Plateau PC Users Group

November 2026

Windows 11

Print Screen to Clipboard: An Evolution

- Screen Capture
- Windows Clipboard
- Putting it all Together

Screen Capture?



Texan IT Support?



Yes, I have seen someone attempt this!

PrtScn Evolution

The **Print Screen** (PrtScn) key has evolved from a direct hardware command in **MS-DOS** to a clipboard-based screenshot tool in modern **Windows** operating systems.

In early **DOS**, the key was an **anachronism** that sent a raw text dump of the screen buffer directly to the **LPT1** printer port, producing a basic ASCII printout without graphics or driver support. As **Windows** introduced graphical interfaces, the key's function shifted to capturing the screen as a **bitmap image** and storing it in the **clipboard** for pasting into applications.

DOS Era: Pressing PrtScn printed text-only screen content directly to the printer via BIOS interrupts, with no option to save or edit the data.

PrtScn Evolution (cont)

Early Windows: The key began copying the full screen (**PrtScn**) or active window (**Alt+PrtScn**) to the **clipboard**, allowing users to paste images into programs like **Paint**.

Windows 8+: Pressing **Windows + PrtScn** saves the screenshot directly to the **Pictures** folder, while **Windows 11** introduced the **Snipping Tool**.

At lot of keyboards shorten **PrtScn** to **prtsc** (or other mutation).

Modern Context: The name "Print Screen" remains as a historical legacy, as the key no longer interacts with printer ports but instead manages digital image data.

PrtScn Today (Windows 11)

PrtScn Captures the full screen to the clipboard.
Opens the **Snipping Tool** by default

Can be changed in **Settings > Accessibility > Keyboard** or **Settings > Bluetooth&Devices > Keyboard**



+ PrtScn Same as **PrtScn** plus…

Saves image to C:\Users\[YourUsername]\Pictures\Screenshots
Screen dims a moment to indicate it worked.

PrtScn Today (Windows 11)

ALT + PrtScn Captures only the active window to the clipboard.

Still my favorite!

 **+ Shift + S** Opens the **Snipping Tool** overlay

Select specific regions, windows, or recording video.

Same as Win+PrtScn except image is not captured right away (makes more sense).

Note:  **+ Shift + R opens snipping tool in video mode**

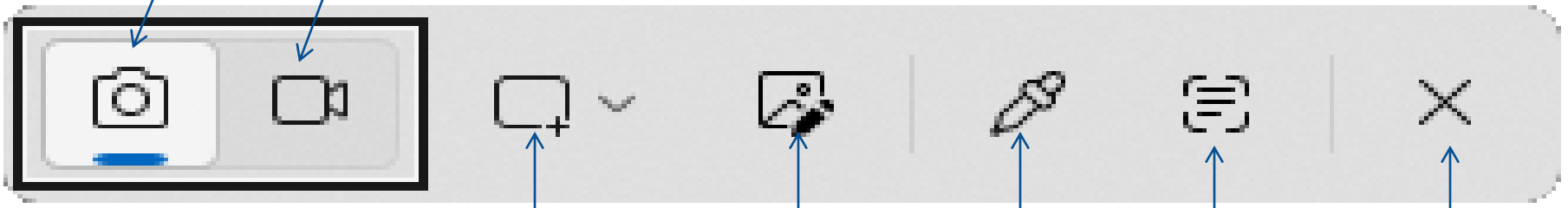
DEMO

Snipping Tool

Windows + Shift + S
Or
PrtScn (if enabled)

Standard mode: capture .PNG to *Pictures > Screenshots*

Video mode: capture .MP4 to *Videos > Screen Recordings*



Capture area

Markup mode

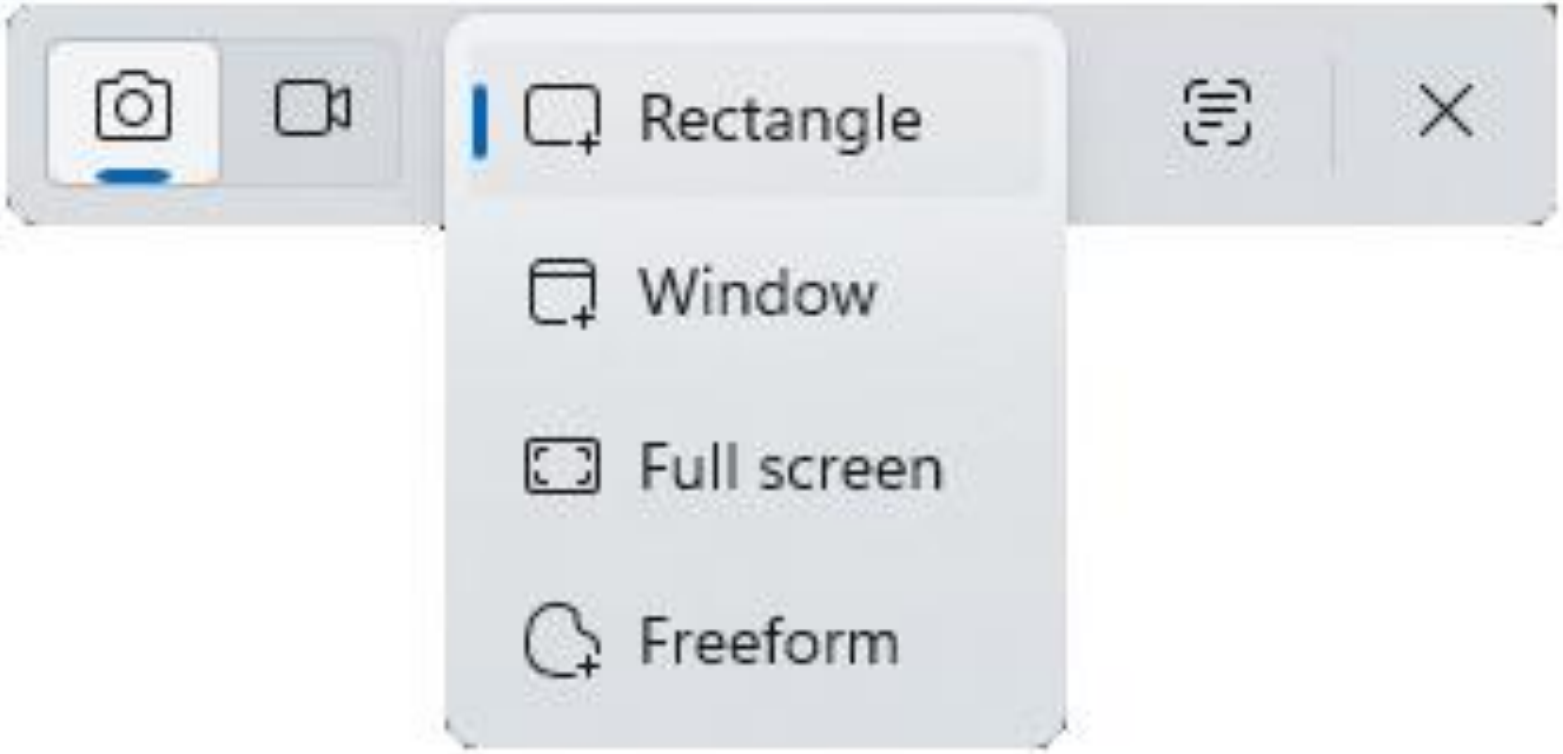
Color Picker

Text extraction "OCR"

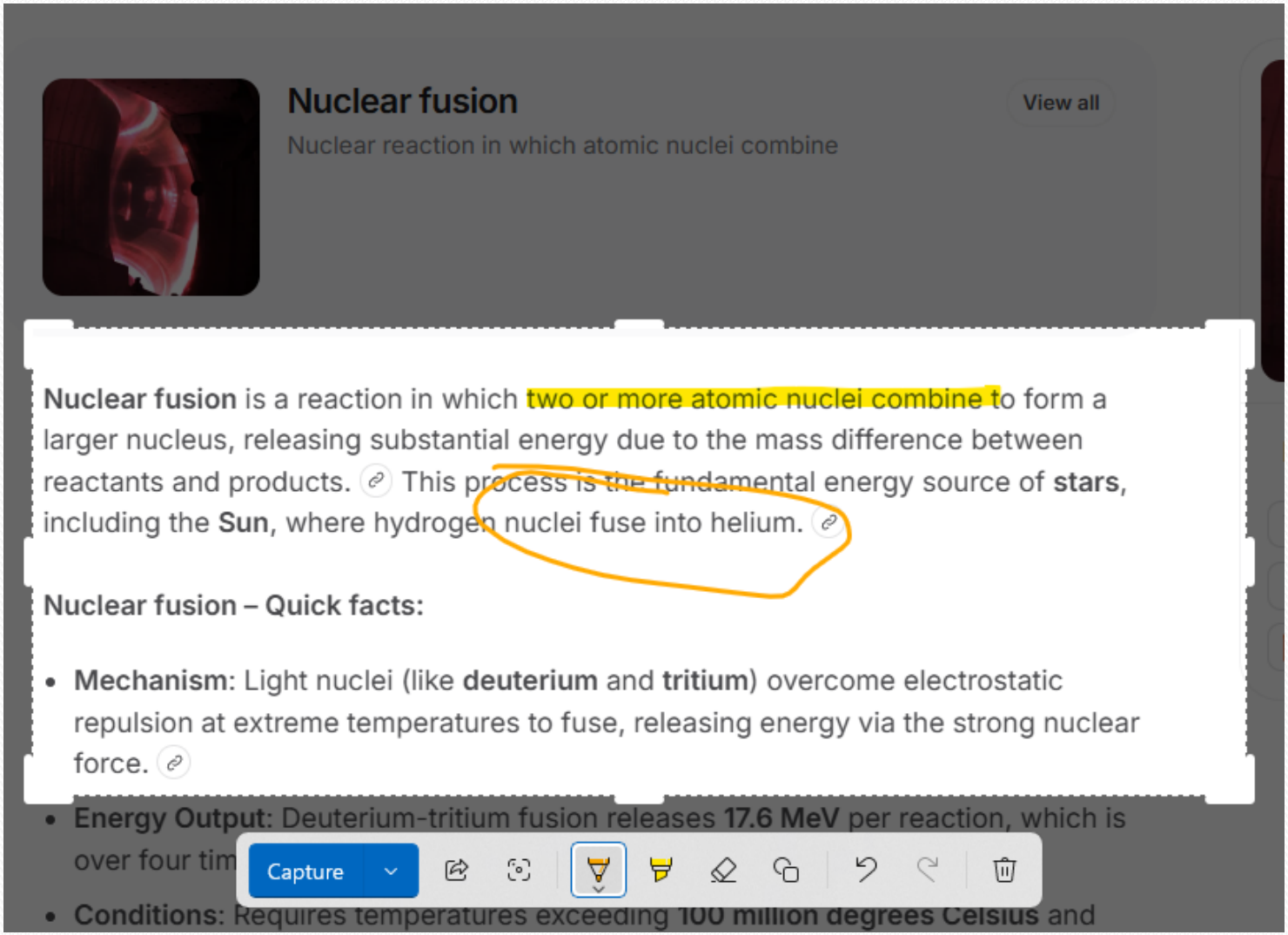
ESC **abort snipping tool**

ENTER (in some cases) accept selection and put in clipboard

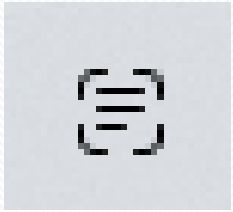
Selection Area Type



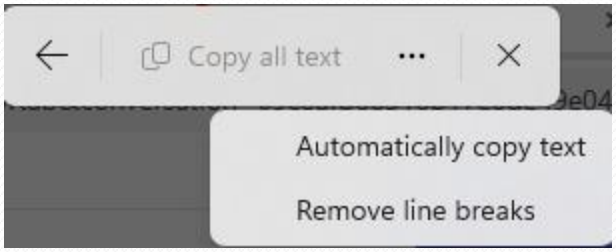
Capture & Markup

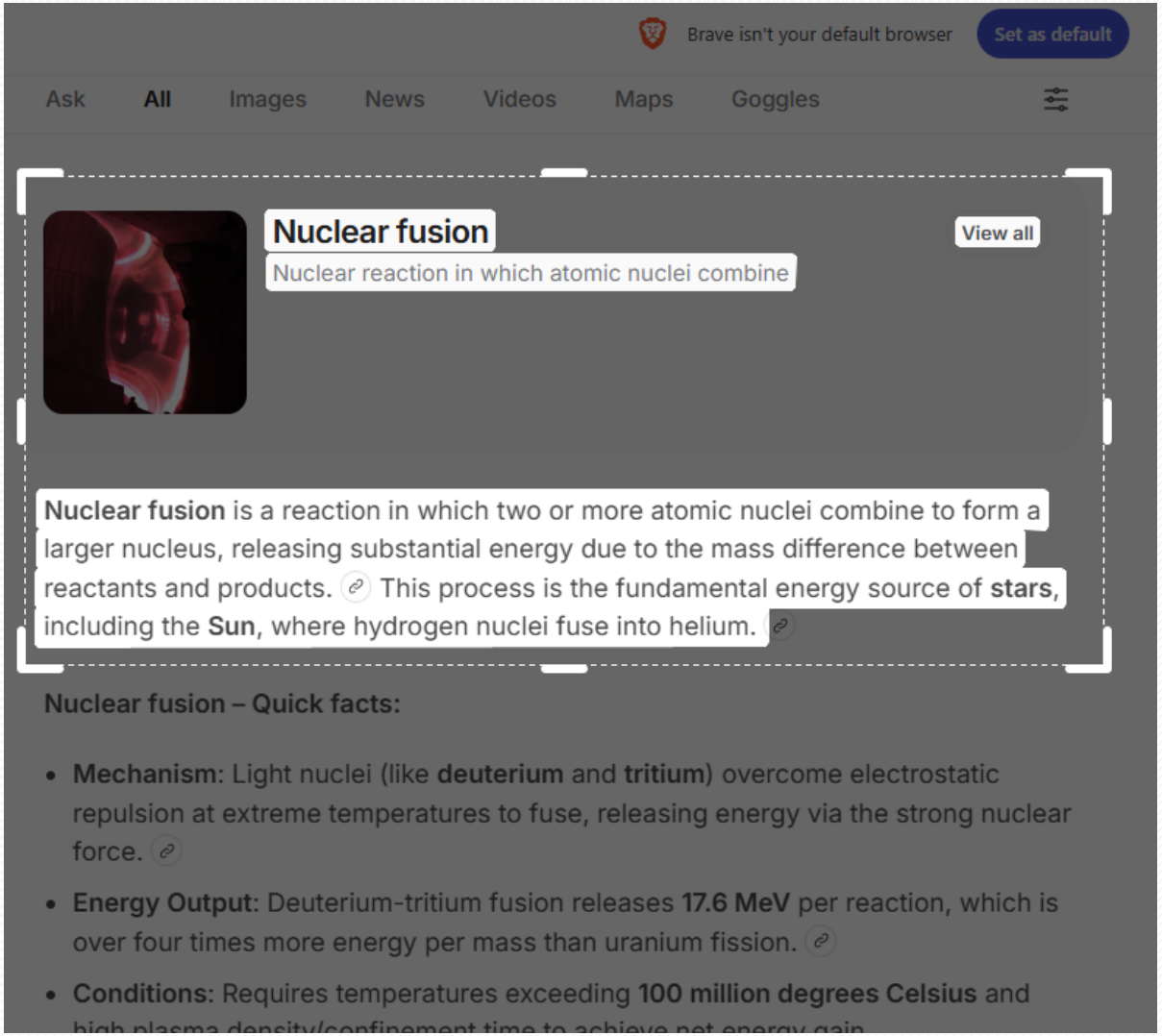


Text Extraction



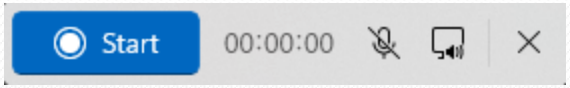
Text extractor (⊞ + Shift + T)





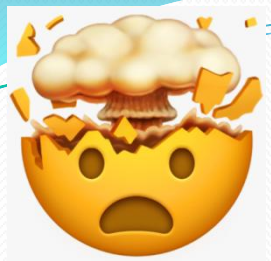


Video Capture

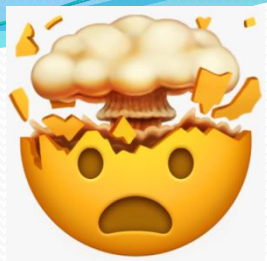








Advanced Options

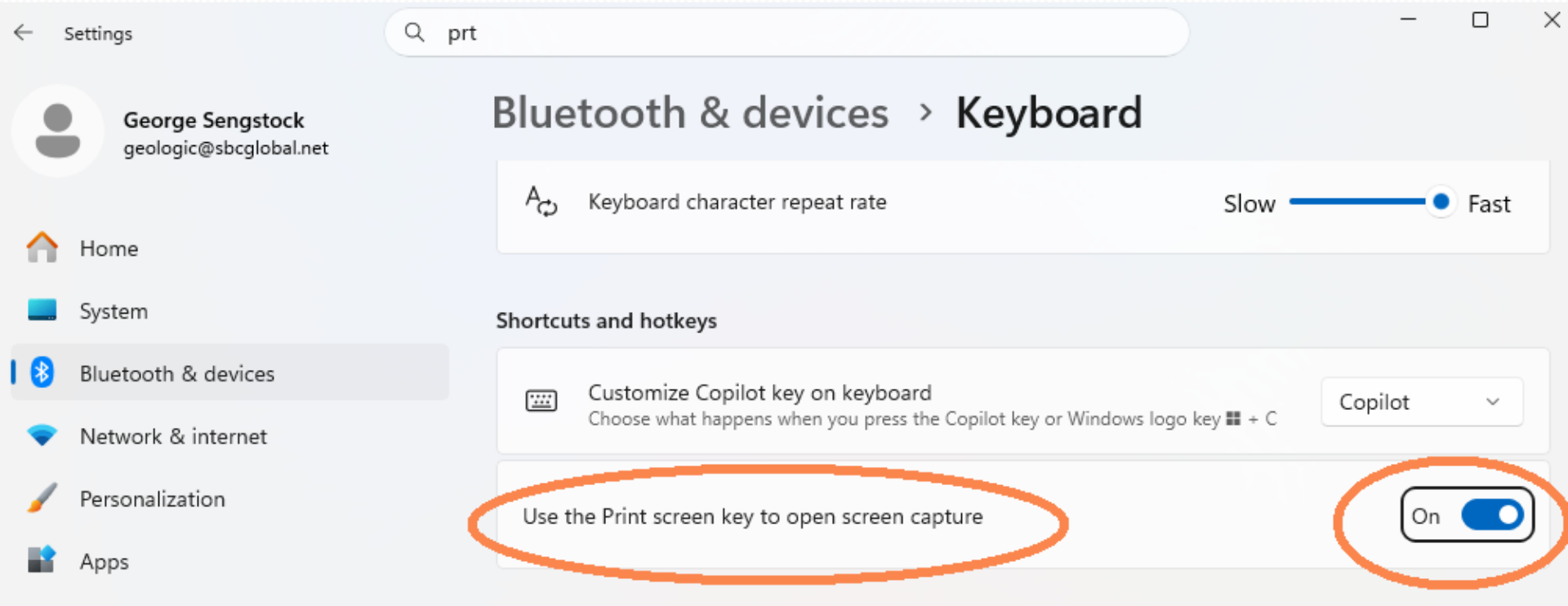


Quick Redact: Need to share a screenshot but want to hide your email or phone number? The tool can automatically detect sensitive info and black it out for you[1].

QR Code Integration: If your screenshot contains a QR code, the tool will recognize it and offer to open the link for you—no phone required.

"**Perfect screenshot**": Snipping Tool uses CoPilot AI to automatically adjusts the capture area to tightly frame on-screen content, reducing the need for post-capture cropping.

Setting PrtScn Key Behavior



My laptop does not have a **PrtScn** key!



On laptops without a dedicated PrtScn key, you may need to use

Fn + PrtScn or

Fn + Windows + Spacebar.

My suggestion: get a real keyboard



Bet Y’all never guessed so much could be said about one key on a keyboard!





- Screen Capture
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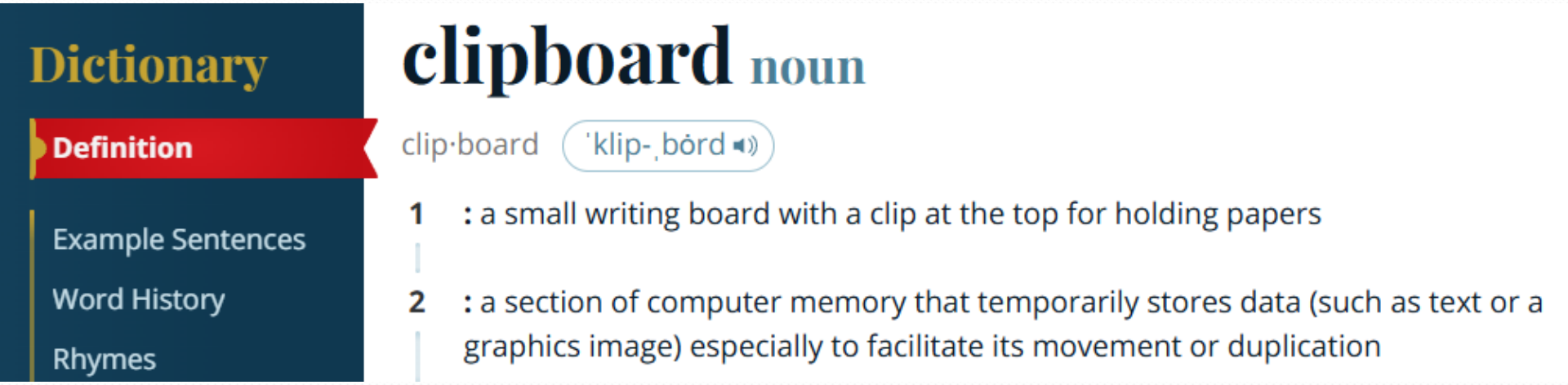
- Putting it all Together

“Clipboard”



Ironically “Print Screen” has nothing to do with your printer anymore, it is all about the Clipboard!

Standard Clipboard Functions

Ctrl + C Copy selected content*

Ctrl + X Cut selected content Shift+Delete

Ctrl + V Paste from the clipboard Shift+Insert

Ctrl + Z UnDo (Oops!)

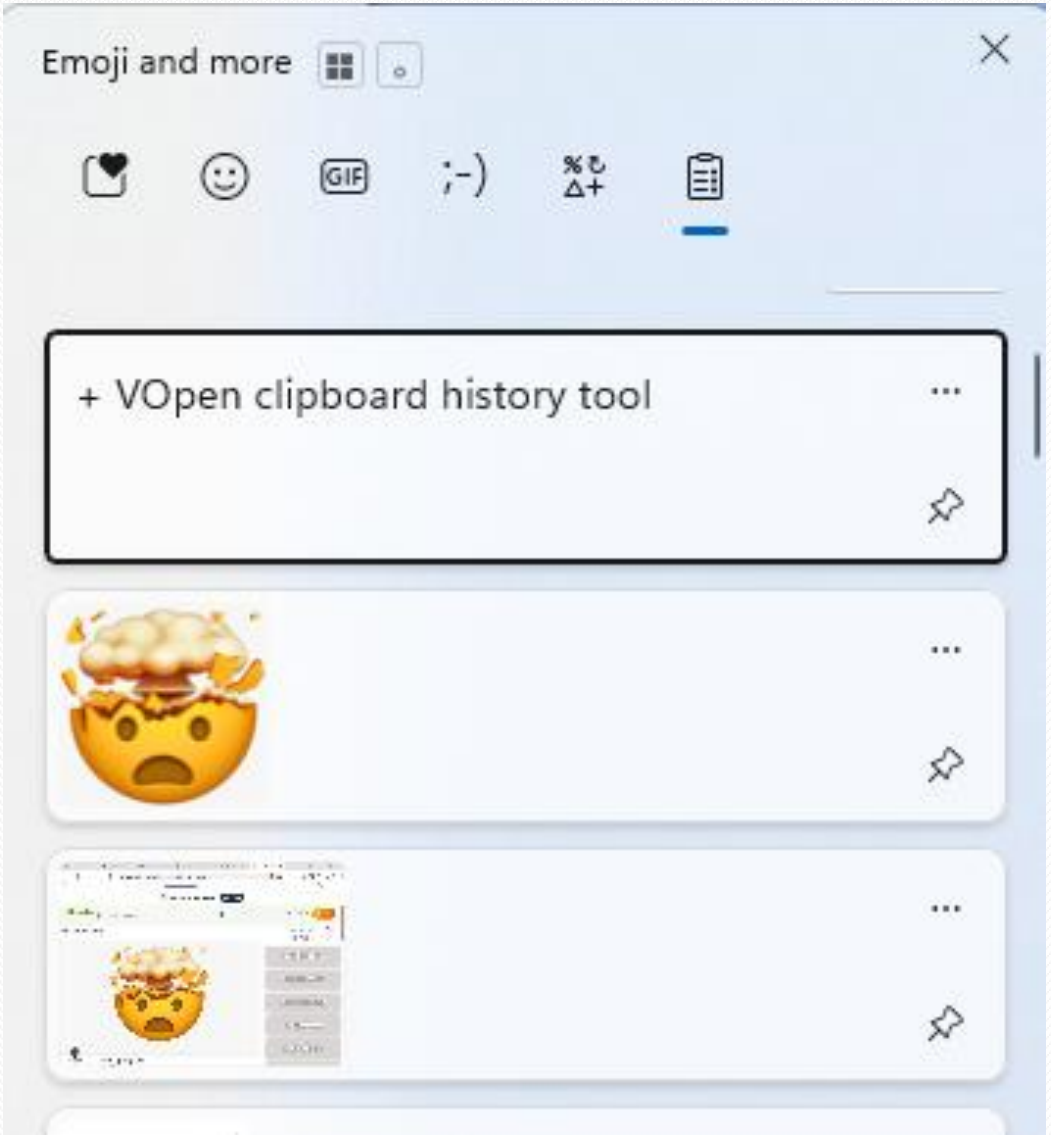
Ctrl + Y ReDo (Undo Ctrl + Z)

* More on this later

New(er) Clipboard Functions

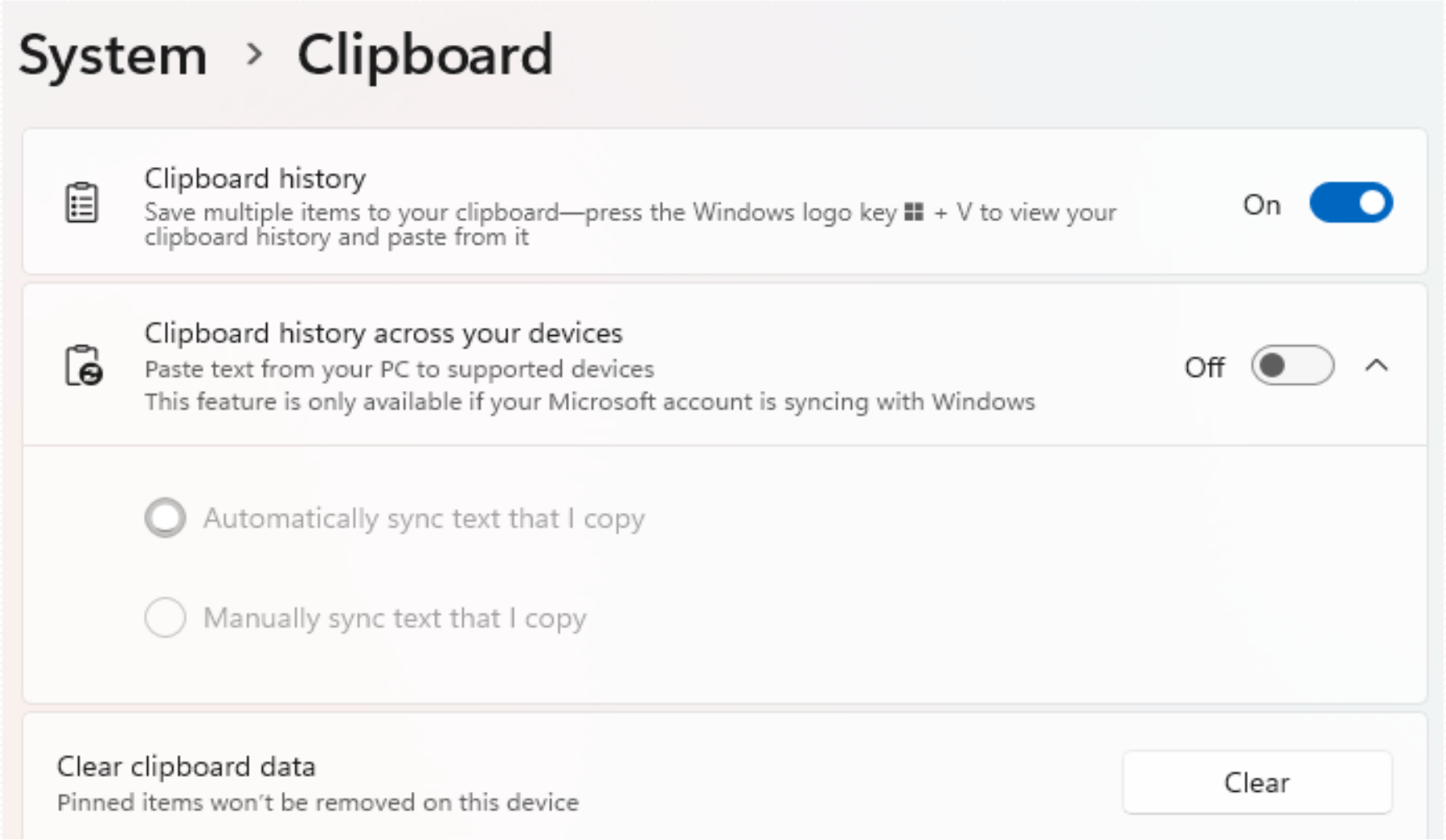
+ V

Open clipboard history tool



DEMO

Enable Clipboard History *

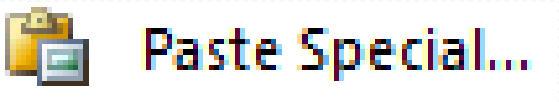


* This setting has moved recently

New(er) Clipboard Functions

Ctrl + Alt + V Paste as plain text ?

Not universal, supported by some apps, instead

look for 

use  + Shift + T

or use NotePad to act as a filter* 

* Old school trick

Prior to Windows 11:

For decades 3rd party applications provided greater functionality for screen capture and enhanced Clipboard functionality. Windows 11 essentially puts them out of business.



SnagIt



ClipX

- Screen Capture
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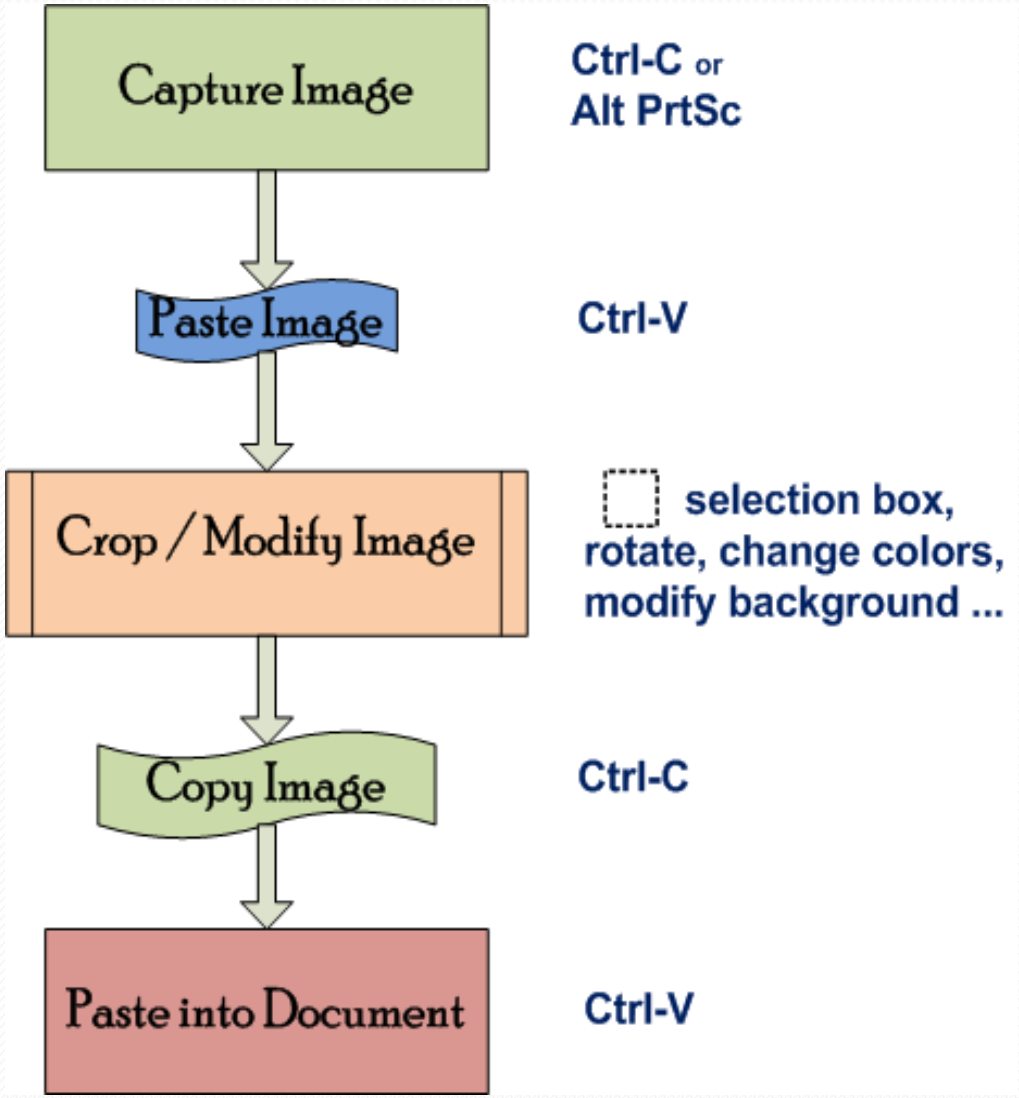
Creating an illustrated document *101*

I have done this
7,561,028 times



Do You Remember Your Selection Tools?

Click-and-drag	Select Range of content
Ctrl + A	Select all content
double-clicking	Select entire words
triple-clicking	Select whole paragraphs or lines
Shift + Arrows	Select Range of content
Click, Shift + Click	Select Range of content
Ctrl + Click	Select /deselect Items*



* Application dependant

Windows Editing Cheat Sheet

Ctrl + A Select all content

Ctrl + C Copy selected content

Ctrl + X Cut selected content

Ctrl + V Paste from the clipboard

Ctrl + Z UnDo (Oops!)

Ctrl + Y ReDo (Undo Ctrl + Z)

Win + V Clipboard history+

Win + Shift + S Snipping Tool

Win + Shift + T Text extraction tool

Alt + PrtScn Captures active window to the clipboard.

PrtScn Captures the full screen to the clipboard.

Optionally Opens the **Snipping Tool**.

Win + PrtScn Captures the full screen to the clipboard.

Saves image to Screenshots folder.

Screen dims a moment to acknowledge.