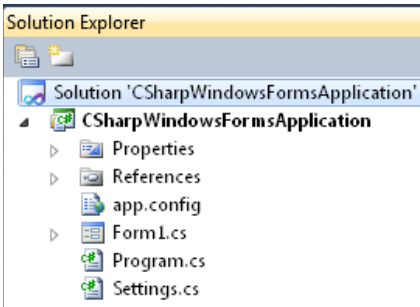
Resources	
Services	
Settings	
Reference Paths	
Signing	
Security	

Name	Type	Scope	Value
BackgroundCol...	System.Dra...	User	0, 51, 204
ForegroundColor	System.Dra...	User	204, 102, 153
WindowColor	System.Dra...	User	255, 80, 80
Path	string	Application	..\..\stuff
SettingsName	string	User	Bubba's Stuff
*			

AX.17 Hide or Show the Solution File in Solution Explorer

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects and Solutions General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005,2008,2010
CODE	vstipProj0008

If you don't like seeing the solution file in Solution Explorer, you can easily hide it (or show it if you have it hidden). First, take a look at the default view of Solution Explorer, with the solu-
tion file showing:



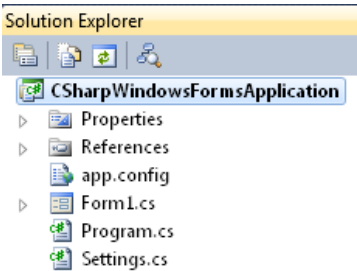
To hide the solution file, select Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General, and clear the Always Show Solution option:

☒ Show advanced build configurations

☐ Always show solution

☒ Save new projects when created

The result is shown below:

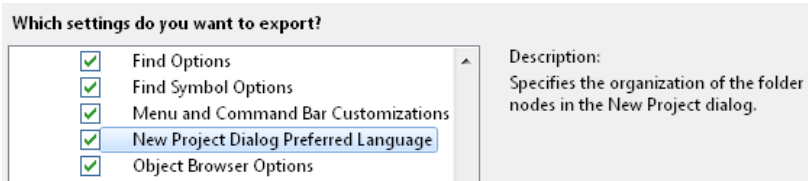


Note This feature works only when you have just one project in the solution; if you have multiple projects in your solution, Visual Studio ignores this setting and shows you the solution node.

AX.18 New Project Dialog Preferred Language

WINDOWS	Alt,T,I
MENU	Tools Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005,2008,2010
CODE	vstipEnv0041

As you’re examining items that Visual Studio can export, you might come across the New Project Dialog Preferred Language option, under General Settings:

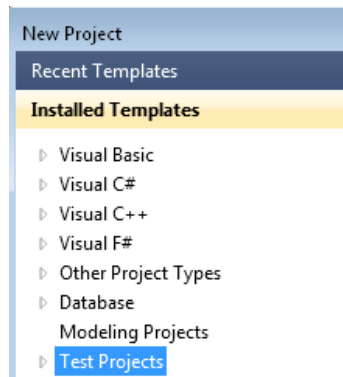


You might wonder what that means. The best way to explain is to show you a little bit more about the inner workings of Visual Studio.

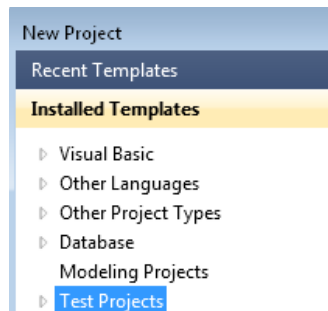
When you installed Visual Studio, you might recall having chosen your preferred development settings:



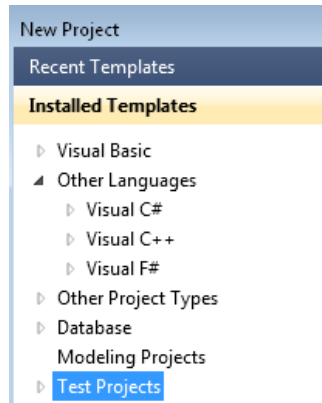
Some of these options are language-specific, and some are not. If you chose General Development Settings, for example, you have no preferred language in the New Project dialog box, so you see a list of languages:



Without a preferred language, the New Project dialog box groups all the language-specific templates into separate nodes, so you can easily select the one you want. However, if you chose a development setting option associated with a particular language, such as VB, you see something different in the New Project dialog box:



As you can see, the other top-level language nodes have disappeared, because you already indicated that Visual Basic is your preferred language. Instead, you'll see an Other Languages node that represents all the other languages:



So, to come full circle, when you export the New Project Dialog Preferred Language item, it saves this structure for you, which you can then later import.

AX.19 Optimizing Your Project Code

DEFAULT	Alt+Enter (with project selected in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Alt+Enter (with project selected in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+Enter (with project selected in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+Enter (with project selected in Solution Explorer)
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+F7; Alt+Enter (with project selected in Solution Explorer)
WINDOWS	Alt,P, P
MENU	Project [Project Name] Properties
COMMAND	Project.Properties
VERSIONS	2008,2010
LANGUAGES	C#, C++, VB
CODE	vstipProj0014

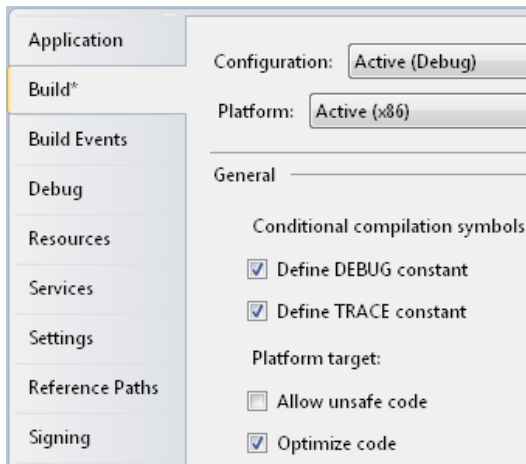
In vstipDebug0032 (“Understanding Just My Code,” page A215), we touched on optimization. When optimization is turned off (the default setting for Debug builds), it factors into the code being considered “yours” for the purposes of determining what is “Just My Code.” Generally, you won’t turn this on for Debug builds. If you do, debug symbols are not generated and you can’t step through your code.

When you create a Release build, Visual Studio turns optimization on by default. So what is optimization? According to the documentation, the optimization option “enables or disables optimizations performed by the compiler to make your output file smaller, faster, and more efficient.”

It’s useful to know where to find this option.

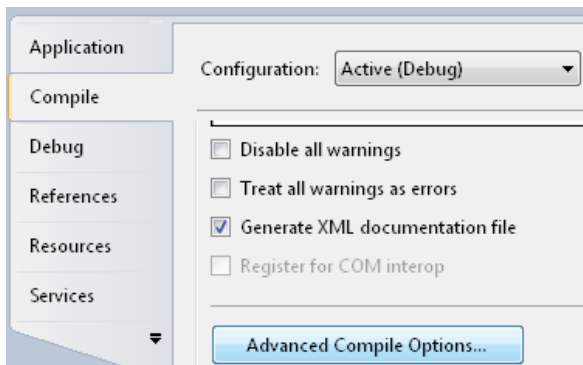
C#

In C#, you’ll find the Optimize Code option in the Project properties on the Build tab:

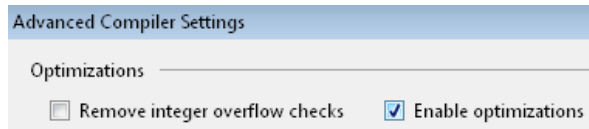


VB

In VB, it is also in the Project properties, but on the Compile tab, and you need to click Advanced Compile Options to find it:



Next, locate the Enable Optimizations option:



C++

While VB and C# have only a single option to control optimization, C++ supports a number of more specific optimizations. For example, you can choose to optimize for application speed or for program size. Enabling the optimizations setting from the Project properties enables full optimization (/Ox).

You can get a sense of the full range of /O features in the following list at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/k1ack8f1.aspx>:

- /O1 optimizes code for minimum size.
- /O2 optimizes code for maximum speed.
- /Ob controls inline function expansion.
- /Od disables optimization, speeding compilation and simplifying debugging.
- /Og enables global optimizations.
- /Oi generates intrinsic functions for appropriate function calls.
- /Os tells the compiler to favor optimizations for size over optimizations for speed.
- /Ot (a default setting) tells the compiler to favor optimizations for speed over optimizations for size.
- /Ox selects full optimization.
- /Oy suppresses the creation of frame pointers on the call stack for quicker function calls.

Finally

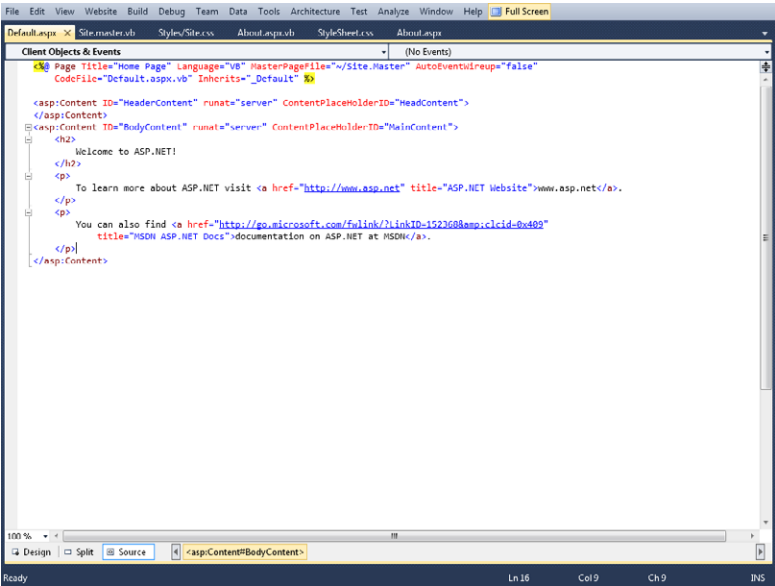
Optimization does a lot of cool things that are great for a shipping application—but not for one you are currently working on and debugging. It's easy to get deep into what the various optimization options actually do; Eric Lippert, of Microsoft, wrote an excellent article on this subject, titled "What Does the Optimize Switch Do," which you can find at <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/ericlippert/archive/2009/06/11/what-does-the-optimize-switch-do.aspx>.

Additional Tips from Chapter 3

AX.20 Full Screen Mode

DEFAULT	Shift+Alt+Enter
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+Alt+Enter
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+Alt+Enter
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+Alt+Enter
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+Alt+Enter
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+Alt+Enter
WINDOWS	Alt,V, U
MENU	View Full Screen
COMMAND	View.FullScreen
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0024

You can quickly switch from any current window state to Full Screen Mode by pressing Shift+Alt+Enter:



By default, this action hides the toolbars and takes up as much of the screen as possible. The advantage, of course, is that you get more real estate to work with when you need more room.

To come out of Full Screen Mode, just press Shift+Alt+Enter again and you are returned to normal view.

AX.21 Split Your Windows Horizontally

WINDOWS	Alt,W, P (toggle split and remove)
MENU	Window Split; Window Remove Split
COMMAND	Window.Split (toggle split and remove)
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0004

In Visual Studio, you can split your windows horizontally. This feature has been available in Microsoft products for quite a while. Just go to Window | Split on the menu bar, or you can use the following mouse technique.

Go the upper-right corner of a document window, and look for the splitter control, as shown in the following illustration:



Click and drag the control down to begin the split process:



Now you have a horizontal split, so you can do things like see different sections of your document at the same time:



To remove a split, select Window | Remove Split—or just double-click the line separating the two sections.

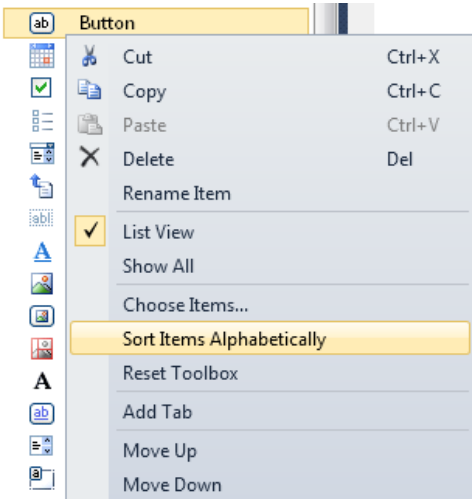
AX.22 **Sorting Items in the Toolbox**

WINDOWS	Shift,F10, O (with the Toolbox selected)
MENU	[Right Click the Toolbox] Sort Items Alphabetically
COMMAND	Tools.SortItemsAlphabetically
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0052

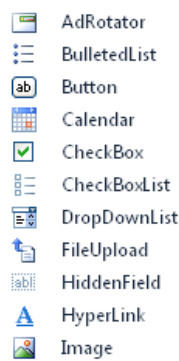


Warning As far as I know, there is no easy way to undo the sorting action other than resetting the Toolbox, so make sure you really want the Toolbox items listed alphabetically before you apply this tip.

If you don't like the default sort order for items in the Toolbox, you can right-click the Toolbox and then choose to sort the items alphabetically:



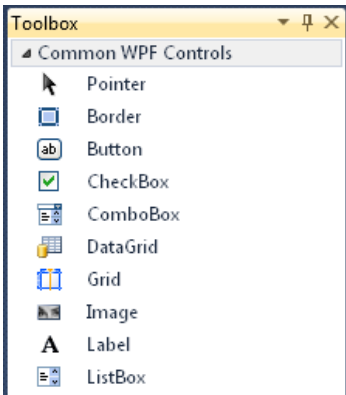
Selecting this option sorts the items by name, assuming they weren't sorted that way already:



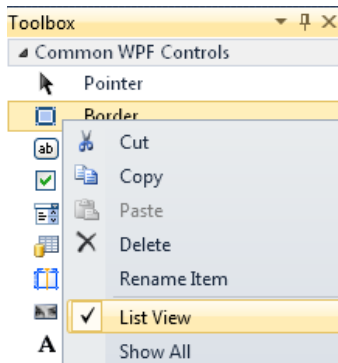
AX.23 Icon vs. List View in the Toolbox

WINDOWS	Shift,F10, L (with the Toolbox selected will toggle List View)
MENU	[Right Click the Toolbox] List View (toggle)
COMMAND	Tools.ListView
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0053

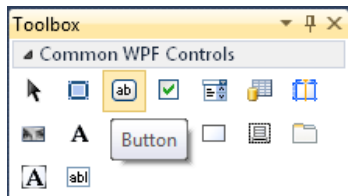
The default view of items in the Toolbox is List View, as shown in the following illustration:



You can change this to the Icon View if you prefer, by right-clicking the Toolbox and clicking List View, which turns off the List View option:

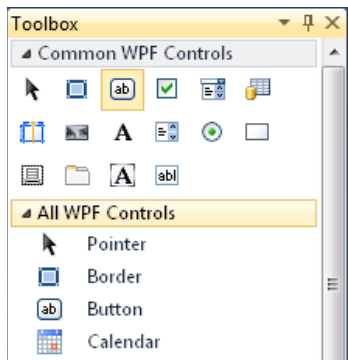


This produces the result shown in the following illustration:



To get the List View back again, right-click in Icon View, and click List View again.

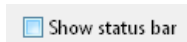
This option applies only on the current Toolbox tab, so you can have your tabs organized differently based on your preference:



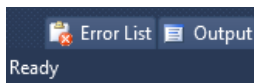
AX.24 Hide the Status Bar

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0024

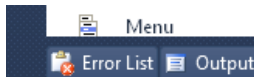
Removing the Status Bar gives you a little extra space at the bottom of your screen. Without it you cannot get status messages, so remove it only if you are sure you don't need it. To remove the Status Bar, go to Tools | Options | Environment | General and clear the Show Status Bar option:



Before (status bar is where the word "Ready" is located):



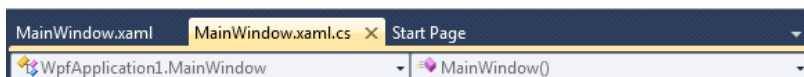
After (no status bar):



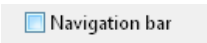
AX.25 Remove the Navigation Bar

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor [All Languages or Specific Language]
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0028

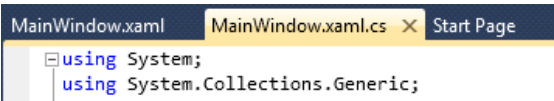
If you find you don't use the navigation bar, shown in the following illustration, and want a little extra space, how can you make it go away?



Just go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | [All Languages or Specific Language], and clear the Navigation Bar check box:



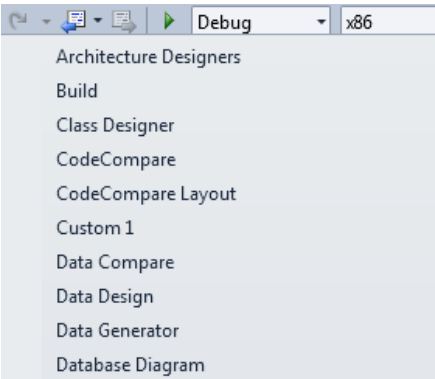
The following illustration shows the result:



AX.26 Show Any Toolbar

WINDOWS	Alt,V, T, [Up or Down] Arrow
MENU	View Toolbars [Toolbar]
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0025

You can show any toolbar at any time. Just right-click an existing toolbar, and left-click the one you want to see:



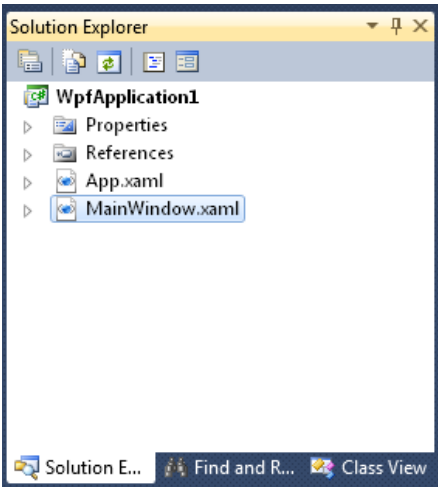
Not all toolbars will have their buttons available, because it depends on your context. For example, the Database Diagram Toolbar (shown in the following illustration) buttons are not available until you are actually working on a diagram:



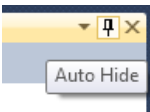
AX.27 Changing Auto-Hide Behavior for Tool Windows

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0035

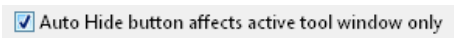
By default, you could easily have several tool windows in a tab group, as shown here:



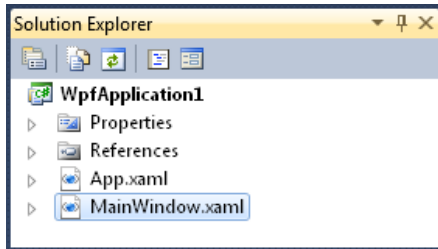
So to clear your workspace, you click the auto-hide button:



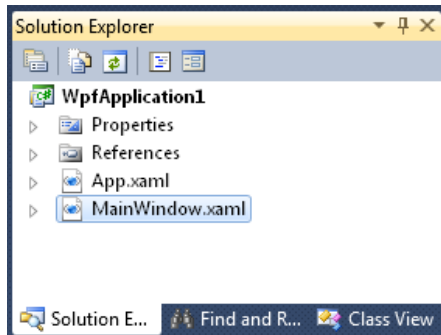
Now all the tool windows are hidden together. Next you can go to Tools | Options | Environment | General and select the Auto Hide Button Affects Active Tool Window Only option:



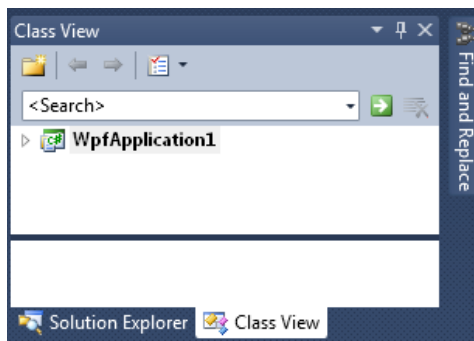
Now you no longer get tabs at the bottom when you interact with a tool window:



The tool windows have to be docked individually to get the tabs again:



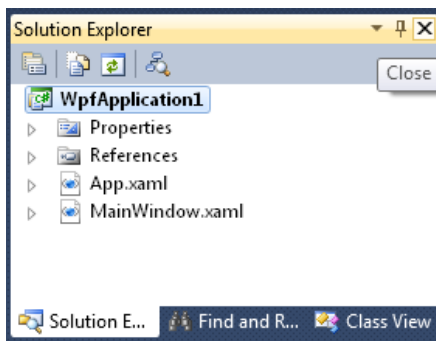
Now, when you auto-hide a window, only that window is hidden; the rest of the tab group remains visible:



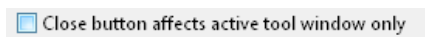
AX.28 Closing a Tool Window Tab Group

WINDOWS	Shift,Esc
MENU	Tools Options Environment General
COMMAND	Window.CloseToolWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0040

By default, when you click the Close button for a tool window in a tab group, it normally closes only the current tool window:



However, you can change this behavior by going to Tools | Options | Environment | General and clearing the Close Button Affects Active Tool Window Only check box, as shown in the following illustration:



Now, closing any one tool window in the tab group causes all tool windows in that group to be closed.

AX.29 Copy and Paste with the Command Prompt

WINDOWS	Enter (copy)
MENU	System Menu Edit [Mark, Copy, Paste, Select All]
CODE	vstipTool0057

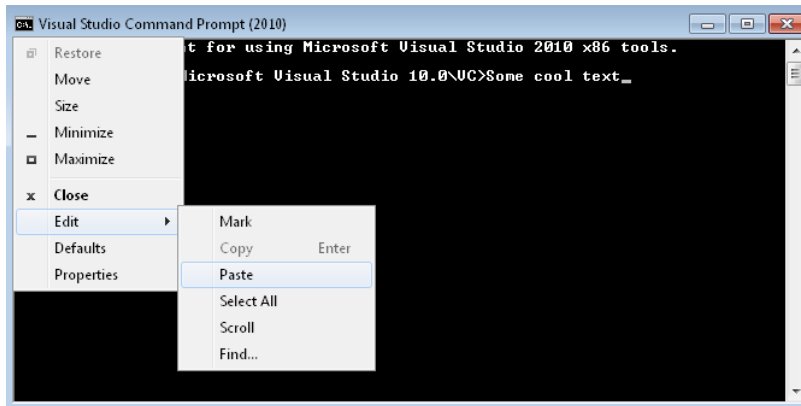
In a previous tip, we looked at how to work with the command prompt history. In this tip, we examine how to copy and paste text to and from the Command Prompt window.

Pasting

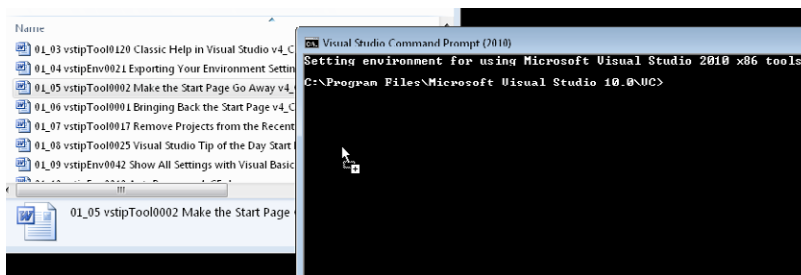
Visual Studio offers a rich set of tools to help you work with text in the command prompt windows. For example, you can copy text and paste it by going to System Menu | Edit | Paste, as shown in the following illustration.



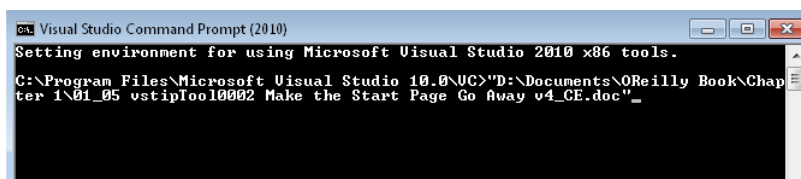
Note The System menu is the icon in the upper-left corner of the window.



If you have a folder or file path you want to use, you can always find the folder or file in Windows Explorer and drag the item to the command prompt, as shown in the following illustration:

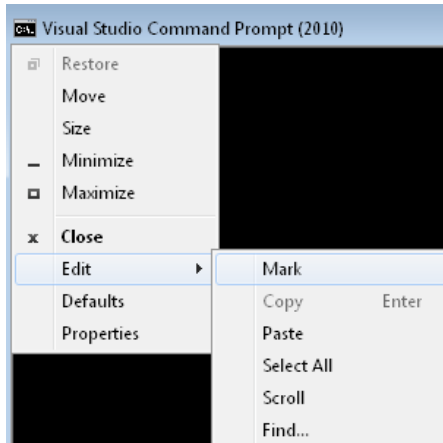


The preceding action pastes the full path to the folder or file in the window:

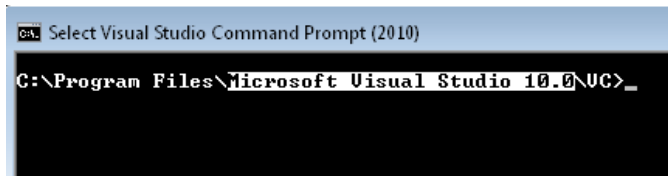


Copying

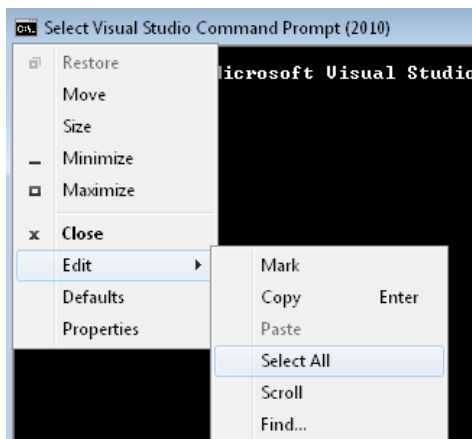
You can copy text from the command prompt by marking the text. Go to System Menu | Edit | Mark, as shown in the following illustration:



Highlight the text you want by clicking and dragging over that text:



If you want, you can always go to System Menu | Edit | Select All:

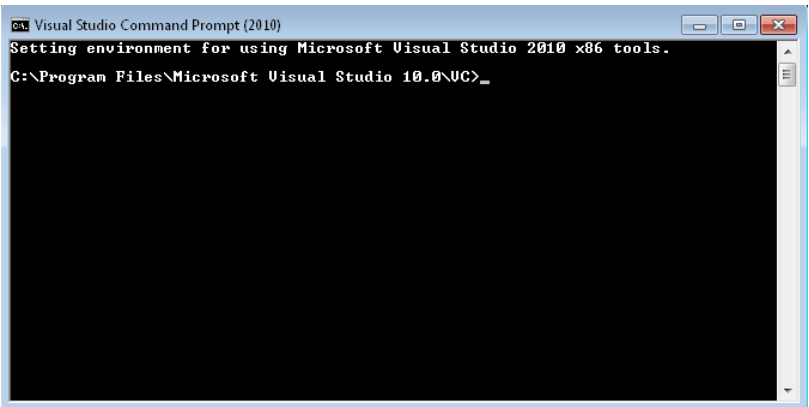


Press Enter to copy the text to the clipboard, and then paste the text where you want.

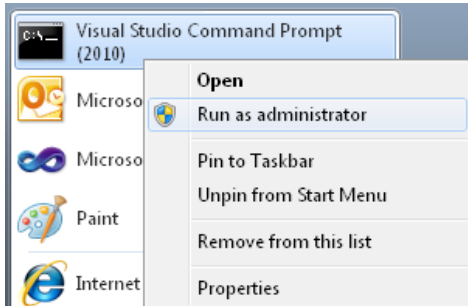
AX.30 **Customize the Command Prompt**

WINDOWS	Alt,Space, P
MENU	System Menu Properties
CODE	vstipTool0058

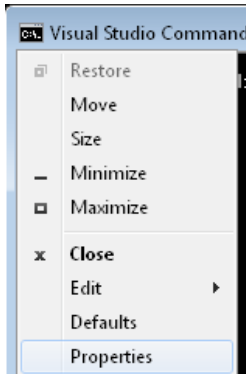
If you are going to use the command prompt, you might want to customize the look and feel:



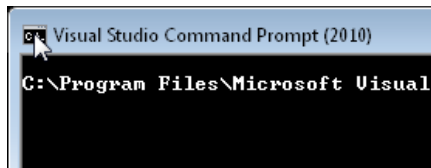
Note If you want to customize the Command window, you need to run it as Administrator. To do this, just right-click the command prompt icon and choose Run As Administrator:



Let’s review some basic settings you might want to take advantage of early on. First go to System Menu | Properties:

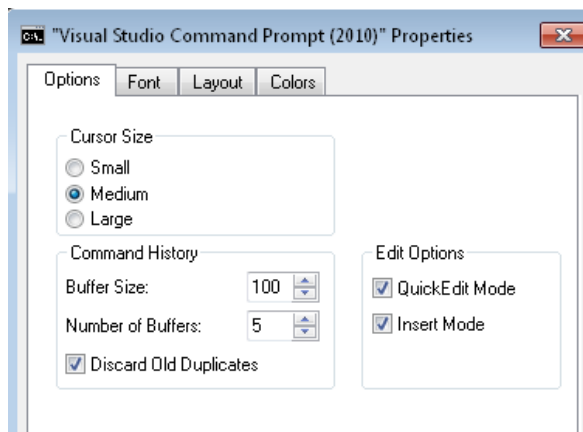


Note Just as a reminder, the System menu is the icon at the upper-left corner of the window:



Options

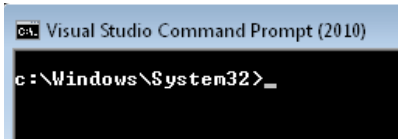
On the Options tab, notice that we have several items of interest:



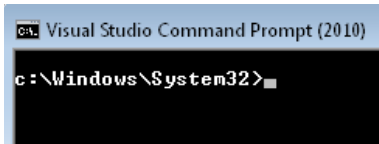
Cursor Size

Represents the size of the flashing cursor.

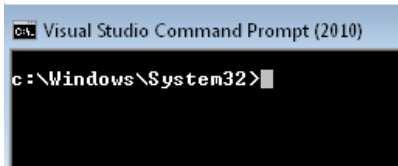
Small



Medium



Large

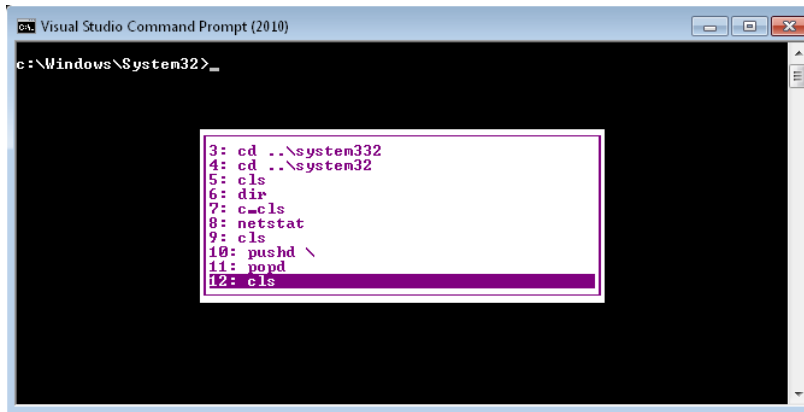


Command History

Deals with how many commands are remembered by setting the buffer size (number of commands to remember) times the number of buffers. The default is 200 commands, but this value can be changed to 999 for each value for a max total of 998,001 commands that can be remembered. I usually set Buffer Size to 100 and Number Of Buffers to 5, for a total of 500 commands remembered.

I usually select the Discard Old Duplicates option. Some people leave this off for running the same command several times, so you might want to leave this off in some cases. Selecting this option removes duplicates so that they don't show up several times in the command history.

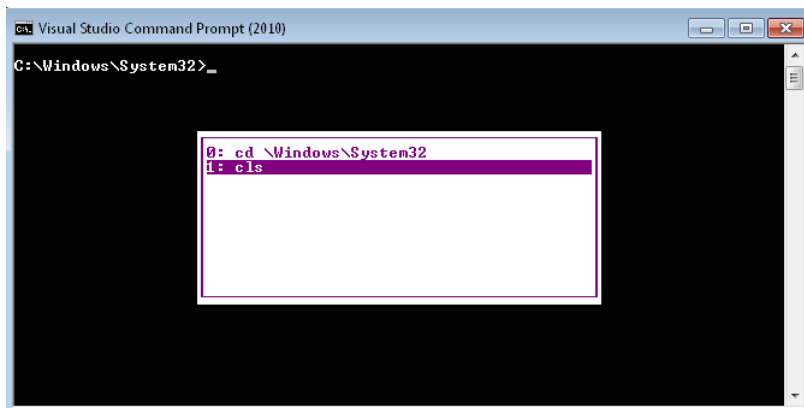
Before:



```
Visual Studio Command Prompt (2010)
c:\Windows\System32>_

3: cd ..\system32
4: cd ..\system32
5: cls
6: dir
7: c=cls
8: netstat
9: cls
10: pushd \
11: popd
12: cls
```

After:



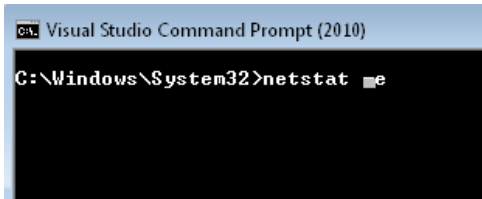
```
Visual Studio Command Prompt (2010)
C:\Windows\System32>_

0: cd \Windows\System32
1: cls
```

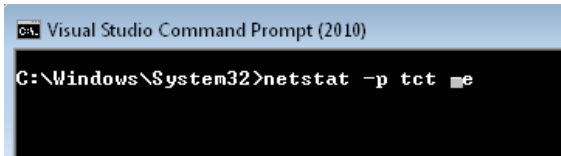
Edit Options

Define how you can do certain actions. Quick Edit Mode allows you to use your mouse to work with text in the window, so I suggest you turn it on. Insert Mode is on by default and simply means that if you move the cursor into a command (using the arrow keys), you can type and it inserts (instead of overwrites) the text after it.

Before:

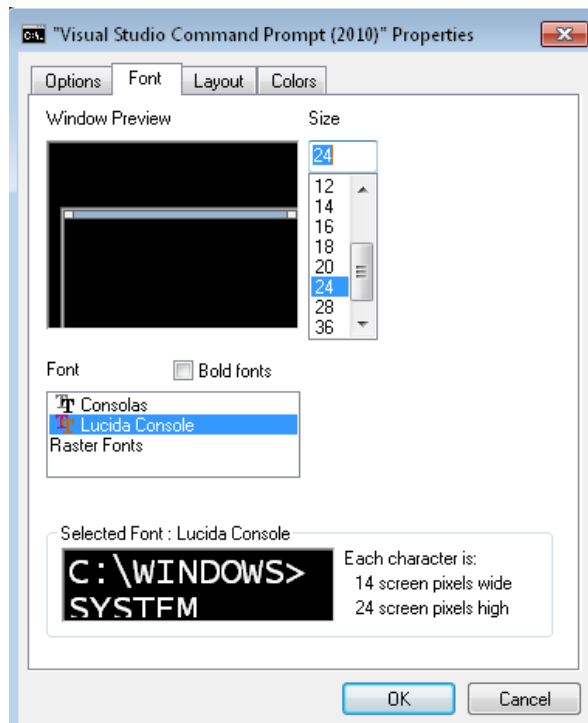


After:



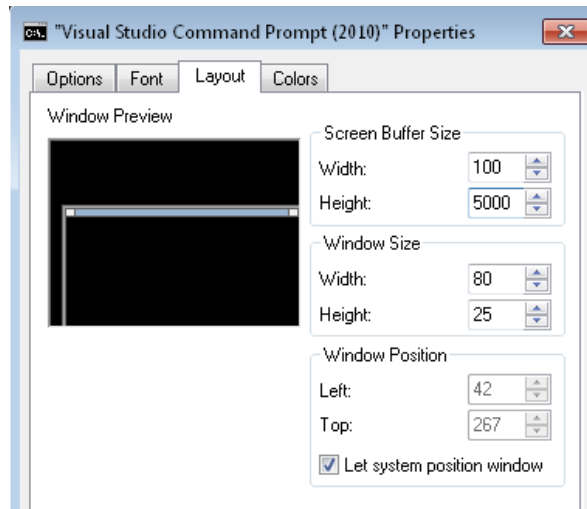
Font

The Font tab is pretty self-explanatory. It allows you to pick various font properties for the command window. Play with these to suit your needs:



Layout

The Layout tab is very important. Let's look at some of these options:



Screen Buffer Size

Allows you to set how wide and tall you want the window information to be. Width should be less than the window size width you anticipate. Because I tend to maximize my command windows, I set this to 100. Height is how many lines you want to be able to scroll back to. I set this to 5000 just because I like large buffer sizes. Most folks tend to set this to around 1000 or so.

Window Size

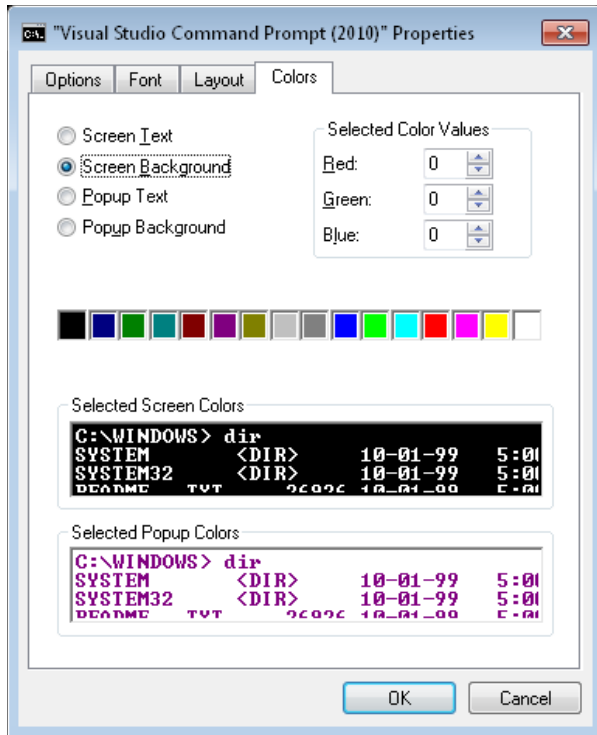
Sets the initial size of the command window. You can play with these settings to find a suitable size for you. Because I maximize my command windows, I just leave this setting alone.

Window Position

The position you want the window to start in. I would leave this setting be, but if you want to change it, set Left and Top to 0 and then increase from there to suit your taste.

Colors

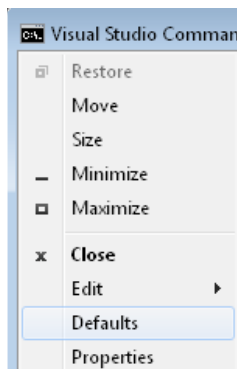
The Colors tab allows you to change two major aspects of the color scheme for the command window: one for the regular window and one for the pop-up window you get when you press F7:



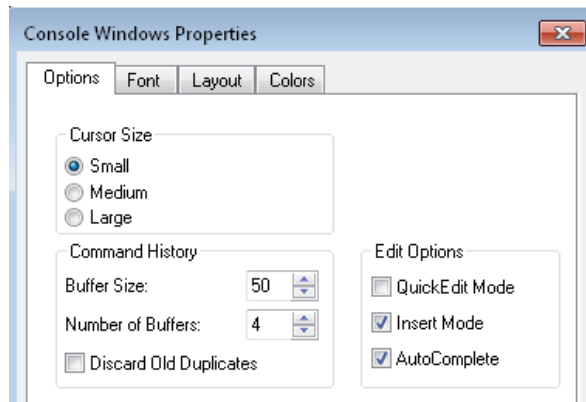
These settings are completely personal preferences, so try adjusting them and looking at the previews at the bottom to determine what schemes suit you. I tend to favor the old school “green screen” colors on my Command windows (green text with a black background).

Resetting Back to Defaults

If you totally mess up your settings, you can always get all the default settings back by going to System Menu | Defaults:



After clicking Default, you see the properties with *all tabs set to their default settings*. Just click OK, and you have all your defaults back:



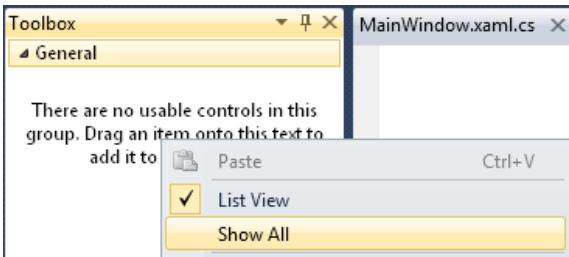
Note When you restore the default settings, notice the AutoComplete option that wasn't enabled before. This option allows for tab completion of file names. (See vstipTool0056, "Command Prompt Tab Completion," page 105.) You should always leave this setting on.

AX.31 Show All Toolbox Controls

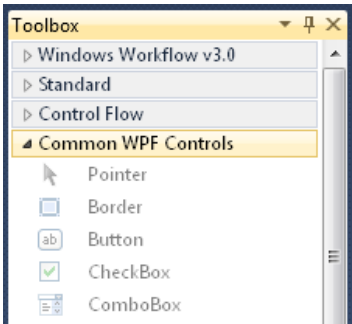
WINDOWS	Shift,F10, S (with Toolbox selected)
MENU	Right-click Show All
COMMAND	Tools.ShowAll
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0060

Sometimes when you install controls for the Toolbox, you might not see the controls because they are in the wrong context. For example, a WPF control wouldn't show up in the Toolbox while you are typing code. When the controls don't show up, you might think the add-in failed to install the Toolbox controls. This tip shows how you can confirm everything installed in the Toolbox.

To see all the controls that are installed, right-click the Toolbox and select Show All, as shown in the following illustration:



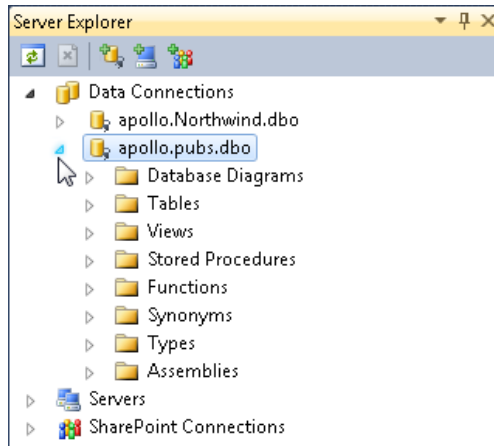
Now all the controls are visible, regardless of context:



AX.32 Server Explorer: Data Connections

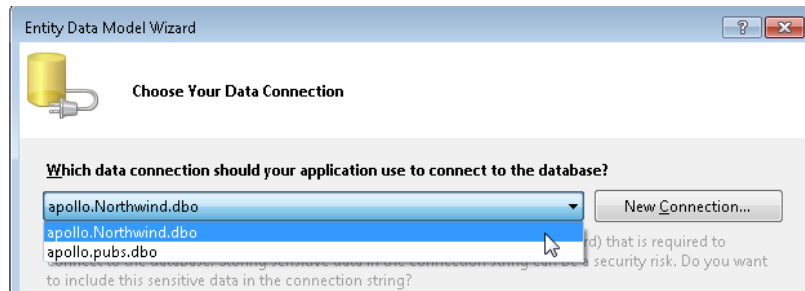
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+S (view server explorer)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+S (view server explorer)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+S; Ctrl+W, L; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+L (view server explorer)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+S (view server explorer)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+S (view server explorer)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+S (view server explorer)
WINDOWS	Alt,V, V (view server explorer); Alt,T, D (connect to database)
MENU	View Server Explorer; Tools Connect to Database
COMMAND	View.ServerExplorer; Tools.ConnecttoDatabase
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0121

Server Explorer (Ctrl+Alt+S) is the server management tool window that comes with Visual Studio. One of the things you can use this window for is to open data connections:



Data Connections in Other Areas

The data connections you have in Server Explorer can be used in other areas, such as ADO.NET Entity Data Models:

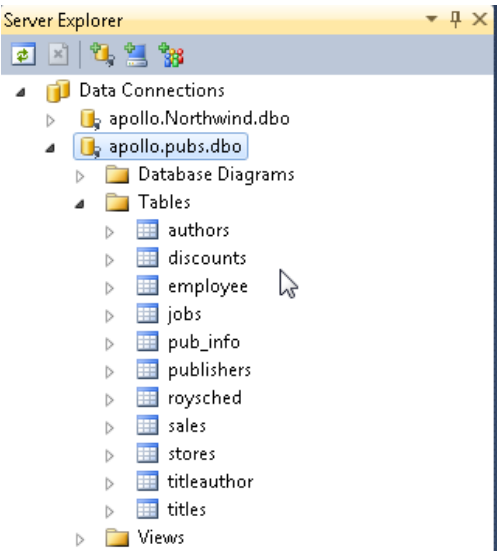


When you go to create Entity Data Models that are generated from a database, you can choose from the data connections you already have or you can create a new connection to be added to the list.

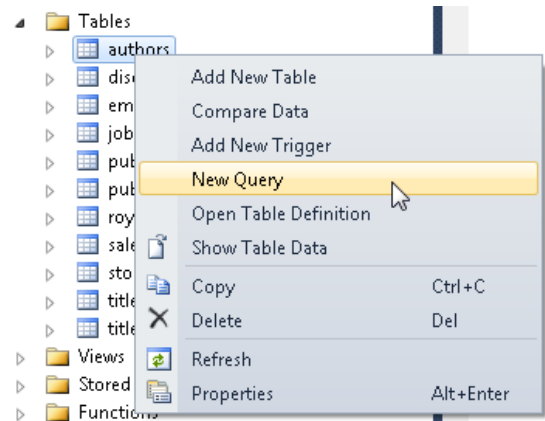
Data Connections in Server Explorer

There is an incredible amount of power and control that is available here. Let's look at a couple of examples.

Tables

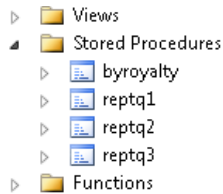


At the most basic level, you can list out the tables in the database. Additionally, you can right-click any table and see most of the features you can leverage, as shown in the following illustration:

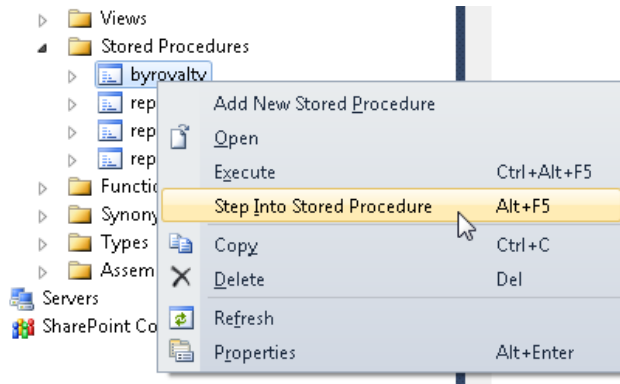


Notice that you can add a new table, create a new query, or just show the data in the table, among other tasks.

Stored Procedures



One of the great database features in Visual Studio is that not only can you create and edit stored procedures, but you can step into them as well:



Finally

Don't take the Database Connection features in Server Explorer for granted. These features make a great deal of power available to you, and you should invest some time to see whether these are helpful for your work.

AX.33 **Server Explorer: Server Event Logs**

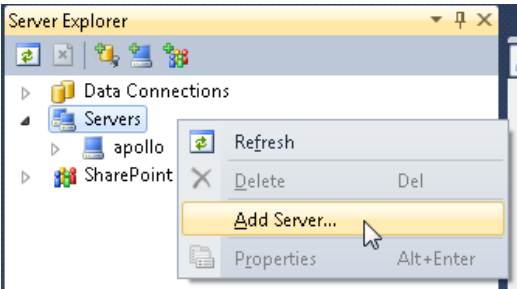
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+S; Ctrl+W, L; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+L
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+S
WINDOWS	Alt,V, V
MENU	View Server Explorer
COMMAND	View.ServerExplorer
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0122

Most people believe that Server Explorer is the tool window we use for data connections (see vstipTool0121, “Server Explorer Data Connections,” page A58), and they assume that’s pretty much where the experience ends.

This unsung hero really does a lot more if you let it. For example, the Servers section comes with a power that you might not even know existed—working with servers.

Adding Servers

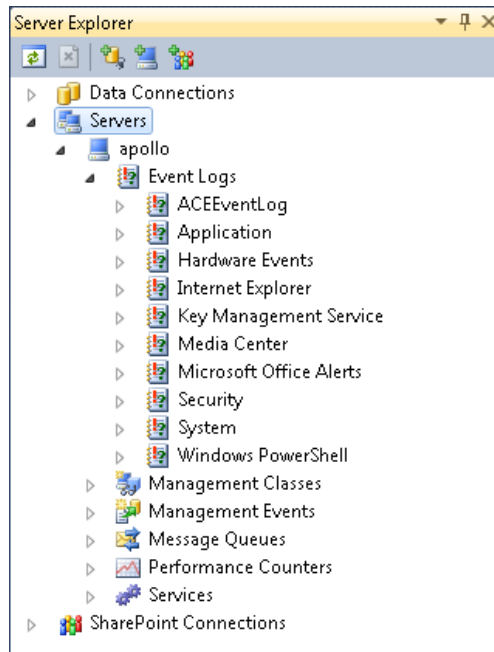
To get started, Server Explorer comes with the local machine already in the list of Servers, plus you can add additional servers as needed:



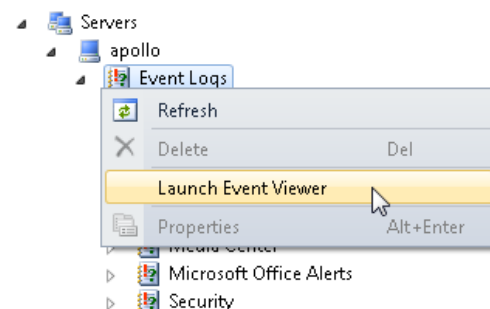
Don’t be fooled by the term “Server”; it really means any computer that you want to connect to for information. In these examples, my “server” is a Microsoft Windows 7 Professional–based machine.

Event Logs

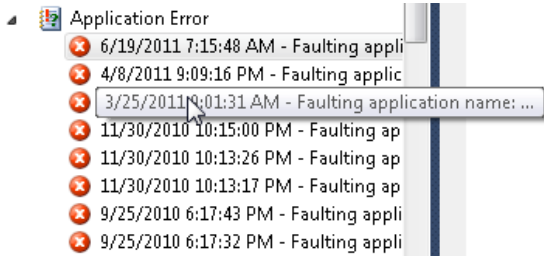
After you have the server that you want, you can start working with features. The Event Logs section is a perfect example. The following illustration shows what is on my machine for Event Logs in Server Explorer:



You can use this area to start the Event Viewer if you need it:



Or you can take a quick view of events in any of the various categories by drilling down into the tree:

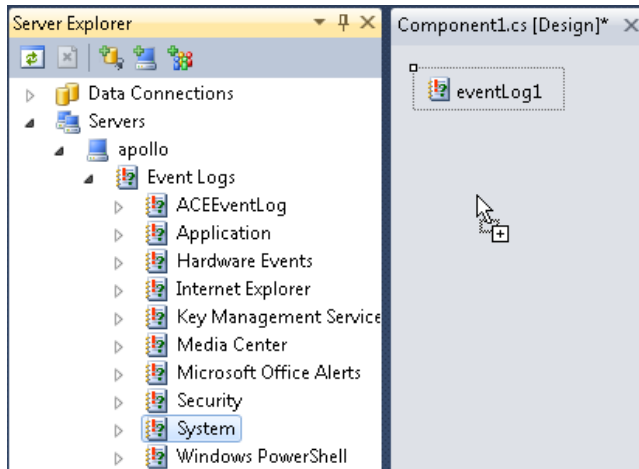


Click and Drag Components

Event log components can even be dragged onto a Windows form or component class design surface so that you can manipulate them:



Note For more information, see the topic "How to: Add Items from Server Explorer," at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/84s2c1k0.aspx>.



When the component is in place, you can write code to perform various actions. In the following example, an entry is written to the event log:

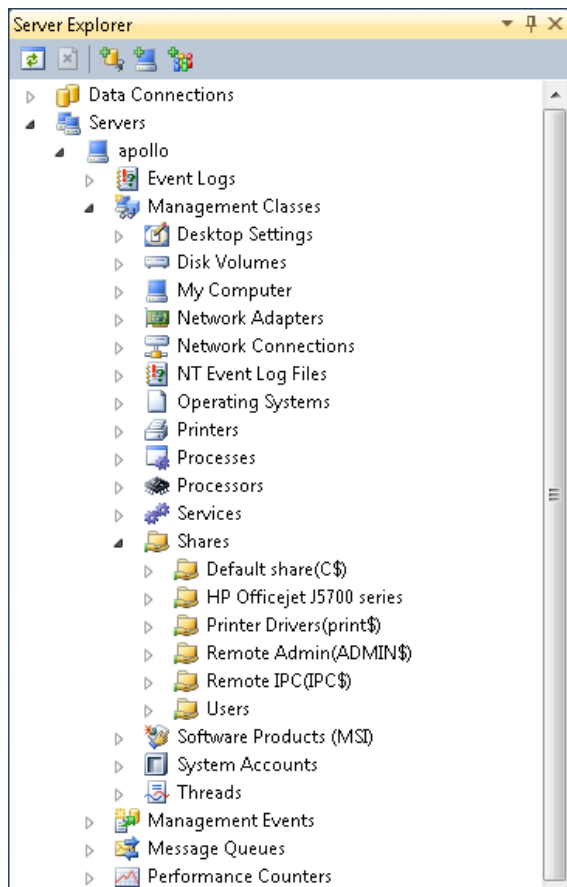
```
public void WriteToLog()
{
    eventLog1.WriteEntry("Log entry!");
}
```

This is a great way to have event log information available to the user. Taking time to learn Server Explorer can definitely bring you benefits in your daily work.

AX.34 Server Explorer: Server Management Classes

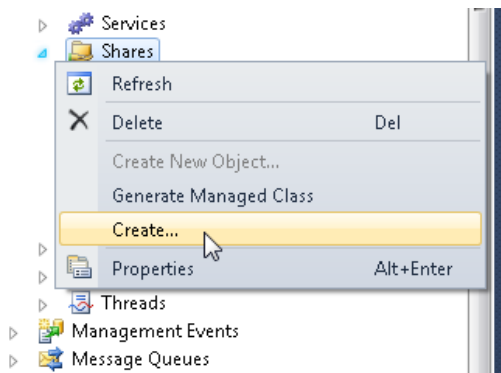
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+S; Ctrl+W, L; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+L
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+S
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+S
WINDOWS	Alt,V, V
MENU	View Server Explorer
COMMAND	View.ServerExplorer
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0123

The management classes in Server Explorer give you a view into the system. For example, you can use management classes to see network shares, as shown in the following illustration:

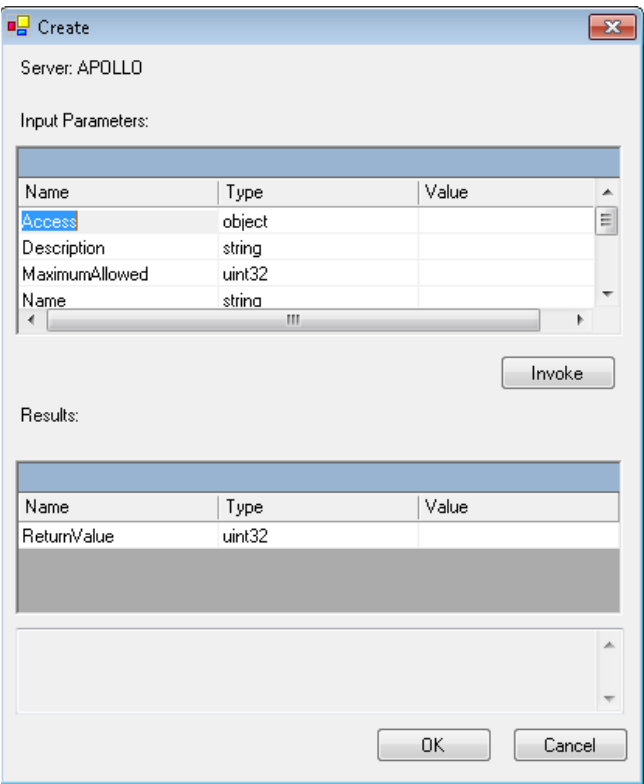


Create

You can also right-click a node and choose Create from the menu to make a new instance:

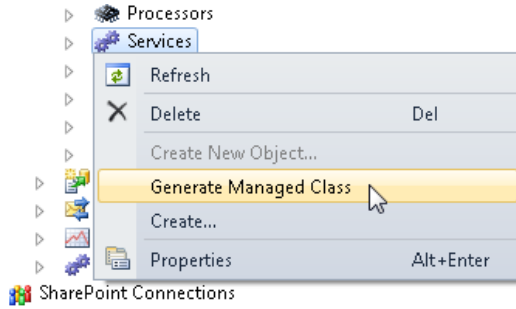


Unfortunately, you get a really ugly and unfriendly dialog box to use when you do this, as shown in the following illustration:

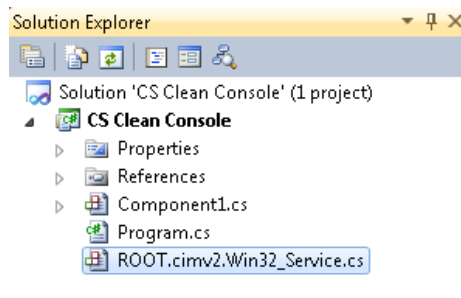


Generate Classes

One better way to work with the management classes is to right-click one and then generate a class from the menu:



This gives you a class you can use as you see fit:



```
// Private property to hold the WMI namespace in which the class resides.
private static string CreatedWmiNamespace = "ROOT\\cimv2";

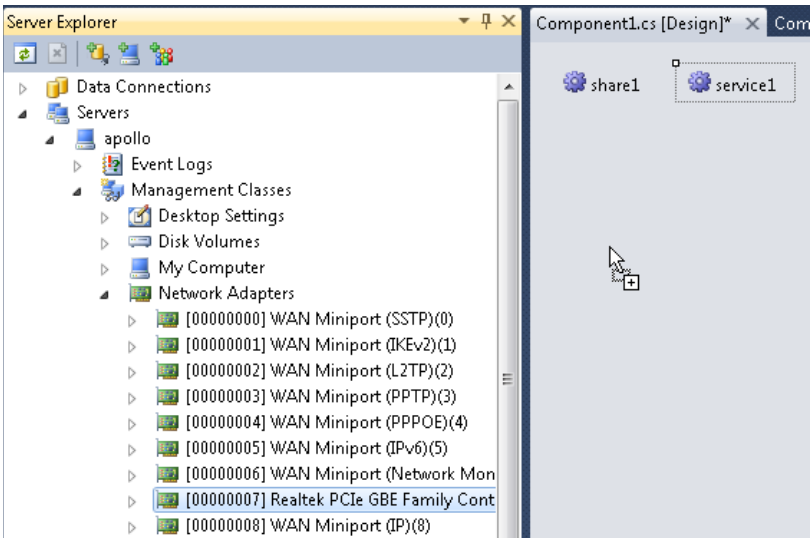
// Private property to hold the name of WMI class which created this class.
private static string CreatedClassName = "Win32_Service";
```

Click and Drag Components

The management classes can also be dragged onto a Windows form or component class design surface so that you can manipulate them.



Note For more information, see the topic "How to: Add Items from Server Explorer," at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/84s2c1k0.aspx>.

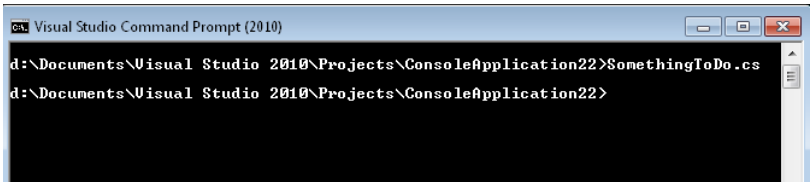


AX.35 Window Layouts: File View

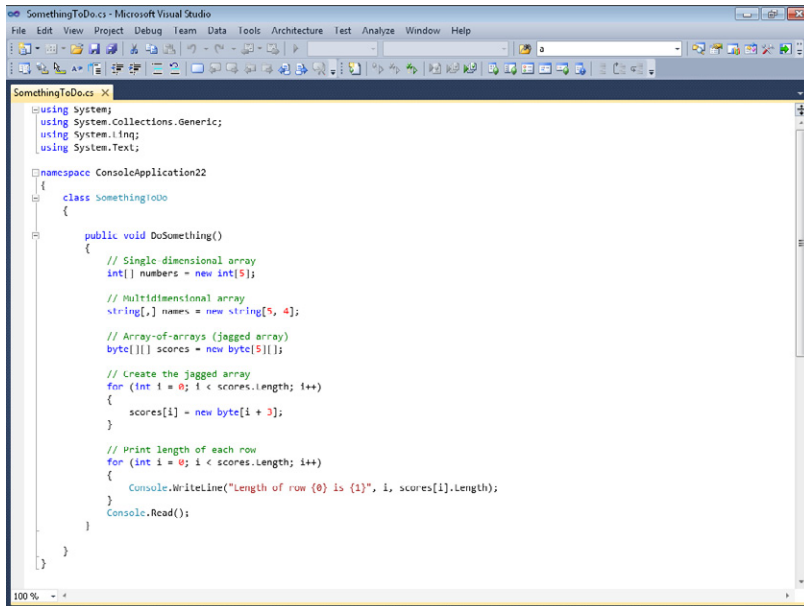
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0053

I talked about the different window layouts in vstipEnv0051, “Window Layouts: The Four Modes,” on page 90, and vstipEnv0052, “Window Layouts: Design, Debug, and Full Screen,” on page 91. Now I want to cover a lesser-known layout known as File View.

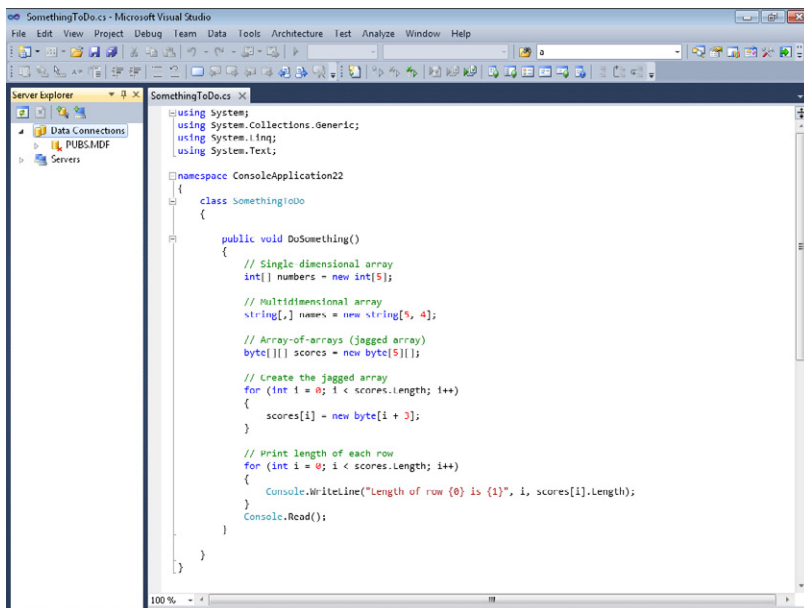
You get to File View by putting in the file name of any file associated with Visual Studio at the command prompt. In the following example, I’ve changed my directory to one of my solutions, and I’m putting in the name “SomethingToDo.cs”:



When I tried to do this without running the command prompt as Administrator, it wouldn’t load the file. So you might have to run the command prompt as Administrator. If Visual Studio is already open, it shows the file and if not, it loads and shows the file:



Notice that it is a very sparse layout. The good news is that you can customize it any way you want, to have quick access to the tools you need most. I'll add Server Explorer for now:



If you make changes, they are saved to your .vssettings file when you close Visual Studio. Remember that each mode is a distinct area, so the changes you make here are not seen in any of the other window modes.

AX.36 Rearrange Your Toolbars

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0027

You can easily rearrange your toolbars by simply putting your mouse over the grip control (the four vertical dots to the left of every toolbar), as shown in the following illustration:



When you get the four-directional mouse pointer, just click and drag the toolbar to the new position:



Be careful; it's real easy to get a shortened toolbar on your hands when moving toolbars be-side other toolbars, as shown in the following illustration:



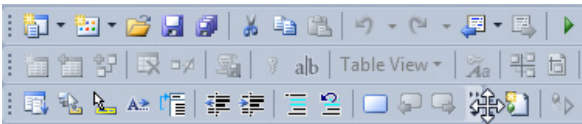
Note You know that you aren't seeing all the buttons on a toolbar if there are two arrows side-by-side on the far right of that toolbar, as shown in the following illustration:



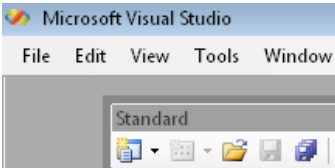
Of course, this shortened toolbar might be exactly what you want because the rest of the buttons are accessed by clicking on the drop-down arrow:



If this is not what you want, just click and drag the grip control of the toolbar to the right of the shortened toolbar and uncover as many buttons as you like:



In Visual Studio 2008 and 2005, you can also make the toolbar a floating one by dragging it off the toolbar area, as shown in the following illustration:

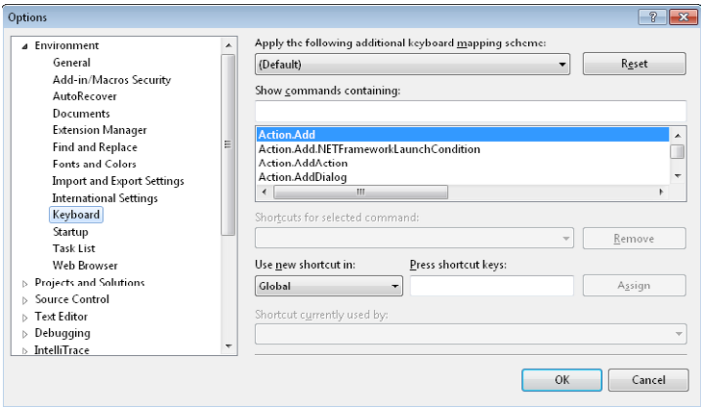


To put it back, just double-click anywhere on the title bar of the toolbar.

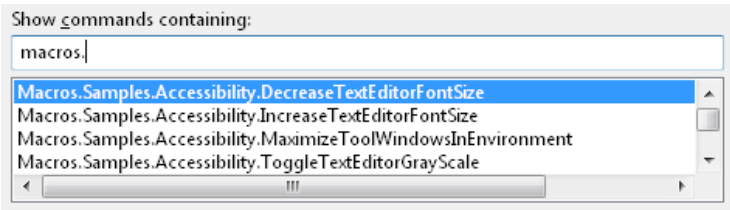
AX.37 Create a Shortcut Key for a Macro

WINDOWS	Alt, T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Keyboard
COMMAND	Tools.CustomizeKeyboard
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0066

We covered creating shortcuts in vstipTool0063 ("Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts," page 127). Assuming you have a macro you would like to attach a shortcut key to, you can easily make your macros accessible. Let's look at an example to show you how. First, go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard:



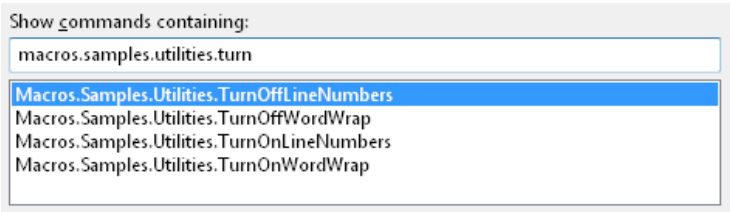
To access your macros, type **macros.** in the Show Commands Containing area:



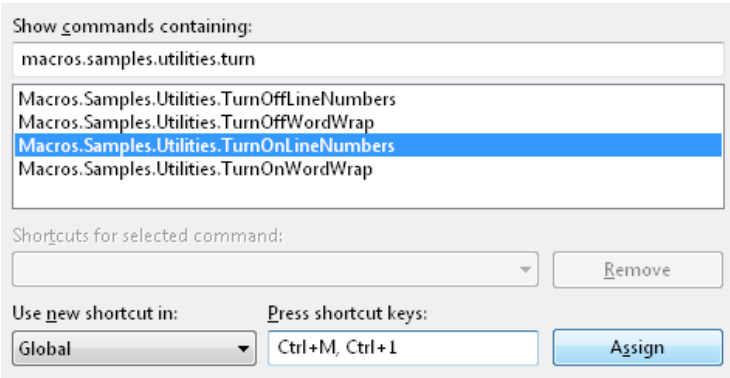
In this case, let’s bind the Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOffLineNumbers and Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOnLineNumbers macros.



Warning Make sure the keyboard shortcuts you use here aren’t already assigned to something else. They most likely aren’t, but you should double-check by reviewing vstipTool0063 , “Keyboard Shortcuts Creating New Shortcuts,” page 127.



Let’s bind Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOnLineNumbers to Ctrl+M, CTRL+1, as shown in the following illustration:



Let’s bind Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOffLineNumbers to Ctrl+M, Ctrl+0 (zero), as shown in the following illustration:

Show commands containing:

- Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOffLineNumbers
- Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOffWordWrap
- Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOnLineNumbers
- Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOnWordWrap

Shortcuts for selected command:

Use new shortcut in: Press shortcut keys:

Click OK, and let's test out our shortcuts. Go to any source code, and press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+0 to turn line numbers off and Ctrl+M, Ctrl+1 to turn them on.

AX.38 How to Run External Executables from the Command Window

COMMAND	Tools.Shell
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0089

You can run external programs from the Command Window (Ctrl+Alt+A) by using the **Tools.Shell** command. This can be useful if you run certain executables often (like Xcopy) and want to turn the action into a command alias. See vstipTool0068 ("Understanding Command Aliases," page 113).

The general syntax for the command is as follows:

```
Tools.Shell [/command] [/output] [/dir:folder] path [args]
```

Arguments

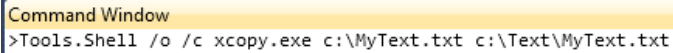
Following are some key arguments you can use for this command:

- **/commandwindow, /command, /c, or /cmd**
Optional. Specifies that the output for the executable is displayed in the Command Window.
- **/dir:folder or /d: folder**
Optional. Specifies the working directory to be set when the program is run.

- **/outputwindow, /output, /out, or /o**

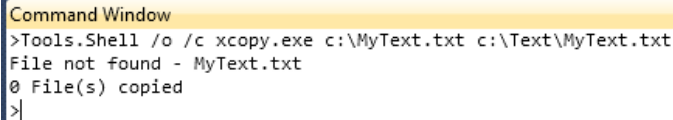
Optional. Specifies that the output for the executable is displayed in the Output window.

For example, to run the Xcopy command, it would appear as shown in the following illustration:



```
Command Window
>Tools.Shell /o /c xcopy.exe c:\MyText.txt c:\Text\MyText.txt
```

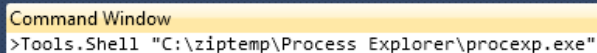
Just for fun, because I don't actually have the files in the sample command, the output shown in the following illustration is the result of running the Xcopy command:



```
Command Window
>Tools.Shell /o /c xcopy.exe c:\MyText.txt c:\Text\MyText.txt
File not found - MyText.txt
0 File(s) copied
>|
```

As you can see, the output from Xcopy was redirected to the Command Window and tells me that it can't find a file.

If the item you want to run isn't in the path environment variable, you must include the full path (surrounded by quotes if any spaces are in the path), as shown in the following illustration:



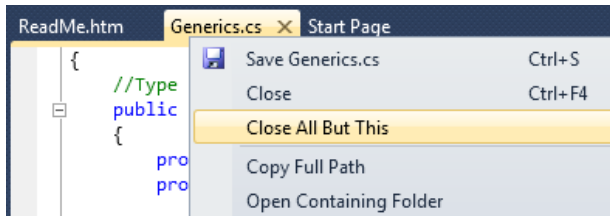
```
Command Window
>Tools.Shell "C:\ziptemp\Process Explorer\procexp.exe"
```

Additional Tips from Chapter 4

AX.39 Close All But This on the File Tab Channel

DEFAULT	Alt+- (minus sign), A [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+- (minus sign), A [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+- (minus sign), A [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+- (minus sign), A [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+- (minus sign), A [VS2010 Only]
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	File.CloseAllButThis; Window.ShowDockMenu
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0011

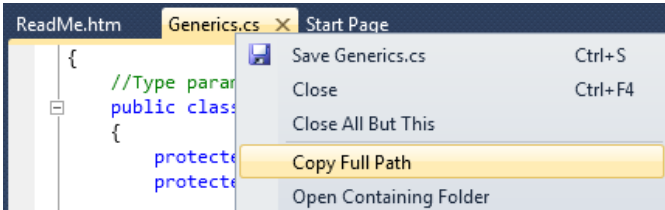
If you ever get the urge to close every file except the one you are currently working on, you can just right-click the current file tab and choose Close All But This:



AX.40 Copy a File's Full Path from the File Tab

DEFAULT	Alt+- (minus sign), F [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Alt+- (minus sign), F [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+- (minus sign), F [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL C++ 6	Alt+- (minus sign), F [VS2010 Only]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Alt+- (minus sign), F [VS2010 Only]
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	File.CopyFullPath; Window.ShowDockMenu
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0013

You can quickly copy the full path of any file. Just right-click the tab for the file, and choose Copy Full Path, as shown in the following illustration:



You now have the full path in your clipboard so that you can paste it (Ctrl+V) anywhere you need it.

AX.41

Understanding the File Tab Channel Drop-Down Button

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0012

Here is a convenient way to know whether you are seeing all your files on the File Tab Channel.

Let’s say you have a couple of files open: Notice that the button to the far right looks like an arrow pointing down:



But if you open up a few more files so that they all can’t be seen on the file channel, the button changes to let you know that all the files are not visible on the File Tab Channel (indicated by the line above the arrow in the following illustration):

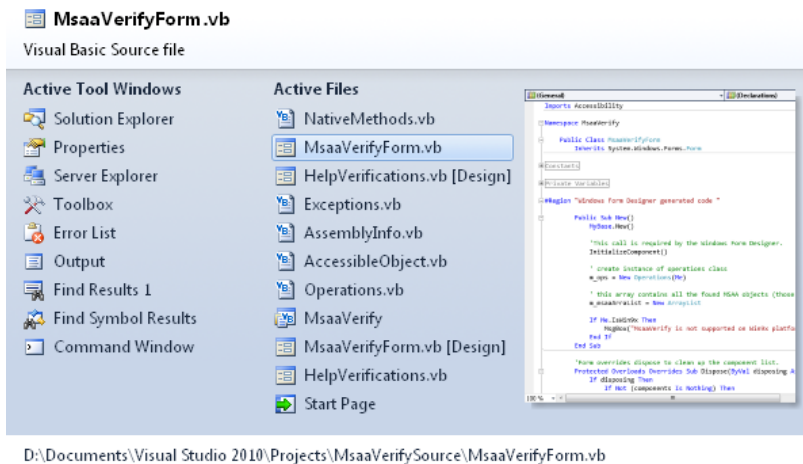


If you click the button, it gives you a list of all the files so that you can pick the one you want from the list.

AX.42 How to Disable the IDE Navigator

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F6 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+F6 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F6 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F6; Ctrl+Tab (next); Ctrl+Shift+F6; Ctrl+Shift+Tab (previous)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+F6 (next); Ctrl+Shift+F6 (previous)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F6; Ctrl+Tab (next); Ctrl+Shift+F6; Ctrl+Shift+Tab (previous)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.NextDocumentWindow; Window.PreviousDocumentWindow
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0039

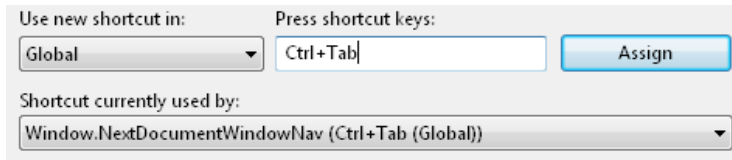
By default, if you press Ctrl+Tab, you get the IDE Navigator, as shown in the following illustration:



Some people don't like this feature and instead would like to just iterate through open document tabs.

This behavior is bound to Ctrl+ F6 and to Ctrl+Shift+F6 in the General settings, but some people don't like this key combination.

You can easily rebind the commands to Ctrl+Tab and Ctrl+Shift+Tab. If you go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard, you can see that Ctrl+Tab is bound to Window.NextDocumentWindowNav:



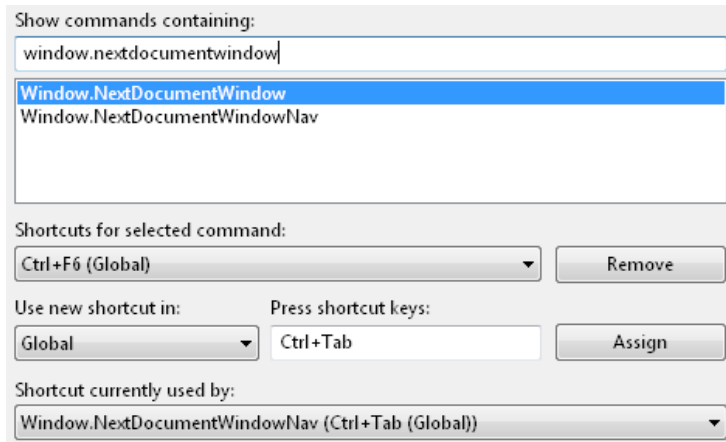
Use new shortcut in: Global

Press shortcut keys: Ctrl+Tab

Assign

Shortcut currently used by: Window.NextDocumentWindowNav (Ctrl+Tab (Global))

If you assign Ctrl+Tab to Window.NextDocumentWindow instead, you can see the result in the following illustration:



Show commands containing: window.nextdocumentwindow

Window.NextDocumentWindow

Window.NextDocumentWindowNav

Shortcuts for selected command: Ctrl+F6 (Global)

Remove

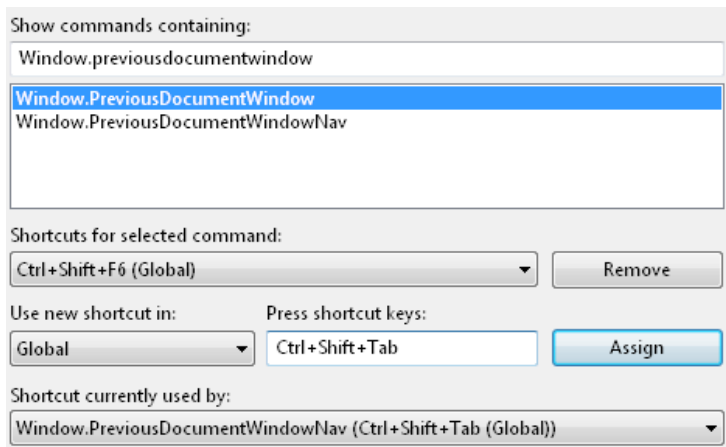
Use new shortcut in: Global

Press shortcut keys: Ctrl+Tab

Assign

Shortcut currently used by: Window.NextDocumentWindowNav (Ctrl+Tab (Global))

The IDE Navigator does not show up anymore, and instead Ctrl+Tab iterates through the open document tabs. If you like this, you might want to bind Ctrl+Shift+Tab to Window.PreviousDocumentWindow as well:



Show commands containing: Window.previousdocumentwindow

Window.PreviousDocumentWindow

Window.PreviousDocumentWindowNav

Shortcuts for selected command: Ctrl+Shift+F6 (Global)

Remove

Use new shortcut in: Global

Press shortcut keys: Ctrl+Shift+Tab

Assign

Shortcut currently used by: Window.PreviousDocumentWindowNav (Ctrl+Shift+Tab (Global))

If you don't like the new setup, you can always reverse the process and rebind Ctrl+Tab and Ctrl+Shift+Tab to Window.NextDocumentWindowNav and Window.PreviousDocumentWindowNav, respectively.

For more information about binding keyboard shortcuts, refer to vstipTool0063 ("Keyboard Shortcuts Creating New Shortcuts," page 127).

AX.43 Thumbnail Previews in the IDE Navigator

VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0113

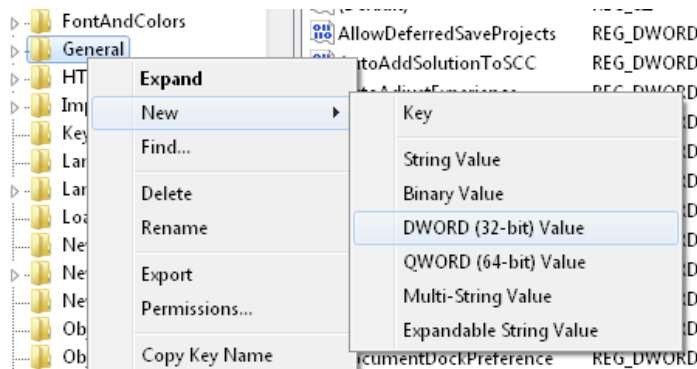
In vstipTool0023 ("Using the IDE Navigator," page 160), I show you how to use the IDE Navigator. This next tip comes from Paul Harrington on the Visual Studio Team. In Visual Studio 2008, when you used the IDE Navigator, you could also see thumbnail previews of the documents in the list. However, this feature was removed from Visual Studio 2010. The good news is that the feature is still there.



Warning This tip requires you to add a value to the registry, so you do this at your own risk. And this solution has been known to not always work 100 percent of the time.

Open up the registry (regedit.exe), and go to HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\General.

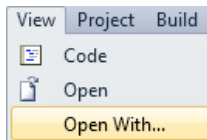
Now right-click the General key, and add a new DWORD value:



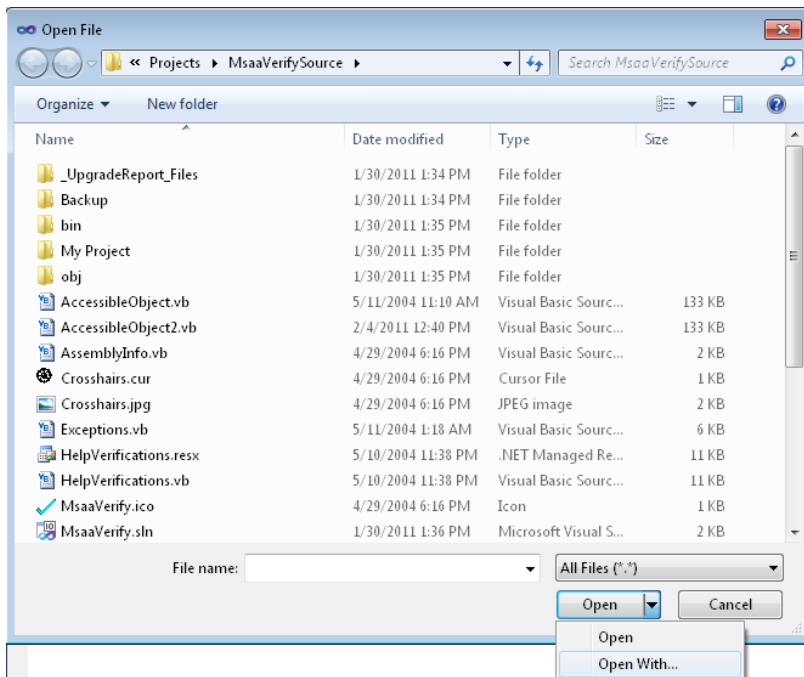
Call it ShowThumbnailsOnNavigation, and set the value to 1:



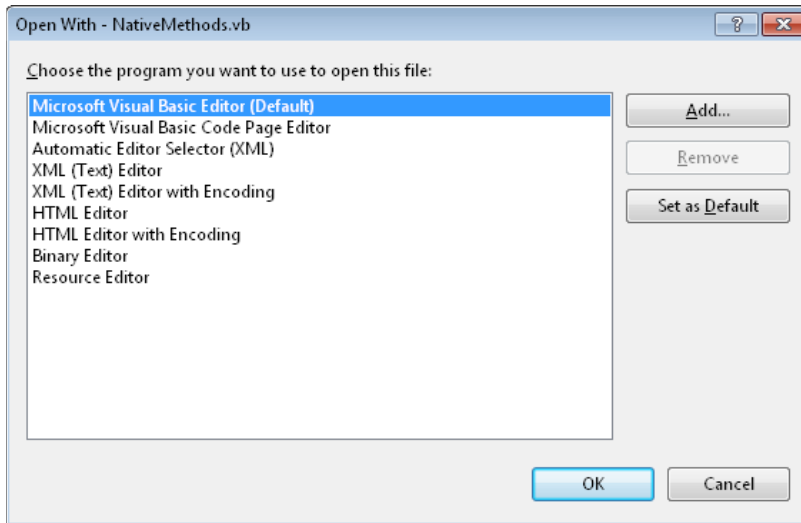
You can use Open With to change the editor used to view a file. You can use this feature in several ways. For example, if you have an existing file open, you can go to View | Open With:



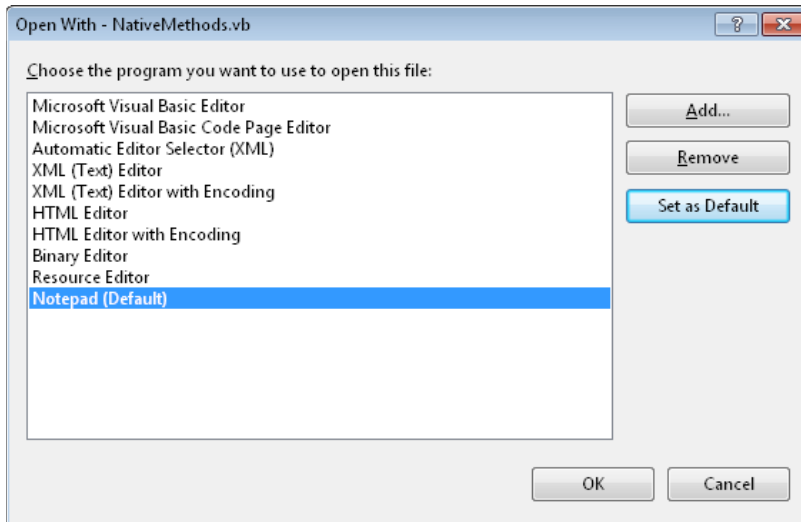
For files not opened yet, you can use this option from inside the Open File dialog box:



Regardless of the method used, you get the Open With dialog box:

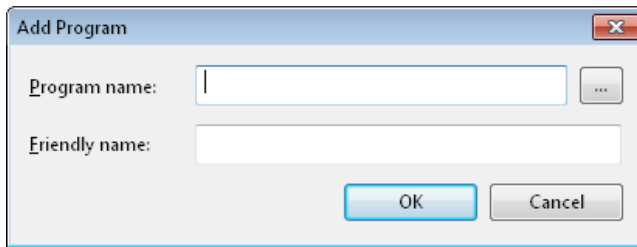


Notice, in this example, that one editor is the default editor for the file type you want to open. This can easily be changed by selecting a new editor and clicking Set As Default:



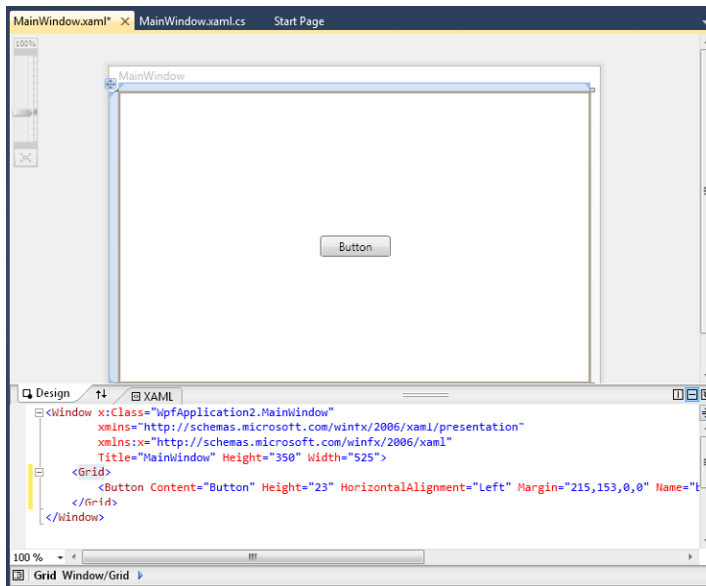
Warning Use this feature at your own risk, because it's important to be sure of the editor you are using before you make it the default.

Notice the Add button, shown in the following illustration, which enables you to indicate new programs that you want to use for opening files:



Example

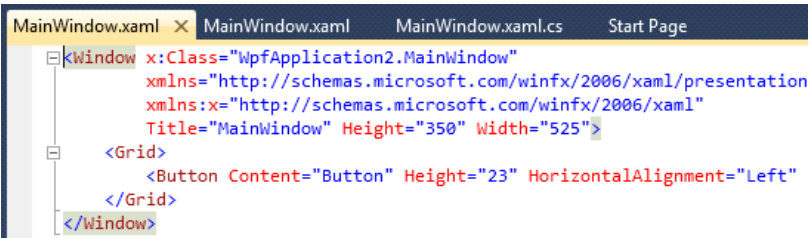
One common use of Open With is to enable source code editing for WPF files. Normally, you get a designer/code view:



To enable source code editing more easily, first use Open With and select Source Code (Text) Editor:

XML (Text) Editor with Encoding
Source Code (Text) Editor
Source Code (Text) Editor With Encoding
HTML Editor

Now you should see a “code only” view of the XAML:

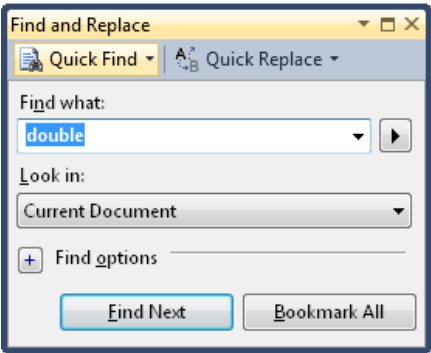


Additional Tips from Chapter 5

AX.45 Using a Simple Quick Find

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+F
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+F
VISUAL C++ 2	Alt+F3
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+F
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+F
WINDOWS	Alt,E, F, F
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Quick Find
COMMAND	Edit.Find
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0006

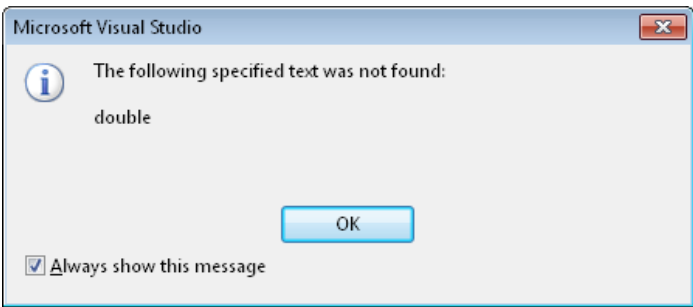
You can do a simple find anytime you want by pressing Ctrl+F to bring up the Quick Find window:



The Find What area is automatically prepopulated with the word the cursor was currently on, or you can type in a new one.

To start, just press Enter or click Find Next, and the find operation finds the next instance of the search term you are looking for. By default, it looks from the current cursor location downward.

The search continues until you reach the end of the document, and then it returns to the beginning and shows the following dialog box:

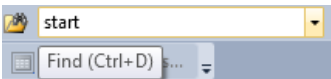


As you can see, you can turn this off by clearing the Always Show This Message check box so that it doesn't annoy you.

AX.46 Using the Find Combo Box

DEFAULT	Ctrl+D
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+/,
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+D; Ctrl+F; Ctrl+A
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+D
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+F
WINDOWS	Ctrl+Shift+F
COMMAND	Edit.GoToFindCombo
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0009

While it tends to get ignored sometimes, the Find Combo box is actually quite useful. In the following examples, I'll show how you can quickly use this area while you are writing your code:



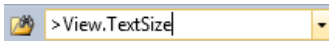
It can be used as a quick way to go to a line without any dialog boxes popping up. Just press Ctrl+D to get to the combo box, and then type in a line number, and finally, press Ctrl+G to go to the line number you typed:



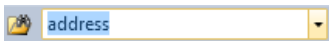
Also, it can be used to execute commands by the pressing Ctrl+Forward slash (/) followed by your command:



Note Ctrl+/ is bound to the **Tools.GoToCommandLine** command for all languages except C#.

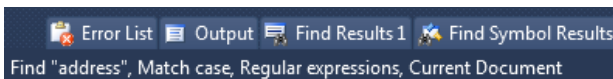


Its primary use, however, is to perform a simple find operation. Press Ctrl+D, type in whatever you are looking for, and press Enter:

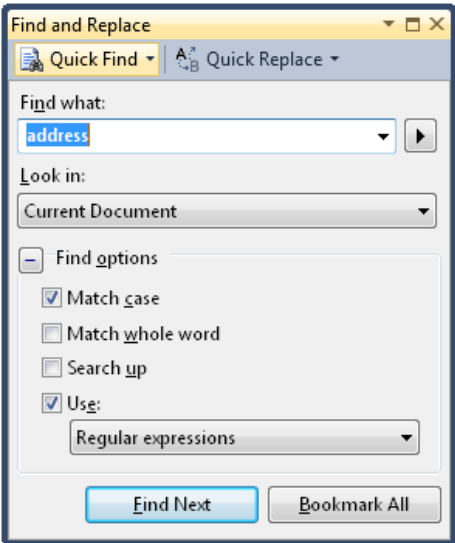


It finds the next instance of the search term. If you have a lot of text to go through, you can hold down the Enter key to quickly go through the document. One other thing to note is that, unlike a Quick Find, this find does *not* give you a dialog box telling you when you have looped around to where you started.

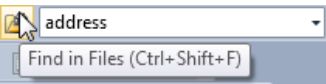
When you use this feature, *pay attention to the status bar* at the bottom. It shows you all the options that have been set for the current search:



The options used here are set in the Quick Find tool window (Ctrl+F):



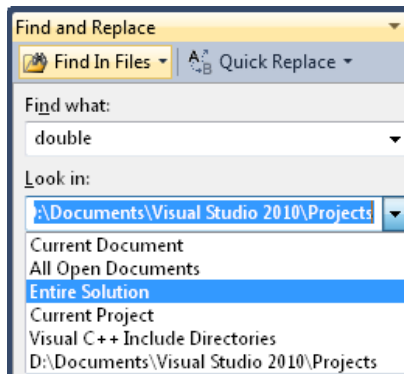
Last, but certainly not least, is the Find In Files button, which brings up the Find In Files tool window (see vstipFind0013, “Find in Files: Find Options,” page 186):



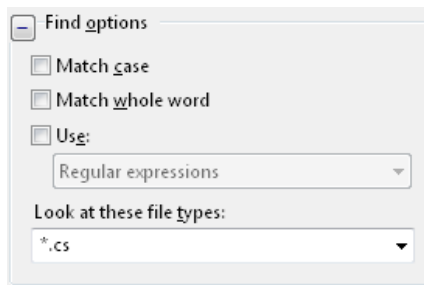
AX.47 Customize the Files to Search with Find In Files

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+F
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt, E, F, I
MENU	Edit Find and Replace Find In Files
COMMAND	Edit.FindInFiles
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0005

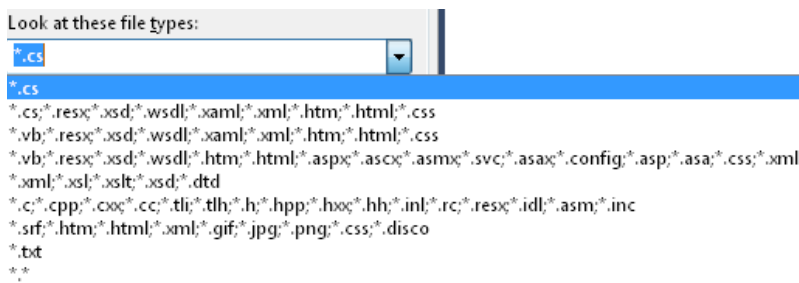
In the Find In Files dialog box (Ctrl+Shift+F), choose any option *except* Current Document and All Open Documents:



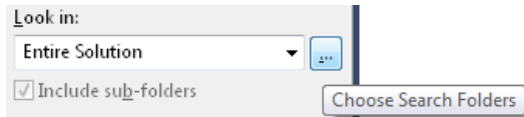
The Look At These File Types combo box is enabled under Find Options:



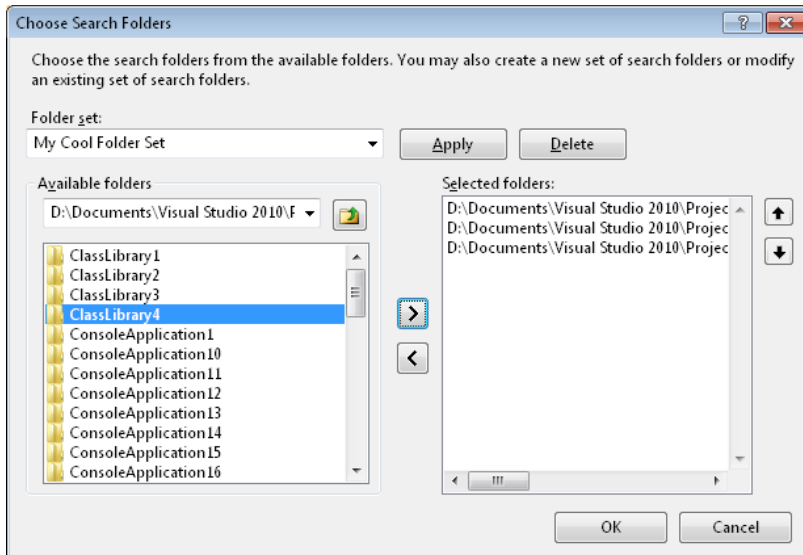
Now you can choose from the predetermined list of file types, or you can include your own (semicolon delimited) list:



You can also create a customized set of folders to search in by going back to the Look In area and clicking the ellipsis:



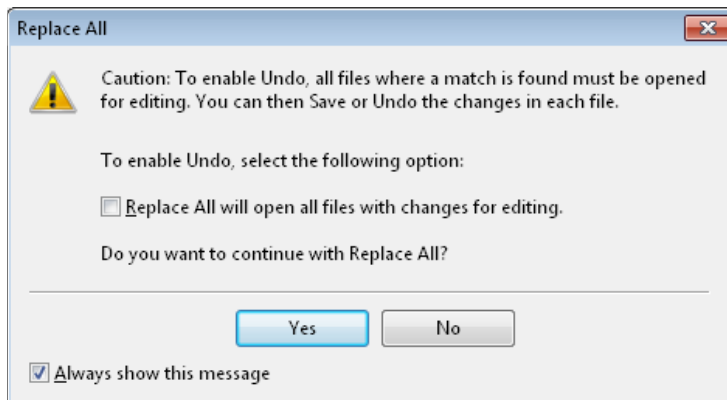
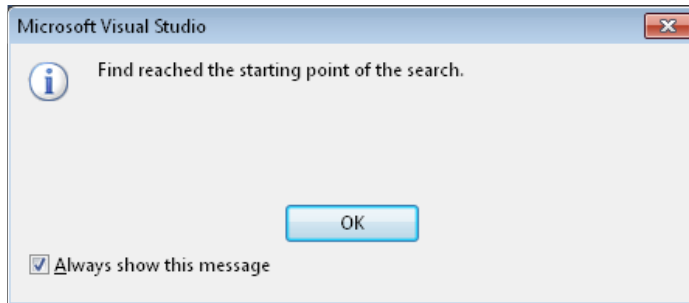
Now you have the Choose Search Folders dialog box, where you can completely customize the folders to look in, and you can even create a custom name for the folder set by typing a new name in the Folder Set area:



AX.48 How to Show and Hide Find Messages

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Find and Replace
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0017

When working with the various find-tool windows, you sometimes get messages based on what you are doing. These range from informational messages to warning messages, as shown in the following illustrations:



If you clear the Always Show This Message check box, the messages go away. But what if you want the messages back or don't want to wait for a message to pop up until you can turn the messages off? No problem. Just go to Tools | Options | Environment | Find And Replace:

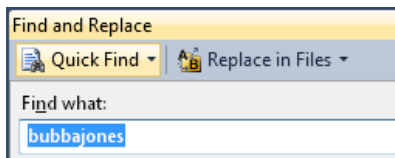


The Display Informational Messages and Display Warning Messages check boxes toggle, showing these messages when you use a find operation. Informational messages really aren't very important, but you should consider carefully whether turning off warning messages is a good idea.

AX.49 How to Not Automatically Search for the Currently Selected Word

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Find and Replace
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipFind0018

Does it annoy you when your find operations automatically populate with the word you happen to have the cursor in?



You can simply go to Tools | Options | Environment | Find And Replace and clear the Automatically Populate Find What With Text From The Editor check box:



AX.50 Setting Bookmarks

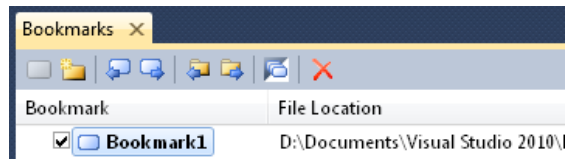
DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+K
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+K; Ctrl+K, T
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+K; Ctrl+B, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+B, T
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+F2
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+K; Ctrl+F2
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+K
WINDOWS	Alt,E, K, T
MENU	Edit Bookmarks Toggle Bookmark
COMMAND	Edit.ToggleBookmark
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0047

Bookmarks are a pretty cool feature that a lot of people don't seem to know about. Essentially, bookmarks provide a way to mark locations in your code. Unlike comment tokens ("TODOs"), bookmarks are not stored with the source code and thus are seen only by you.

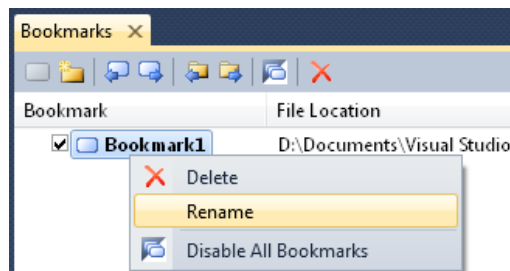
You have numerous ways to set a Bookmark. The simplest way is to use Ctrl+K, Ctrl+K to create a single bookmark:

```
14 //Type parameter T
15 public class MyList
16 {
```

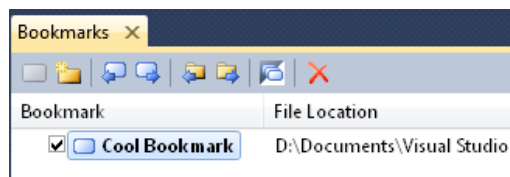
When you set a bookmark, it creates a glyph in the margin (see image above) and creates an entry in the Bookmarks window:



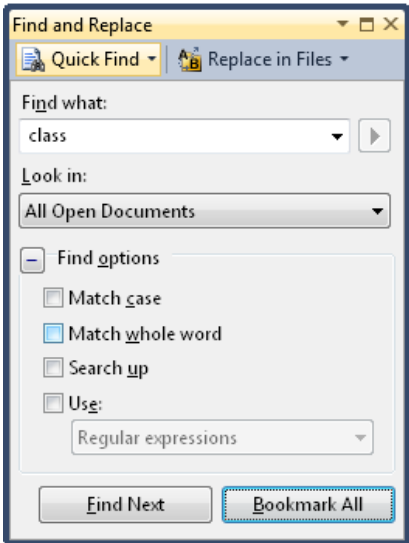
The good news is that you don't have to keep the default name that is given for the bookmark. Just right-click the entry in the window, and choose Rename:



Then put in whatever you want for the name:



You can continue to use either the keyboard command or the menu option to create bookmarks. Another great way to create bookmarks is to use the Bookmark All (bottom right) button in the Quick Find dialog box (Ctrl+F):



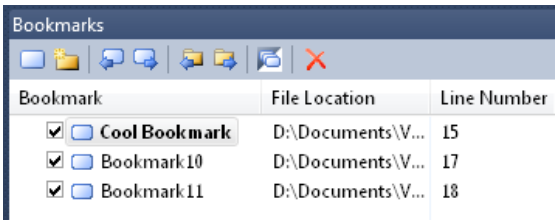
The Bookmark All button becomes available only if you choose Current Document or All Open Documents from the Look In drop-down box.

AX.51

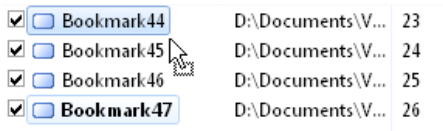
Organizing Bookmarks

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0048

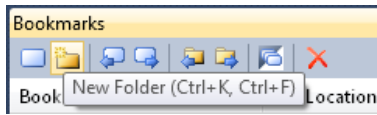
The Bookmarks window gives you some basic information about the bookmarks, and you have the ability to rename them as well:



However, when you have a lot of bookmarks, it is probably a good idea to organize your bookmarks. You can drag the bookmarks around to reorganize them in the list:



Another thing you can do is create folders in the Bookmarks window (Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F):

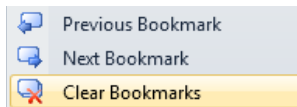


Just give the folder(s) a name, and you have a great place to organize bookmarks:



Now you can just drag your bookmarks into the folder(s) you have created:

Naturally, if you have no need for a bookmark, you can simply press Del to delete the currently selected one, or you can go to Edit | Bookmarks | Clear Bookmarks to remove all your bookmarks:



AX.52 Navigating Bookmarks

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+P (previous bookmark); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+N (next bookmark); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+P (previous bookmark in folder); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+N (next bookmark in folder)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+P (previous bookmark); Ctrl+K, P (previous bookmark); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+N (next bookmark); Ctrl+K, N (next bookmark); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+P (previous bookmark in folder); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+N (next bookmark in folder)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+P (previous bookmark); Ctrl+B, Ctrl+P (previous bookmark); Ctrl+B, P (previous bookmark); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+N (next bookmark); Ctrl+B, Ctrl+N (next bookmark); Ctrl+B, N (next bookmark); [no shortcut] (previous bookmark in folder); [no shortcut] (next bookmark in folder)
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+F2 (previous bookmark); F2 (next bookmark); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+P (previous bookmark in folder); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+N (next bookmark in folder)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+P (previous bookmark); Shift+F2 (previous bookmark); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+N (next bookmark); F2 (next bookmark); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+P (previous bookmark in folder); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+N (next bookmark in folder)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+P (previous bookmark); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+N (next bookmark); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+P (previous bookmark in folder); Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+N (next bookmark in folder)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, K, [P (previous),B (next)]
MENU	Edit Bookmarks [Previous, Next] Bookmark [In Folder, Document]
COMMAND	Edit.[Previous, Next] Bookmark; Edit.[Previous, Next] Bookmark [In Folder, Document]
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0049

After you have created and organized your bookmarks, you want to navigate them. You can go to Edit | Bookmarks to see several available options:

	Previous Bookmark	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+P
	Next Bookmark	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+N
	Clear Bookmarks	
	Previous Bookmark In Folder	Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+P
	Next Bookmark In Folder	Ctrl+Shift+K, Ctrl+Shift+N
	Previous Bookmark In Document	
	Next Bookmark In Document	
	Clear All Bookmarks In Document	

[Next,Previous] Bookmark In Document

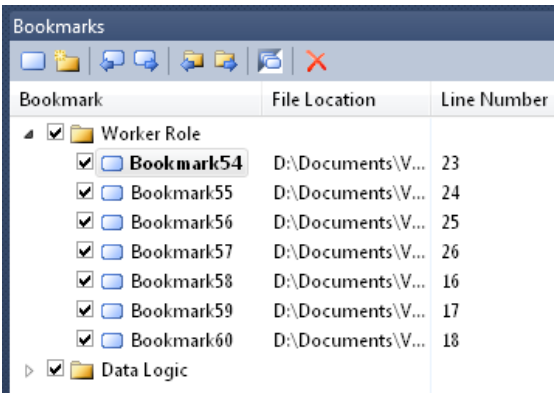
This option allows you to restrict browsing to only those bookmarks in the current open document, independently of how they are organized in the Bookmarks window.

So, even though you have lots of bookmarks in different folders within the Bookmarks window, this option moves only between the bookmarks in the current document, ignoring any organization.

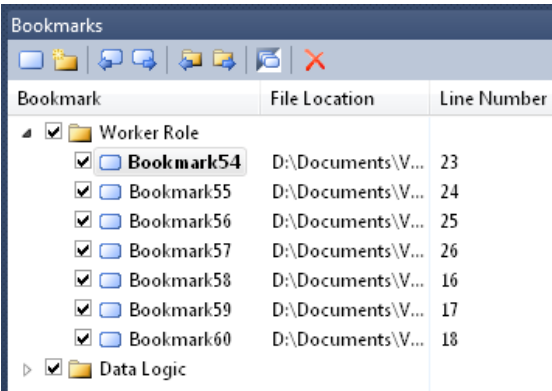
[Next,Previous] Bookmark In Folder

This option allows you to restrict browsing to only those bookmarks in the current folder in the Bookmarks window, independent of how they are arranged in the source code.

Pretty much the opposite of the previous feature, this feature ignores how the bookmarks are organized in the source code and moves only within the bookmarks in the current folder within the Bookmarks window:



When you reach the last Bookmark in the folder, it loops back around to the first bookmark in the current folder:



The screenshot shows a 'Bookmarks' window with a toolbar at the top containing icons for adding, deleting, and navigating between bookmarks. Below the toolbar is a table with three columns: 'Bookmark', 'File Location', and 'Line Number'. The table lists several bookmarks under the 'Worker Role' folder, with 'Bookmark54' selected. A 'Data Logic' folder is also visible at the bottom of the list.

Bookmark	File Location	Line Number
Worker Role		
Bookmark54	D:\Documents\V...	23
Bookmark55	D:\Documents\V...	24
Bookmark56	D:\Documents\V...	25
Bookmark57	D:\Documents\V...	26
Bookmark58	D:\Documents\V...	16
Bookmark59	D:\Documents\V...	17
Bookmark60	D:\Documents\V...	18
Data Logic		

[Next,Previous] Bookmark

This option allows you to navigate between bookmarks in the Bookmarks window. This feature is very similar to the [Previous, Next] Bookmark In Folder feature and moves sequentially through bookmarks.

The difference comes when you reach the last bookmark in a folder. Instead of looping back around to the first bookmark in the folder, this option continues to the next folder and moves sequentially through those bookmarks as well (and so on):



This screenshot shows the 'Bookmarks' window after navigating from the last bookmark in the 'Worker Role' folder to the first bookmark in the 'Data Logic' folder. 'Bookmark50' is now selected.

Bookmark60	D:\Documents\V...	18
Data Logic		
Bookmark50	D:\Documents\V...	21
Bookmark51	D:\Documents\V...	22

Additional Tips from Chapter 6

AX.53 Turn On Line Numbers

WINDOWS	Alt,T,O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor All Languages General Display
COMMAND	Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOnLineNumbers; Macros.Samples.Utilities.TurnOffLineNumbers
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0025

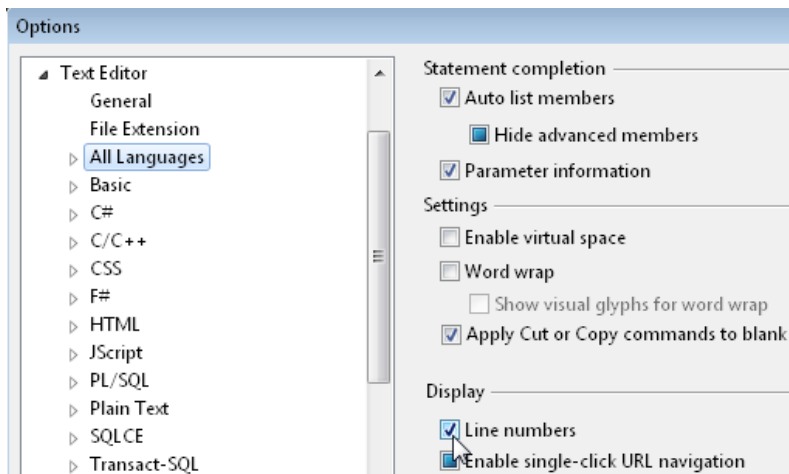
As you can see in the following illustration, it's great to have line numbers in your code:

```

12 namespace G
13 {
14     //Type
15     public
16     {
17         pro
18         pro
19
20         //
21         pro
22     {

```

Line numbers are not on by default. To turn on line numbers, just go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | General | Display and select the Line Numbers check box:

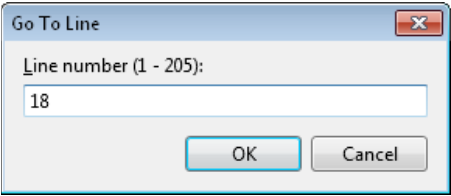


AX.54 Go to a Line Number

DEFAULT	Ctrl+G
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+G
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+G
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+G
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+G
WINDOWS	Alt,E,G
MENU	Edit Go To
COMMAND	Edit.GoTo
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010, 2010 SP1
CODE	vstipEdit0026

You have three main ways you can go to any line number in your code.

First, you can go to any line number by simply pressing Ctrl+G to see the following dialog box. Just type in your desired line number, and click OK. The cursor moves to the line number you typed:



Second, you can double-click in the status bar area that shows your current location (lower-right part of your screen) to get the "Go To Line" dialog box:

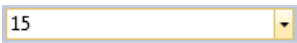


Third, you can use the Find Combo box to quickly go to a line number. This technique does not work with a default installation of Visual Studio 2010 but was fixed with Service Pack 1. It requires two steps:

1. Press Ctrl+D to put your cursor into the Find Combo box:



2. Type in any line number, and press Ctrl+G to go to that line number:





Note In Visual Studio 2010, you might have to press the escape key (Esc) to get out of the Find Combo box and back to your code.



AX.55 Comment and Uncomment Code

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+E, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+E, C (comment); Ctrl+E, Ctrl+U (uncomment); Ctrl+E, U (uncomment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C (comment); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (uncomment)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, M; Alt,E, V, E;
MENU	Edit Advanced Comment Selection; Edit Advanced Uncomment Selection
COMMAND	Edit.CommentSelection; Edit.UncommentSelection
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0047

Sometimes it's the simple things we forget about. So I present to you the classic Comment and Uncomment selection. Naturally, you have the Comment and Uncomment buttons, shown in the following illustration:



And, of course, you have the menu items:

	Comment Selection	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C
	Uncomment Selection	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U

But it's the keyboard shortcuts that are really important. These, predictably, comment or uncomment lines of code for you. So let's say you have some code you want commented out. Just select it, as shown in the following illustration:

```
Console.WriteLine();
Console.WriteLine();
Console.WriteLine();
```

Then press Ctrl+K, Ctrl+C:

```
//Console.WriteLine();
//Console.WriteLine();
//Console.WriteLine();
```

OK, great, but what if you don't want to use the mouse? No problem. Just hold Alt+Shift+[Up or Down Arrow] to do a vertical selection. You don't have to select the entire line to comment or uncomment it.



Note In Visual Studio 2005 and Visual Studio 2008, you have to go right or left one character before you can go up or down for vertical selection.

```
//Console.WriteLine();
//Console.WriteLine();
//Console.WriteLine();
```

Then press Ctrl+K, Ctrl+U (in this example):

```
Console.WriteLine();
Console.WriteLine();
Console.WriteLine();
```

And there you go. You now have Comment and Uncomment actions anytime you want them.

AX.56 Select the Current Word

DEFAULT	Ctrl+W
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+W
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+W
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+W
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+W
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+W
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.SelectCurrentWord
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0039

You can easily select the current word in Visual Studio by putting your cursor in the word:

```
public
```

And then just press Ctrl+W:

```
public
```

AX.57 Delete Through the Beginning or End of a Word

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Del (delete to end); Ctrl+Backspace (delete to start)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Del (delete to end); Ctrl+Backspace (delete to start)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Del (delete to end); Ctrl+Backspace (delete to start)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Del (delete to end); Ctrl+Backspace (delete to start)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Del (delete to end); Ctrl+Backspace (delete to start)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Del (delete to end); Ctrl+Backspace (delete to start)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.WordDeleteToEnd; Edit.WordDeleteToStart
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0040

You can delete from the current cursor position through the beginning or end of a word. Let me illustrate with a simple example. Let's say you want to change the word "public":

```
public
```

Given the current cursor position, you could delete to the end of the word by pressing Ctrl+Del:

```
pvoid
```

Then you could type the new word:

```
private void
```

This is a somewhat contrived example, but you get the idea. Additionally, Ctrl+Backspace deletes from the current cursor location through the beginning of a word.

AX.58 Click and Drag Text to a New Location

COMMAND	OtherContextMenus.DragandDrop.MoveHere
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0041

Often you will find yourself with the need to move text around in the Editor. Text can easily be moved around by simply selecting it and dragging it to a new location. Start with something you want to move, like a method:

```

45 public MyList()
46 {
47     head = null;
48 }
49
50 //T as method parameter type.
51 public void AddHead(T t)
52 {
53     Node n = new Node(t);
54     n.Next = head;
55     head = n;
56 }

```

In this case, you might want to collapse the code to make it easier to select and move, as shown in the following illustration:

```

45 public MyList()...
49
50 //T as method parameter type.
51 public void AddHead(T t)
52 {
53     Node n = new Node(t);
54     n.Next = head;
55     head = n;
56 }
57

```

Now just select the text, and then click and drag (left mouse button) to move the cursor to the destination:

```

45 public MyList()...
49
50 //T as method parameter type.
51 public void AddHead(T t)
52 {
53     Node n = new Node(t);
54     n.Next = head;
55     head = n;
56 }
57
58
59
60

```

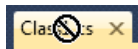
Release the mouse button to finish the move to the new location:

```

45
46
47 //T as method parameter type.
48 public void AddHead(T t)
49 {
50     Node n = new Node(t);
51     n.Next = head;
52     head = n;
53 }
54
55
56 public MyList()
57 {
58     head = null;
59 }
60

```

This technique can also be used to move text from one file to another. Just select the text, and then click and drag your mouse pointer over the tab for the new file:



Even though you get the “can’t drop” indicator, it switches to the new file. Just keep holding the mouse button down, and move the cursor to the new location:

```

8 class Class1
9 {
10
11 }
12
13

```

Then release and you are all set.

AX.59 Make Selection Uppercase or Lowercase

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+U (uppercase); Ctrl+U (lowercase)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+U (uppercase); Ctrl+U (lowercase)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+U (uppercase); Ctrl+U (lowercase)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+U (uppercase); Ctrl+U (lowercase)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+U (uppercase); Ctrl+U (lowercase)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+U (uppercase); Ctrl+U (lowercase)
WINDOWS	Alt, E, V, U (uppercase); Alt, E, V, L (lowercase)
MENU	Edit Advanced Make Uppercase; Edit Advanced Make Lowercase
COMMAND	Edit.MakeUppercase; Edit.MakeLowercase
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0044

You can easily change the case of any text:

Dim Bubba As String

Just select the as much of the word you want to change case for, and press Ctrl+Shift+U to make the selected characters all uppercase:

Dim BUBBA As String

Or if you prefer, you can always make all the selected characters lowercase by pressing Ctrl+U:

Dim bubba As String

Again, you don't have to select the whole word; you can select only the characters you want to change.

AX.60 Brace Matching Rectangle

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Fonts and Colors Display Items
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0050

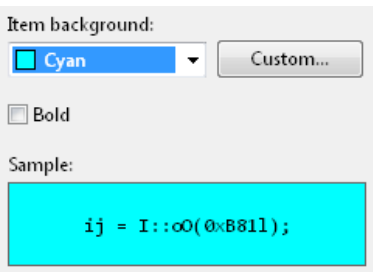
The default colors can be a pain sometimes, especially when it comes to certain colors. One of these, for me, is the Brace Matching Rectangle. The default colors are light grey:


```
static void Main
{
}
}
```

To change the color, first go to Tools | Options | Fonts and Colors | Display Items and choose Brace Matching (Rectangle), as shown in the following illustration:



Now choose your new color (Cyan in this example):



A Note About VB

Visual Basic treats this a little differently. When you first close braces, it gives you the Brace Matching Rectangle color.

After the braces are in place, if you click next to them, it uses the highlighted reference colors.

AX.61 Automatic Delimiter Highlighting

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Fonts and Colors Display Items
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0071

You have probably seen automatic delimiter highlighting in action before. It shows up when you close parentheses, curly brackets, and other similar delimiters.

C#

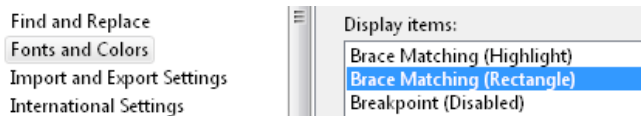
```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
}
}
```

VB

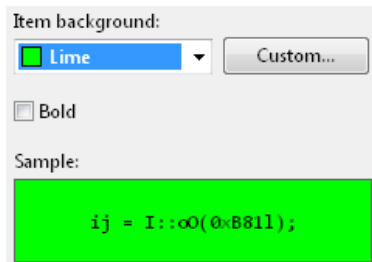
```
GetName(ByVal name As String, ByVal age As Integer)
```

Changing Colors

You can modify the colors to suit your need by going to Tools | Options | Environment | Fonts and Colors and selecting Brace Matching (Rectangle):

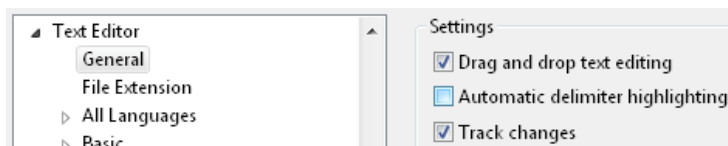


Let's change the background to lime green and click OK:



Turning It Off

If you don't like this feature, you can go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | General and clear the Automatic Delimiter Highlighting check box, as shown in the following illustration:



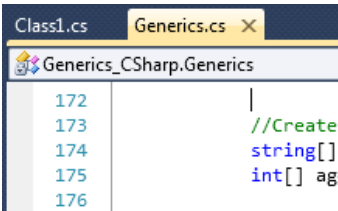
AX.62 Move or Select to the Top or Bottom of the Current View in the Editor

DEFAULT	Ctrl+PgUp (move top); Ctrl+PgDn (move bottom); Ctrl+Shift+PgUp (select top); Ctrl+Shift+PgDn (select bottom)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+PgUp (move top); Ctrl+PgDn (move bottom); Ctrl+Shift+PgUp (select top); Ctrl+Shift+PgDn (select bottom)
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+PgUp (move top); Ctrl+PgDn (move bottom); Ctrl+Shift+PgUp (select top); Ctrl+Shift+PgDn (select bottom)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+PgUp (move top); Ctrl+PgDn (move bottom); Ctrl+Shift+PgUp (select top); Ctrl+Shift+PgDn (select bottom)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+PgUp (move top); Ctrl+PgDn (move bottom); Ctrl+Shift+PgUp (select top); Ctrl+Shift+PgDn (select bottom)
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.ViewTop; Window.ViewBottom;Edit.ViewTopExtend;Edit.ViewBottomExtend
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0056

This tip comes in handy when you want to travel from one end of your screen to the other. For example, when you are working with documents, you might find yourself at the bottom of the screen and want to get to the top:

```
201 |      }
202 |  |  }
203 |  |
204 |  }
```

Just press Ctrl+PgUp, and you are taken to the top of the screen as close to the current column position as possible:



Using Ctrl+PgDn takes you to the bottom of the screen. You can also use Ctrl+Shift+Pg[Up or Dn] to select everything from the current cursor position to the top or bottom of the screen.

AX.63 Format the Current Document or Selection

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+E, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+E, D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection); Ctrl+E, Ctrl+F (selection); Ctrl+E, F (selection)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut] (document); Ctrl+Shift+F (selection); Ctrl+Alt+I (selection)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection); Alt+F8 (selection)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+D (document); Ctrl+K, Ctrl+F (selection); Alt+F8 (selection)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, A (document); Alt,E, V, F (selection)
MENU	Edit Advanced Format Document; Edit Advanced Format Selection
COMMAND	Edit.FormatDocument; Edit.FormatSelection
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0057

Let's say you have some code that isn't formatted properly.

```
6 namespace ConsoleApplication24
7 {
8     class Program
9     {
10     static void Main(string[] args)
11     {
12
13         Console.WriteLine("blah");
14     }
15 }
16 }
17 }
```

Now you want it to look good. Just select the code, and then go to Edit | Advanced | Format Selection to get the result shown in the following illustration:

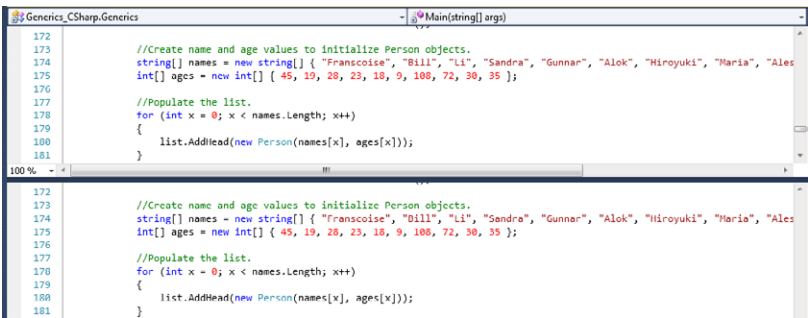
```
6 namespace ConsoleApplication24
7 {
8     class Program
9     {
10         static void Main(string[] args)
11         {
12
13             Console.WriteLine("blah");
14         }
15     }
16 }
17 }
```

If you want to fix the formatting for the entire document you are currently working in, just go to Edit | Advanced | Format Document. This operation formats everything in the current open document for you, without your having to select specific areas.

AX.64 Use F6 to Jump Between Split Windows

DEFAULT	F6; Shift+F6
VISUAL BASIC 6	F6; Shift+F6
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	F6; Shift+F6
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F6; Shift+F6
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Window.NextSplitPane; Window.PreviousSplitPane
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0005

If you have split windows (Window | Split), you can easily move the cursor between the panes without using your mouse: Just press F6:



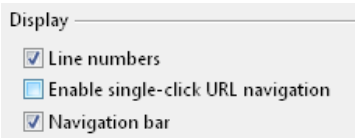
AX.65 Turn Off Single-Click URL Navigation in the Editor

WINDOWS	Alt,T,O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor All Languages General Display
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0060

In most languages, by default, single-click URL navigation is turned on, which allows you to use Ctrl+Click to follow a link from the Editor:



This feature can be turned off by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | All Languages [or your language] | General | Display and clearing the Enable Single-Click URL Navigation check box:

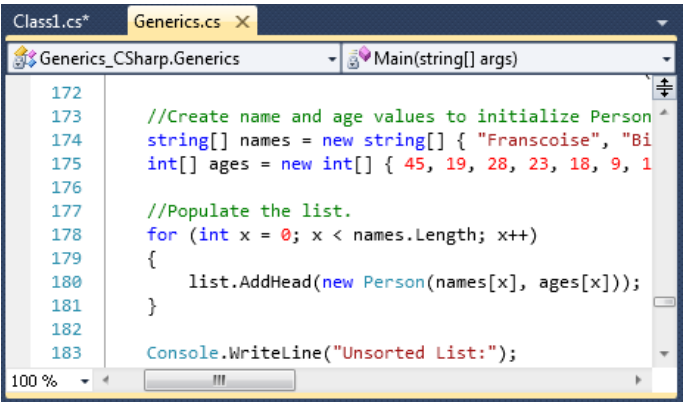


AX.66 Hide the Vertical and/or Horizontal Scroll Bars

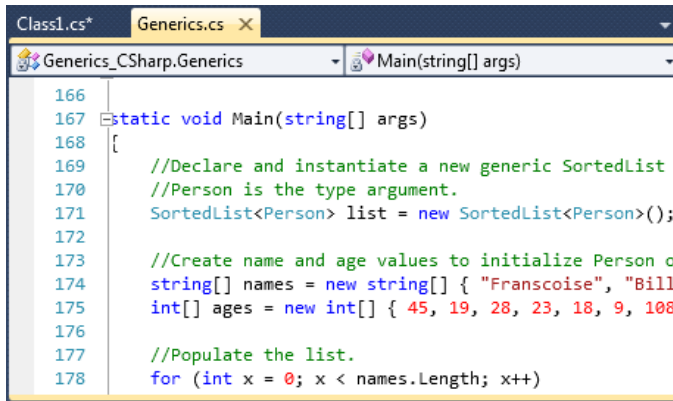
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor General Display
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0058

This isn't a commonly used option but can be useful in certain situations. If you want more real estate on your screen, you can go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | General | Display and clear the Vertical Scroll Bar and/or Horizontal Scroll Bar check boxes to make the scroll bars go away.

Before:



After:



```

166 static void Main(string[] args)
167 {
168     //Declare and instantiate a new generic SortedList
169     //Person is the type argument.
170     SortedList<Person> list = new SortedList<Person>();
171
172     //Create name and age values to initialize Person ob
173     string[] names = new string[] { "Franscoise", "Bill
174     int[] ages = new int[] { 45, 19, 28, 23, 18, 9, 108
175
176     //Populate the list.
177     for (int x = 0; x < names.Length; x++)
178

```

Of course, you no longer have your scroll bars, which can be somewhat annoying.

AX.67 How to Convert Tabs to Spaces and Vice Versa

DEFAULT	[no shortcut]
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Q (tabify); Ctrl+Shift+Q (untabify)
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, T (tabify); Alt,E, V, B (untabify)
MENU	Edit Advanced Tabify Selected Lines; Edit Advanced Untabify Selected Lines
COMMAND	Edit.TabifySelectedLines; Edit.UntabifySelectedLines; Edit.ConvertSpacesToTabs; Edit.ConvertTabsToSpaces
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0028

Some people prefer spaces; others prefer tabs. You can have it any way you want it with this next item. You can convert spaces to tabs and convert tabs to spaces on your selected lines. You can do this in a couple of ways, and each has different results.

Tabify/Untabify

If all you want to do is convert leading spaces to tabs (or vice versa), you would use the Tabify/Untabify commands. First, pick a line with some leading spaces, as shown in the following illustration.



Note You don't have to select the entire line for this to work; as long as any part of the line is selected, it performs the action.

```

11 | .....{
12 | .....Person.....bob = new Person(); .....
13 | .....bob.ToString(); .....
14 | .....}

```

Now go to Edit | Advanced | Tabify Selected Lines.

You should get the leading spaces converted to tabs, as shown in the following illustration:

```

11 | .....{
12 | → → .....Person.....bob = new Person(); .....
13 | → → .....bob.ToString(); .....
14 | → → .....}

```

To change leading tabs to spaces, you would use the Untabify Selected Lines command.

ConvertSpacesToTabs/ConvertTabsToSpaces

OK, so what if you want to convert *all* spaces to tabs? Well, you have to use commands that have no shortcut or menu items. The commands you are interested in are Edit.ConvertTabsToSpaces and Edit.ConvertSpacesToTabs.

The following illustration shows what ConvertSpacesToTabs does to our example.



Note For these commands, you have to select everywhere you want to convert, because the command does not automatically convert the entire line.

```

11 | .....{
12 | → → ...Person→ → bob→= new Person();→ → ...
13 | → → ...bob.ToString();→ → → → → ...
14 | → → .....}

```

As you can see, almost all spaces are converted to tabs. Because spaces are converted to tabs in increments of 4 (default), if you have, say, 6 spaces, it results in a tab and 2 spaces left over. That is why you see some leftover spaces in the example. If you select these same lines and run ConvertTabsToSpaces, it inserts spaces instead of tabs.

AX.68

Delete Horizontal White Space

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+\
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+\
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+\; Ctrl+E, Ctrl+\; Ctrl+E, \
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+\
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+\
WINDOWS	Alt,E, V, H
MENU	Edit Advanced Delete Horizontal White Space
COMMAND	Edit.DeleteHorizontalWhiteSpace
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0037

Want to get rid of some extra spaces? First find a line that has some extra white space that you want to get rid of:

```
.....Ti ( );.....
```

Put your cursor in the extra white space:

```
.....Ti ( );.....|.....
```

Go to Edit | Advanced | Delete Horizontal White Space or press Ctrl+K, Ctrl+\, and the extra space is gone:

```
.....Ti ( );|
```

Interestingly, this also works between items as well. Just find some space and put your cursor in it:

```
.....{.....|.....} ..
```

Then get rid of the extra space:

```
.....{-}
```

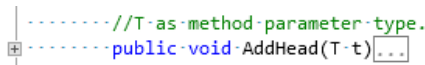


Note One space always remains when you use this feature between items.

AX.69 Expanding Your Code with Outlining

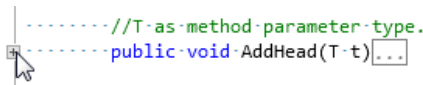
DEFAULT	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M; Ctrl+M, M
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,E, O, T
MENU	Edit Outlining Toggle Outlining Expansion
COMMAND	Edit.ToggleOutliningExpansion
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0030

By default, outlining is enabled in Visual Studio. Suppose you encounter a collapsed area of code, as shown in the following illustration, and you want to see all the code that is collapsed in that area:



You have three ways to expand it:

- Click the plus sign to expand the area.



- Click anywhere in the area to be expanded, and press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+M.
- Click anywhere in the area to be expanded, and go to Edit | Outlining | Toggle Outlining Expansion on the menu bar.

AX.70 Collapsing or Expanding All Your Code with Outlining

DEFAULT	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+L
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+L
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+L; Ctrl+M, L
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+L
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,E, O, L
MENU	Edit Outlining Toggle All Outlining
COMMAND	Edit.ToggleAllOutlining
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0031

You can easily collapse or expand all your code with outlining. For example, suppose you have code that is expanded, as shown in the following illustration:

```

using namespace System;
int main(array<System::String ^> ^args)
{
    Console::WriteLine(L"Hello World");

    Stuff();

    return 0;
}

void Stuff()
{
    // test
}

```

You want it all collapsed, so you have two options:

- Press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+L.
- Go to Edit | Outlining | Toggle All Outlining on the menu bar.

The result is collapsed code:

```
Declarations
int main(array<System::String ^> ^args) { ... }

void Stuff() { ... }
```

Just repeat one of the steps to reverse the process, and all your code is expanded again. This is particularly useful if you are using a feature (certain Find operations) that can't look inside collapsed code.

AX.71 Turn Off or Turn On Outlining

DEFAULT	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+P (stop outlining)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+P (stop outlining)
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+P (stop outlining); Ctrl+M, P (stop outlining)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+M, Ctrl+P (stop outlining)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	[no shortcut]
WINDOWS	Alt,E, O, P (stop outlining); Alt, E, O, U (start outlining)
MENU	Edit Outlining Stop Outlining; Edit Outlining Start Automatic Outlining (Not Available in C++ 2005 and 2008)
COMMAND	Edit.StopOutlining; Edit.OutliningStartAutomaticOutlining
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0033

If you don't like the outlining feature in Visual Studio, you can turn it off one of two ways:

- Press Ctrl+M, Ctrl+P on your keyboard.
- Go to Edit | Outlining | Stop Outlining on your menu bar.

To turn outlining back on, go to Edit | Outlining | Start Automatic Outlining on your menu bar. Unfortunately, no keyboard shortcut is available for turning outlining back on.



Note Start Automatic Outlining is not available in C++ 2005/2008. To get it back in C++ 2005/2008, just close and reopen the file you are working on.

AX.72 Understanding Virtual Space

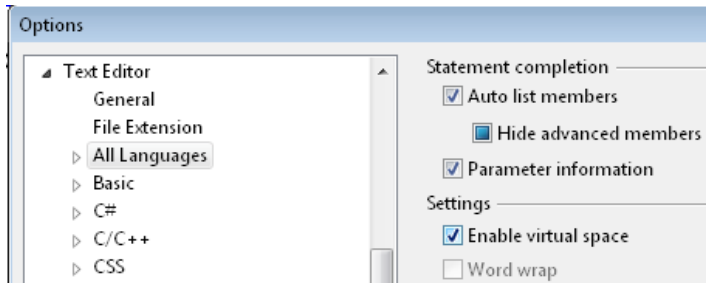
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor All Languages General Settings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0023

Virtual space is a little difficult to understand if you aren't familiar with older editors. We used to have (and some people still have) editors that treat everywhere on a line as editable space.

Let me explain: Without virtual space, the line ends where the code ends.

If I move my cursor to the end of any line and press my Right Arrow key, it goes to the next line. This is the way editors have been for a while now, and this isn't really new information.

However, this wasn't always the case. There was a time when you could type anywhere you wanted, anytime you wanted, without restriction. Some text editors still allow this today. Virtual space allows you to go back to the old style of editing, which is preferred by some. Go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | All Languages | General | Settings, and select the Enable Virtual Space check box to turn this feature on:



Note Enable Virtual Space and Word Wrap are mutually exclusive options, so you have to choose one or the other.

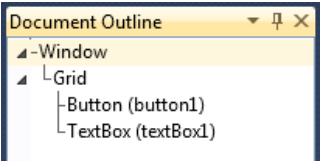
After you select the Enable Virtual Space option, you can type anywhere on a line, regardless of whether or not the code ends:

```
int main(array<System::String ^> ^args)
{
    Console::WriteLine(L"Hello World");
    Stuff();
    return 0;
}
```

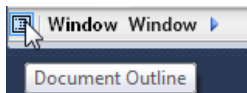
AX.73 Document Outline: WPF and Silverlight Projects

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+T; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+U; Ctrl+W, U
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+D
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+T
WINDOWS	Alt,V, E, D
MENU	View Other Windows Document Outline
COMMAND	View.DocumentOutline
VERSIONS	2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipTool0117

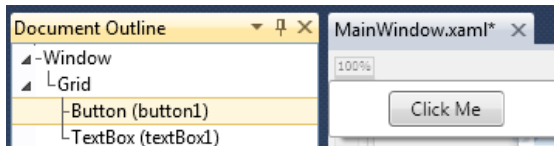
When working with WPF and XAML, it can sometimes get tricky finding items. This is where the Document Outline feature comes in handy. In this example, I've created a WPF Application and put a few controls on it. The following illustration shows what I get when I pull up the Document Outline (Ctrl+Alt+T):



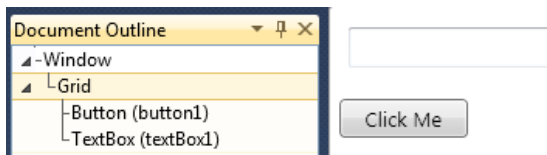
You can also get to the Document Outline by clicking the Document Outline button located in the lower-left corner of the screen by default:



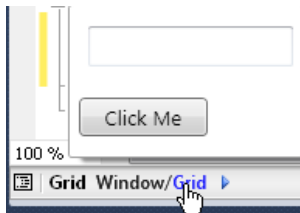
Notice how it shows each control and the parent/child relationships. If the experience stopped there, it would be OK, but it actually gets even better when you put your mouse pointer over any item in the list, as shown in the following illustration:



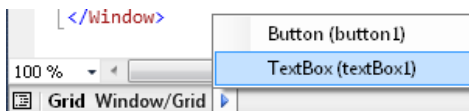
Putting the mouse pointer over a parent shows a preview of the parent and all the children:



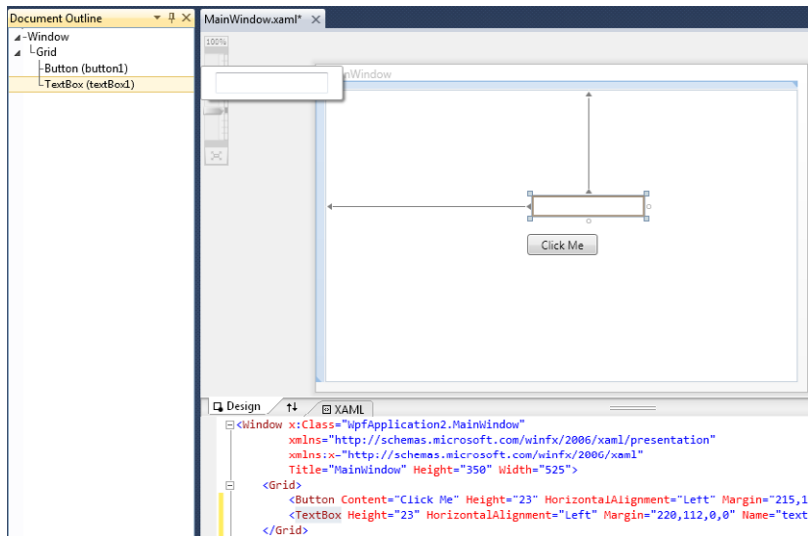
You can also get a preview from the outline presented at the lower part of the screen:



And you can dig into the details if needed:



Also, when you click on any item in the Document Outline, it is selected in both XAML and Design view:



To sum it up, the Document Outline can be used when working with WPF to do the following:

- View the logical structure of elements in your XAML.
- View a thumbnail preview of an element in a pop-up window.
- Navigate to specific elements, in Design view and in XAML view.
- Put user input focus on deeply nested elements that might be hard to select on the design surface itself.
- Locate controls that might be visually hidden by other controls.

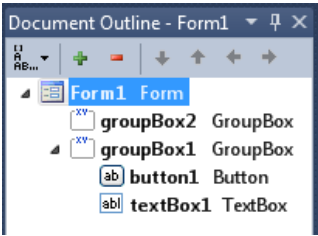
AX.74

Document Outline: Windows Form Projects

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+T
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+T; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+U; Ctrl+W, U
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+D
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+T
WINDOWS	Alt,V, E, D
MENU	View Other Windows Document Outline
COMMAND	View.DocumentOutline
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0118

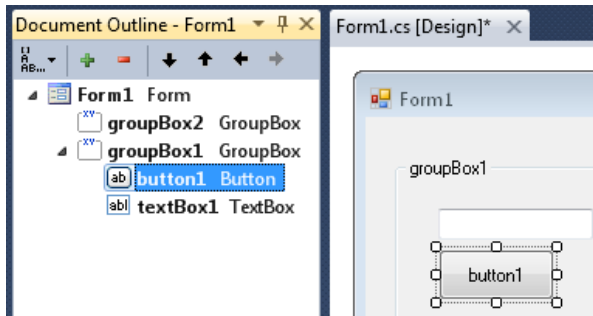
The Document Outline is used to get a bird’s eye view of items in your project. Let’s look at using it with Windows Form projects.

For this example, I’ve created a new Windows Forms Application and put a few sample controls on it. The following illustration shows what the Document Outline (Ctrl+Alt+T) looks like:



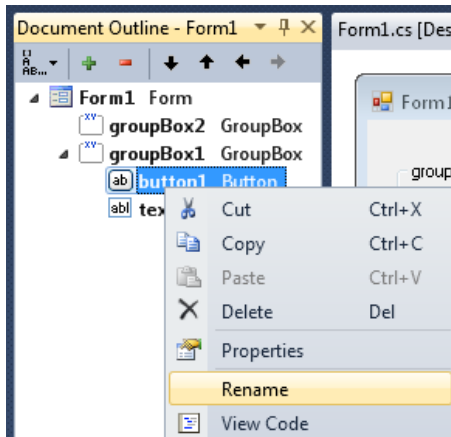
Selection

When you click any item in the list, that item is selected on the form in Design view:



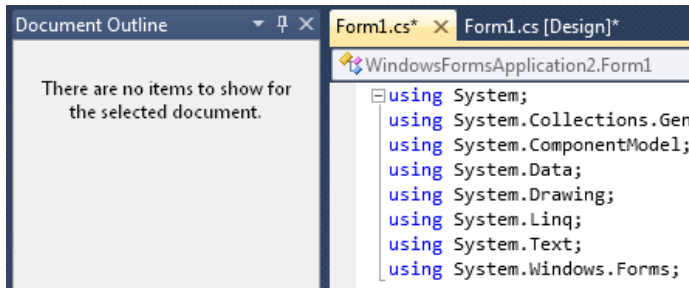
Context Commands

Additionally, you can access a variety of commands by right-clicking any item, including the ability to rename the control from the Document Outline:



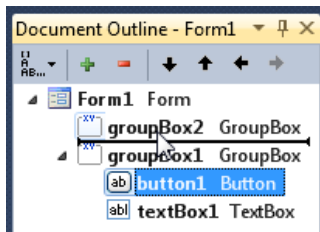
View Code

You can also press F7 with any item selected to view the code for it, but remember that the Document Outline does not work in code view:



Relocate Items

The ability to move items from one container to another is supported as well:

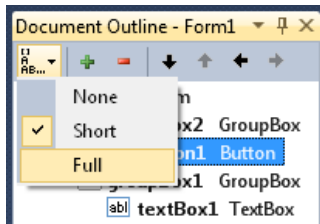


Toolbar Controls

The toolbar supports a variety of functions as described in the following sections.

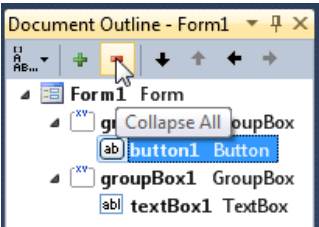
Name display

You can select different name display styles:



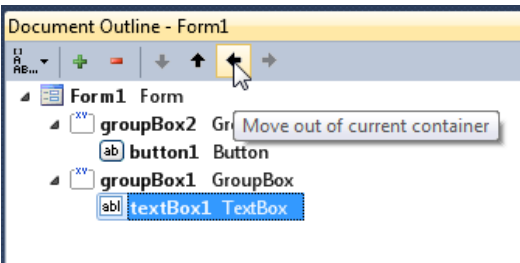
Expand/collapse

You can expand or collapse the entire outline:



Moving around

The toolbar even supports moving around within and between containers:



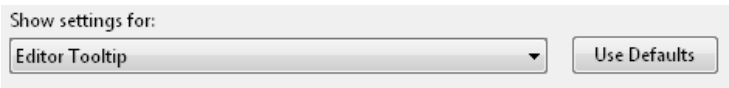
AX.75 Change the Tooltip Font Size

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Fonts and Colors Show settings For
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0046

Ever want to change the size of your tooltip font? Here is what it looks like by default:

```
Console.WriteLine();  
class System.Console  
Represents the standard input,
```

To change it, just go to Tools | Options | Fonts and Colors | Show Settings For. From there, select Editor Tooltip from the drop-down list, as shown in the following illustration:

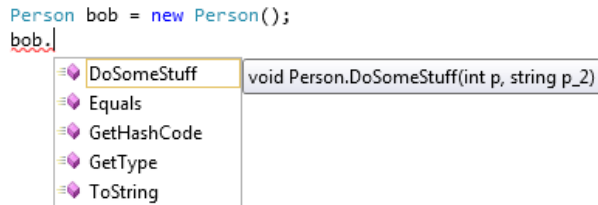


Now that you have the Editor Tooltip settings, change the font to a bigger size and then click OK. Now you should see a bigger font size on your tooltips.

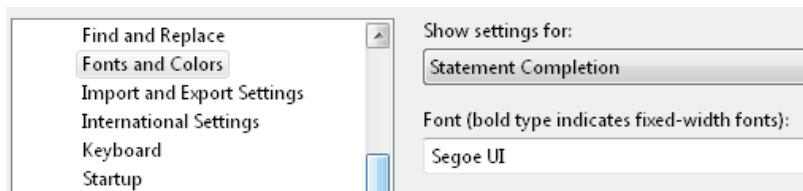
AX.76 Change the Statement Completion Font Size

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Fonts and Colors
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0055

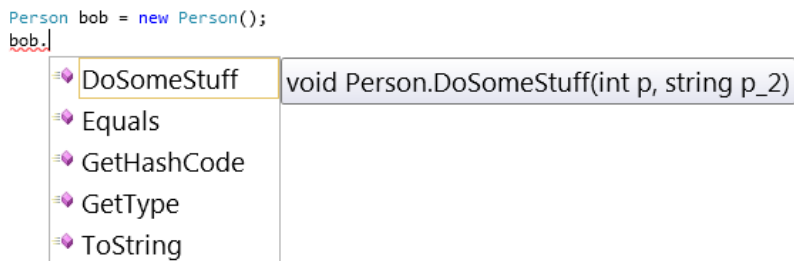
Are you like me and think that the statement completion font is annoyingly small and hard to read?



Well, you can easily increase the font size by going to Tools | Options | Fonts And Colors | Show Settings For | Statement Completion, as shown in the following illustration:



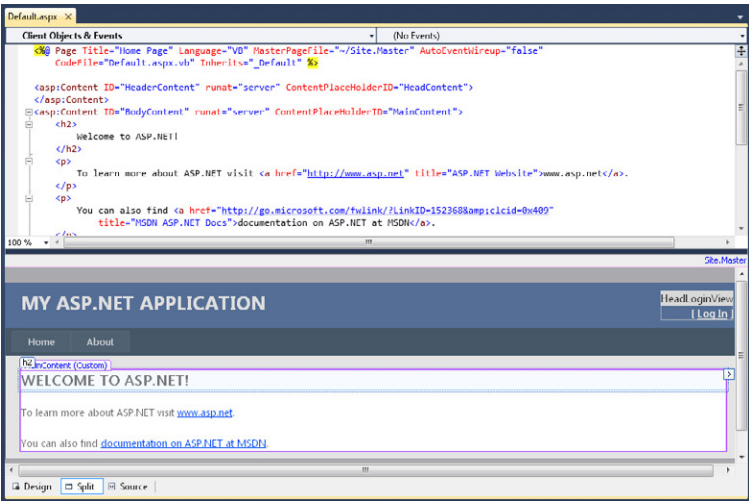
From this dialog box, just make the font any size you like. Click OK to exit the dialog box, and now you should have statement completion in a size you can read:



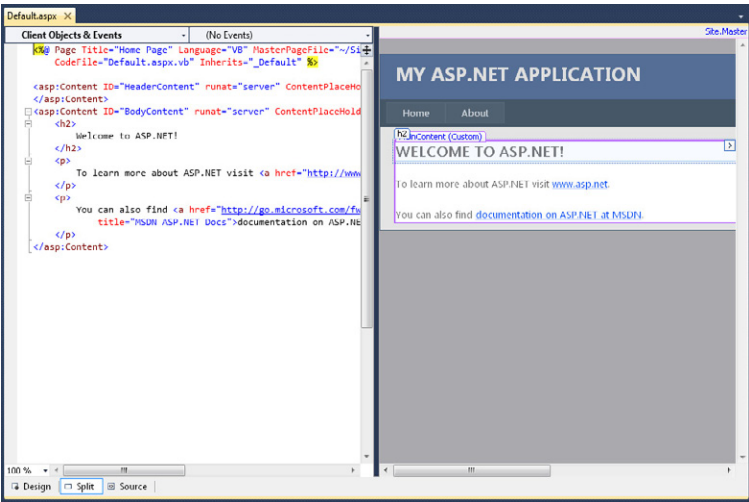
AX.77 Vertical Split View for Web Projects

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0081

The default way Split view handles panes is to tile them horizontally:



However, you can change this by going to Tools | Options | HTML Designer | General and selecting Split Views Vertically. Now the Split view tiles the panes vertically:





Note When you perform this action, you might have to close and reopen some files to see it take effect.

AX.78 Open JScript Braces on a New Line

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor JScript Formatting
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0087

By default, Visual Studio formats JScript functions and control blocks with the open brace on the same line as the declaration:

```
function Blah() {  
  
};
```

Without getting into the big debate about whether this is good or bad, let's assume you prefer to have your braces inline vertically:

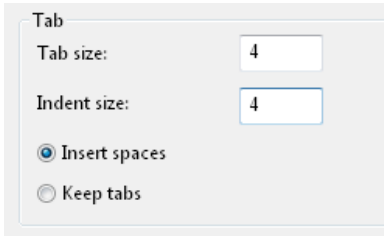
```
function Blah()  
{  
  
};
```

Go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | JScript | Formatting, and choose whether you want the open brace on a new line for functions, control blocks, or both.

AX.79 Insert Spaces vs. Keep Tabs

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor [Language] Tab
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0072

Some people like tabs in their code, and others are partial to spaces. You can specify what you want by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | [Language] | Tab:



Tab Size

Use this setting to specify the distance in spaces between tab stops. The default is four spaces. Every time you hit the Tab key, it advances the number of spaces specified.

Indent Size

Use this setting to specify the size in spaces of an automatic indentation. The default is four spaces. Tab characters, space characters, or both are inserted according to the specified size. When the editor automatically indents your code, it uses this setting to determine how much space to use.

Insert Spaces

Indent operations insert only space characters, not Tab characters. For example, if the indent size is set to 5, five space characters are inserted whenever you press the Tab key or click the Increase Indent button on the formatting toolbar:

... spaces|

Keep Tabs

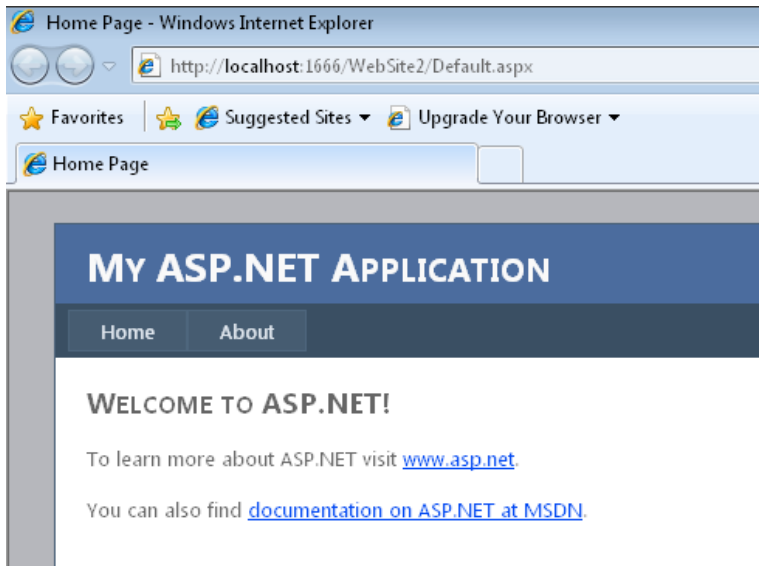
Indent operations insert Tab characters. Each Tab character comprises the number of spaces specified in the Tab Size setting. If the indent size is not an even multiple of the Tab size, space characters are added to make up the difference:

→ tab|

AX.80 View in Browser

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+W
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+W
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+W
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+W
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+W
WINDOWS	Alt,F, B
MENU	File View in Browser
COMMAND	File.ViewinBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0119

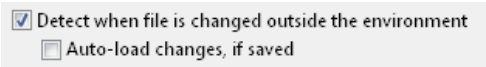
You can quickly view your current page in your browser by pressing Ctrl+Shift+W. This automatically opens up your default browser (see vstipEnv0057, "Using Additional Browsers for Web Development," page 96):



AX.81 **Detect When a File Is Changed Outside the Environment**

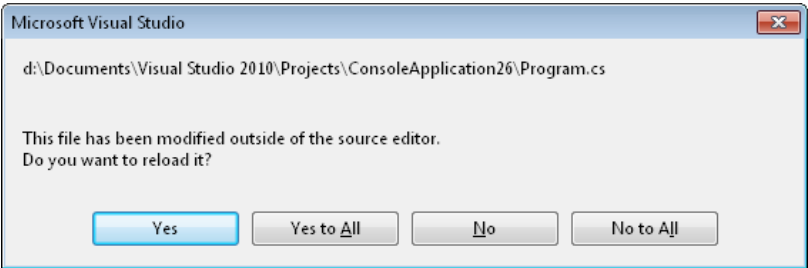
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Documents
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0073

If you go to Tools | Options | Environment | Documents, you can see two interesting options:



Detect When File Is Changed Outside The Environment

When this option is selected, a message immediately notifies you of changes to an open file that have been made by an editor outside the IDE. The message enables you to reload the file from storage:



Auto-Load Changes, If Saved

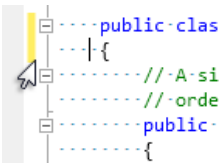
When you have the Detect When File Is Changed Outside The Environment options selected and an open file in the IDE changes outside the IDE, a warning message is generated by default. However, if the Auto-Load Changes, If Saved option is selected, no warning appears and the document is reloaded in the IDE to pick up the external changes.

As you can see, the default is to detect the changes but not auto-load them. This is generally a good strategy because any changes you load from outside the editor should be reviewed, to avoid erasing work you have already in the editor.

AX.82 Turn Off the Selection Margin

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0034

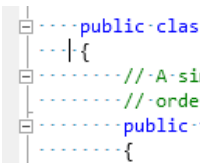
For those who aren't familiar with it, the selection margin is the area between line numbers and the outline indicators. It is used to show code changes and to enable you to select an entire line of code with one click. The following illustration shows the area in action:



If you don't have use for the change tracking and line selection, you can easily turn this feature off by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | General | Display and clearing the Selection Margin check box:

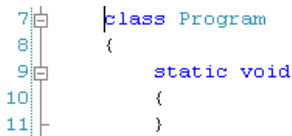


Now the selection margin is gone:



An interesting side effect in Visual Studio 2005 and Visual Studio 2008 is that hiding the selection margin also hides the outline area.

Before:



After:

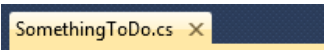
```
7 | class Program
8 | {
9 |     static void
10|     {
```

AX.83 Reuse the Same Editor Window When Opening Files

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Documents
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0027

Normally, when you open up a document (in this example "Program.cs"), it creates a new tab.

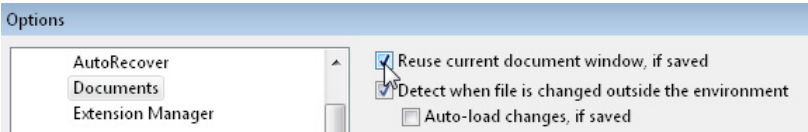
Before:



After:

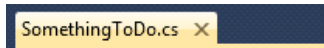


You can reuse the same document window if you want by going to Tools | Options | Environment | Documents and selecting the Reuse Current Document Window, If Saved check box:



Now when you open a document, you see the following results.

Before:



After:



The caveat here is that you must have a saved document for this to work. If the document was not saved, a new document window would be created even with this option turned on.

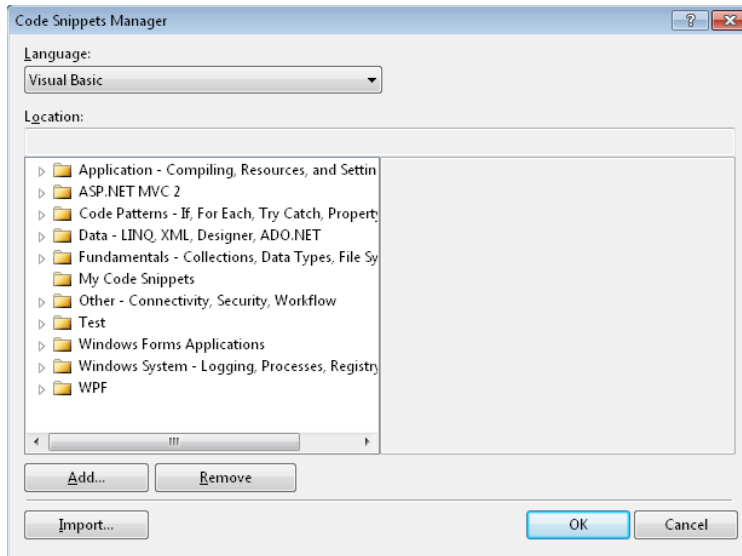
AX.84 Sharing Snippets with Your Team

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B
WINDOWS	Alt,T, T
MENU	Tools Code Snippets Manager
COMMAND	Tools.CodeSnippetsManager
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0075

Sometimes you might want to share special snippets with your team for others to use. It's easy to do, and it's a great way to ensure common code constructs remain the same.

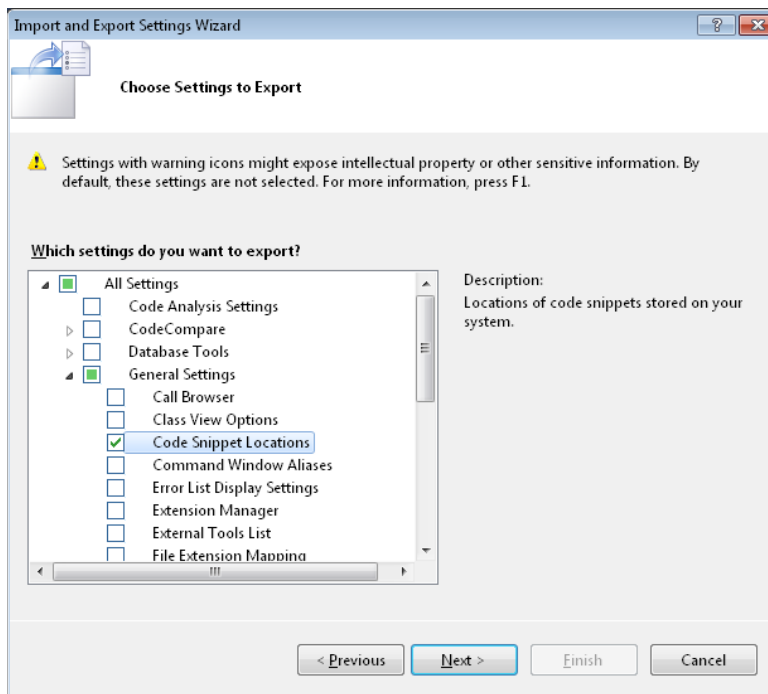
First create a network directory that all the team members can read from, and put all your special .snippet files there. If you don't have experience working with snippet files, take a look at vstipTool0016, "Create New Code Snippets from Existing Ones," page 271.

Next have each team member open the Code Snippets Manager (Ctrl+K, Ctrl+B):



Ask your team members to click Add and select the network directory you created earlier, and everyone can use the shared snippets.

If you don't want to have everyone doing this manually, you can do these steps yourself and export just your code snippet locations, as shown in the following illustration:



Then have everyone import the .vssettings file you created to get the shared location. For more information about exporting, see vstipEnv0021, “Exporting Your Environment Settings,” on page 6.

AX.85 Swap the Current Anchor Position

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+A
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+A
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+A; Ctrl+E, Ctrl+A; Ctrl+E, A
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+X
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+A
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+A
WINDOWS	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Edit.SwapAnchor
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0068

When you select text, the “anchor” is the cursor location at the end of the selection. By default, the anchor is to the right of the selection. However, you can use Ctrl+K, Ctrl+A to swap the anchor from the right side to the left side, as shown in the following illustrations:

```
iAnotherParam = 6;
```

```
iAnotherParam = 6;
```

OK, so why would you want to do this? Well, those who use Emacs like this feature quite a bit, and it has been around a long, long time. One great benefit comes when you need to expand a selection from left to right. By swapping the anchor, you can hold down your Shift key and use your Left Arrow key to expand the selection:

```
iAnotherParam = 6;
```

AX.86 Guidelines: A Hidden Feature for the Visual Studio Editor

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0015

Guidelines are used when you want visible column indicators to help you keep things lined up in the editor:

```

namespace Generics_CSharp
{
    //Type parameter T in angle brackets.
    public class MyList<T> : IEnumerable<T>
    {
        protected Node head;
        protected Node current = null;

        // Nested type is also generic on T
        protected class Node
        {
            public Node next;
            //T as private member datatype.
            private T data;
            //T used in non-generic constructor.
            public Node(T t)
            {

```

Visual Studio 2010

This feature has been removed in Visual Studio 2010. With that said, if you are using Visual Studio 2010, an extension, created by Paul Harrington, is available at <http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/0fbf2878-e678-4577-9fdb-9030389b338c>.

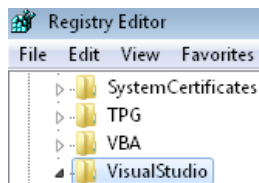
Visual Studio 2005/2008

To add the guidelines to the user interface, you need to follow these steps:

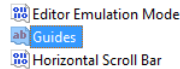
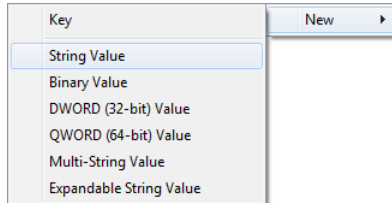
1. Shut down Visual Studio.
2. Go to [HKEY_CURRENT_USER]\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version>\Text Editor in the registry (regedit.exe).



Warning Editing the registry can cause serious problems if you don't know what you are doing, so edit it at your own risk.



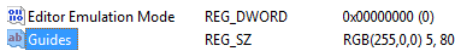
3. Create a string value called Guides:



4. Set Guides to the following:

RGB(x,y,z) n1,...,n13, where x,y,z are the RGB color values representing the color you want for the guides; and n is the column number position at which you want the guides to appear.

You can have at most 13 guidelines. For example, RGB(255,0,0) 5, 80 places a red guideline at column numbers 5 and 80:



5. Open Visual Studio, and open a file in the Editor:

```
//Type parameter T in angle brackets.
public class MyList<T> : IEnumerable<T>
{
    protected Node head;
    protected Node current = null;

    // Nested type is also generic on T
    protected class Node
    {
        public Node next;
        //T as private member datatype.
        private T data;
        //T used in non-generic constructor.
        public Node(T t)
        {
            next = null;
            data = t;
        }
        public Node Next
        {
            get { return next; }
            set { next = value; }
        }
    }
}
```

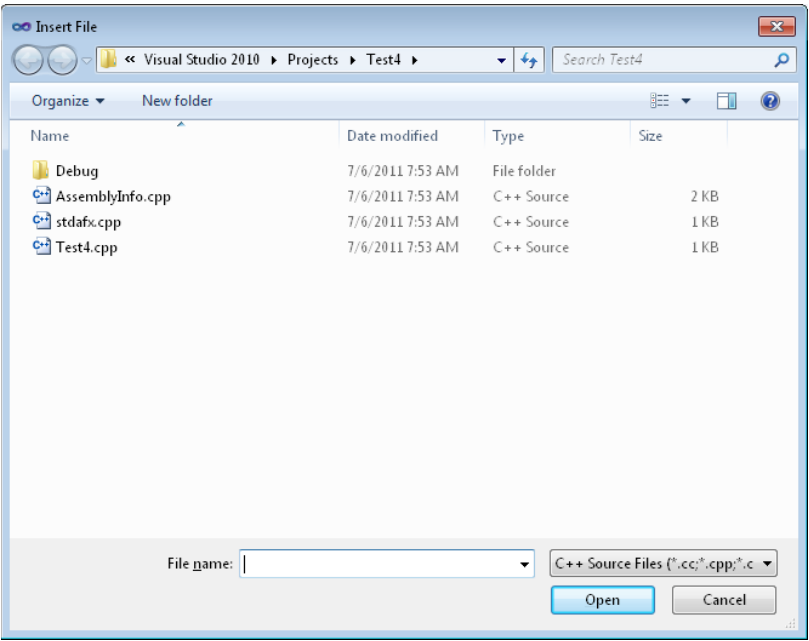
Removing guidelines

To delete the guidelines, just delete the Guides value you created above and then close and reopen Visual Studio.

AX.87 Insert File as Text

WINDOWS	Alt,E, X
MENU	Edit Insert File As Text
COMMAND	Edit.InsertFileAsText
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0021

Another classic item that tends to get overlooked in the wake of snippets and T4 templates is the Insert File As Text feature. Let’s say you have a chunk of code in a file, and you want it in another file too. Just go to Edit | Insert File As Text to see the following dialog box:



Choose your file, and it inserts the contents of that file as though you had just typed the text in yourself.

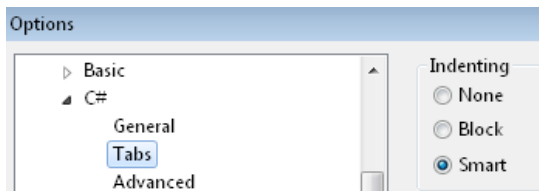


Note When performing this action, you might need to change the file type to look for.

AX.88 Indenting: Smart vs. Block vs. None

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor [Language] Tabs Indenting
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0049

Indenting is something we all deal with in the Editor all the time. In this tip, I reveal what each of the available indenting choices does for you. If you go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | [Language] | Tabs | Indenting, you can see the options shown in the following illustration:

**Smart**

Let's begin with the option that most people have by default: Smart indenting. Create a new method, and press Enter after the curly brace:

```
void Blah()
{
    |
```

Notice that Smart indenting pays attention to where it is and automatically indents after the opening curly brace. This is the "smart" part of the indenting because it knew that you pressed Enter after an opening curly brace and assumed you wanted to indent.

Block

Now let's look at Block indenting:

```
void Blah()
{
    |
```

In this case, the cursor maintains its current indent level and doesn't "smart" indent based on context. Block indenting is the old indenting style that is preferred by people who want control over when indenting happens.

None

Of course, if you really want total control, you can choose None in the Options dialog box and turn off any indenting at all:

```
void Blah()  
{  
|
```

The cursor returns to column 1 every time you press Enter.

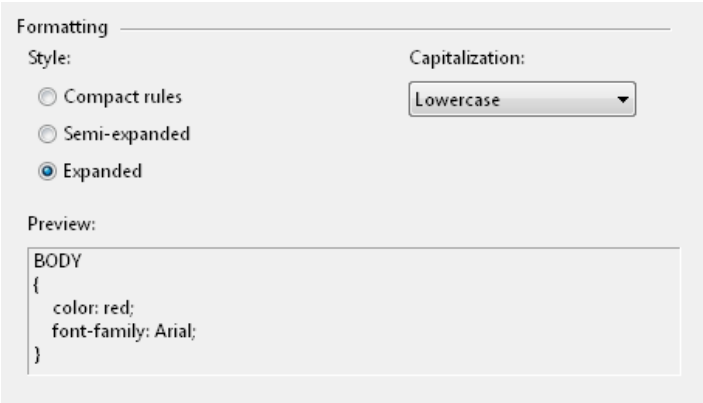
AX.89 Change CSS Formatting

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor CSS Formatting
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0094

People are very picky about how their code is styled. Fortunately, Visual Studio offers you the ability to format your CSS code the way you like it. Just go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | CSS | Formatting:



Note In Visual Studio 2005, the menu path is Tools | Options | Text Editor | CSS | Format.



Style

You have three style options available:

Expanded (Default)

Provides the most readability by adding extra space in the styles. The selector and initial brace appear on their own lines, declarations are indented on subsequent lines, and the closing brace is aligned with the matching opening brace:

```
BODY
{
  color: red;
  font-family: Arial;
}
```

Semi-expanded

Provides a trade-off between readability and compactness by reducing space. The selector and initial brace ({}) are positioned on the same line, declarations are indented on subsequent lines, and the closing brace (}) is aligned with the matching opening brace:

```
BODY {
  color: red;
  font-family: Arial;
}
```

Compact rules

Provides maximum amount of reduced space. The selector and declaration are positioned on the same line:

```
BODY { color: red; font-family: Arial; }
```

Capitalization

This option is pretty straightforward and provides casing instructions for the properties.

Lowercase (Default)

```
BODY
{
  color: red;
  font-family: Arial;
}
```

Uppercase

```

BODY
{
    COLOR: red;
    FONT-FAMILY: Arial;
}
```

As entered

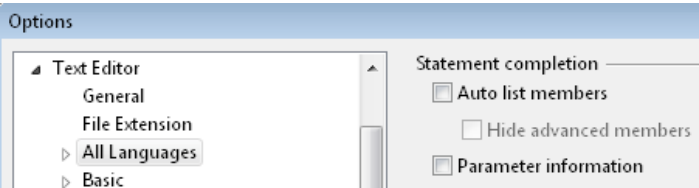
Leaves the casing alone and doesn't modify the user input.

AX.90
 How to Turn Off Automatic IntelliSense

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor All Languages [or specific language] General Statement completion
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0054

So IntelliSense might not be for everyone. It can sometimes annoy people when it automatically pops up. You can disable automatic IntelliSense and still have it come up only when you want it to.

Go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | All Languages [or specific language] | General | Statement Completion, and clear the Auto List Members check box:



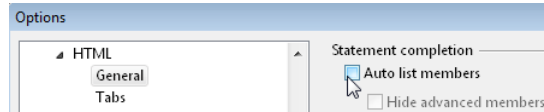
Now anytime you want IntelliSense, just press Ctrl+J to bring it up.

AX.91
 Disable HTML, CSS, or JScript IntelliSense

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Text Editor HTML General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0085

Personally, I love IntelliSense everywhere I write code.

However, some people don't like it in some places, and one place I find where that is especially true is in the HTML editor. You can turn off IntelliSense by going to Tools | Options | Text Editor | HTML | General and clearing the Auto List Members check box:

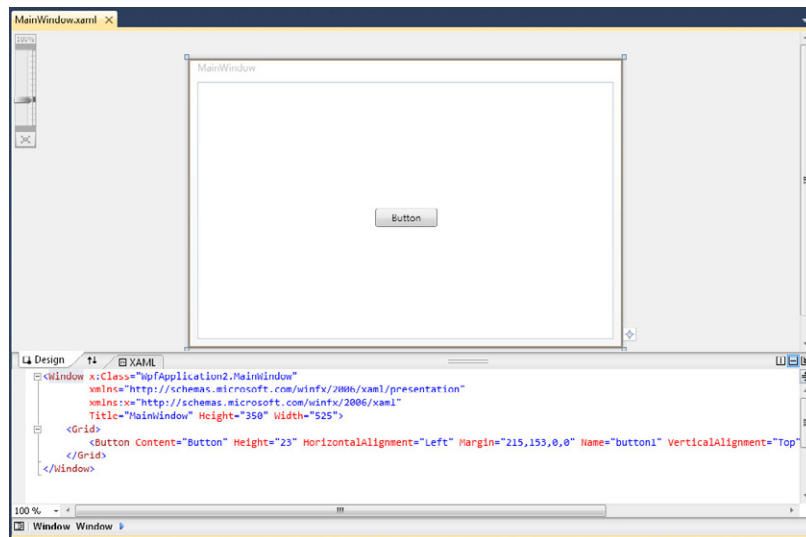


This action disables IntelliSense for the HTML text editor. Additionally, if you want to do the same for CSS or Jscript, just go to Tools | Options | Text Editor | [CSS or JScript] | General and perform the same step.

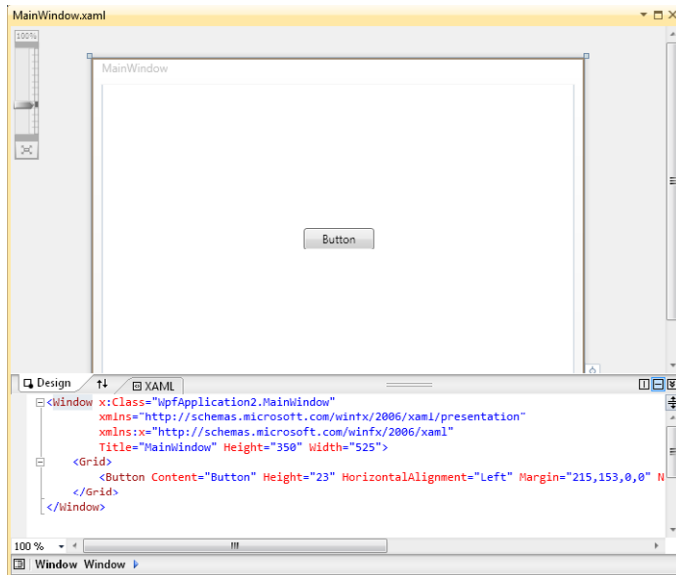
AX.92 Design and XAML on Different Document Tabs

VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipTool0009

Now that you can free your document windows and put them on multiple monitors, many people are asking how to do this with code-behind files. Assume you have the following XAML document open:



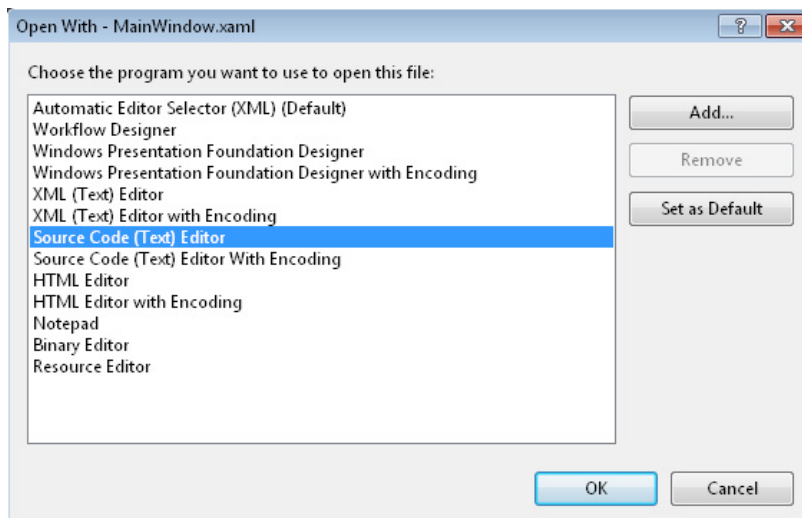
But you want the Design view in one window and the XAML view in another so that you can work on each document in a separate monitor. Well, if you click and drag the document tab, both the design and the XAML go together:



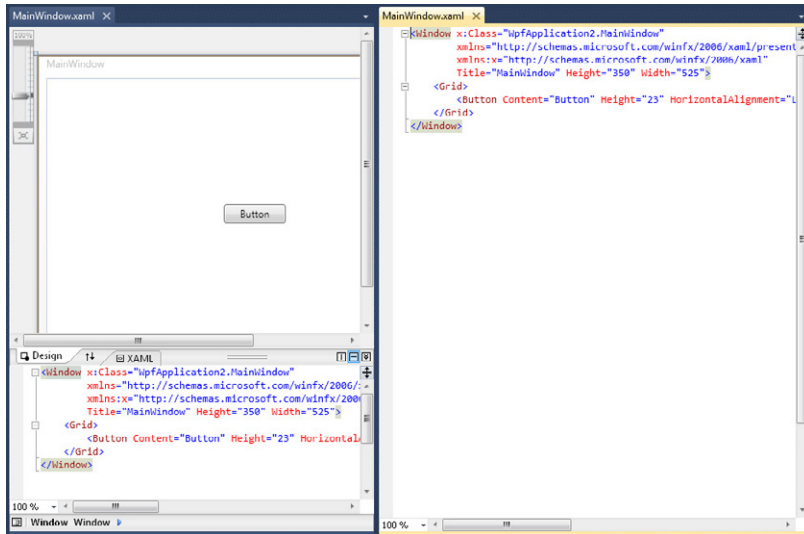
So what do you do? As it turns out, the solution is pretty easy. With the design view in one document, go to Solution Explorer, right-click the XAML file, and choose Open With:



Now, in the Open With dialog box, select Source Code (Text) Editor and click OK:



You now have two XAML windows, one for your designer and one for the XAML:



Now you can put them on two different monitors or whatever you feel like doing.

AX.93 Using Generate from Usage

WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, G, T
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Generate New Type
COMMAND	Edit.GenerateNewType; EditorContextMenus.CodeWindow.Generate.GenerateNewType
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipEdit0011

I'm a big fan of Test Driven Development (TDD), so I absolutely love this tip because it is a big step toward enabling TDD activities in Visual Studio. The idea behind it is simple; it allows you to use classes and members before you define them. This was created so that you can write your tests and use classes/members that haven't been created yet per the tenets of TDD ("red, green, refactor"). The C# and VB implementations are slightly different, so let's take a look at those differences.

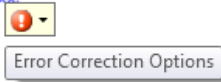
VB

Start by using a class that you haven't created yet:

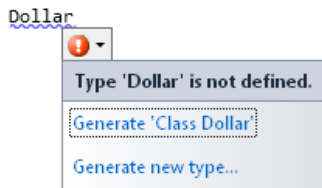
```
Sub Main()  
  
    Dim myDollar As New Dollar  
  
End Sub
```

Obviously, you will get an error:

```
Sub Main()  
  
    Dim myDollar As New Dollar  
  
End Sub
```



But wait. When you click the Error Correction Options, you get something new:



```
Dollar
```

Click Generate 'Class Dollar', and you get a new file called Dollar.vb with a class stub inside:

```
Class Dollar  
  
End Class
```

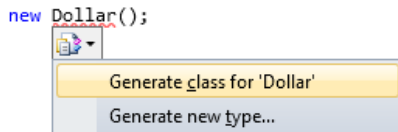
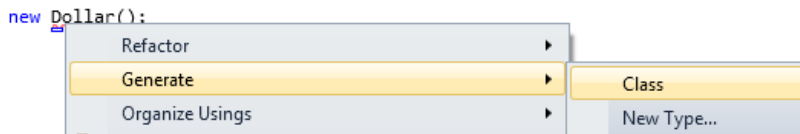
The error is gone, and you are ready to start using the class. You can repeat this process for new members that you create for the new class, as you use them.

C#

Start by using a class that doesn't exist:

```
static void Main(string[] args)
{
    Dollar myDollar = new Dollar();
}
```

Here you have a couple of options. You can right-click and choose Generate | Class, or you can click the smart tag and choose Generate class for 'Dollar'. They both do the same thing, and you can see both options in the following illustrations:

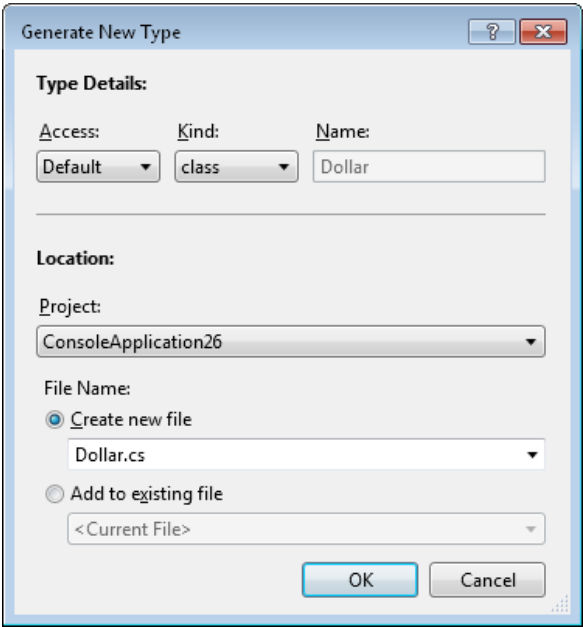


You get a new file called Dollar.cs with a class stub inside:

```
class Dollar
{
}
```

The error is gone, and you are ready to start using the class. You can repeat this process for new members that you create for the new class, as you use them.

When you get the hang of this and actually start using this feature for TDD activities, you would not use the examples I provided but would instead choose the Generate New Type option. The dialog box is the same for VB and C#.



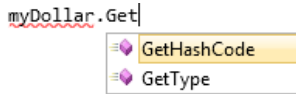
Notice that you have the ability to set Access, Kind, and—most importantly—Location. It’s the Location option that TDD folks will use to put the classes into the proper project outside of their test projects.

AX.94 IntelliSense Suggestion Mode

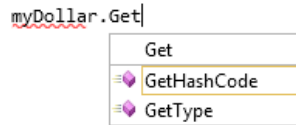
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+Spacebar
WINDOWS	Alt,E, I, T
MENU	Edit IntelliSense Toggle Completion Mode
COMMAND	Edit.ToggleCompletionMode
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0012

IntelliSense comes in two modes: Completion and Suggestion. You are already familiar with IntelliSense completion mode; it’s the traditional mode that we have all used for years. But if you are into Test Driven Development (TDD), completion mode can be very annoying at times.

TDD developers often use classes and members before they exist. It’s not fun when you go to type the name of something that doesn’t exist and you get IntelliSense. Especially because you sometimes accidentally get an option you didn’t want:



The solution is suggestion mode. Just press Ctrl+Alt+Spacebar to go into this mode:

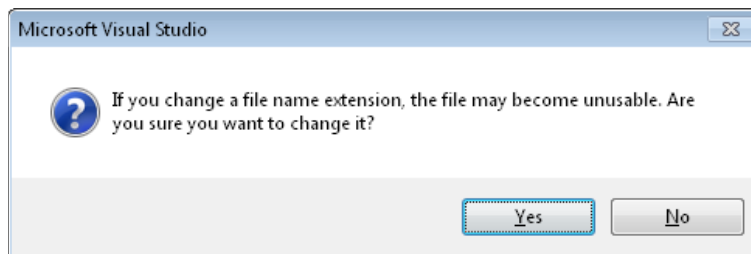


Now you get the best of both worlds: You can type in a name that doesn't exist and have quick access to the completion mode options as well. The risk of getting an option you don't want is reduced.

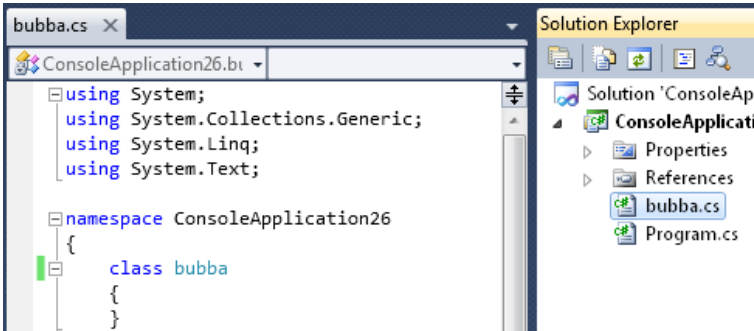
AX.95 Turn Off Automatic Symbol Renaming When You Rename a File in Solution Explorer

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects And Solutions General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0011

When you start to rename a class file in Solution Explorer, you receive the following prompt:



When you click Yes, both the class name in all your code and the file are renamed:



If you find yourself doing this a lot, you can get rid of the prompt to rename by going to Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General and clearing the Prompt For Symbolic Renaming When Renaming Files check box.

From now on, when you do your renaming, the prompt does not appear and everything is renamed automatically.

AX.96 **Mark Methods and Types as Hidden from IntelliSense and the Object Browser**

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0088

When you make assemblies for others to use, you might sometimes want to have hidden methods, properties, and other elements. To hide an item, you use the System.ComponentModel namespace.

C#

```
using System.ComponentModel;
```

VB

```
Imports System.ComponentModel
```

Hiding

To hide a property or method, you use the `EditorBrowsable(EditorBrowsableState.Never)` attribute.

C#

```
public class Person
{
    public int Age { get; set; }

    [EditorBrowsable(EditorBrowsableState.Never)]
    public string Name { get; set; }

    [EditorBrowsable(EditorBrowsableState.Never)]
    public void DoStuff()
    {
        //todo
    }
}
```

VB

```
Public Class Person

    Public Property Age As Integer

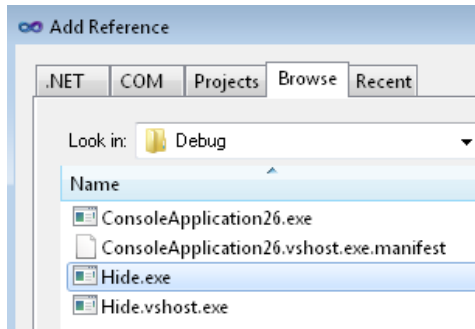
    <EditorBrowsable(EditorBrowsableState.Never)>
    Public Property Name As String

    <EditorBrowsable(EditorBrowsableState.Never)>
    Public Sub DoStuff()
        'todo stuff
    End Sub

End Class
```

Use

Testing this is a little tricky. You have to use the assembly externally because hiding is meant to hinder external users, *not* the creator of the assembly. Just making a reference to another project isn't enough. You actually have to go to the Browse tab and set a reference to the external assembly that is created:



Result

When you test it, the hidden items should not be visible.

C#

```
class Program
{
    static void Main(string[] args)
    {
        Person bob = new Person();

        bob.|
    }
}
```

VB

```
Sub Main()

    Dim bob As New Person

    bob.|
End Sub
```


Additional Tips from Chapter 7

AX.97 Set or Remove a Breakpoint

DEFAULT	F9
VISUAL BASIC 6	F9
VISUAL C# 2005	F9
VISUAL C++ 2	F9; Ctrl+Shift+F9
VISUAL C++ 6	F9
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F9
WINDOWS	Alt,D, G
MENU	Debug Toggle Breakpoint
COMMAND	Debug.ToggleBreakpoint
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0016

Setting a simple breakpoint is easy. Just find some code:

```

11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13     Console.WriteLine("boogie fever");
14     Console.WriteLine("disco inferno");
15 }
16

```

Now set (or remove) a breakpoint either by pressing F9 or by selecting Debug | Toggle Breakpoint on your menu bar:

```

11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13     Console.WriteLine("boogie fever");
14     Console.WriteLine("disco inferno");
15 }
16

```

If you prefer using the mouse, you can set a breakpoint by positioning your pointer in the margin next to the line on which you want to set the breakpoint:

```
11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13     Console.WriteLine("boogie fever");
14     Console.WriteLine("disco inferno");
15 }
16
```

Then click your left mouse button:

```
11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13     Console.WriteLine("boogie fever");
14     Console.WriteLine("disco inferno");
15 }
16
```

AX\Program.cs, line 14 character 1 ('CS_Clean_Console.Program.Main(string[] args)', line 4)

All the breakpoints you have set show up in the Breakpoints window as a list that you can work with later on.

AX.98 Enable or Disable a Breakpoint

DEFAULT	Ctrl+F9
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
COMMAND	Debug.EnableBreakpoint
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0017

Sometimes you want to keep a breakpoint around but need to temporarily disable it. This is easy to do and requires only a slight muscle memory modification from setting and removing a breakpoint. Just put your cursor on the line with the breakpoint you want to disable, then press Ctrl+F9 to disable the breakpoint (notice that the glyph in the margin changes):

```
11 static void Main(string[] args)
12 {
13     Console.WriteLine("boogie fever");
14     Console.WriteLine("disco inferno");
15 }
```

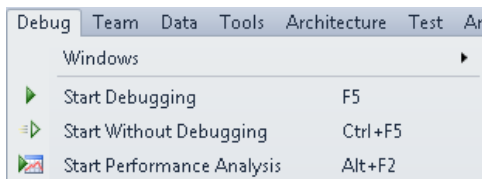
To re-enable it, press Ctrl+F9 again.

All your disabled breakpoints are easily visible in the Breakpoints window alongside your enabled breakpoints so that you can work with them later.

AX.99 Start Debugging vs. Start Without Debugging

DEFAULT	F5 (start); Ctrl+F5 (start w/o debug)
VISUAL BASIC 6	F5 (start); Ctrl+F5 (start w/o debug); Ctrl+Alt+Break (stop)
VISUAL C# 2005	F5 (start); Ctrl+F5 (start w/o debug); Shift+F5 (stop)
VISUAL C++ 2	F5 (start); Ctrl+F5 (start w/o debug); Alt+F5 (stop)
VISUAL C++ 6	F5 (start); Ctrl+F5 (start w/o debug); Shift+F5 (stop)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F5 (start); Ctrl+F5 (start w/o debug); Shift+F5 (stop)
WINDOWS	Alt,D, S (start); Alt,D, H (start w/o debug)
MENU	Debug Start Debugging; Debug Start Without Debugging
COMMAND	Debug.Start; Debug.StartWithoutDebugging
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0037

There seems to be a great deal of confusion as to what actually happens when you use Start Debugging (F5) versus Start Without Debugging (Ctrl+F5):

**Starting with Debugging**

Let's start with the basics: When you press F5 (Start Debugging) in Visual Studio, it launches your application, attaches the debugger, and lets you do all the "normal" things you would expect.

According to the documentation (see "Debugger Roadmap" at [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/k0k771bt\(v=VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/k0k771bt(v=VS.100).aspx)), here is what the debugger does:

"The Visual Studio debugger is a powerful tool that allows you to observe the run-time behavior of your program and locate logic errors. The debugger works with all Visual Studio programming languages and their associated libraries. With the debugger, you can break, or suspend, execution of your program to examine your code, evaluate and edit variables in your program, view registers, see the instructions created from your source code, and view the memory space used by your application."

The debugger: Release builds

One popular misconception is that the debugger doesn't come into play for release builds. This isn't true. Set a breakpoint in some code for a release build, and press F5 to see whether it stops there. Of course it does!

The debugger is attached. Now, what about things that aren't happening?



Note Release builds are optimized versions of your code, so make sure to test your breakpoint on a piece of code that is used.

For example, you can't use the `System.Diagnostics.Debug` class methods to send messages to the Output window because the compiler strips them out for release builds:

```
System.Diagnostics.Debug.WriteLine  
("This is a debug message.");
```

Starting Without Debugging

This is exactly what it sounds like. When you choose the Start Without Debugging option, the application starts without the debugger attached. That's it! Nothing else happens. It just doesn't attach the debugger. Otherwise, everything else is the same. So, the practical implications of this are obvious: Without the debugger attached, when the application runs, it does not hit breakpoints, emit debug messages, and so on.

So now let's deal with the biggest myth about choosing the Start Without Debugging option.

Myth: Start Without Debugging creates a release build

Not true. It uses the build you are currently on. So if you are using a debug build and you press Ctrl+F5, Visual Studio runs that debug build. The easiest way to test this is to use conditional compilation to see whether you are using a debug build:

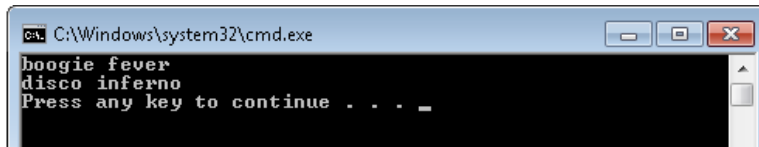
```

#if DEBUG
    Console.WriteLine("boogie fever");
    Console.WriteLine("disco inferno");

    System.Diagnostics.Debug.WriteLine
        ("This is a debug message.");
#endif

```

In this example, the Console statements run, but the System.Diagnostics.Debug statement does not run because the debugger is not attached. So you get the following output:



Finally

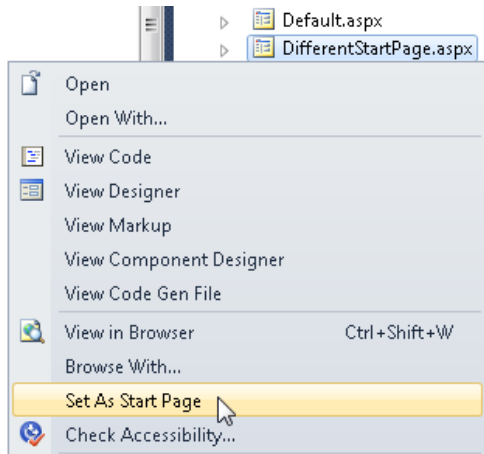
OK, so the obvious question is “Why have this option?” Well, the answer is simple: So that you can run the application without having the overhead of the debugger attached, to do a quick “Smoke Test” to see whether the code runs. As you learn more about this feature, you might find other reasons for wanting to run without the debugger attached.

Now you have a better idea of the difference between the Start Debugging and Start Without Debugging options.

AX.100 Set As Start Page

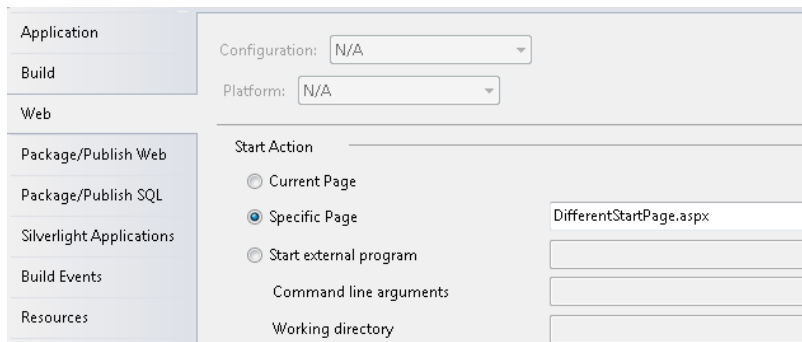
WINDOWS	ALT, P, P, P, Enter
MENU	Project Set As Start Page
COMMAND	Project.SetAsStartPage
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0027

When you create a new web project, the default start page is set for you automatically and is the first page you see when you start debugging. However, you might find that you want a different page to start with instead. It’s easy to change the start page. Simply right-click the new start page in Solution Explorer, and select Set As Start Page:

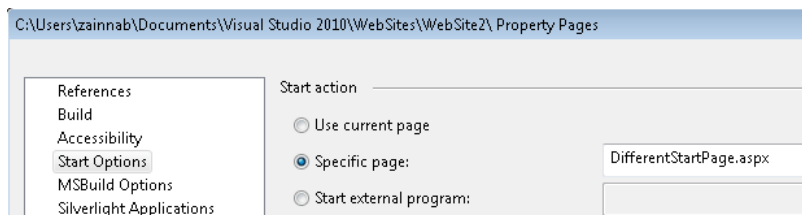


The changes take effect immediately, and the new page becomes the start page until you change it.

In case you are curious, this actually changes the Specific Page value in your Web Application properties dialog box (Web Tab, Start Action):



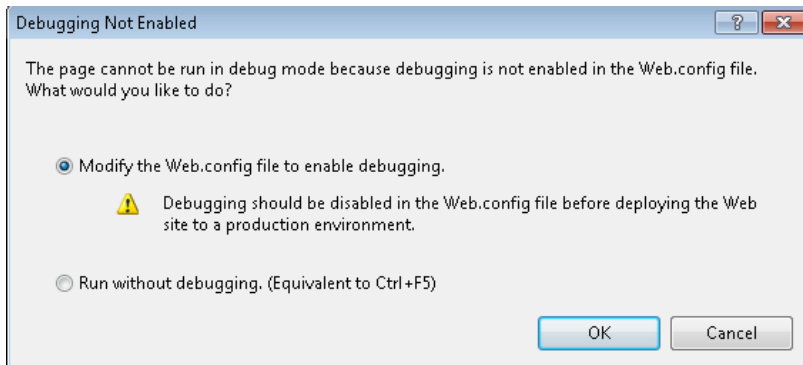
For websites, you can find this in the project properties dialog box under Start Options:



AX.101 Enable Debugging in Web.Config

VERSIONS	2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0026

If you have ever created a web project in Visual Studio, you have undoubtedly encountered the following dialog box:



A quick read tells you that it defaults to the Modify The Web.config File To Enable Debugging option:

```
<system.web>
  <compilation debug="true"
    targetFramework="4.0"/>
```

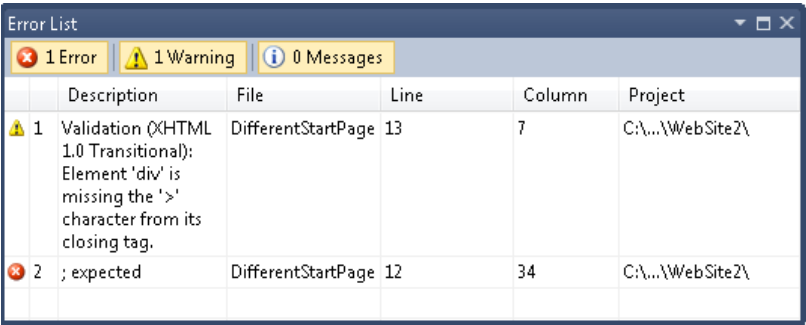
A couple of things need to be pointed out here:

- You can avoid this dialog box by editing your Web.config file manually and setting **debug** to true.
- No dialog box comes up to enable you to turn this off again before you deploy, so be aware that you should ensure that it is turned off before you go to production.

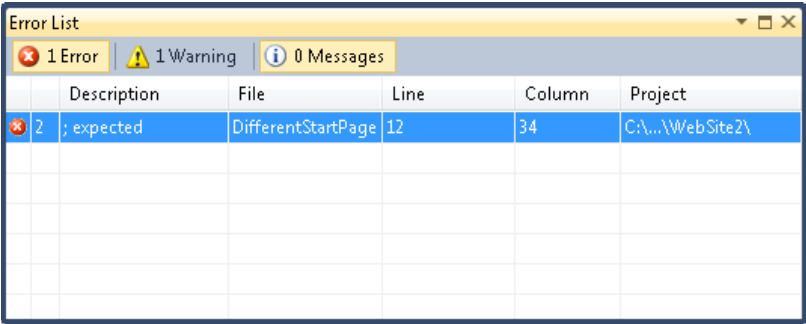
AX.102 View the Error List Window

DEFAULT	Ctrl+\\, E; Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+E
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+\\, E; Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+E; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+E
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+\\, E; Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+E; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+E; Ctrl+W, E
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+\\, E; Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+E
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+\\, E; Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+E
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+\\, E; Ctrl+\\, Ctrl+E
WINDOWS	Alt,V, I
MENU	View Error List
COMMAND	View.ErrorList
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0018

You can view the Error List window by pressing Ctrl+\\, E inside Visual Studio:



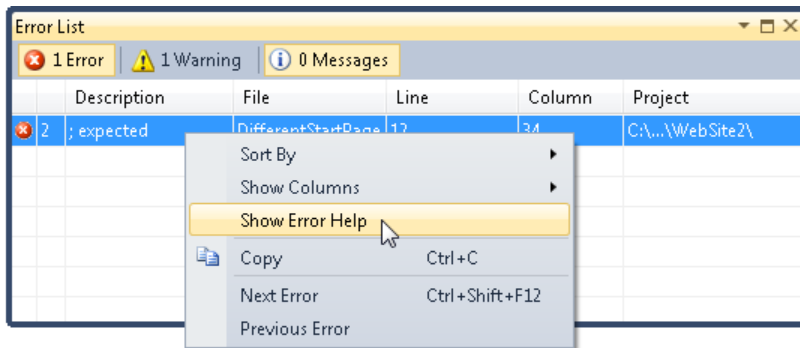
Also, you can filter by type, using the toggle buttons at the top (Errors, Warnings, Messages) to show or hide particular messages:



AX.103 Show Error Help from Errors List Window

DEFAULT	F1
VISUAL BASIC 6	F1
VISUAL C# 2005	F1
VISUAL C++ 2	F1
VISUAL C++ 6	F1
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F1
WINDOWS	F1
MENU	[Context Menu] Show Error Help
COMMAND	Help.F1Help
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0020

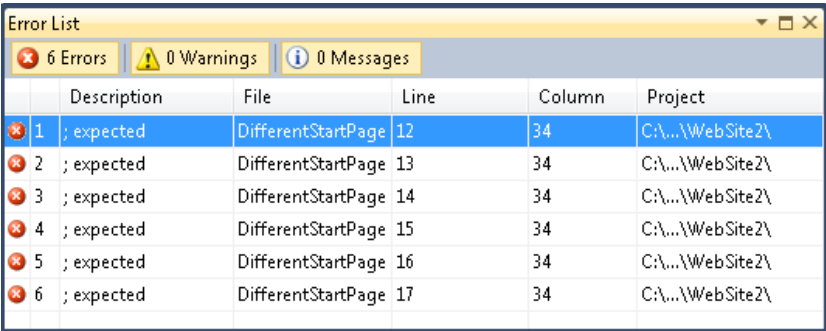
You can get help on any error in the Errors List window by right-clicking any error and choosing Show Error Help. This opens the documentation, if available, with details about the specific error:

**AX.104 Hide or Show Error List When the Build Finishes with Errors**

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects and Solutions Default
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0022

By default, the Error List window appears when build errors have occurred:

A162 **AX.105** Show the Output Window During Build

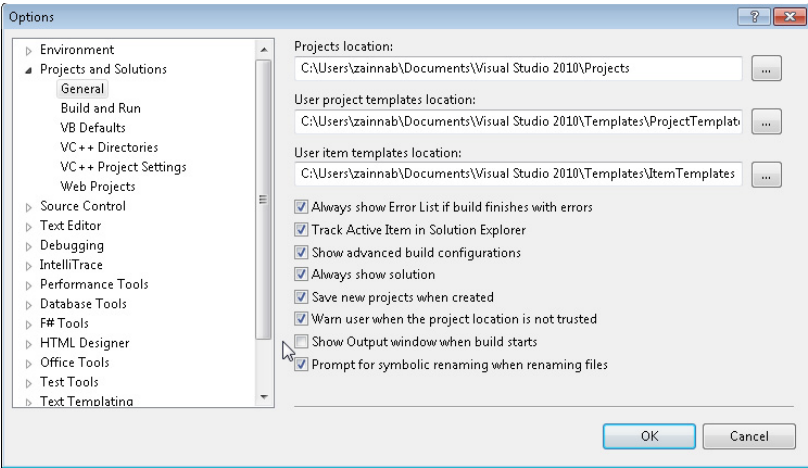


You can change this behavior by going to Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General and clearing the Always Show Error List If Build Finishes With Errors check box.

AX.105 Show the Output Window During Build

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects and Solutions General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0045

When you do a build, by default, it always shows the Output window. If you don't want the Output window to show up every time you do a build, you can go to Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General and clear the Show Output Window When Build Starts check box:

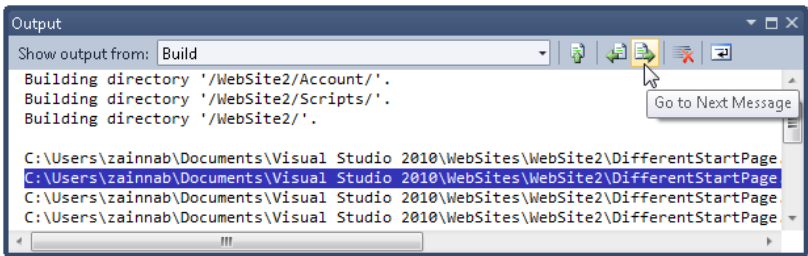


Of course, you can bring up the Output window anytime by pressing Ctrl+Alt+O.

AX.106 Navigate Among Errors in the Output Window

DEFAULT	F8 (next); Shift+F8 (previous)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C# 2005	F8 (next); Shift+F8 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 2	F4 (next); Shift+F4 (previous)
VISUAL C++ 6	F8 (next); F4 (next)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F8 (next); F12 (next); Shift+F8 (previous); Shift+F12 (previous)
COMMAND	Edit.GoToNextLocation; Edit.GoToPrevLocation;
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0043

Did you know that you can use toolbar buttons on the Output window to navigate between errors?



Also, assuming the Output window is active, you can use F8 (next) and Shift+F8 (previous) to navigate among the errors as well.

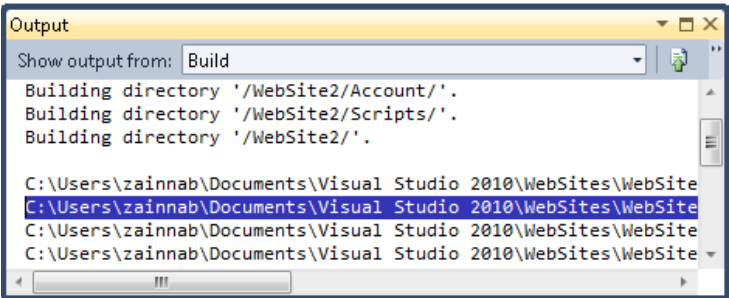
The cursor in the editor automatically follows you as you go through the errors, places the cursor where you can make changes so that you just start typing, and has an indicator in the far left margin to show your current position:

```
12 Console.WriteLine("blah")
13 Console.WriteLine("blah")
14 Console.WriteLine("blah")
15 Console.WriteLine("blah")
16 Console.WriteLine("blah")
17 Console.WriteLine("blah")
```

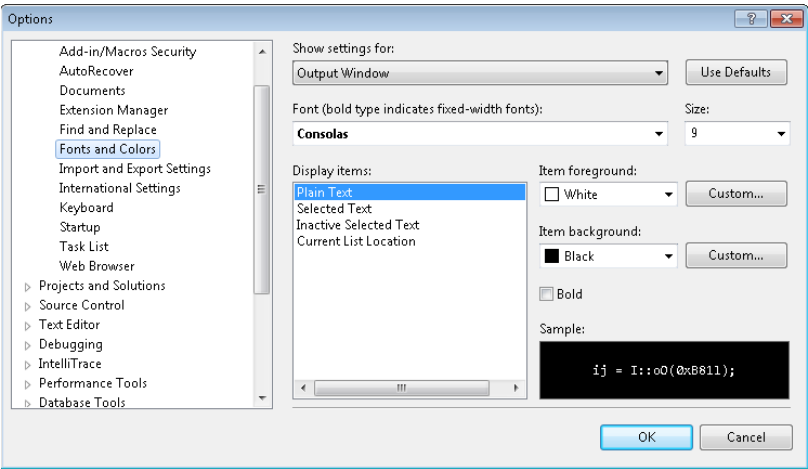
AX.107 Customize the Output Window

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Fonts and Colors Show settings for Output Window
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0044

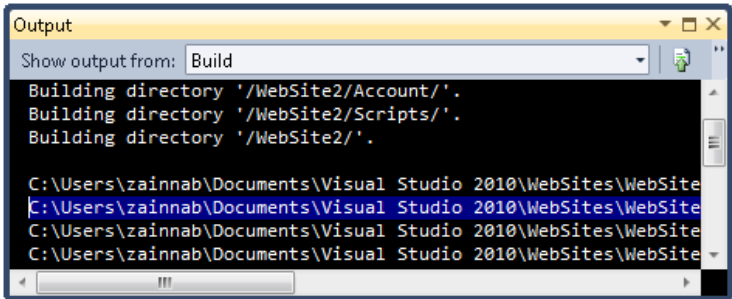
Working with the Output window is fairly common. Personalizing the window to your needs can definitely improve your work day. The Output window can be modified from its original configuration:



Just go to Tools | Options | Fonts And Colors | Show Settings For | Output Window. You can change the font type, color, and size for a variety of display items, as shown in the following illustration:



Here’s the result in the Output window:



Obviously, you'll want to experiment with combinations that suit you.

AX.108 Step Out of or Over a Method

DEFAULT	Shift+F11 (step out); F10 (step over)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Shift+F11 (step out); Ctrl+Shift+F8 (step out); F10 (step over); Shift+F8 (step over)
VISUAL C# 2005	Shift+F11 (step out); F10 (step over)
VISUAL C++ 2	Shift+F7 (step out); F10 (step over)
VISUAL C++ 6	Shift+F11 (step out); F10 (step over)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Shift+F11 (step out); F10 (step over)
WINDOWS	Alt,D, T (step out); Alt, D, O (step over)
MENU	Debug Step Out; Debug Step Over
COMMAND	Debug.StepOut ; Debug.StepOver
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0035

When debugging your code, you often come across a call to another method:

```
Sub Main()  
  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
  
    SomeMethodHere()  
  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
End Sub
```

At this point, if you want to see what is in the method, you can step into it by pressing F11:

```
Sub SomeMethodHere()  
    Console.WriteLine("awesome code here")  
    Console.WriteLine("awesome code here")  
    Console.WriteLine("awesome code here")  
    Console.WriteLine("awesome code here")  
    Console.WriteLine("awesome code here")  
    Console.WriteLine("awesome code here")  
End Sub
```

Step Out

Once inside, you might decide you don't really need to go through all the code. You can, at any time, step out by pressing Shift+F11, which finishes execution of the current method and returns you to the original call:

```
Sub Main()  
  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
  
    SomeMethodHere()  
  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
    Console.WriteLine("blah")  
End Sub
```

From here, you can continue on as you normally would with your debugging.

Step Over

You have another option when you get to a method call:

You can decide that the method should just run without having to look at what is inside it. If you want to run the method and move to the next line of code, just press F10 to step over that method:

```
Sub Main()

    Console.WriteLine("blah")
    Console.WriteLine("blah")

    SomeMethodHere()

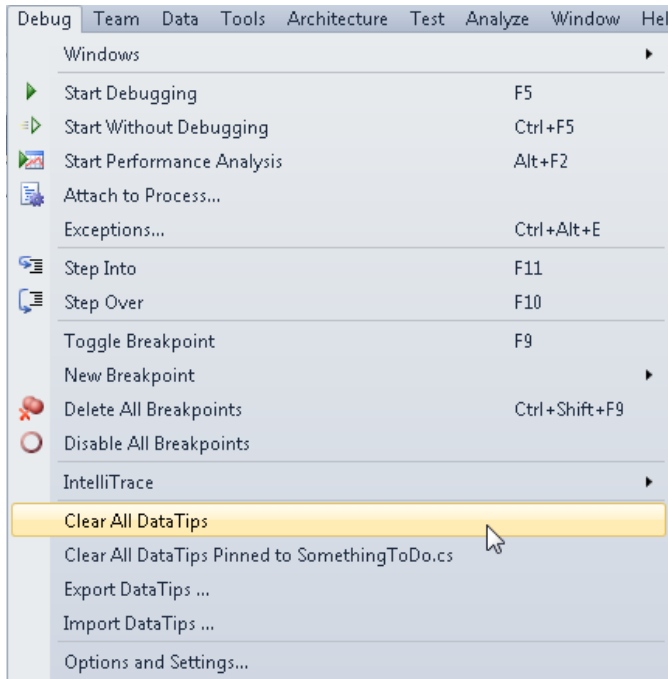
    Console.WriteLine("blah")
    Console.WriteLine("blah")
    Console.WriteLine("blah")
End Sub
```

You can now navigate more effectively by using these techniques to determine how deep you want to get into method calls.

AX.109 Clearing Your DataTips

WINDOWS	Alt,D, A, A, ENTER (clear all)
MENU	Debug Clear All DataTips; Debug Clear All DataTips Pinned to [file]
COMMAND	Debug.ClearAllDataTips
VERSIONS	2010
CODE	vstipDebug0014

As you create your DataTips, you might find that it is necessary to clear them out when you are done. You can clear your DataTips in a couple of ways from the Debug menu:



Clear All DataTips

This command does what it says and clears *all* (pinned and floating) DataTips in the solution.

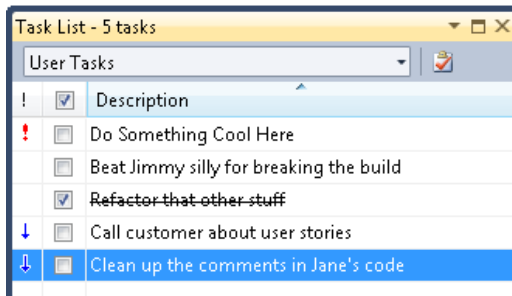
Clear All DataTips Pinned to [File Name]

Clear only the pinned DataTips in [file name]. This option appears only if you have at least one pinned DataTip in a file. The referenced file is the one you have currently open in the editor.

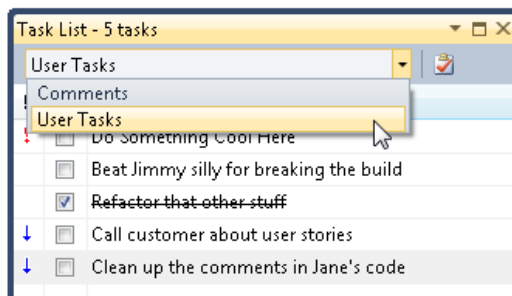
AX.110 Create User Tasks in the Task List

DEFAULT	Ctrl+\, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+\, T
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+\, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+\, T; Ctrl+ALT+K
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+\, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+\, T; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+W, T
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+\, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+\, T
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+\, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+\, T
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+\, Ctrl+T; Ctrl+\, T; Ctrl+Alt+K
WINDOWS	Alt, V, K
MENU	View Task List
COMMAND	View.TaskList
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0027

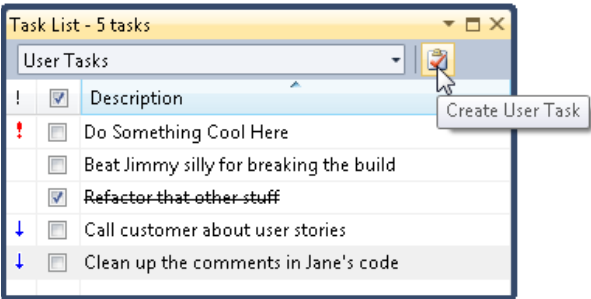
Creating tasks is useful when you need reminders for getting work done. User Tasks is a checklist of “to do” items that are stored in the Solution User Options (.suo) file. They are per-user settings and are not typically checked into source control:



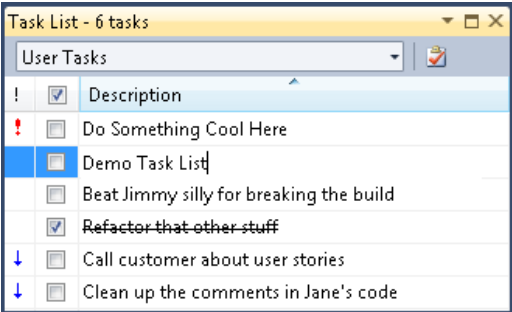
To begin, make sure that User Tasks is selected from the drop-down list in the Task List (Ctrl+\, T):



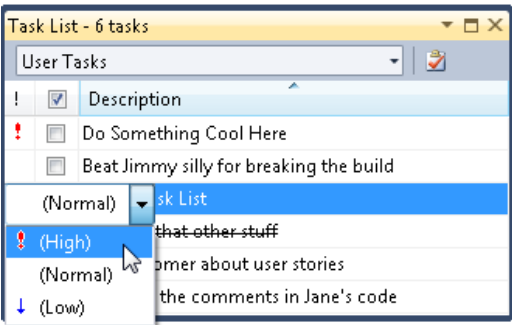
Next, click the Create User Task button:



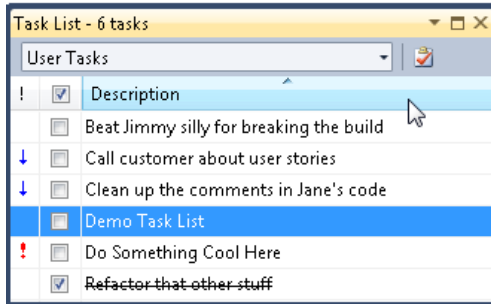
Now you can enter any task you want:



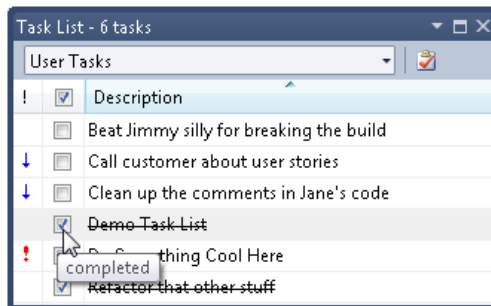
You can easily edit any task by double-clicking or pressing Enter while in it. Also, you can set priority levels on them by clicking in the box to the far left of any task:



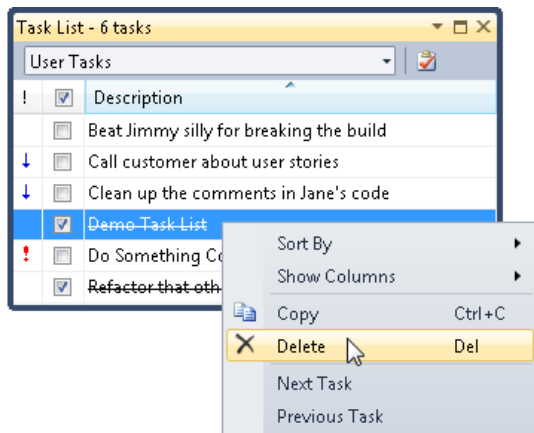
Naturally, you can sort them by any column, such as Description or Priority:



When you are done with a task, you can just click the check box to mark it complete:



Or you can right-click the task and delete it:

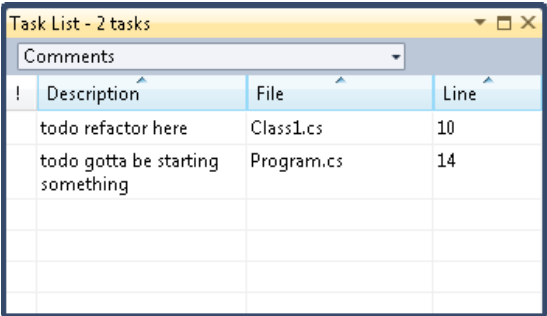


Note A command called `CreateUserTask` is available, but it doesn't accept any arguments and creates only a blank task. For this reason, I didn't list it in the summary information.

AX.111 Show the Full File Path in the Task List

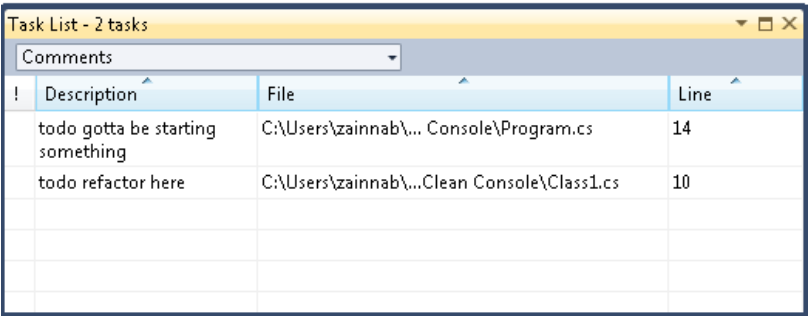
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0033

Sometimes you have comments and/or shortcuts with descriptions and/or file names that are the same but in different solutions. Knowing the full path to the file can help you determine which item you are looking at in the Task List. This tip can help you with the items that are part of the Comments and Shortcuts areas. Normally, an item in the Task List doesn't have the full path:



You can enable the full path by going to Tools | Options | Environment | Task List | Task List Options and clearing the Hide Full File Paths check box:

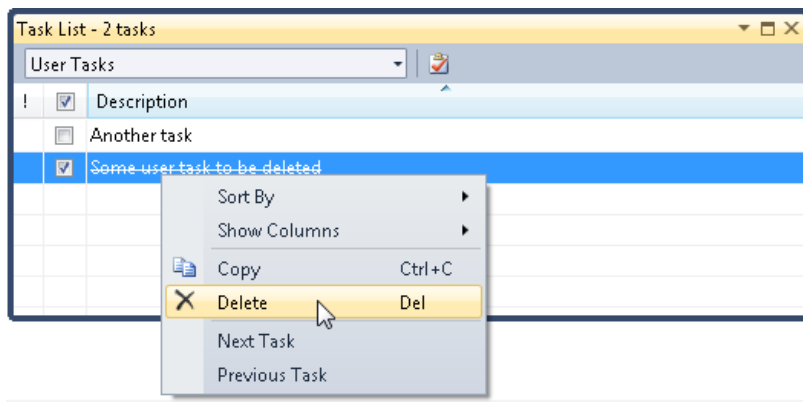
Now you can see the full file path in the Task List and clearly see where a comment or short-cut resides:



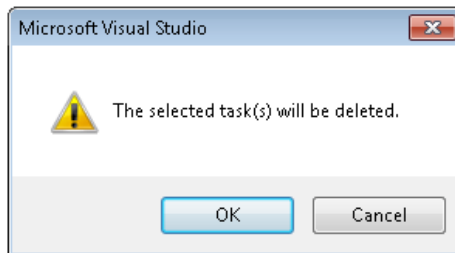
AX.112 Disable the Prompt for Deleting Items from the Task List

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Task List Task List
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0031

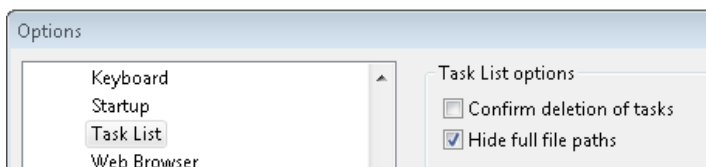
When dealing with the Task List, removing items is quite common. To delete an item from the Task List, simply right-click any item and choose Delete:



The following prompt appears:



You can turn the prompt dialog box off by going to Tools | Options | Environment | Task List | Task List Options and clearing the Confirm Deletion Of Tasks check box:



Now when you delete tasks, you have no dialog box to contend with. Of course, this means that you can also now accidentally delete a task without anything to stop you, so use this option at your own risk.

AX.113 **Navigate Task List Entries with the Keyboard**

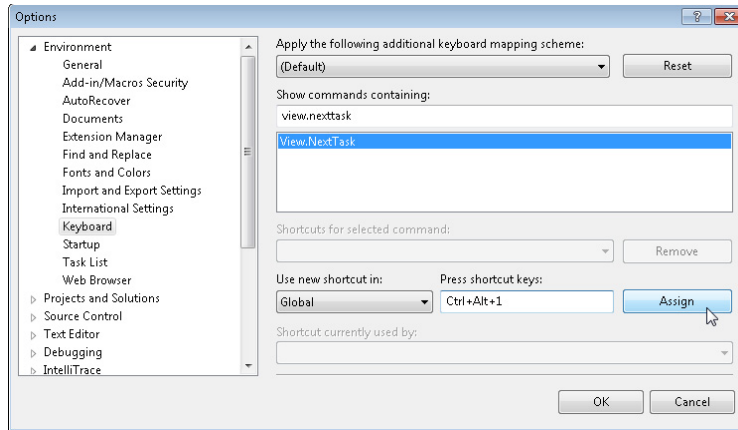
DEFAULT	F8 (next location); Shift+F8 (prev location); [no shortcut] (next task); [no shortcut] (prev task)
VISUAL BASIC 6	[no shortcut] (next location); [no shortcut] (prev location); Ctrl+Shift+F12 (next task); [no shortcut] (prev task)
VISUAL C# 2005	F8 (next location); Shift+F8 (prev location); [no shortcut] (next task); [no shortcut] (prev task)
VISUAL C++ 2	F4 (next location); Shift+F4 (prev location); [no shortcut] (next task); [no shortcut] (prev task)
VISUAL C++ 6	F8 (next location); F4 (next location); [no shortcut] (next task); [no shortcut] (prev task)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	F8 (next location); F12 (next location); Shift+F8 (prev location); Shift+F12 (prev location); [no shortcut] (next task); [no shortcut] (prev task)
COMMAND	Edit.GoToNextLocation; Edit.GoToPrevLocation; View.NextTask; View.PreviousTask
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0092

F8 and Shift+F8 are the universal “next” and “previous” keyboard shortcuts for items in tool window lists. For example, when the Task List is up, these keyboard commands move the focus between task items. If the Errors window is up, the commands move the focus between errors. However, you cannot use these commands to switch to the Task List from the Errors window.

What if you wanted a set of keyboard shortcuts that switched to the Task List and then navigated between them? Just go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard, and assign shortcut keys to the View.NextTask and View.PreviousTask commands, as shown in the following illustration.



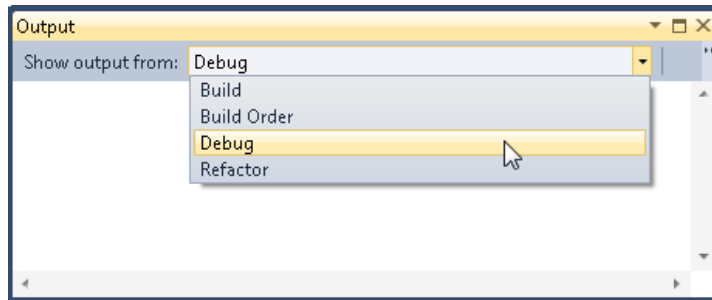
Note For more information about assigning shortcut keys, see vstipTool0063 (“Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts,” page 127).



AX.114 Navigating Between Output Window Panes with the Keyboard

COMMAND	Window.NextSubPane; Window.PreviousSubPane
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0091

The Output window can have several panes. How many depends on your context:



You can use `Window.[Next / Previous]Subpane` to move between these panes. However, the commands are not bound, by default, to any keyboard mappings. That is easily solved by going to **Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard** and assigning shortcut keys to the commands.



Note For more information about assigning shortcut keys, see vstipTool0063 ("Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts," page 127).

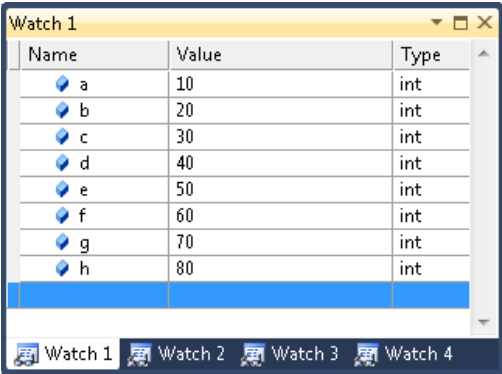
AX.115 The Watch Window: Moving Values Between Watch Windows

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+W; Ctrl+D, W; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+W,1; Ctrl+Alt+W,[2-4]
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, W, [1-4]
MENU	Debug Windows Watch Watch [1,2,3,4]
COMMAND	Debug.Watch[1,2,3,4]
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0105

You can have up to four Watch windows in Visual Studio. The reason you get all these windows is so that you can easily organize your watches into groups. Opening a particular window is easy enough: Just press Ctrl+Alt+W and then select the number of the window you want (1, 2, 3, or 4):



The only problem is that anytime you use Add Watch or QuickWatch, the watch expression always gets added to Watch 1:

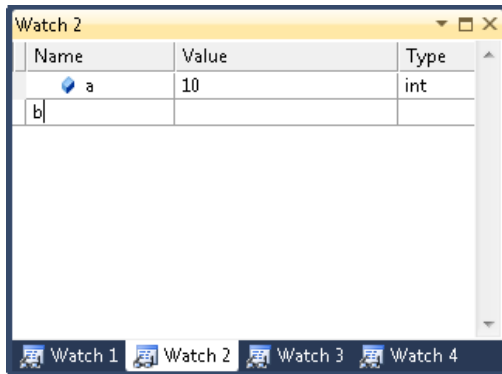


Moving Between Windows

What if you want to move to another window? Let’s look at some of your options.

Type it in

You can just go to the window you want and type in the value you are looking for:



Copy and paste

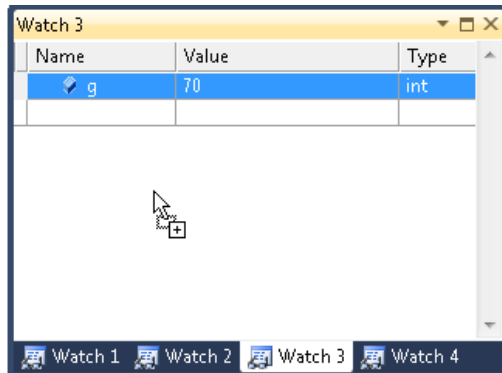
You can copy and paste the value from one window to another:



Note You can copy but not cut in the Watch window. You have to delete the original value from Watch 1 if you want to actually “move” it.

Click and drag

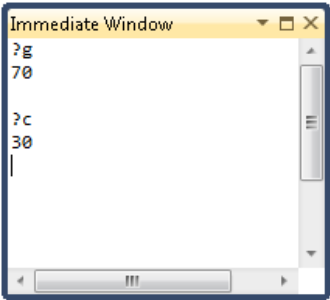
You can click and drag to copy a value from one window to another:



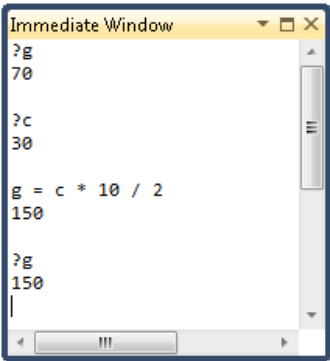
AX.116 The Immediate Window: Simple Printing and Changing Values

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+G
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+D, I
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, I
MENU	Debug Windows Immediate
COMMAND	Debug.Immediate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0094

The Immediate Window’s versatility is great, and it can give instant feedback with information you might need to help with your application. The first thing people usually learn when using it is how to print values. Just go into debug mode, and use either **Debug.Print(variable)** or (more commonly) just **?variable**:



Additionally, you can modify values:



This is pretty basic assignment in these examples, but you can run pretty much any valid code to change values.

AX.117 The Immediate Window: Working with Members

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+G
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+D, I
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, I
MENU	Debug Windows Immediate
COMMAND	Debug.Immediate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipTool0095

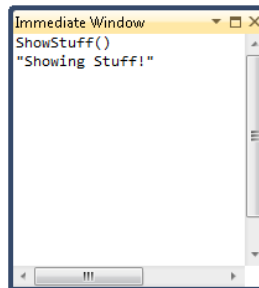
When using the Immediate Window, you work with class and object members directly. Both the traditional usage in Debug mode and the lesser-known use in Design mode is available.

Debug

You can use any method or property as long as it is in context. So, for example, when you are in debug mode, you can call any method that is in scope:

```
class Person
{
    public string ScopeFun()
    {
        return "blah";
    }

    private string ShowStuff()
    {
        return "Showing Stuff!";
    }
}
```

**Design**

Warning When working with members at design time, a build will occur. This might have unintended consequences, so make sure you have experimented with this feature a bit before you use it on production code.



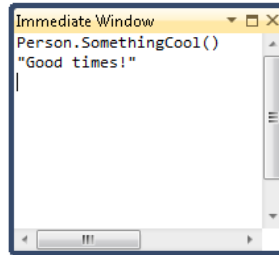
Note You cannot use design time expression evaluation in project types that require starting up an execution environment, including Visual Studio Tools for Office projects, web projects, Smart Device projects, and SQL projects.

A lesser-known feature is that you can work with properties and methods while in design mode. If you have static (“Shared” in VB) methods on a class, for example, you can just execute them without going into debug mode:

```
class Person
{
    public static string SomethingCool()
    {
        return "Good times!";
    }

    public string ScopeFun()
    {
        return "blah";
    }

    private string ShowStuff()
    {
        return "Showing Stuff!";
    }
}
```

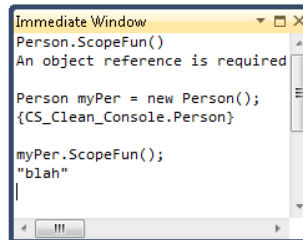


For object members, you need to create an instance of the object before working with the members:

```
class Person
{
    public static string SomethingCool()
    {
        return "Good times!";
    }

    public string ScopeFun()
    {
        return "blah";
    }

    private string ShowStuff()
    {
        return "Showing Stuff!";
    }
}
```



AX.118 The Immediate Window: Design-Time Breakpoints

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+G
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+D, I
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, I
MENU	Debug Windows Immediate
COMMAND	Debug.Immediate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipTool0096

In vstipTool0095 ("The Immediate Window: Working with Members," page A179), I demonstrated that you could do design-time execution of members. I thought it would be instructive to mention that you can also use this technique to hit breakpoints in your code.

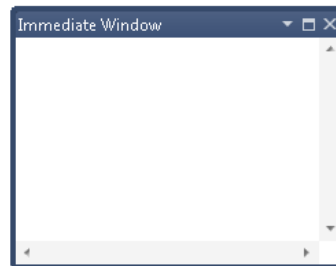
For example, assume you have an application that has a class with a static method.

Now set a breakpoint on a line of code:

```
class Person
{
    public static string SomethingCool()
    {
        return "Good times!";
    }

    public string ScopeFun()
    {
        return "blah";
    }

    private string ShowStuff()
    {
        return "Showing Stuff!";
    }
}
```



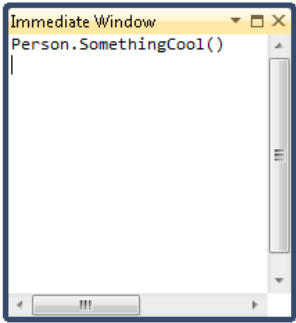
Then, in design mode, execute the method from the Immediate Window.

It executes the code and stops at the breakpoint, ready for you to continue debugging:

```
class Person
{
    public static string SomethingCool()
    {
        return "Good times!";
    }

    public string ScopeFun()
    {
        return "blah";
    }

    private string ShowStuff()
    {
        return "Showing Stuff!";
    }
}
```

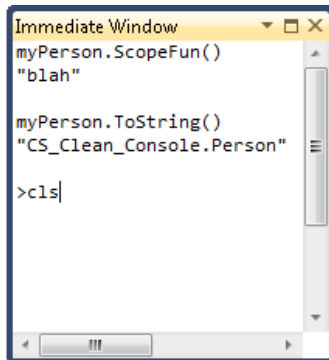


This is an interesting feature of design-time execution, which you can use to quickly get to an area for debugging.

AX.119 The Immediate Window: Running Commands

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+G
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+D, I
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, I
MENU	Debug Windows Immediate
COMMAND	Debug.Immediate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0098

You can run commands when you are in the Immediate Window. Just type **>[command]** to run any command. When I want to quickly clear out the Immediate Window, one of my favorite commands to run is **>cls**:

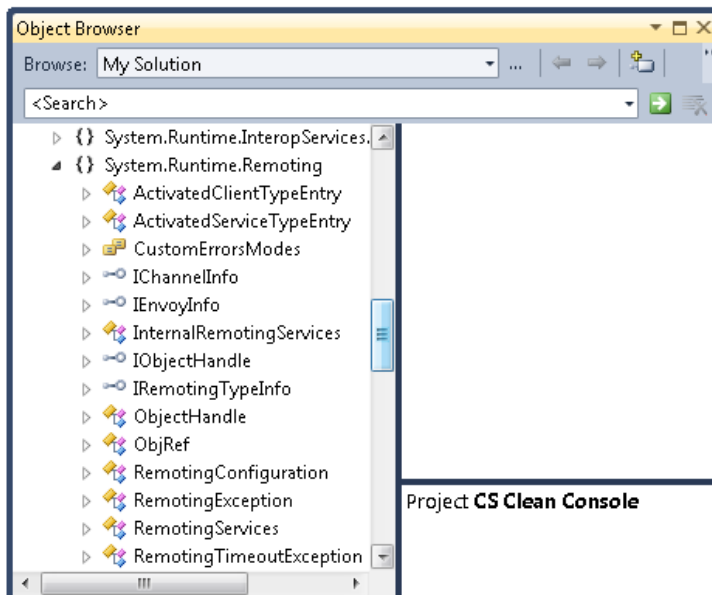


Any valid command can be run in this way, so you can run any command you want from the Immediate Window.

AX.120 Class View and Object Browser Icons

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0076

You often encounter icons to represent symbols in a variety of places, such as when you use the Object Browser:



The help documentation lists out the icons for you and I have listed them in the following table for your reference. You can see them online at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/y47ychfe.aspx>.

Class View and Object Browser Icons:

Icon	Description	Icon	Description
	Namespace		Method or function
	Class		Operator
	Interface		Property
	Structure		Field or variable
	Union		Event
	Enum		Constant
	TypeDef		Enum item
	Module		Map item
	Intrinsic		External declaration
	Delegate		Macro
	Exception		Template
	Map		Unknown or error
	Global		Type forwarding
	Extension method		

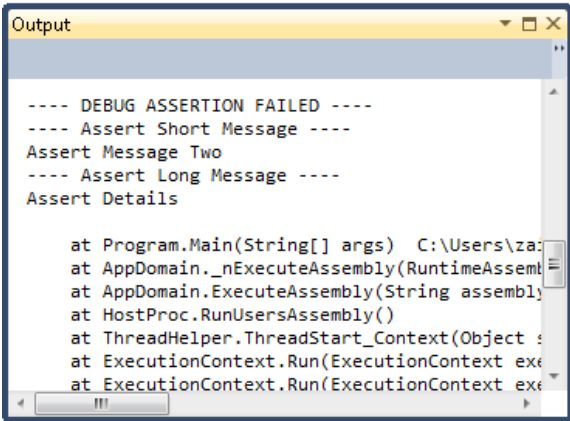
Modifier Icons:

Icon	Description
<No Signal Icon>	Public. Accessible from anywhere in this component and from any component that references it.
	Protected. Accessible from the containing class or type, or those derived from the containing class or type.
	Private. Accessible only in the containing class or type.
	Internal. Accessible only from this component.
	Friend. Accessible only from the project.
	Shortcut. A shortcut to the object.

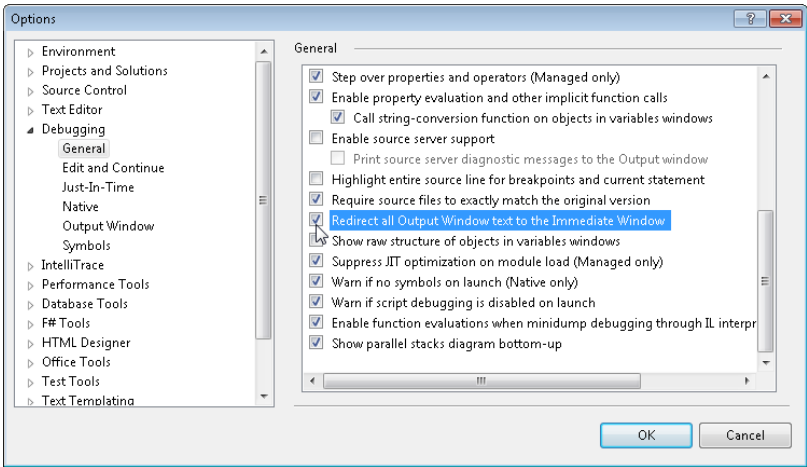
AX.121 Output Window vs. Immediate Window

WINDOWS	Alt,T,O
MENU	Tools Options Debugging General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0046

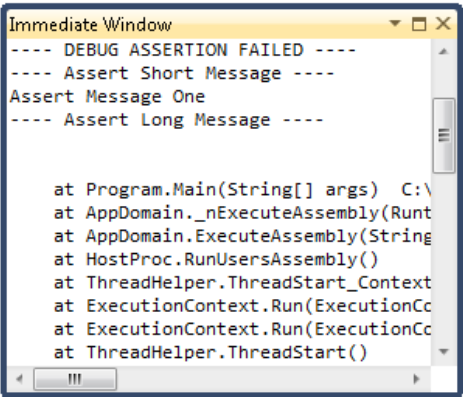
Depending on your settings, you might want to redirect Output window messages that you create to the Immediate window, or vice versa. So, consider your messages (Asserts, for example) that currently go to the Output window:



Go to Tools | Options | Debugging | General, and select the Redirect All Output Window Text To The Immediate Window check box:



Now your messages go to the Immediate window instead of the Output window:



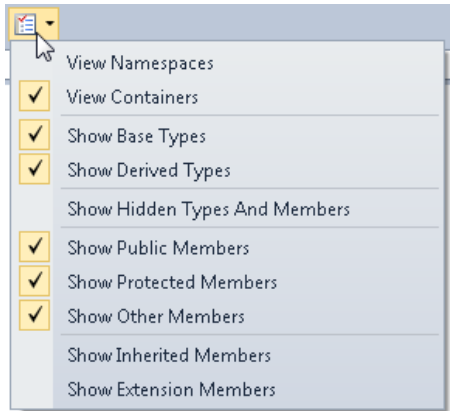
Note Not all information is redirected to the Immediate window. In this example, the results of your Assert are redirected, but some system information is always shown in the Output window.

AX.122 The Object Browser: Settings

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J; F2
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J; Ctrl+W, J
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+J; Shift+Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; F2
WINDOWS	Alt,V, J
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0080

Object Browser settings are a critical part of your browsing experience. They determine what you see and how much detail exists. This tip shows you how to use the settings to your advantage.

First, the settings button is located to the far right on the toolbar and looks like a sheet of paper with a check mark in it. There is quite a bit to look at, as you can see:

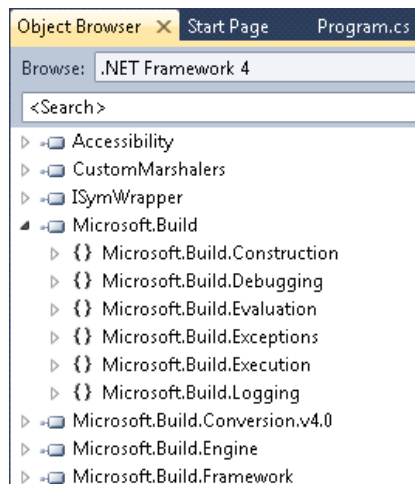


Note The options you see are based on your context in the Object Browser, so not all options may be currently available.

Containers vs. Namespaces

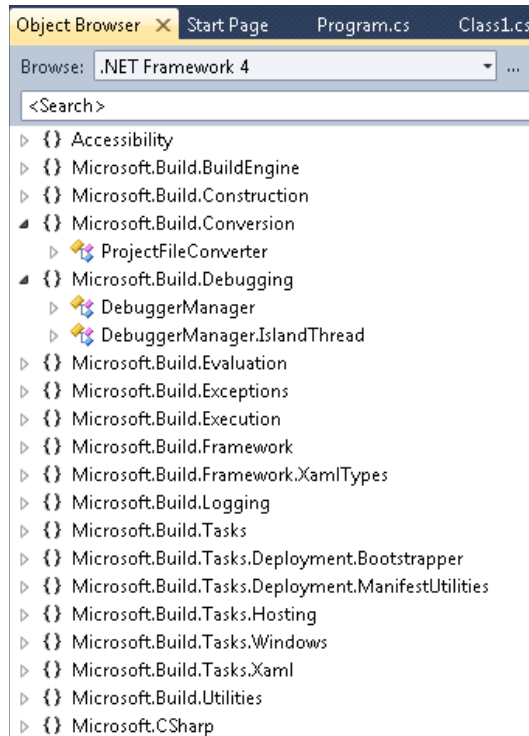
View Containers

Sets the highest-level items in the Objects pane to physical containers, such as components, assemblies, source browser (.bsc) files, and output type libraries (.tlb). These expand to show the namespaces that are contained:

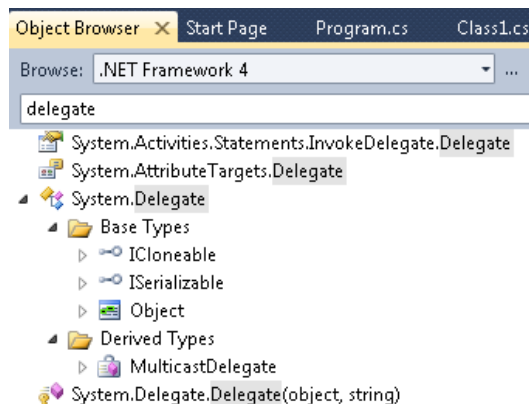


View Namespaces

Sets the highest-level items in the Objects pane to namespaces. Namespaces stored in multiple physical containers are merged. These expand to show the items that are contained:



Base and Derived Types

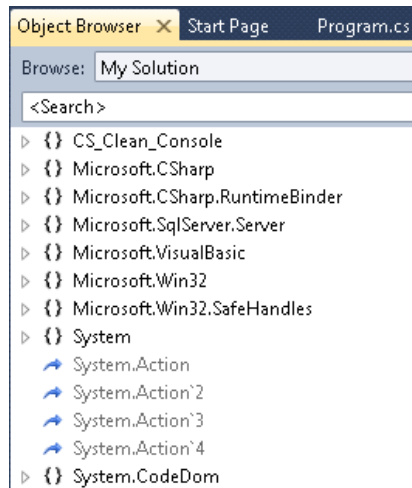


Show Base Types

Toggles showing the Base Types folder and contents.

Show Derived Types

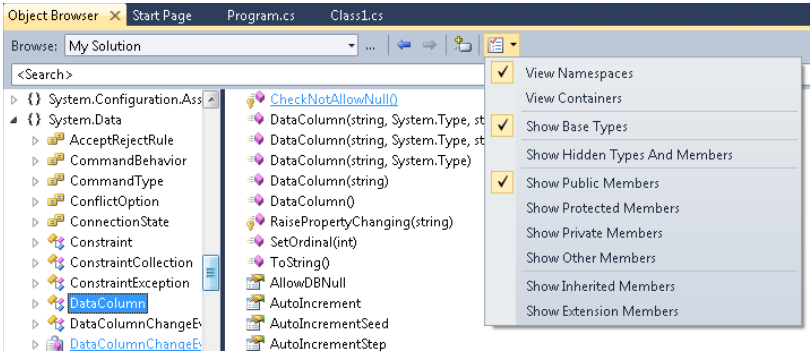
Toggles showing the Derived Types folder and contents and is available only for Visual C++ projects and the .NET Framework.

Hidden Types and Members**Show Hidden Types And Members**

Toggles display of hidden types in the Objects pane and hidden members in the Members pane. Hidden items show up as dimmed items in the lists.

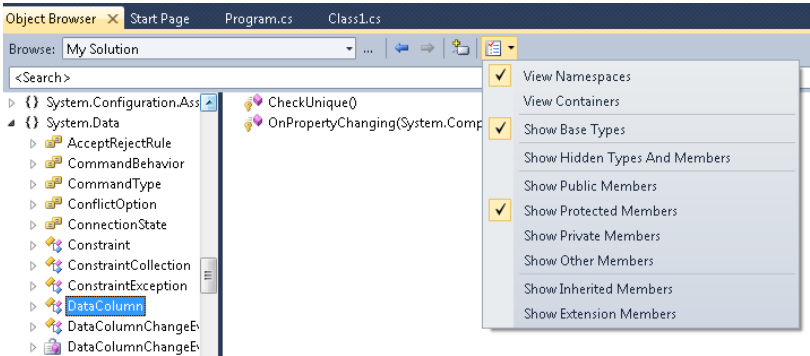
Public, Protected, Private, and Other Members**Show Public Members**

Displays members that are public or protected:



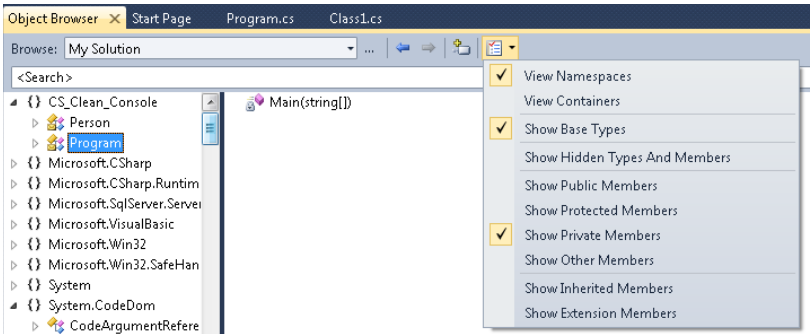
Show Protected Members

Displays members that are protected:



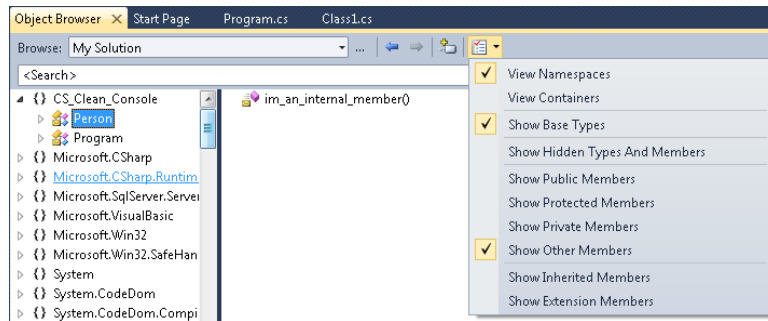
Show Private Members

Displays members with private accessibility:



Show Other Members

Displays members that do not fall into the category of public, protected, private, or inherited:

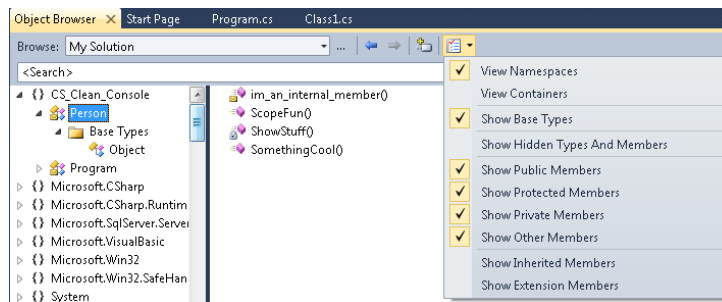


Inherited Members and Extension Methods

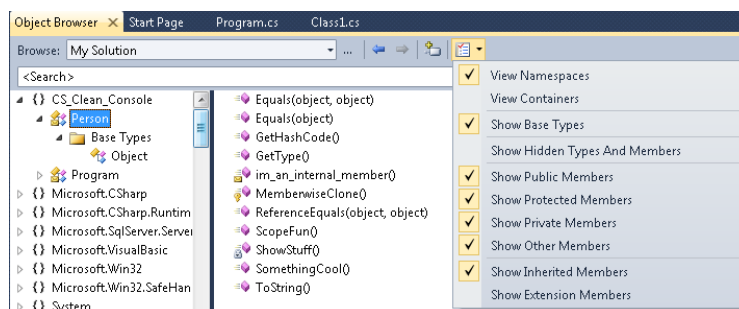
Show Inherited Members

Toggles display of inherited members in the Members pane, as shown in the following illustrations:

Off:

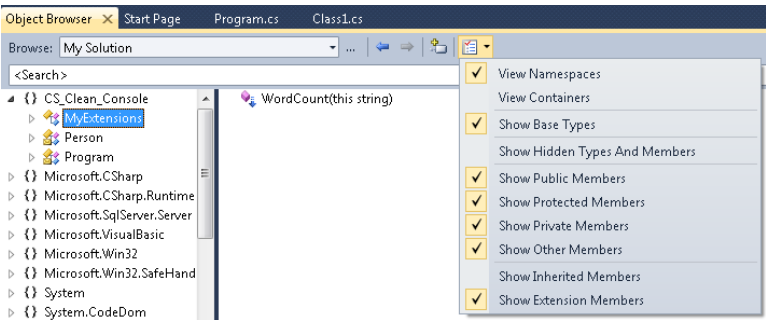


On:



Show Extension Methods

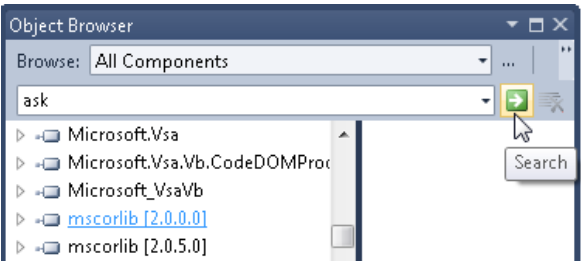
Toggles the display of extension methods in the Members pane:



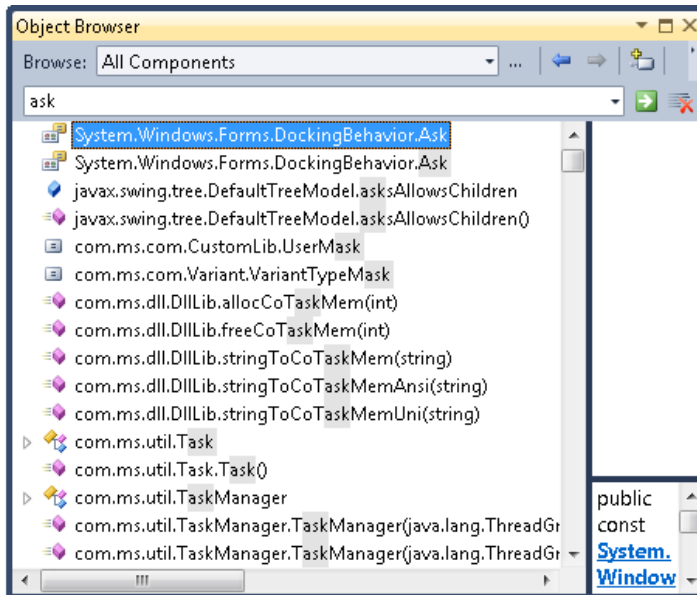
AX.123 The Object Browser: Search

DEFAULT	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+R (goto to search)
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+R (goto to search)
VISUAL C# 2005	[no shortcut] (goto to search)
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut] (goto to search)
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+R (goto to search)
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+K, Ctrl+R (goto to search)
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowserGoToSearchCombo; View.ObjectBrowserClearSearch; View.ObjectBrowserSearch
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0081

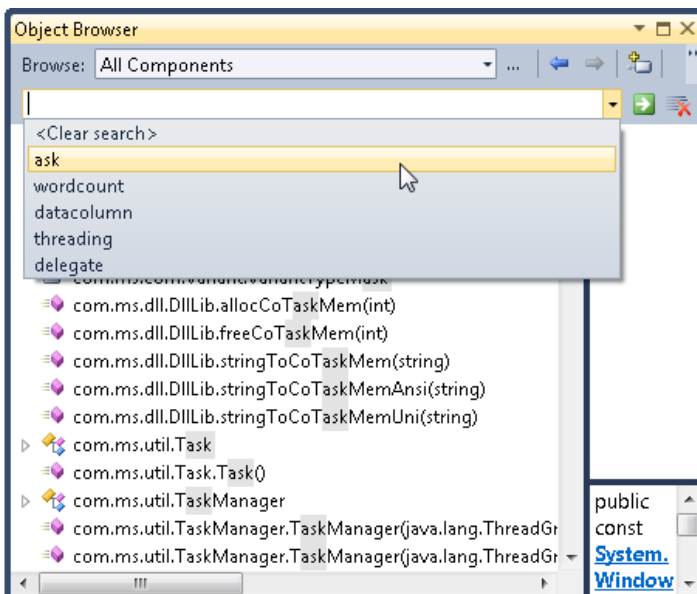
When you use the Object Browser, typically you need to find something fast. Search is a great way to find what you are looking for within the current browsing scope. To use search, just type the string you are looking for into the Search box and press Enter or click the Search button:



Searches are a “contains” operation and are not case-specific. For example, typing in the search term **ask** highlights the substring in the results. The search utility filters the Objects pane to show only those items that contain the search string:

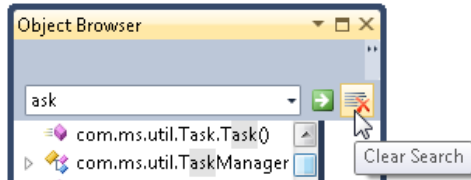


You can repeat any previous search by clicking the drop-down list arrow in the Search area:



This list persists even after Visual Studio is closed because the values are stored in the registry (HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\<version>\Object_Browser):

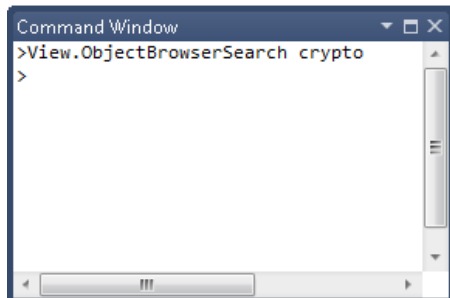
You can clear any search (and remove the filter on the Objects pane) by clicking the Clear Search button to the right of the Search box:



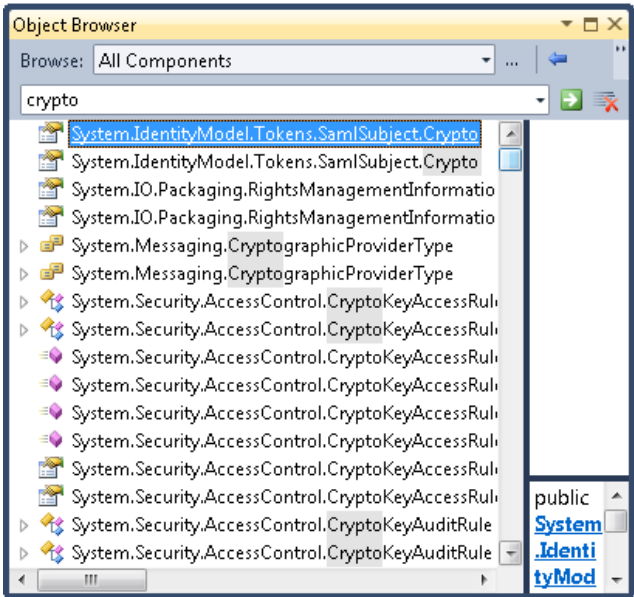
View.ObjectBrowserSearch Command

You can invoke the `View.ObjectBrowserSearch` command to quickly do a search by using a command. This is particularly useful if you have a search you perform frequently because you can create command aliases for your common search strings. See `vstipTool0068` ("Understanding Commands: Aliases," page 113) for more information about command aliases.

The command is relatively straightforward. Just type in **View.ObjectBrowserSearch [search string]**:



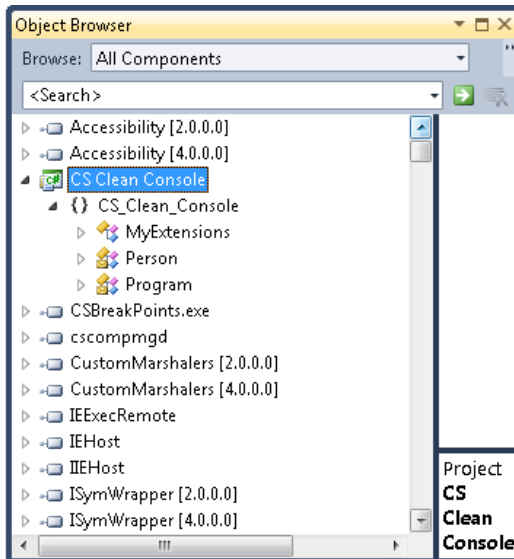
This yields a result based on the current Object Browser settings:



AX.124 The Object Browser: Objects Pane

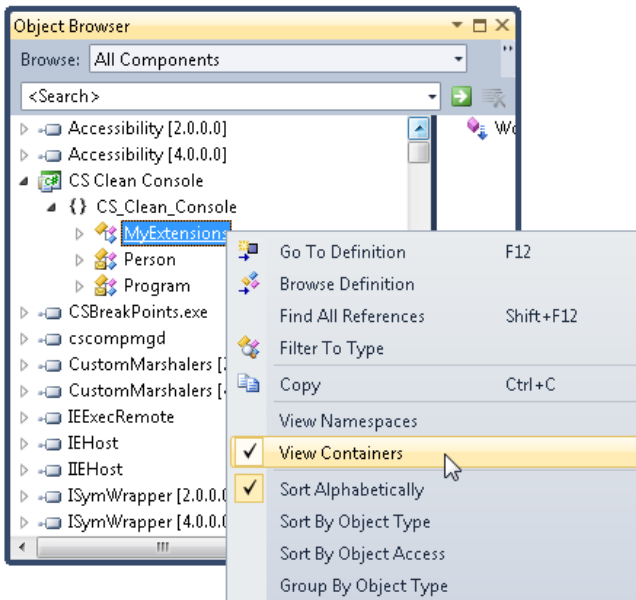
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J; F2
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J; Ctrl+W, J
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+J; Shift+Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; F2
WINDOWS	Alt,V, J
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0082

When working with the Object Browser, you will inevitably find yourself in the Objects pane located just below the Search area:



The Objects pane displays an expandable list of symbols whose top-level nodes represent components or namespaces (based on your choice in the settings) available in the current browsing scope. These top-level nodes typically contain symbols that contain other symbols. To expand or collapse a node selected in the list, click its arrow sign or press Enter.

When you right-click in the Objects pane, you can see a list of options. What you see depends on the item chosen, but it generally looks something like the following:



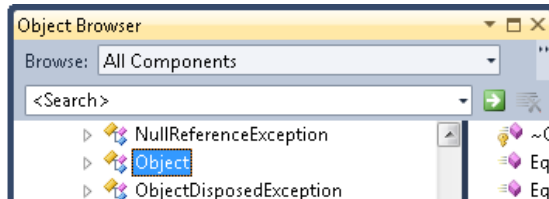
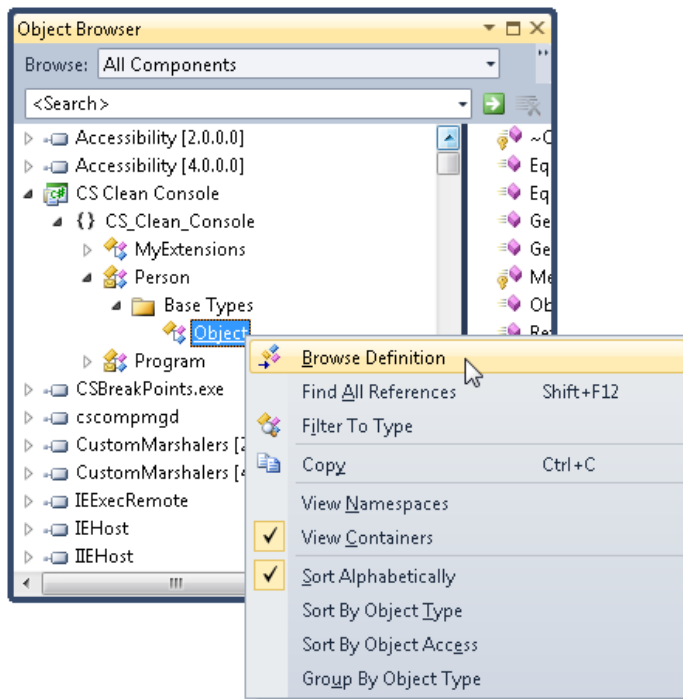
Following are descriptions of the possible options and what they do.

Go To Definition

Takes you to the line of code where the item is defined:

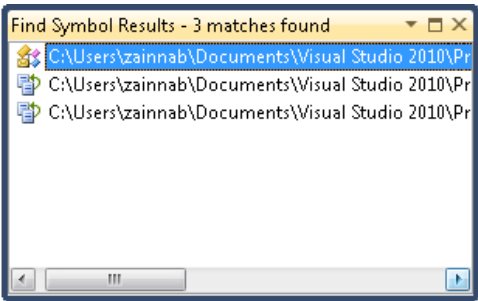
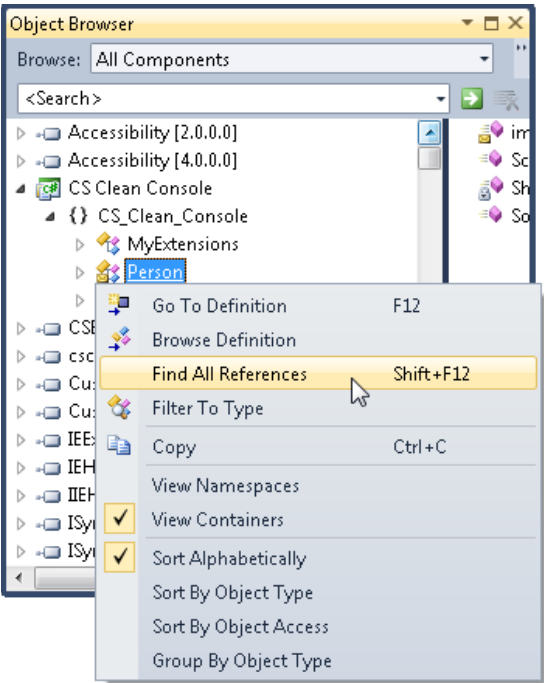
Browse Definition

Takes you to the primary node (typically top level) for the selected symbol in the Object Browser:



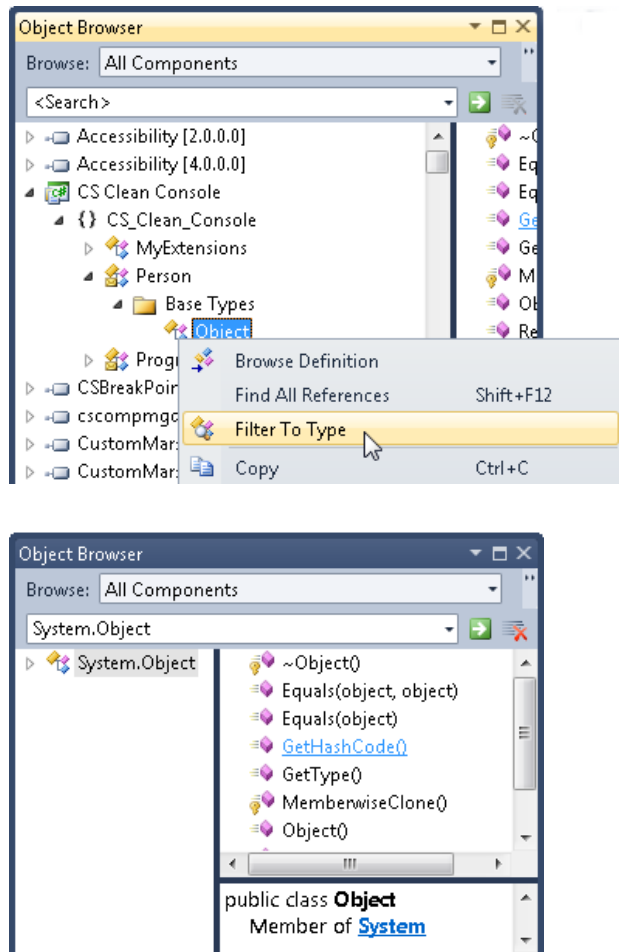
Find All References

Performs a search on the currently selected object symbol by using the current browsing scope with results shown in the Find Symbol Results dialog box:



Filter To Type

Shows only the selected type in the Objects pane. Essentially, it makes the selected item the top-level item in the pane. It is particularly useful for focusing on a single namespace or component:



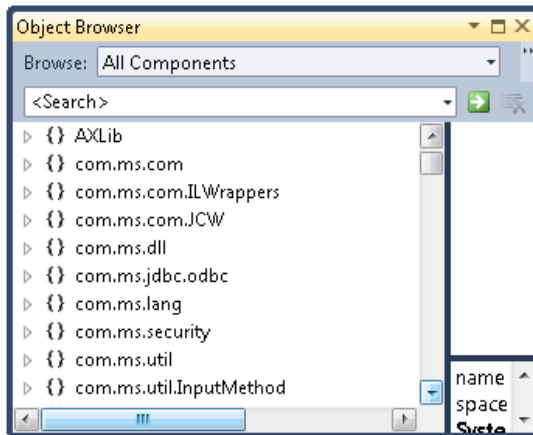
Filter To Type searches only on the item selected, and you can take the filter off by clicking the Clear Search button to the right of the Search box:

Copy

Copies a symbol reference that can be pasted into a designer and also copies the full path and name of the selected item to the clipboard.

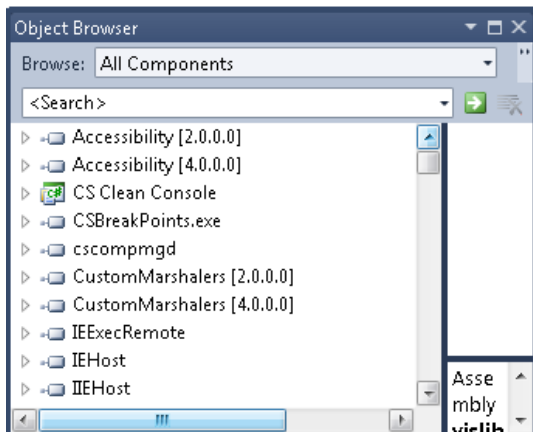
View Namespaces

Sets the highest-level items in the Objects pane to logical namespaces. Namespaces stored in multiple physical containers are merged:



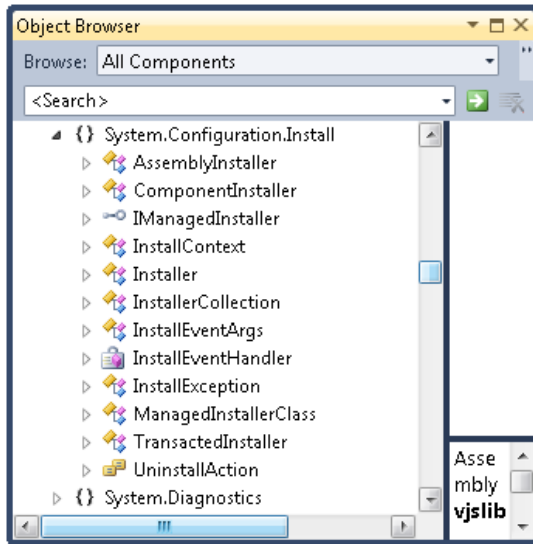
View Containers

Sets the highest-level items in the Objects pane to physical containers, such as projects, components, assemblies, source browser (.bsc) files, and output type libraries (.tlb). These can be expanded to show the namespaces they contain:



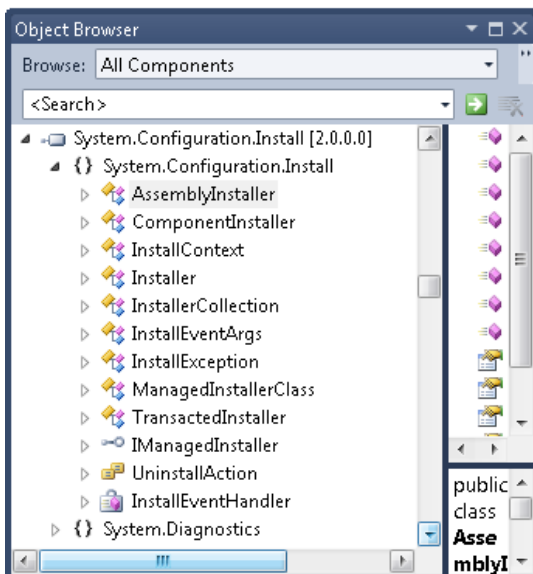
Sort Alphabetically

Lists items alphabetically by their names in ascending order:



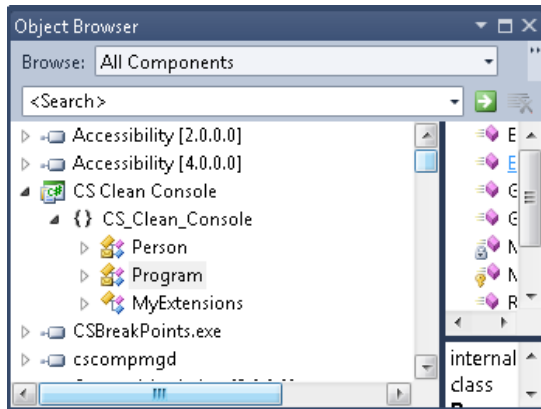
Sort By Object Type

Lists items in order of their type, such as base classes, followed by derived classes, interfaces, methods, and so forth:



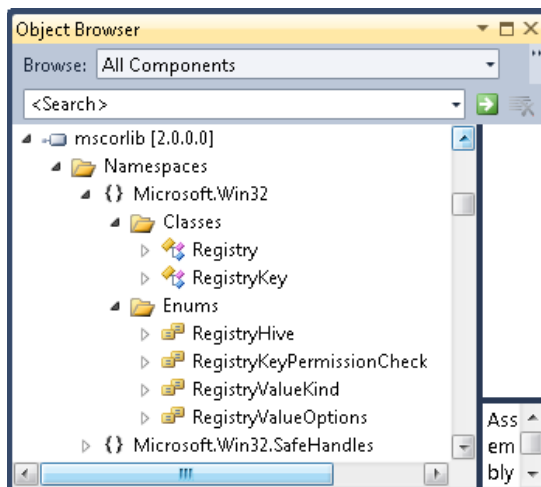
Sort By Object Access

Lists items in order of their access type, such as public or private:



Group By Object Type

Sorts items into groups by type, such as classes, interfaces, properties, methods, and so on. This is a great organizational feature:



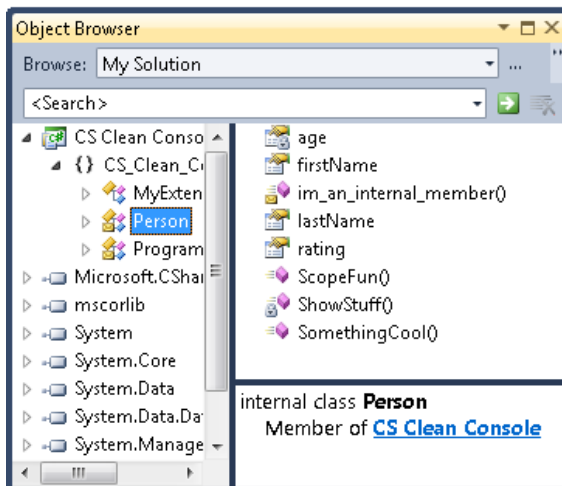
Go To Declaration

Takes you to the declaration of the symbol in the code. This is available only in Visual C++ projects.

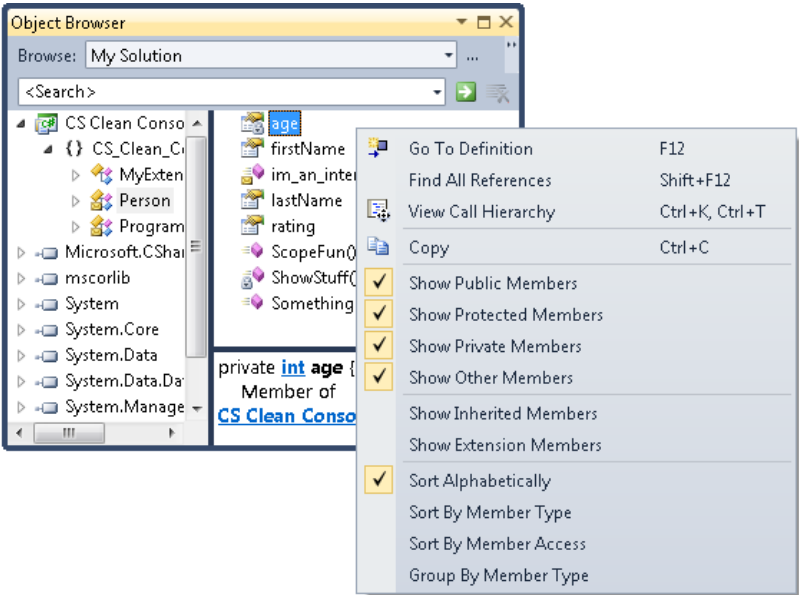
AX.125 The Object Browser: Members Pane

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J; F2
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J; Ctrl+W, J
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+J; Shift+Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; F2
WINDOWS	Alt, V, J
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0083

Each object can contain members such as properties, methods, events, constants, variables, and enum values. Selecting an object in the Objects pane (left) displays its members in the Members pane (right):



While in the Members pane, you can do several things. Many of these activities are duplicates of actions you can take in other areas of the Object Browser, so I will reference those areas to avoid duplication:



Go To Definition, Find All References, and Copy

These are the same as in the Objects pane (vstipTool0082, “The Object Browser: Objects Pane,” page A195).

View Call Hierarchy

This command is unique to the Members pane and opens up the Call Hierarchy window (vstipTool0005, “Using the Call Hierarchy,” page 310).

Show *

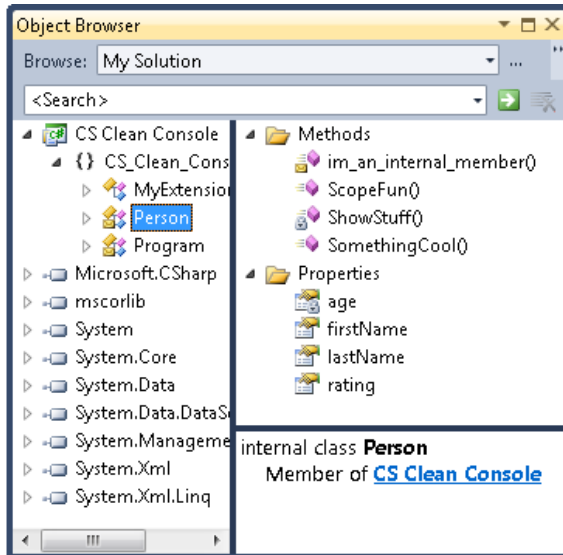
These options are the same as the ones available in the Object Browser settings (vstipTool0080, “The Object Browser: Settings,” page A186).

Sort *

These options are the same as the ones available in the Objects pane (vstipTool0082, “The Object Browser: Objects pane,” page 124).

Group By Member Type

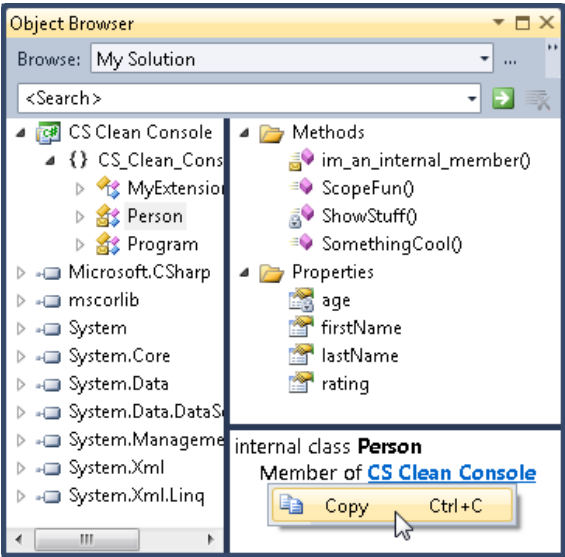
This is similar to the same option in the Objects pane but different enough to warrant a quick look. When you use this option, members are grouped into their respective types:



AX.126 The Object Browser: Description Pane

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J; F2
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J; Ctrl+W, J
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+J; Shift+Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; F2
WINDOWS	Alt, V, J
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0084

The Description pane (bottom right) displays detailed information about the currently selected item (Objects pane) or member (Members pane). You can copy (right-click anywhere in the pane) data from the Description pane to the clipboard and then paste it into the code editor:



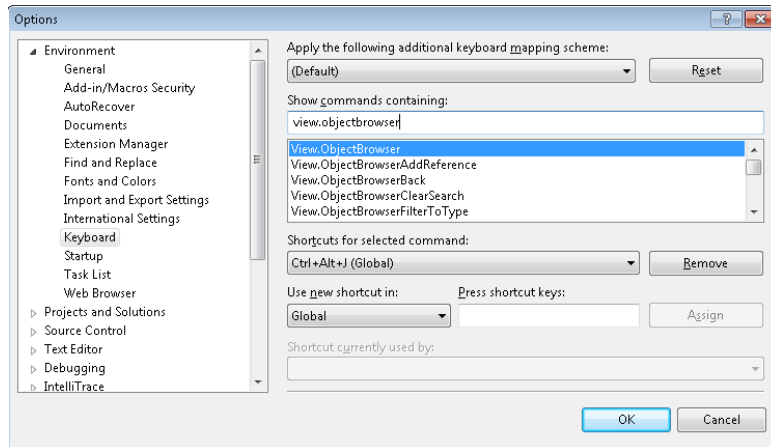
The information displayed depends on the selection and can include the following:

- Name and parent object
- Properties and attributes
- Syntax in the programming language of the active project
- Links to related objects and members
- Descriptions, comments, and Help text
- Version of the .NET Framework in which the object or member is included

AX.127 The Object Browser: Creating a Keyboard Shortcut for Add To References

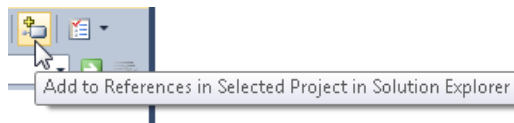
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowserAddReference
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0085

A command is available for almost anything you can do in the Object Browser. You can see this by going to Tools | Options | Keyboard and typing in **view.objectbrowser** in the Show Commands Containing area:

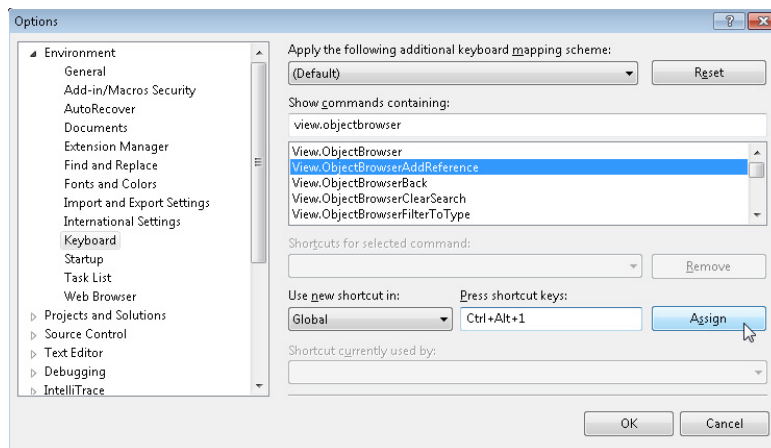


This means that you can create a shortcut key for all kinds of activities. (See `vstipTool0063`, “Keyboard Shortcuts: Creating New Shortcuts,” page 127.) I’ll provide a short example here.

So let’s say you want to make it easy to get the Add To References In Selected Project In Solution Explorer functionality available on the toolbar in a keyboard shortcut:



Just go to Tools | Options | Keyboard, type **view.objectbrowseraddreference** in the Show Commands Containing area, enter the shortcut you want to use, and click Assign:

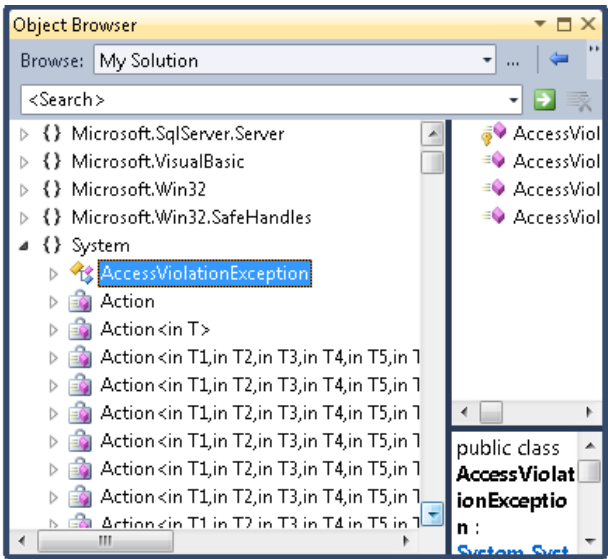


You now have a shortcut key you can use anytime you want instead of having to use the toolbar.

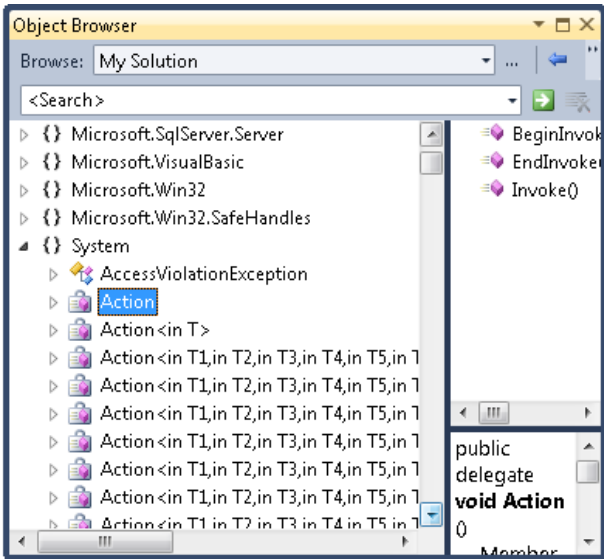
AX.128 The Object Browser: Type-Ahead Selection

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+J; F2
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+J; Ctrl+W, Ctrl+J; Ctrl+W, J
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+J; Shift+Alt+F1
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+J
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+B; F2
WINDOWS	Alt,V, J
MENU	View Object Browser
COMMAND	View.ObjectBrowser
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0086

Type-ahead support is available in the Object Browser lists. For example, I have a list of items in the Objects pane:



I type **act**, and I get the following result:

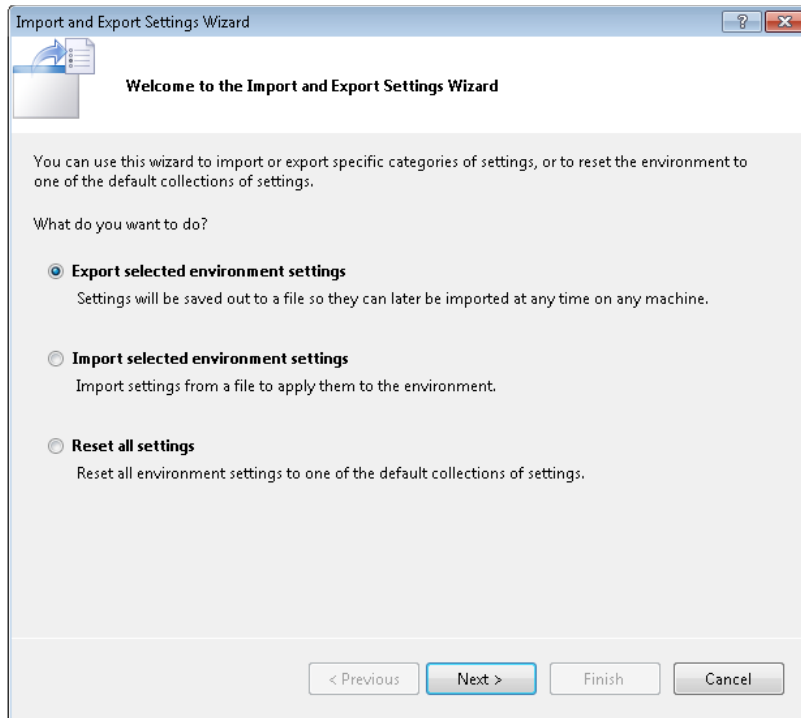


As you can see, it takes me to the first item that begins with *act*. I can continue typing until I find exactly what I want, or I can browse from there.

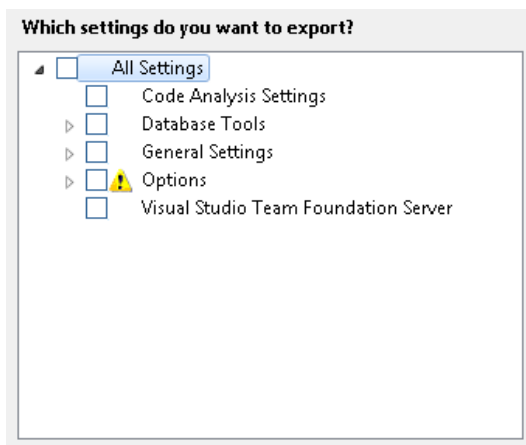
AX.129 The Object Browser: Exporting Your Settings

WINDOWS	Alt,T, I
MENU	Tools Import and Export Settings
COMMAND	Tools.ImportandExportSettings
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0087

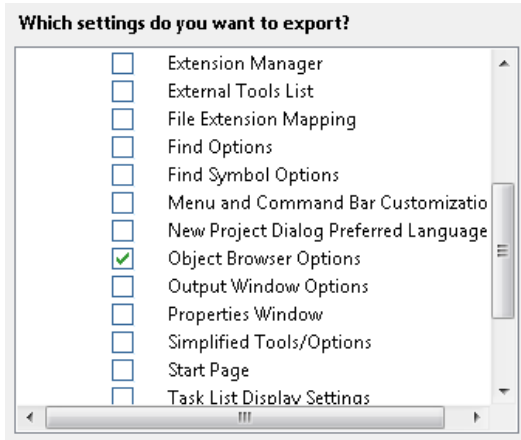
After you have the Object Browser configured the way you want it, you probably want to export the settings. In fact, you might have several different configurations you use, depending on the circumstances. For more information about exporting, see vstipEnv0021 (“Exporting Your Environment Settings,” page 6). For now, let’s just use a quick example to get your Object Browser settings exported. First, go to Tools | Import And Export Settings and choose Export Selected Environment Settings:



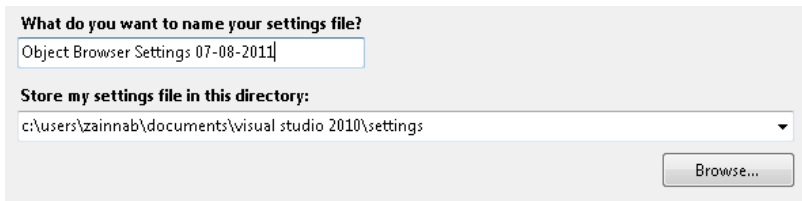
Click Next, and then clear the All Settings box to clear out all the currently selected items:



Now select Object Browser Options under General Settings:



Click Next, and then give the .vssettings file a name and the path to store it in:



Click Finish, click Close, and you are all set to go. Anytime you need these settings again, you can import them.

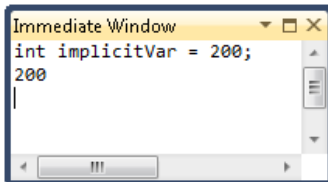
AX.130 The Immediate Window: Implicit Variables

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+G
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+D, I
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, I
MENU	Debug Windows Immediate
COMMAND	Debug.Immediate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipTool0100

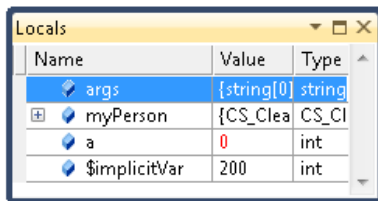
In the Immediate Window, you can create implicit variables for use in your debugging efforts. These implicit variables never go out of scope and can be treated as any other variable. They are approached differently in VB and C#.

C#

To create an implicit variable in C#, just declare any variable in the Immediate window:

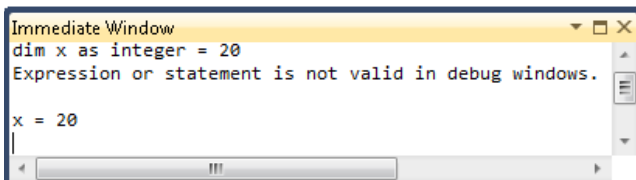


If you are in debug mode, you can actually see the variable in your Locals window. Implicit variables show up with a "\$" character in front of them:



VB

In VB, you cannot declare implicit variables in the Immediate Window. But if you use an undeclared variable, an implicit variable is created automatically. Unfortunately, VB implicit variables are not listed in the Locals window:



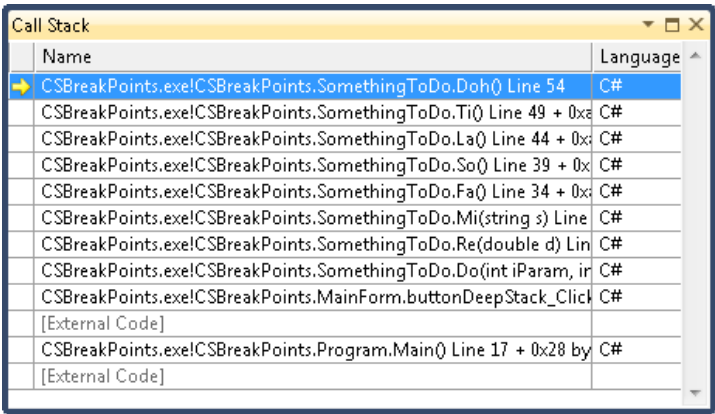
AX.131 Show External Code

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0031

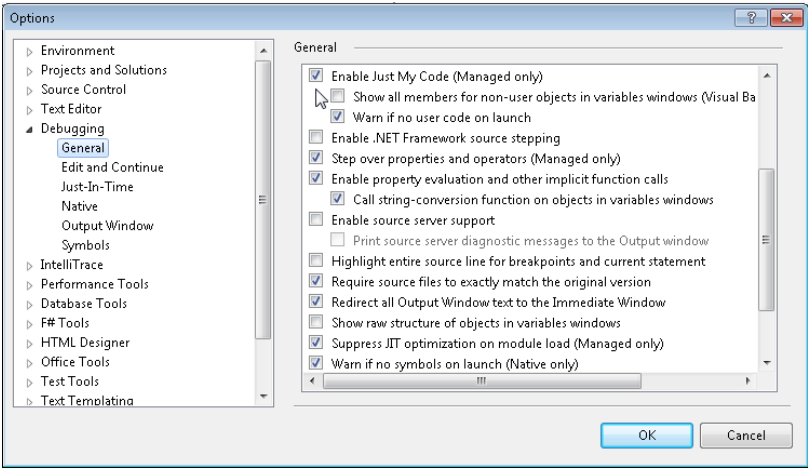
The Call Stack window provides an option to show external code. Let’s start with the basics. When you are in break mode and you look at a “normal” call stack, you see the following:



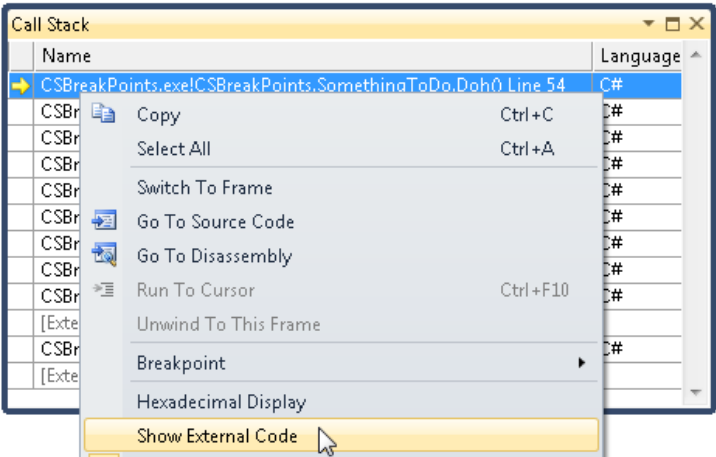
Note The Call Stack window (Ctrl+Alt+C) is only available while debugging.



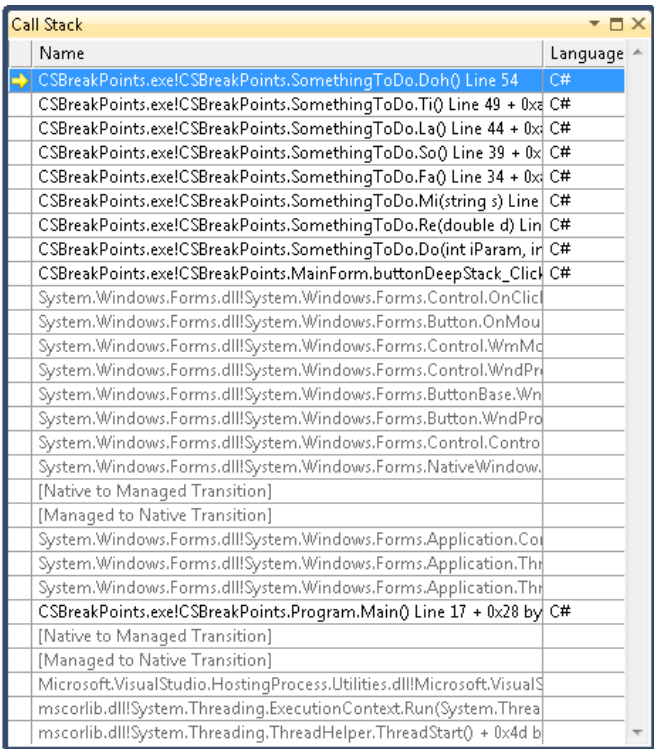
Let’s define what “normal” is in this case. Essentially, what you see here is determined by the Enable Just My Code (Managed Only) setting in Tools | Options | Debugging | General:



This setting is on by default, and it is the reason you see the “[External Code]” sections in your Call Stack. Selecting Enable Just My Code (Managed Only) means that you want to see your code without any information getting in the way. If you want to see the details of “[External Code],” just right-click anywhere in the Call Stack and choose Show External Code:



Now you should be able to see the external calls:



The grey part is where “[External Code]” used to be. Let’s zoom in on a couple of the entries:

System.Windows.Forms.dll!System.Windows.Forms.Control.OnClick	
System.Windows.Forms.dll!System.Windows.Forms.Button.OnMouseClick	
System.Windows.Forms.dll!System.Windows.Forms.Control.WmMouseDown	
System.Windows.Forms.dll!System.Windows.Forms.Control.WndProc	
System.Windows.Forms.dll!System.Windows.Forms.ButtonBase.WndProc	

Notice that now you are looking into the details of what is happening. It remains this way until you turn it off again.

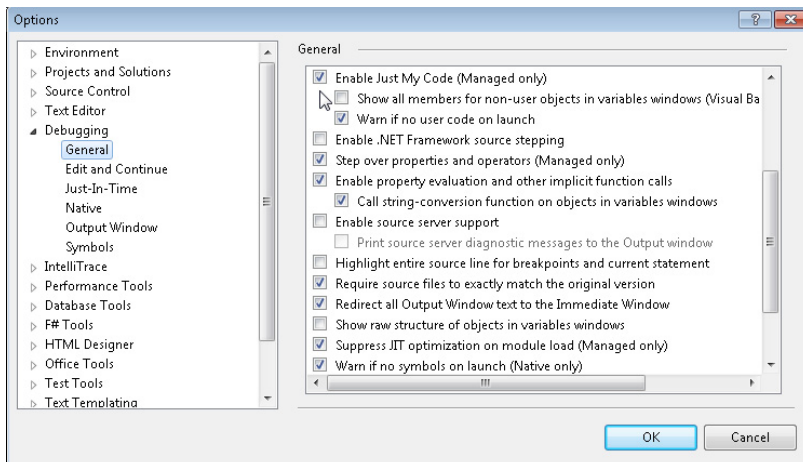
By the way, if you ever need to turn this feature off, just right-click the Call Stack again and select Show External Code. It turns off this feature, and you are back to the original view.

There is no option to turn this feature on and off, but just for reference, this setting is stored in the registry at HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\VisualStudio\10.0\Debugger under ShowExternalCode.

AX.132 Understanding Just My Code

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C++ (managed only), C#, VB
CODE	vstipDebug0032

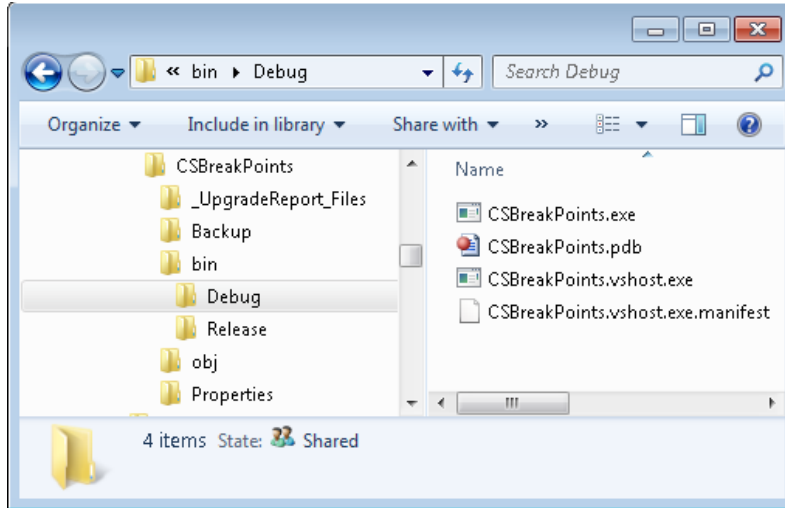
You often want to debug just the code you have written and exclude any Framework or external component code that you are using. If you go to Tools | Options | Debugging | General, you can find an option to Enable Just My Code (Managed Only):



Lots of people wonder what "Just My Code" really means. So let's start with what the documentation says (<http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/h5e30exc.aspx>):

"To distinguish user code from non-user code, Just My Code looks at three things: DBG Files, PDB files, and optimization."

DBG and PDB files



One way to figure out what is "your code" is to look and see whether it has DBG and/or PDB files. In case you didn't know, DBG files have been superseded by the PDB format.

The PDB extension stands for "program database." It holds the debugging information that was introduced in Visual C++ version 1.0. You can find out more about PDB files at <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/121366/en-us>. This is typically deep-level information about the source, so if you have these files, either it's your code or someone trusted you enough to give them to you. In other words, it is basically "yours."

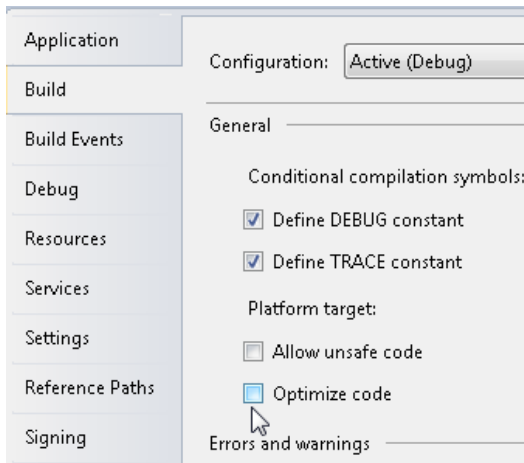
Optimization

When optimization is turned off (the default setting for Debug builds), it factors into the code being considered "yours" as well. As stated in the documentation mentioned earlier, the optimization "option enables or disables optimizations performed by the compiler to make your output file smaller, faster, and more efficient."

Many optimizations are available, such as optimizing for application speed or the size of your program. You can get see the full list of features at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/k1ack8f1.aspx>. Basically, optimization does many things that are great for a shipping application but not for one that you are currently debugging.

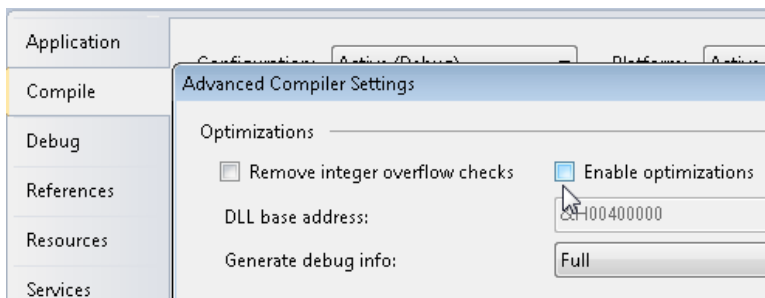
C#

In C#, this is found in the Project properties on the Build tab:



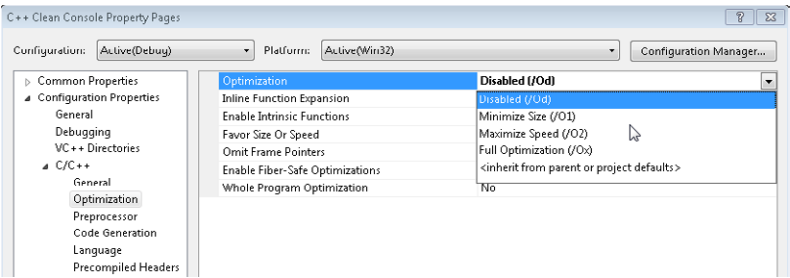
VB

In VB, it is in the Project properties on the Compile tab, but you have to click the Advanced Compiler Settings button:



C++

In C++, you can find optimization options under the Project properties, under C/C++, Optimization:



Finally

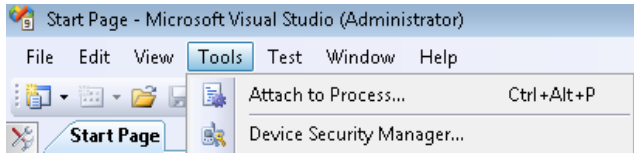
So if the PDB information is there and optimization is *not* turned on, the code is considered “yours” as far as Visual Studio is concerned.

AX.133 Attach To Process (Tools vs. Debug Menu)

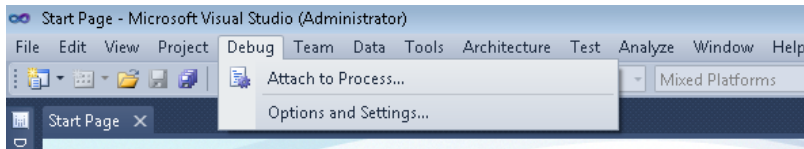
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+P
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+P; Ctrl+Shift+R
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+P
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+P
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+P
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+P; Ctrl+Shift+R
WINDOWS	Alt, T, P; Alt, D, P, Enter
MENU	Tools Attach to Process; Debug Attach to Process
COMMAND	Tools.AttachtoProcess; Debug.AttachtoProcess
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0033

I decided to figure out what the difference is between Debug | Attach To Process and Tools | Attach To Process. I’ll spare you the suspense: They are the same.

OK so why are they there? The answer is simple: Prior to Visual Studio 2010, when you didn’t have a project open in Visual Studio, it would not show the Debug menu. So the only way you could use Attach To Process was to use the Tools menu:



Beginning in Visual Studio 2010, the Debug menu is available even when a project isn't open:



Essentially, the redundancy is unnecessary in Visual Studio 2010, but it actually served a purpose in prior versions.

AX.134 The Immediate Window: Running WinDbg and SOS (Son of Strike) Commands

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+G
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+I; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+I; Ctrl+D, I
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+I
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, I
MENU	Debug Windows Immediate
COMMAND	Debug.Immediate
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0097

It would take a long time to go into detail about WinDbg and SOS (Son of Strike), so I will avoid that here. I want to give you a quick view into how SOS works in the Immediate Window. If you want to get hard-core with debugging, the absolute best places to learn are these two blogs:

- John Robbins, at Wintellect: <http://www.wintellect.com/CS/blogs/jrobbins/default.aspx>
- Tess Fernandez, an ASP.NET Escalation Engineer at Microsoft: <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/tess>

Loading SOS in the Immediate Window

With that said, let's take a look at what it takes to get SOS going in the Immediate Window when using 32-bit and 64-bit architectures. As we go along, I also want to show you the messages you commonly encounter when trying to set this up. First, open the Immediate Window (Ctrl+Alt+I), type in **.load sos**, and press Enter.

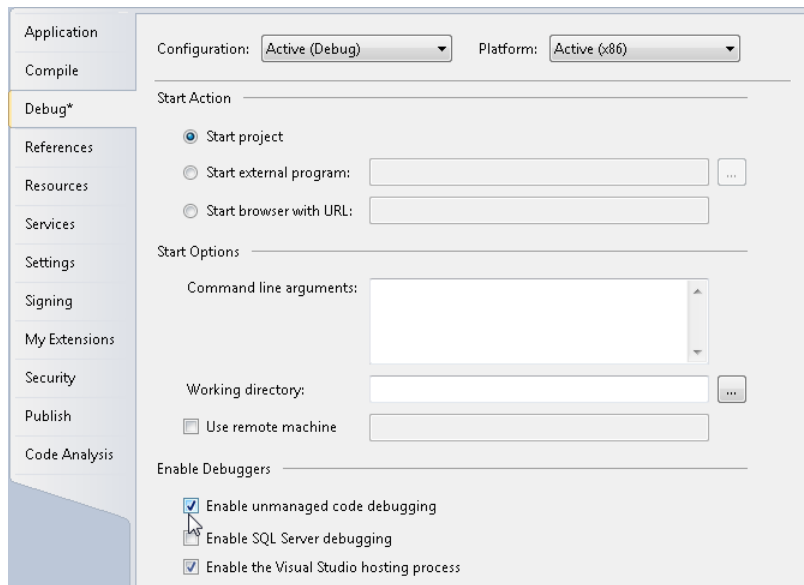
32-bit

You most likely get the following message:

"SOS not available while Managed only debugging. To load SOS, enable unmanaged debugging in your project properties."

To fix this, go to your project properties page and click the Debug tab.

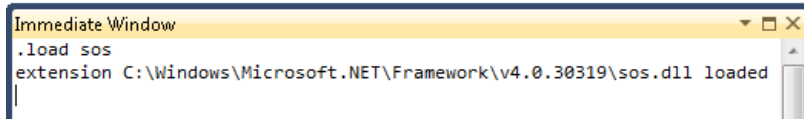
Then select Enable Unmanaged Code Debugging:



Now go back to the Immediate Window, and type **.load sos** again. It might take a few seconds, but eventually you should see the following message:



Note Your version might be different based on the CLR being used.



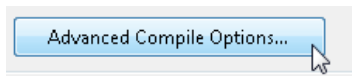
```
Immediate Window
.load sos
extension C:\Windows\Microsoft.NET\Framework\v4.0.30319\sos.dll loaded
```

64-bit

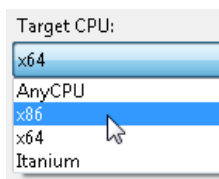
You might see the following message:

"Error during command: extension C:\Windows\Microsoft.NET**Framework64**\v4.0.30319\sos.dll could not load (error 193)"

This means that you are attempting to debug an x64 (64-bit) application. Visual Studio currently offers no support for interop (managed/unmanaged) debugging on x64. You can fix this in VB by going to the project properties (Compile tab) and clicking the Advanced Compile Options button:



In C#, you would go to the Build tab of your project properties instead. Then, under Target CPU, choose x86:

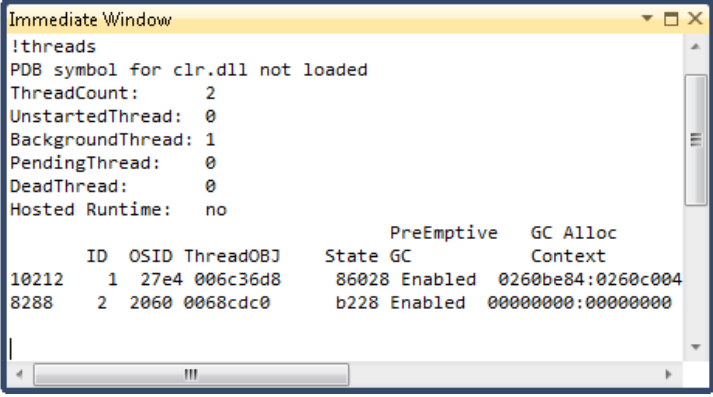


Using SOS

Once you have Son of Strike loaded, there are a variety of WinDbg commands you can leverage. I'll cover some of the more interesting ones in this section.

Threads and symbols

Type **!threads** to see threading info:



```

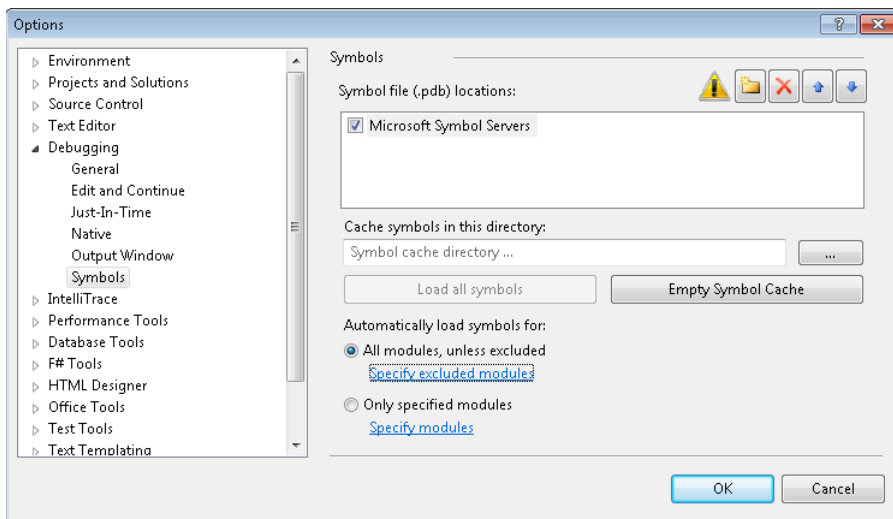
Immediate Window
!threads
PDB symbol for clr.dll not loaded
ThreadCount:      2
UnstartedThread:  0
BackgroundThread: 1
PendingThread:    0
DeadThread:       0
Hosted Runtime:   no

      ID  OSID ThreadOBJ      State GC      PreEmptive  GC Alloc
      10212  1  27e4 006c36d8      86028 Enabled  0260be84:0260c004
      8288  2  2060 0068cdc0      b228 Enabled  00000000:00000000
  
```

Do you see the error that says “PDB symbol for clr.dll not loaded”? This is a common error that is trying to tell you that you need to get symbols. The easiest way to do this is to go to Tools | Options | Debugging | Symbols and select the Microsoft Symbol Servers check box in the Symbol File (.pdb) Locations area:

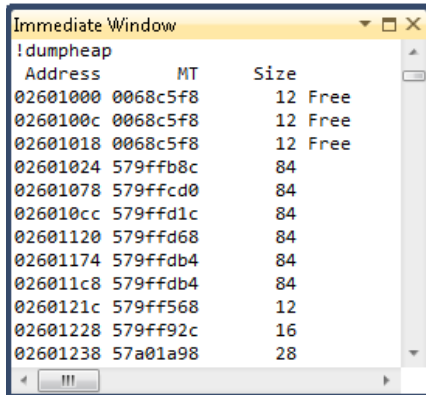


Warning There is definitely a performance hit when loading symbols, so be prepared to have some delays as you debug.



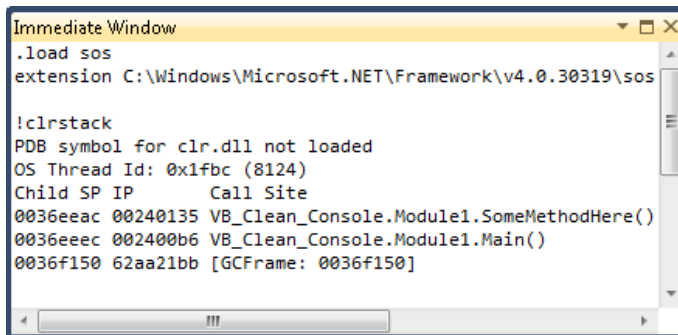
Dump the managed heap

You can dump the managed heap by typing **!dumpheap**. Just watch out—this is pretty verbose output by default:



Current thread call stack

If you want to display the call stack for the current thread, you can use **!clrstack**. The following illustration shows a sample of the output:

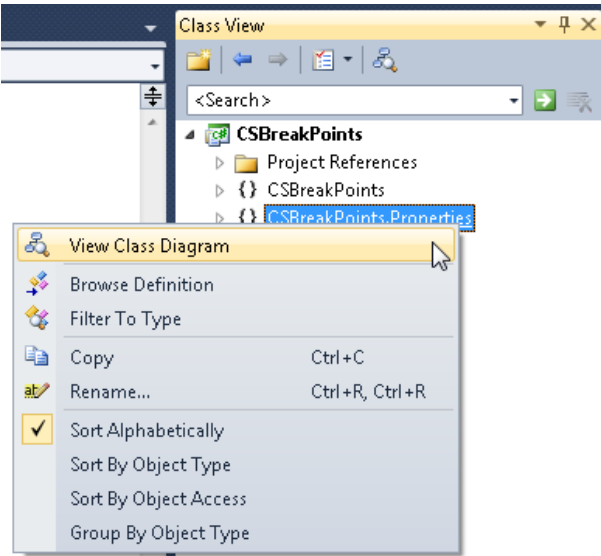


These are just a few of the commands you can use. You can get as deep or as shallow into this as you want, but the moral of this story is that you can run WinDbg and SOS commands from the Immediate Window and do some serious debugging from within the IDE.

AX.135 Creating a Class Diagram from Class View

MENU	[Context Menu] View Class Diagram
COMMAND	ClassViewContextMenu.ClassViewItem.ViewClassDiagram
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipTool0112

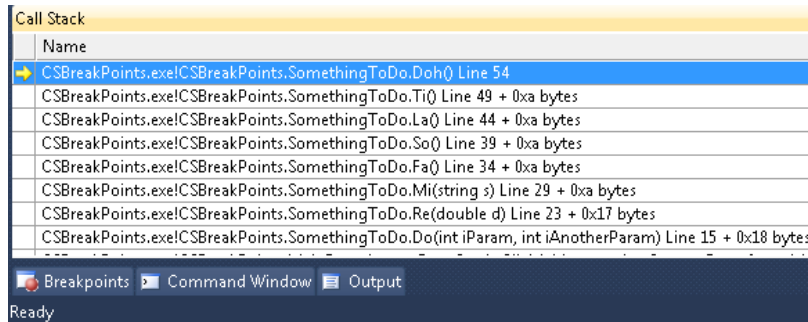
If you like using class diagrams, you can easily create them by using the Class View (Ctrl+Shift+C) window. Just right-click a namespace or class, for example, and choose View Class Diagram:



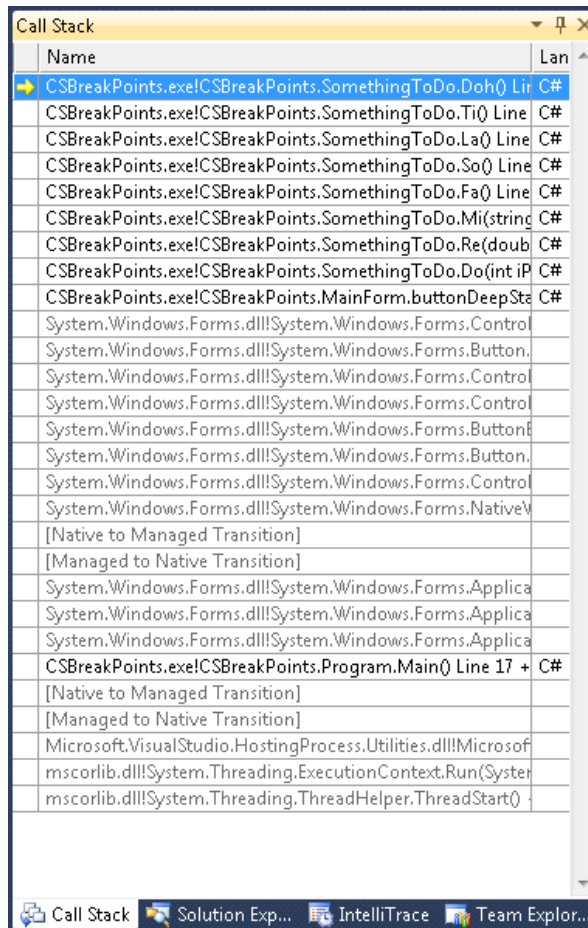
AX.136 Placing the Call Stack and Call Hierarchy Windows

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0115

When you are working with the Call Stack or Call Hierarchy windows, they can sometimes get a little lengthy. Usually you see them docked at the bottom. This is a great feature, but not much fun if you want to look at, say, 20 lines in the stack. You might find it useful to dock the window with Solution Explorer (which by default is docked to the right of your screen). Just drag the tab toward Solution Explorer, and place it with the other tabs:



Now you are all set, and you can see much more information while you work:



Also, recall that this has no impact on your Design Mode experience because the window layouts are different. (See vstipEnv0052, “Window Layouts: Design, Debug, and Full Screen,” page 91)

AX.137 Delete All Breakpoints

DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+F9
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+F9
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+F9
VISUAL C++ 2	[no shortcut]
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+F9
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Shift+F9
WINDOWS	Alt,D, D
MENU	Debug Delete All Breakpoints
COMMAND	Debug.DeleteAllBreakpoints
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0025

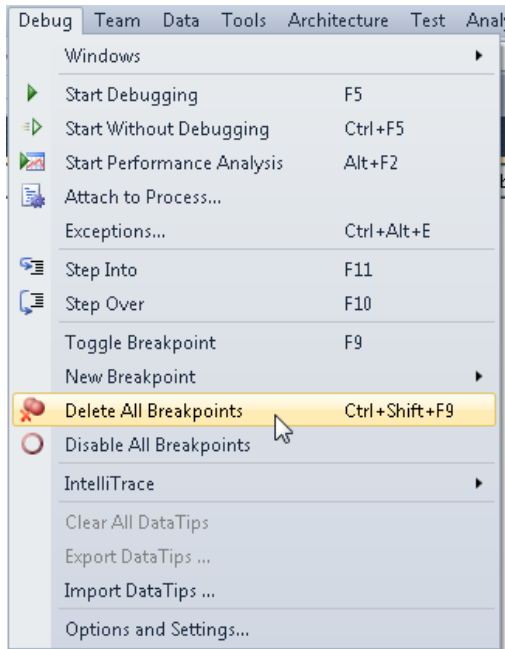
You can delete all your breakpoints at once. You have a couple of options for doing this.



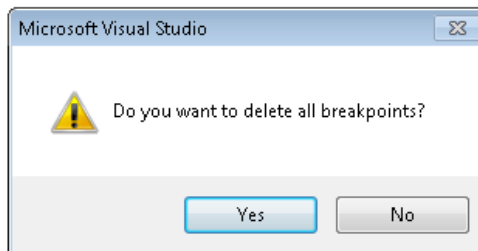
Warning If you want them back, make sure that you export your breakpoints before you use either of these options. See vstipDebug0003, “How to Import and Export Breakpoints” on page 329, for information about how to back up your breakpoints.

Debug | Delete All Breakpoints; Ctrl+Shift+F9

If you use the Debug menu or Ctrl+Shift+F9, the behavior hasn’t changed from previous versions: All breakpoints get deleted:

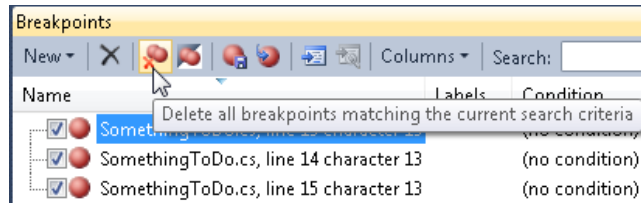


You will get the following dialog box to verify that you want to delete *all* the breakpoints:

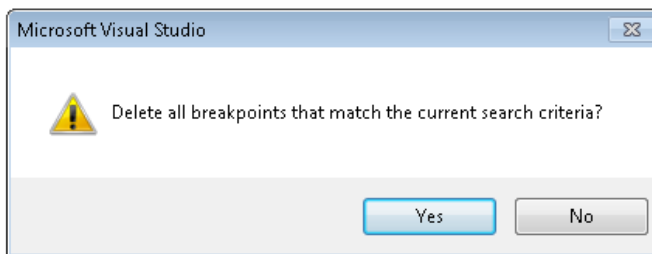


Breakpoints Window

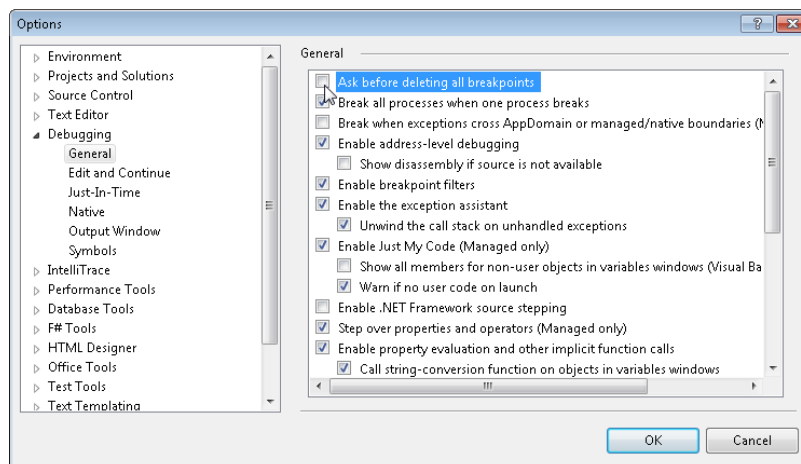
In Visual Studio 2010, you can delete all breakpoints that match the current search criteria. Only those breakpoints that are currently visible in the Breakpoints window are deleted. This is a powerful concept that allows you to remove unwanted breakpoints in bulk that are no longer needed, but still keep the ones you will use later:



You get the following dialog box to verify that you want to delete the breakpoints. Notice the additional text concerning the current search criteria:



You will always get a dialog box to verify that you want to delete all the breakpoints. You can turn this off by going to Tools | Options | Debugging | General and clearing the Ask Before Deleting All Breakpoints check box:





Warning Just because you can turn it off doesn't mean you should turn it off. I don't recommend it.

AX.138 Make Object ID

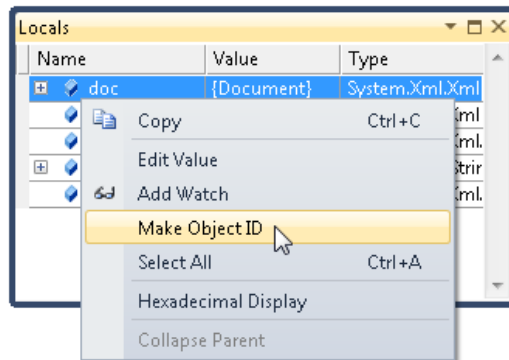
COMMAND	DebuggerContextMenus.AutosWindow.MakeObjectID
VERSIONS	2008, 2010
LANGUAGES	C#, VB
CODE	vstipDebug0015



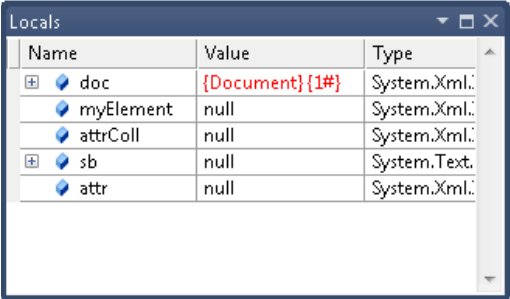
Note The idea for this tip came originally from John Robbins at Wintellect (<http://www.wintellect.com>).

Ever want to track an object even if it is out of scope? How about seeing whether an object has been garbage collected? Well, you can do it with Object IDs. Just follow these steps:

1. Set a breakpoint in your code where you can get to an object variable that is in scope.
2. Run your code and let it stop at the breakpoint.
3. In your Locals or Autos Window, right-click the object variable and choose Make Object ID from the context menu:



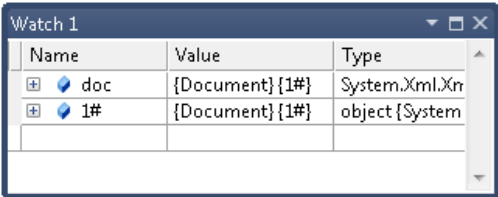
You should now see something new in the Value column:



Name	Value	Type
doc	{Document}{1#}	System.Xml.
myElement	null	System.Xml.
attrColl	null	System.Xml.
sb	null	System.Text.
attr	null	System.Xml.

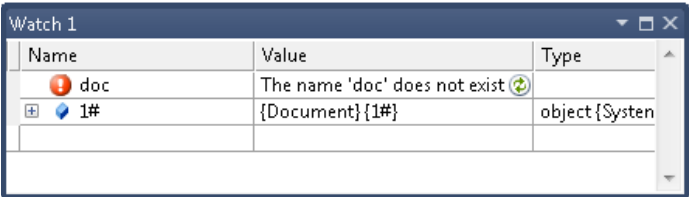
That new value is the Object ID that was generated. Let's see how it works.

To experiment for this experiment, type both the object variable and the new Object ID in your Watch window:



Name	Value	Type
doc	{Document}{1#}	System.Xml.Xm
1#	{Document}{1#}	object {System

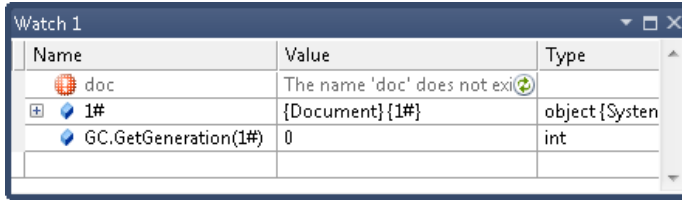
Now if you go to another method where the object variable (in this case "doc") is out of scope, you get the following result:



Name	Value	Type
doc	The name 'doc' does not exist	
1#	{Document}{1#}	object {System

Notice that the variable name "doc" is out of scope, but I can still track the Object ID that shows the location in memory that object variable pointed to. This is very handy for looking at objects for full lifecycle.

Also, you can do some interesting things. For example, you can see which generation the memory space is currently in for purposes of garbage collection:



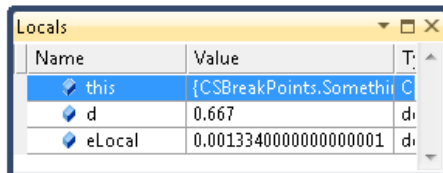
If you want to learn more about Object IDs, see the excellent blog post at <http://blogs.msdn.com/b/jimgries/archive/2005/11/16/493431.aspx>.

AX.139 Change Values from the Locals Window

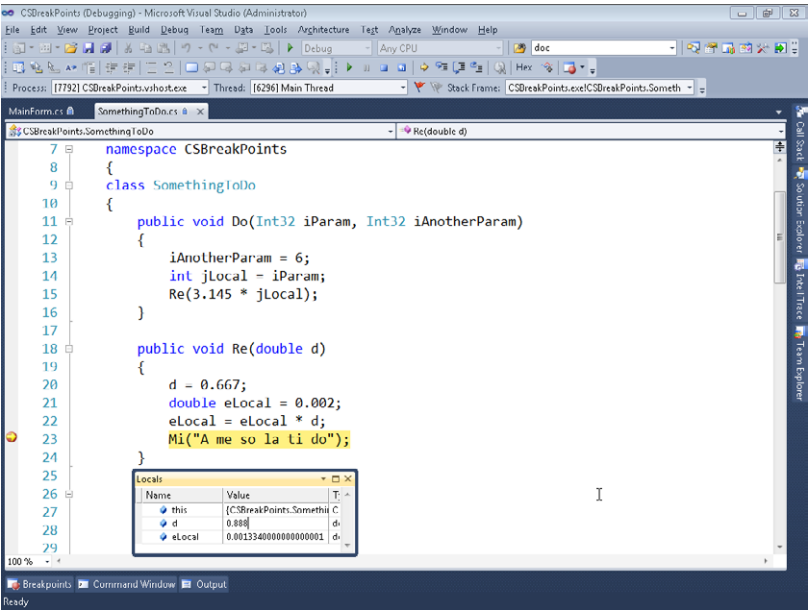
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Alt+V, L
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, L
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Alt+V, L; Ctrl+D, Ctrl+L; Ctrl+D, L
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Alt+V, L; Alt+3
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, L; Alt+4
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+Alt+V, L; Ctrl+Alt+L
WINDOWS	Alt,D, W, L
MENU	Debug Windows Locals
COMMAND	Debug.Locals
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0102

You can use the Locals window to change values while debugging in break mode. Just find any variable you want to change in your Locals window:

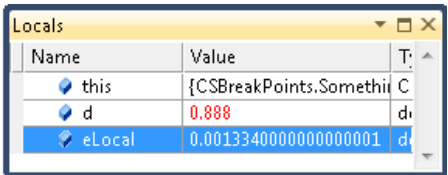
```
public void Re(double d)
{
    d = 0.667;
    double eLocal = 0.002;
    eLocal = eLocal * d;
    Mi("A me so la ti do");
}
```



In this case, let’s change “d” to another value:



The changed value turns red afterward to indicate that it has been modified:



AX.140 Debug Executable Without Using Attach to Process

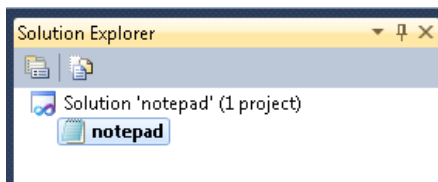
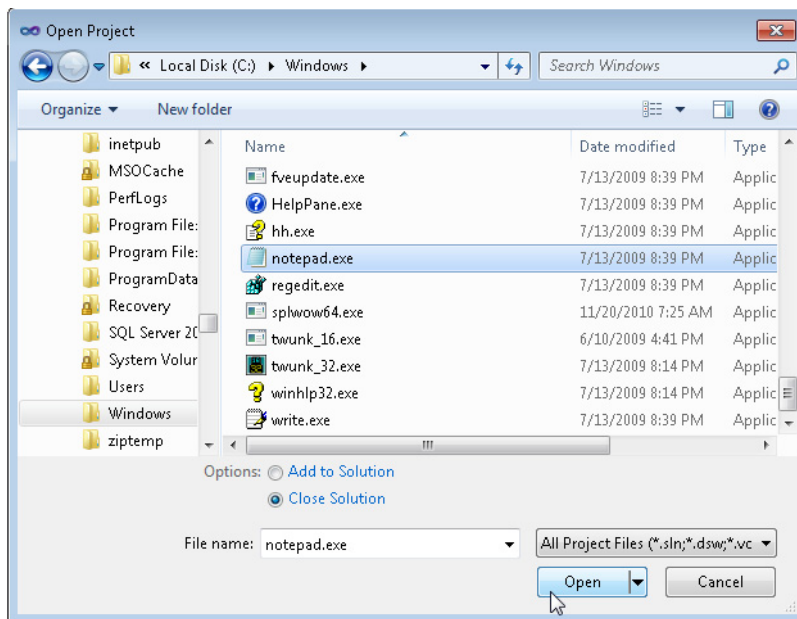
DEFAULT	Ctrl+Shift+O
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+Shift+O; Ctrl+O
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+Shift+O
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+Shift+O
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+Shift+O
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+O
WINDOWS	Alt,F, O, P; Alt,F, D, N
MENU	File Open Project/Solution; File Add New Project
COMMAND	File.OpenProject; File.AddNewProject
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0034



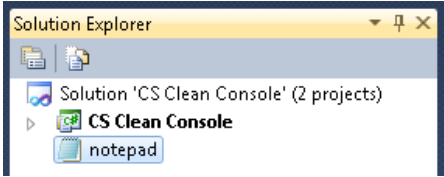
Note You might need to start Visual Studio with administrator rights before you can use this tip. You will get a warning message that allows you to elevate privileges if this is the case.

You probably already know about the Attach To Process menu items on the Debug and Tools menus, but what if, for example, the process fails before you can attach to it? Maybe it fails on startup, or it runs too fast for you to catch it. Did you know you can create a solution for executables?

It's easy to do. Just find the executable you want to create a solution for by going to File | Open Project/Solution:



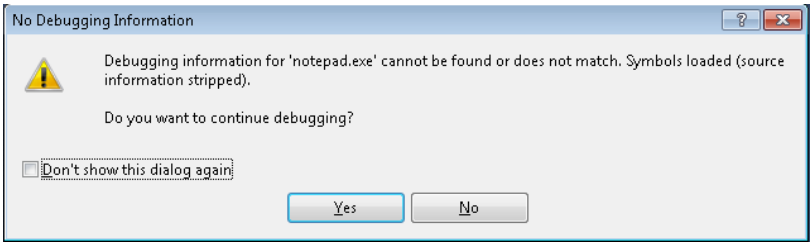
Or, if you have a solution open already, go to File | Add | Existing Project:



Now you can run the executable just like any other project by pressing F5. If you have multiple projects, make sure to set it as the startup.

When you are debugging an executable without the source code, the available debugging features are limited, whether you attach to a running executable or add the executable to a Visual Studio solution.

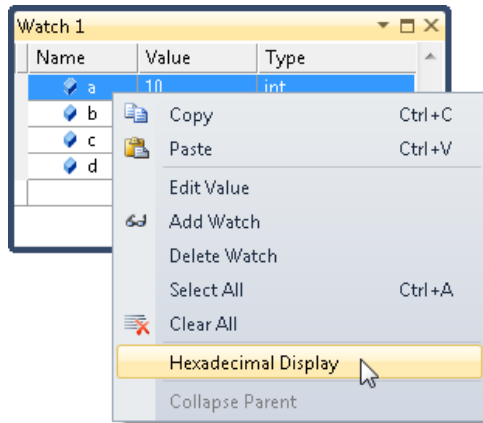
If the executable was built without debug information in a compatible format, available features are further limited. If you have the source code, the best approach is to import the source code into Visual Studio and create a debug build of the executable in Visual Studio:



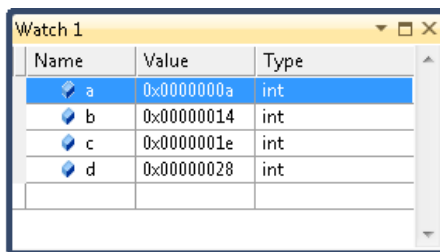
AX.141 The Watch Window: Hexadecimal Display

MENU	[Context Menu] Hexadecimal Display
COMMAND	Debug.HexadecimalDisplay
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipTool0110

All the variable windows (Locals, Autos, QuickWatch, and Watch) support showing the hexadecimal display for values. These values are particularly useful when you are dealing with data that requires any hex input for values. In any variable window, you can right-click anywhere and choose Hexadecimal Display:



You now have hex values displayed for the values in all the variable windows:

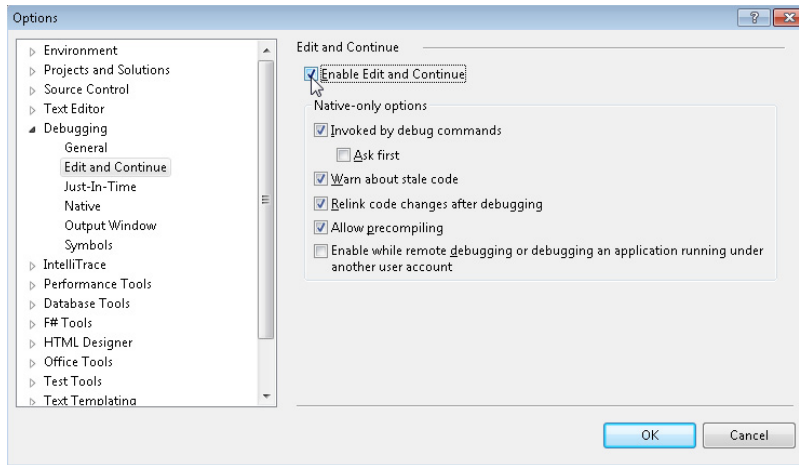


You can repeat this action to turn the hex display off.

AX.142 Edit And Continue

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipDebug0038

Did you know you can edit your code while you are debugging? You can do it with the Edit And Continue (EnC) feature. First, you can find this option under Tools | Options | Debugging | Edit And Continue:



However, in many language-specific scenarios, you can't use this feature. For more detailed information, see the topic "Edit and Continue" at [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bcew296c\(v=VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bcew296c(v=VS.100).aspx).

The preceding caveat notwithstanding, this is an interesting feature that allows you to edit code while you are debugging and to continue execution without having to do a full recompile of the code.

Disclaimer

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that there are some people who don't think using Edit And Continue is a good idea. John Robbins, whose opinion I respect a great deal, is one of those people, and he makes some compelling arguments why you might not want to use this feature all the time. You can find John's post at <http://www.wintellect.com/CS/blogs/jrobbins/archive/2004/10/17/c-edit-and-continue-announced.aspx>.

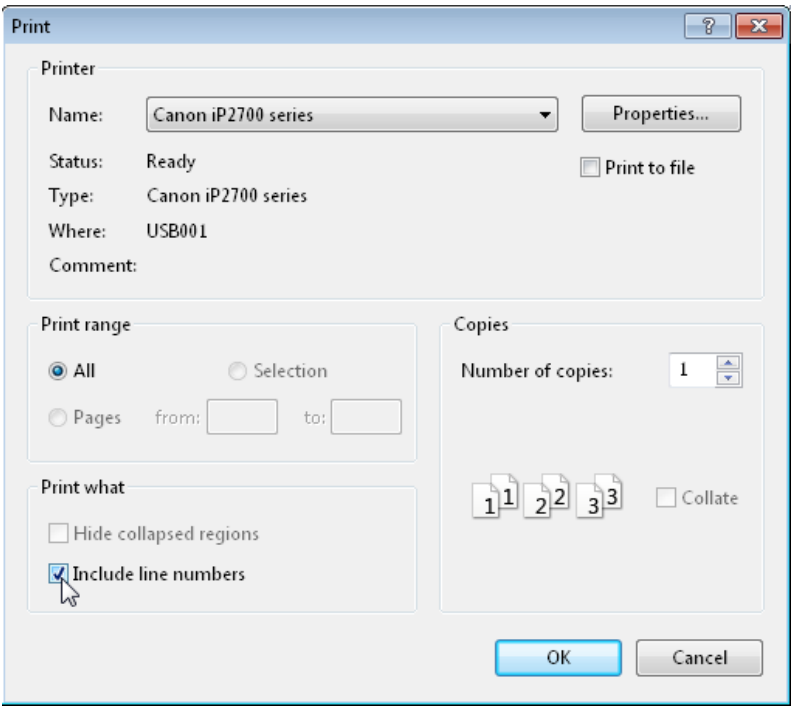
Interestingly, you can find Jeff Atwood's rebuttal to John's argument at <http://www.coding-horror.com/blog/2006/02/revisiting-edit-and-continue.html>.

The bottom line: Make your own informed decision about using Edit And Continue, but even if you do use it, be fully aware of the implications of changes you make when using it.

AX.143 Print with Line Numbers

DEFAULT	Ctrl+P
VISUAL BASIC 6	Ctrl+P
VISUAL C# 2005	Ctrl+P
VISUAL C++ 2	Ctrl+P; Ctrl+Shift+F12; Ctrl+Shift+Alt+F2
VISUAL C++ 6	Ctrl+P
VISUAL STUDIO 6	Ctrl+P
WINDOWS	Alt,F, P
MENU	File Print
COMMAND	File.Print
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0006

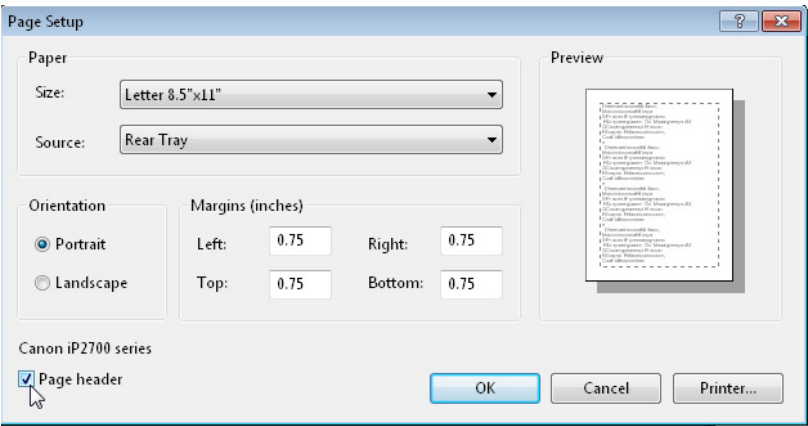
Want to print your line numbers with your code? Don't worry! You can do it by just checking the Include Line Numbers option in the Print dialog box:



AX.144 Printing the File Path in the Page Header

WINDOWS	Alt,F, U
MENU	File Page Setup
COMMAND	File.PageSetup
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0008

This feature is on by default in Visual Studio 2010, but just in case you accidentally turn it off or maybe you don't want the file path in the page header, just go to File | Page Setup and notice the Page Header check box:

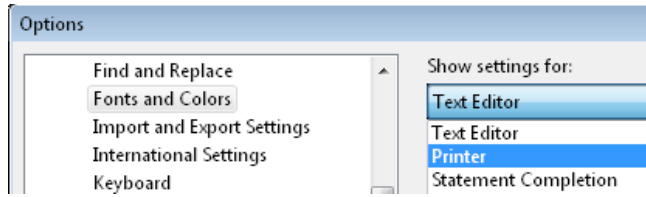


The Page Header setting toggles the printing of the file path in the page header.

AX.145 Printing in Different Fonts and Colors

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008
CODE	vstipEnv0007

Ever change your fonts or colors in the editor only to be frustrated because the fonts and colors do not print correctly or as expected? Just go to Tools | Options | Environment | Fonts And Colors on your menu bar, and then in the Show Settings For drop-down box, select Printer. Now you can change how your printed output looks:



To use your editor colors when you print, just click Use and select Text Editor Settings:



The color and font settings from the text editor will now be applied to your printed output.



Note This is a copy operation, so if you change the text editor settings, you must redo this step to copy the new settings over.

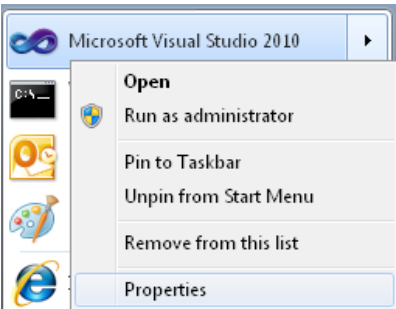
AX.146 Get Rid of the Splash Screen

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0046

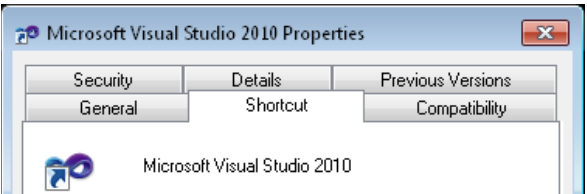
When you start Visual Studio, the splash screen is often the first thing you see:



Did you know that you can suppress it? Just go to the properties of your Visual Studio program icon:



Now click the Shortcut tab:



Add **/nosplash** to the end of the Target area:

Target:

Now when you run Visual Studio, you no longer see the splash screen.

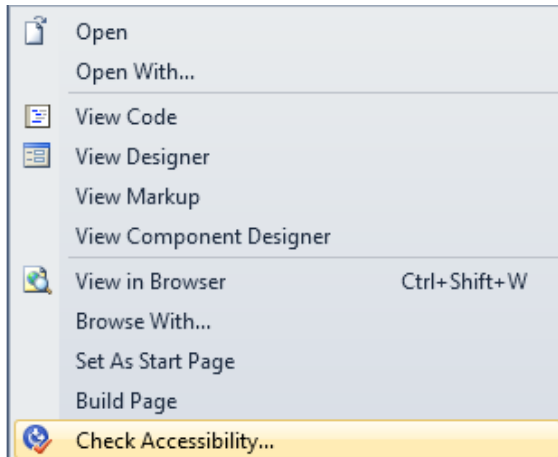
AX.147 Understanding Check Accessibility

WINDOWS	Alt,T, B
MENU	Tools Check Accessibility; [Context Menu] Check Accessibility
COMMAND	Tools.CheckAccessibility
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0028

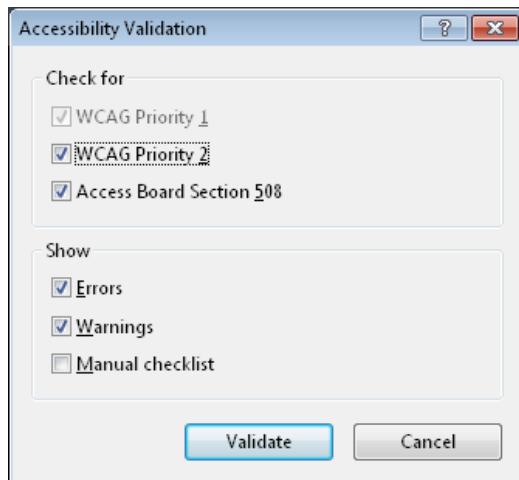
According to the documentation in "Accessibility in Visual Studio and ASP.NET," at [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms228004\(v=VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms228004(v=VS.100).aspx), accessibility is an important consideration in your development work:

"Accessibility standards enable you to build Web pages that can be used by people who have disabilities. [You can] configure ASP.NET Web server controls to make sure that they generate accessible HTML."

It is always better to make your websites accessible to people with disabilities, and in some cases, it's required. Did you know that you can easily determine whether a page meets accessibility requirements by right-clicking on any page and choosing Check Accessibility?



This opens the Accessibility Validation dialog box:



Following are descriptions of each option on the Accessibility Validation dialog box.

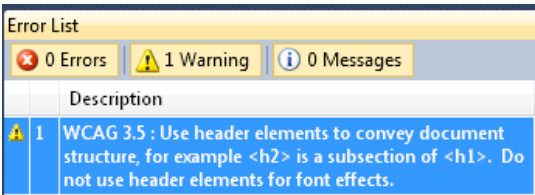
Check For

WCAG Priority 1 & 2—checks for compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (<http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php>).

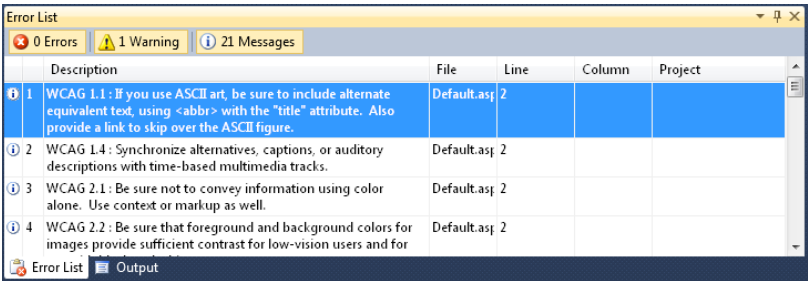
Access Board Section 508—checks accessibility by using the standards that were defined by the United States government in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, which are based on the WCAG (<http://www.section508.gov>).

Show

- **Errors and Warnings** Shows relevant items that violate the rules selected in the Check For section:



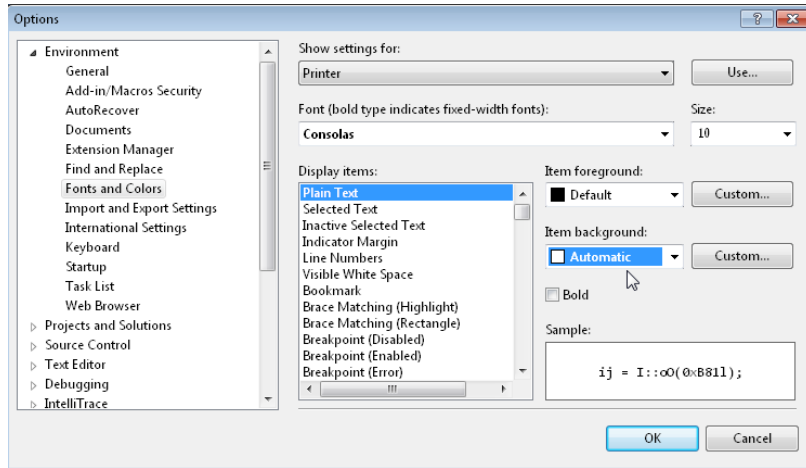
- **Manual Checklist** Generates informational messages that can be used as guides while the errors and warnings are addressed:



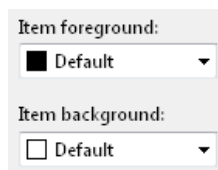
AX.148 Automatic vs. Default in Fonts and Colors

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0009

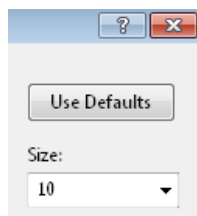
If you've ever wondered what the difference is between the Default and Automatic options in the fonts and colors found at Tools | Options | Environment | Fonts And Colors, see the next illustration:



Default



The Default setting is pretty straightforward. It uses the default colors set up by Visual Studio for the item selected. The colors are what Visual Studio defines as the default. You might call these the “normal” colors, for want of a better term. The good news is that you can always restore these settings by just clicking Use Defaults in the upper-right corner of the dialog box:

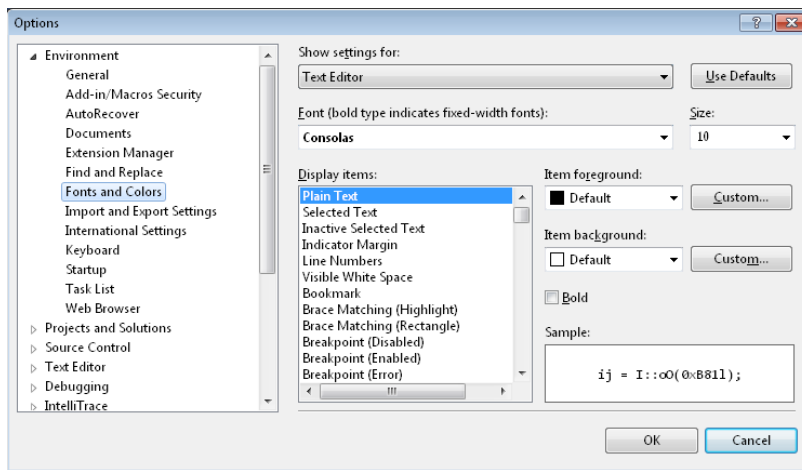


Automatic

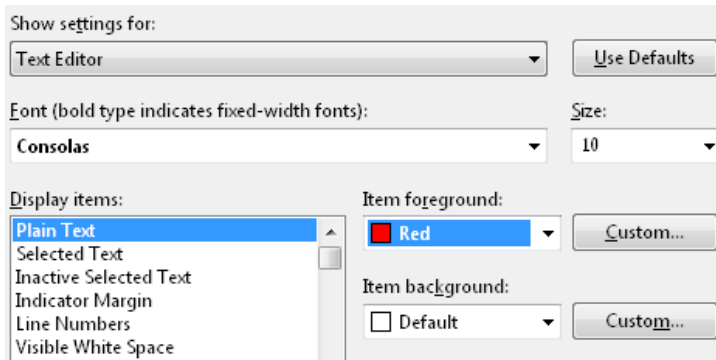
The Automatic setting is a lot more interesting. Here is the definition of Automatic from the documentation (the bold emphasis is mine):

*“Items can **inherit** the [...] color from other display items such as Plain Text. Using this option, when you change the color of an inherited display item, the color of the related display items also change automatically. For example, if you selected the Automatic value for Compiler Error and later changed the color of Plain Text to Red, Compiler Error would also automatically inherit the color Red.”*

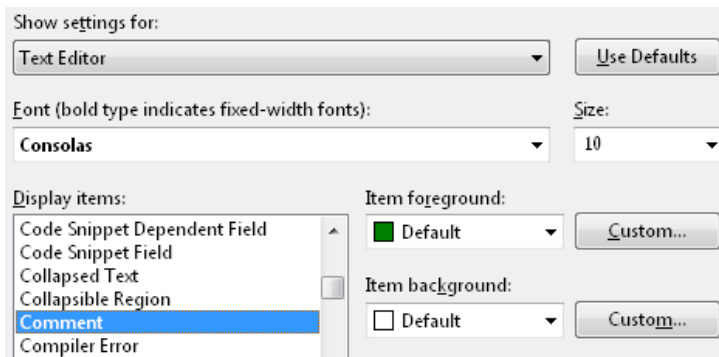
OK, so let’s show you what this means. Following are the current settings for Plain Text:



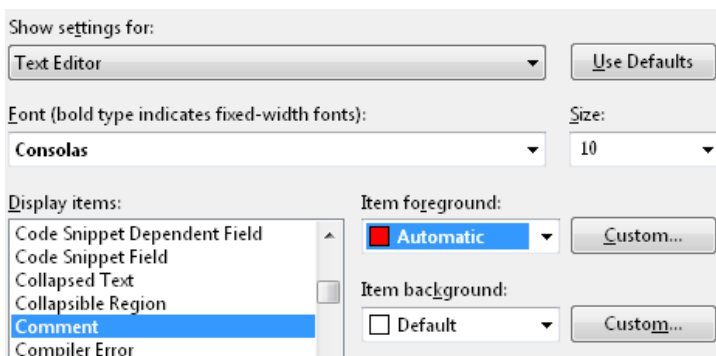
Notice, among other things, that the Item foreground is black. Now let’s change the foreground color to red:



Now let's change the display item to Comment and see what the settings are there:



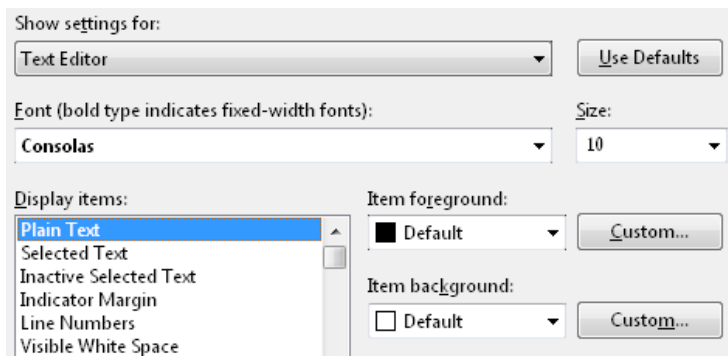
Notice that the Item foreground is green and is set to Default. If we change the Item foreground to Automatic, we get the following:



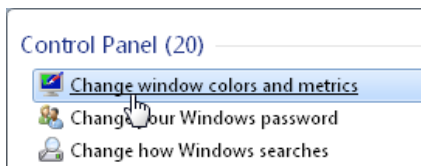
Notice that Comment inherited the Item Foreground setting from the Plain Text setting we just changed to red. So now we clearly see the relationship between the Plain Text setting and some of the other display items. You need to be aware of the following factors:

- Not all items inherit from plain text.
- Plain text inherits from the Windows System.

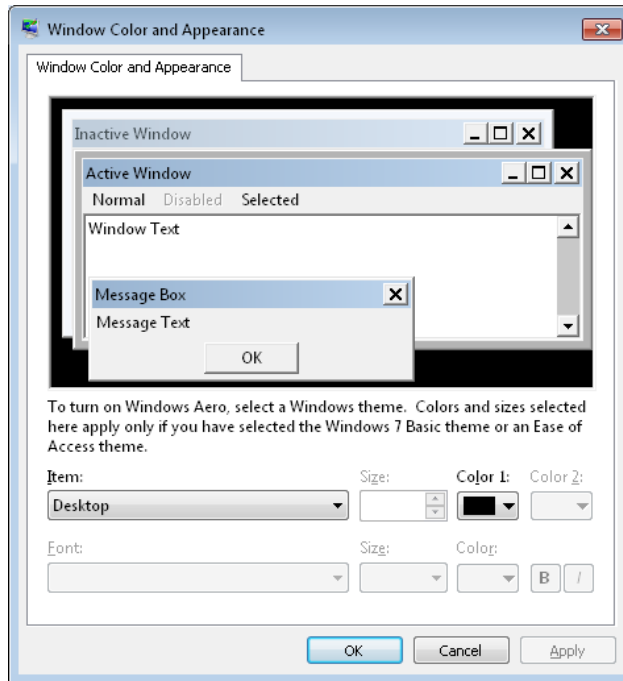
Let's address the second point. With all the colors back to the default settings, let's look at the Plain Text setting again:



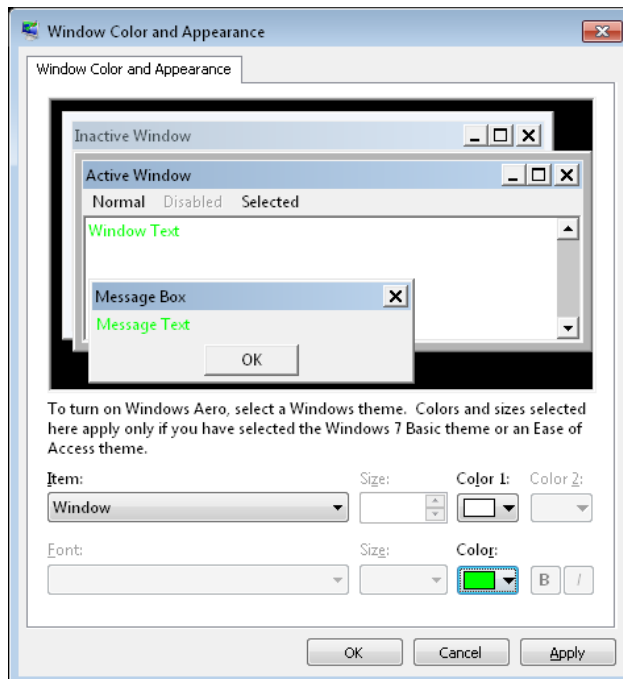
Plain Text has a default Item Foreground setting of black again. Where does the plain text default color come from? Let's see what happens if we change the Windows System colors. In this example, I'm using Windows 7, so your settings might be elsewhere, but all versions of Windows have a similar area. In the case of Windows 7, it's called Change Windows Colors And Metrics, as you can see in the following illustration:



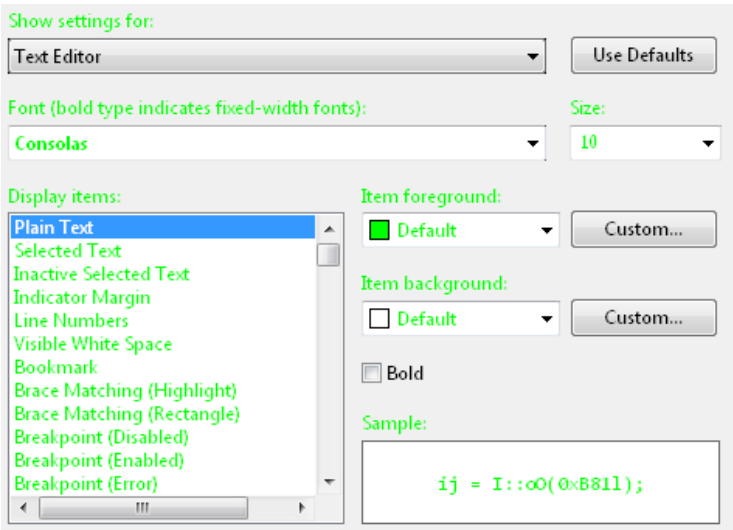
When I click this option, it brings me to the Window Color And Appearance dialog box:



Now I change the Item to Window and the font color to lime green:



I click Apply and then switch back to Visual Studio and notice that, among other things, the Plain Text setting now has a default color of lime green:



So the plain text default color clearly inherits from the Windows System, and now various display items inside Visual Studio can inherit from the Plain Text setting by setting their color to Automatic. Now we finally have a clear picture of the difference between Default and Automatic in the Fonts And Colors dialog box.

At this point, you might want to change all your colors back to what they were before we started this adventure.

AX.149 Visual Studio Permissions Needed on Windows Vista or Later

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEnv0056

A popular misconception is that you need to have Administrator privileges to use Visual Studio. While this is true in some cases, it isn't true in all of them. So when do you need to run Visual Studio as an administrator and when don't you? This tip offers some guidance.

Installing Visual Studio (All Versions)

You need Administrator rights to install Visual Studio.

Running Visual Studio 2005

To run Visual Studio 2005 on Windows Vista or later, you are prompted to run as Administrator when you start the application. This version of Visual Studio requires that you have Administrator rights to use it.

Specific Scenarios for Visual Studio 2008/2010

Web/Internet Information Services

Creating a new local or remote IIS website project—You cannot make changes to the Internet Information Services (IIS) metabase (for example, creating new entries) because it requires administrative privileges. This affects your ability to configure some settings in the Web.config file.

Opening a local or remote IIS website project—You cannot run your website unless you use the ASP.NET Development Server, which is the default web server for filesystem websites. Alternatively, you can set project options to open the browser and point to the website by using IIS.

Debugging a local or remote IIS website project—You cannot attach to a process that is running under the IIS worker process because it requires administrative privileges.

More information can be found here: [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms178112\(v=VS.90\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms178112(v=VS.90).aspx).

Windows Installer deployment

Windows Installer technology supports software installation on the Windows Vista (or later) operating system. The end user installing applications on Windows Vista should receive prompts only for each component installation that requires elevation, even when the user's computer runs under User Account Control (UAC).

More information can be found here: [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/Bb384154\(v=VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/Bb384154(v=VS.100).aspx).

ClickOnce deployment

Windows Installer deployment requires administrative permissions and allows only limited user installation; ClickOnce deployment enables non-administrative users to install and grants only those Code Access Security permissions necessary for the application.

More information can be found here: <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/t71a733d.aspx>.

Code

Some code requires Administrator access to execute. If possible, alternatives to this code should be pursued. Examples of code operations that require Administrator access are as follows:

- Writing to protected areas of the filesystem, such as the Windows or Program Files directories
- Writing to protected areas of the registry, such as HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE
- Installing assemblies in the Global Assembly Cache (GAC)

Generally, these actions should be limited to application installation programs. This allows users to use administrator status only temporarily.

More information can be found here: [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms173360\(v=VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms173360(v=VS.100).aspx).

Debugging

According to the documentation, “you can debug any applications that you launch within Visual Studio (native and unmanaged) as a non-administrator by becoming part of the Debugging Group. This includes the ability to attach to a running application using the Attach to Process command. However, it is necessary to be part of the Administrator Group in order to debug native or managed applications that were launched by a different user.”

More information can be found here: [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms173360\(v=VS.100\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms173360(v=VS.100).aspx).

COM/COM Interop

Classic COM

When you add a classic COM control, such as an .ocx control, to the toolbox, Visual Studio tries to register the control. You must have administrator credentials to register the control.

Add-ins written by using classic COM must be registered to work in Visual Studio. You must have administrator credentials to register the control.

COM Interop

When you build managed components and you have selected Register For COM Interop, the managed assemblies must be registered. You must have administrator credentials to register the assemblies.

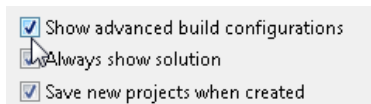
More information can be found here: [http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms165100\(v=VS.90\).aspx](http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms165100(v=VS.90).aspx).

AX.150 Show Advanced Build Configurations

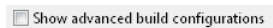
WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Projects and Solutions General
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipProj0016

This one is interesting, and the main reason I'm showing it to you is so that you know how to turn this back on if it ever gets turned off.

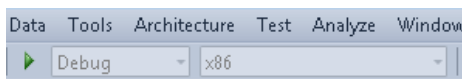
If you go to Tools | Options | Projects And Solutions | General, you can see many available options. Locate the Show Advanced Build Configurations option:

**Simplified Build Configurations**

So what does this option do? Well, when it is turned off, it uses simplified build configurations, which involve several changes:

***Configuration Manager***

In simplified builds, the Configuration Manager is not available. It's just disabled (or removed completely) from all areas:



The practical implications of this are that you can't do any custom build configurations, which makes sense with a simplified build configuration option. So when you don't see the Configuration Manager anymore or it's disabled, that is usually a clear sign that you have turned off Show Advanced Build Configurations.

Debug Build

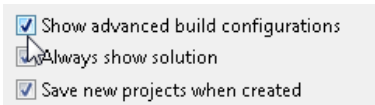
In a simplified build scenario, each time you press F5 or go to Debug | Start Debugging, a debug build of your application is created. This is the expected behavior.

Release Build

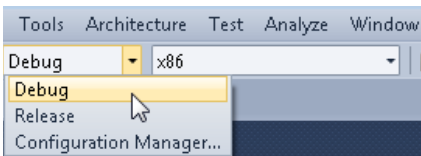
The real shocker is that you have no obvious way to create a release build. With simplified builds, you create a release build by going to Build | Build Solution (Ctrl+Shift+B).

Advanced Build Configurations

I could do an entire series on advanced builds, but I'll just keep it to the basics for now. Essentially, you first select Show Advanced Build Configurations:



This option gives you access to the Configuration Manager, so you can actively switch between build types without having to remember some arcane steps to do it:



As an added bonus, it gives you the ability to make custom builds with your own special configuration options specified for the build.

In short, you have many good reasons to show the advanced build configurations options and few good reasons to turn it off.

AX.151 Emacs Emulation

WINDOWS	Alt,T, O
MENU	Tools Options Environment Keyboard
COMMAND	Tools.Options
VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0079

For those not familiar with the term, according to Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emacs>), Emacs can be defined as follows:

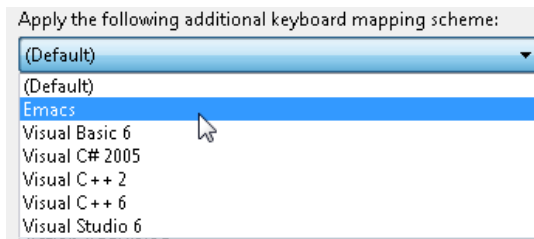
"[...] a class of feature-rich text editors, usually characterized by their extensibility. Emacs has, perhaps, more editing commands than other editors, numbering over 1,000 commands. It also allows the user to combine these commands into macros to automate work.

“Development began in the mid-1970s and continues actively as of 2010. Emacs text editors are most popular with technically proficient computer users and computer programmers. The most popular version of Emacs is GNU Emacs, a part of the GNU project, which is commonly referred to simply as ‘Emacs’.”

Did you know that Visual Studio supports Emacs emulation? If you are using Visual Studio 2010, you need to install the Emacs extension that can be found here:

<http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/09dc58c4-6f47-413a-9176-742be7463f92>

Then, for Visual Studio 2008, 2005, and 2010, go to Tools | Options | Environment | Keyboard and choose Emacs from the Apply The Following Additional Keyboard Mapping Scheme drop-down list:



AX.152 ViM Emulation

VERSIONS	2005, 2008, 2010
CODE	vstipEdit0080

Many people like to use ViM—there is no denying it. Unfortunately, Visual Studio does not support ViM emulation out of the box. However, as of the time of this writing, you have two solutions in the Visual Studio Gallery, depending on your version.

Visual Studio 2010

VsVim by Jared Parsons is very well reviewed, plus it is free. You can find it at <http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/59ca71b3-a4a3-46ca-8fe1-0e90e3f79329>.

Visual Studio 2008 and Prior

ViEmu by NGEDIT Software is available for Visual Studio versions prior to Visual Studio 2010. It has good reviews, and the trial version is available from the gallery. It is available at <http://visualstudiogallery.msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/C9055830-39AB-4B39-A19E-4D60F195E7FC>.

So, if you need ViM emulation, you have a couple options. These might not be the only options, but they are readily available in the Visual Studio Gallery.

