



Hope you all had a great holiday, and hopefully it will be an incredible new year!

Since we value our customers so much, we need to know what you would like to see in our newsletter, so we can help you with what you're interested in. If you have a question you think others might also have, we'd love to answer it in our newsletter. So come in and give us your opinion on what we should talk about in this letter.

Mouse Cleaning

I need to clean my mouse on the inside? That's right! If you don't it can cause your cursor to skip along instead of moving in a nice even motion. Of course, if you have an optical mouse, one that operates on a laser, you don't need to clean it.

If you turn your mouse over you will see part of a small rubber or plastic ball through a cut-out in a cover. The cover holds the ball in place inside the mouse.

As the ball rolls on the mouse pad surface, it causes two rollers inside the mouse to turn.

One roller controls the cursor's left to right motion. The other roller controls the up and down motion.

How Does it Get Dirty?

Over time the ball picks up and transfers dust, dirt and old eraser bits to the rollers. If you're like me there will be a lot of eraser material all over your desk for the mouse to pick up!

Eventually all the dirt and debris builds up on the rollers until it forms a hard band all the way around them.

When these bands of dust and dirt get big enough, they cause the rollers to slip as the ball moves, which can make your cursor do funny things.

Cleaning your mouse is very easy to do! You can clean the mouse with the PC on or off. The cursor will jump around if you leave it on, but it won't hurt anything!

Removing the Ball

The ball we talked about is held in place by a circular cover that either slides or spins off. Take a close look at this cover. There is usually some marking or text on it (similar to those on the battery cover on your portable CD or cassette player) that indicate which way to get the cover off.

Once you get the cover off, slowly turn the mouse over and the little ball will roll out.

Check the ball for any obvious surface damage, which could really cause strange cursor movement. If this is the case, then give this mouse to the cat and buy another one. I've never seen this happen but it is possible, especially if the mouse has been subject to really rough treatment.

If the ball is OK, put it and the cover aside in a safe place.

Cleaning the Rollers

Now that the ball is out, look inside and you will see two large rollers (these need cleaning), and a smaller one, which doesn't. The small roller is there to push the ball against the other rollers. You don't have to do anything with it.

The next task is to find a small relatively hard object to clean the rollers. A toothpick will work. Pretty much anything that is small, stiff and not too sharp. You don't want to scratch the rollers!

Begin with one of the rollers and scrape the ring of dirt off in a motion in line with the axis of the roller. As you get the dirt off in one spot, spin the roller a little and work on the next spot until you've gone all the way around and the ring has been completely removed.

When both rollers are clean, hold the mouse upside down and shake out all the dirt that you removed from the rollers. You may have to blow a little air in there to get it all. Don't leave any in there, because it will soon find its way back to one of the rollers! **Cont. Page 2, Second Column**

Vermont Computing Inc.'s emergency pager is no longer available.

We have also raised our on-site labor rate starting the first of the year. It wasn't something we wanted to do, but we are in a competitive industry, and the \$50/ hour we now charge (up from \$40) is still half of what some places charge.

Interesting E-mail Fonts

If your e-mails are plain looking it could be that your e-mail text format is set to plain text. The text font, size, color etc. of plain text is - plain!

HTML or Rich Text (depending on the version of e-mail you are using) will allow you to greatly vary the appearance of your e-mail text. It can really spruce up your e-mails.

Here's how you do it.

Go to your Outlook Express (Other programs should have similar steps) main screen:

- 1) Click on Tools, then Options. Select the 'Send' tab.
- 2) Scroll down to the 'Mail Sending Format' area.
- 3) There are two options, Plain Text and HTML. Select HTML.
- 4) Click OK to save the changes.

If you don't like the way it looks just select plain text in step 3.

This help came from Computer Help A To Z. "Changing Your E-mail Text Format"

Cont. from page 1, Mouse Cleaning

With the mouse upside down, put the ball back in. Then slide or turn the cover (depending on how it came off) back into place.

Congratulations! You are done!

Don't Forget Your Mouse Pad

Before you start using your mouse again, make sure your mouse pad is clean. It is a good idea to clean your mouse pad often to keep dirt and erasure debris from finding it's way onto the rollers.

This information came from Computer Help A to Z.

Another equal solution to mouse problems is to get an optical mouse, which does not have a mouse ball at all. Vermont Computing has them in the store if you would like to buy them.

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L.A.N. Game Nights are still going on, this month the first game night will be January 9th. It will start at 9:00 PM. Call or email us to get details. You'll need your own computer and supplies, and a copy of the game.

For future games, if you would like to play, but do not have the game, you can come in, in advance, and you can buy the game here, and we will order it for you.

Attendance has been sporadic – please come support this FREE activity we are trying to build, so come show your support for these nights, and let us know we should still do this.