

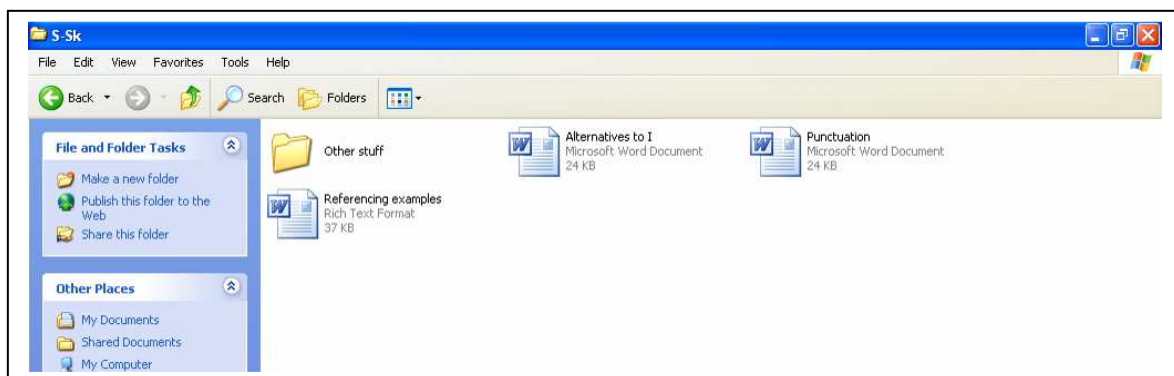
Convenient access to study skills information.

There are numerous resources available in texts, on leaflets and on the internet which can provide information to students on any aspect of study skills. Why, then, do students make simple errors of grammar and punctuation? There are certainly many reasons. However, one reason relates to convenience:

When a student is word-processing an assignment, an over-riding priority may be to get the information down on paper before the idea 'slips away'. When faced with a dilemma (e.g. Should I use a colon or semi-colon at this point?) the student may be discouraged from closing down or minimising their document in order to trawl through computer files, books or Internet pages for an answer. Queries can of course be dealt with at the proofing stage – but there is a likelihood that they will be forgotten about.

What follows is a method for making study-skills resources more conveniently available on a computer running Windows XP or Vista.

Start by collecting resources and placing them in a dedicated folder. I have called my folder 'S-Sk'. There is a reason for the abbreviation.

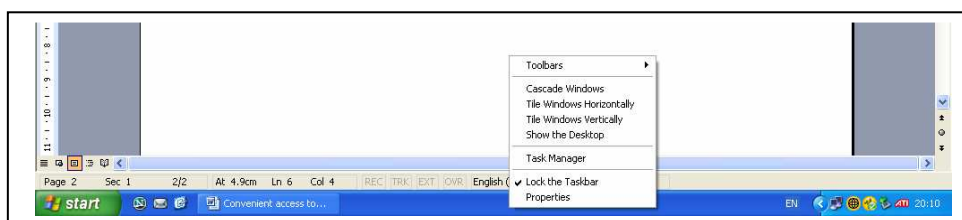


I have assumed that, as a student, I have particular difficulties with referencing, some elements of punctuation, and writing in the 3rd person. As a result, I have placed the relevant files (they don't have to be 'Word' files) at the top level in my folder and have placed everything else (including resources on reading, note-taking, statistics, etc, etc, in a sub-folder which I have called 'Other stuff'.

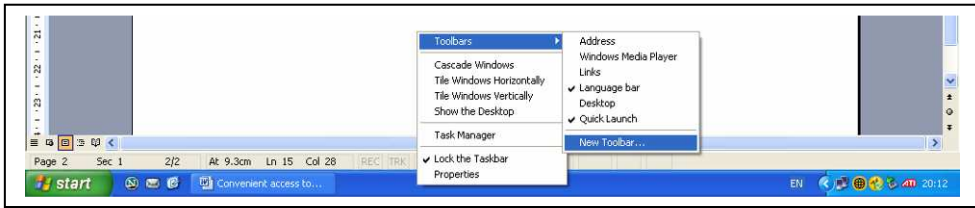
The aim now is to make this folder as easy to 'get at' as possible. There are a couple of options.

Option 1: Create a 'Toolbar' on the taskbar at the bottom of the page.

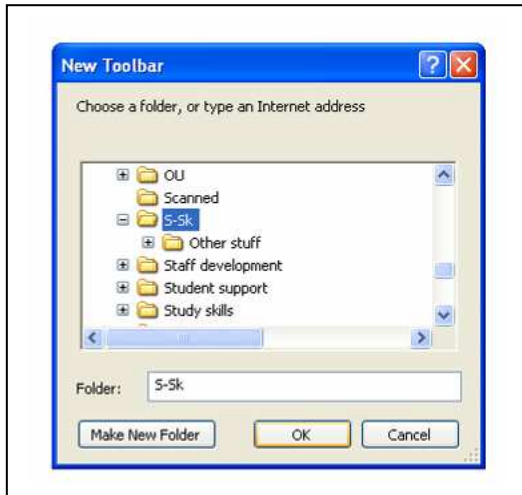
a) Right click on the Taskbar at the bottom of the screen.



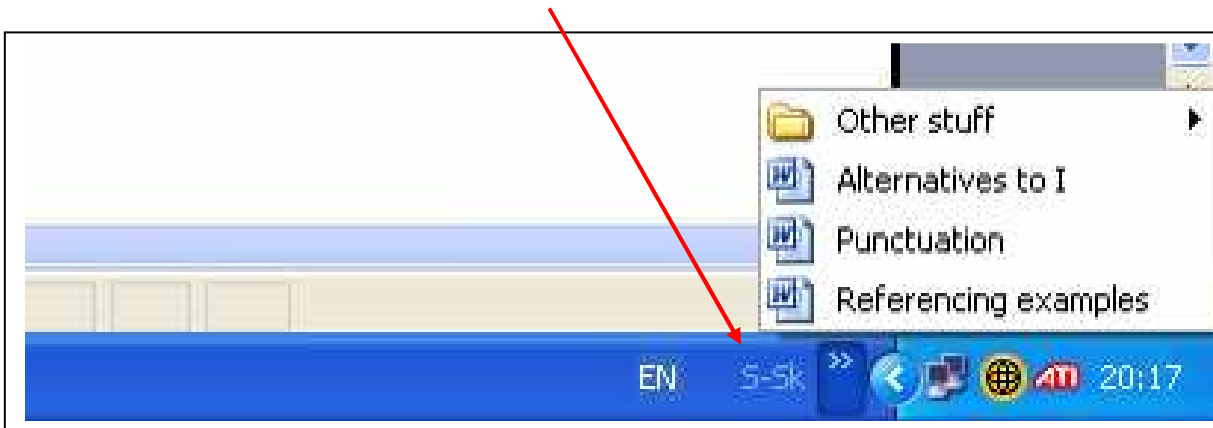
b) Click on 'Toolbars' and 'New Toolbar'



c) Locate and 'open' the study skills (S-Sk) file.



d) A link will be created on the right hand side of the taskbar. Click on the chevron next to it to reveal the contents of the folder.

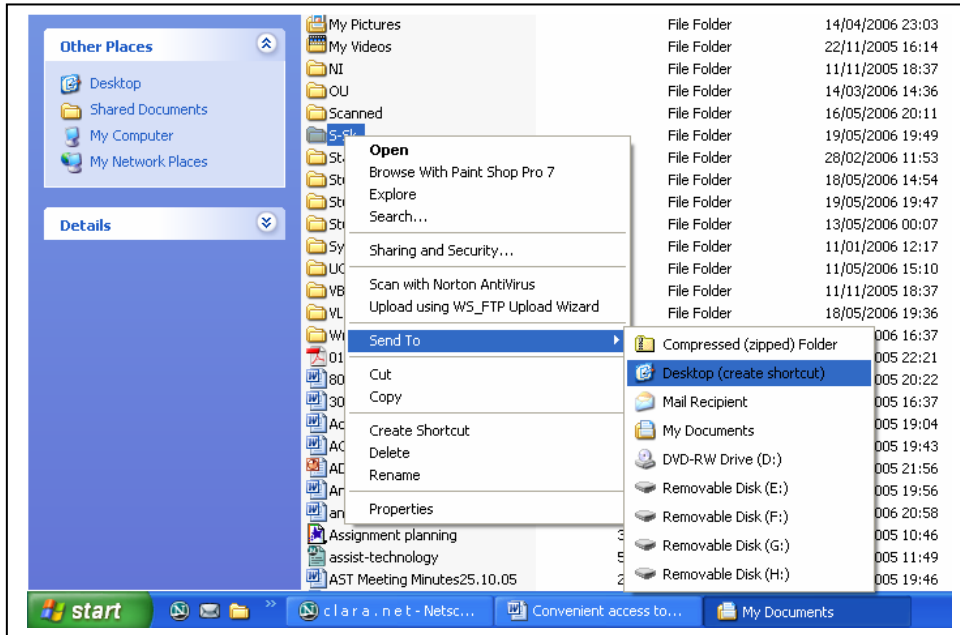


The user can open any of the files without having to minimise an existing document. Try it. It's quite simple.

Note: a short filename (S-Sk) looks less cluttered than a longer one – especially if the user decides to create more than one toolbar.

Option 2. Place a shortcut to the folder on the taskbar.

- a) Locate the Study Skills (S-Sk) folder in Widows Explorer. Right click on it and select 'Send to' and 'Desktop (create shortcut)'



A shortcut will be placed on the desktop.



You can then 'drag' the shortcut to the left side of the taskbar – near to the Start button.



Again, it is simple to open the folder without having to minimise an open document.

Finally: Students are unlikely to 'wade through' reams of information to find a solution. These files should be concise and presented in straightforward terms.