

## Monitor Refresh Rate

Does the picture on your screen have an annoying flicker?

The image on the screen is created by an electronic beam that scans horizontally from the top of the screen to the bottom. When it reaches the bottom it returns to the top and repeats the process (same as a TV). The rate at which the scan is repeated is called the monitor's refresh rate.

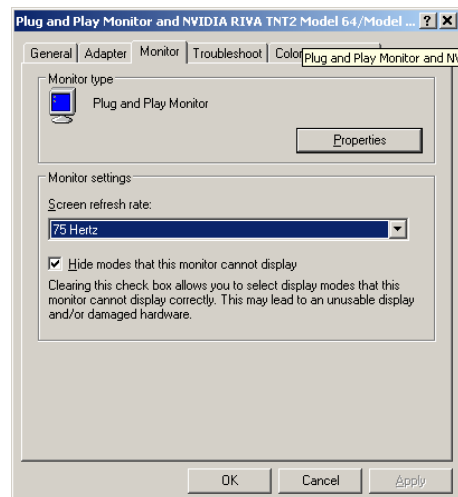
If the refresh rate is too low the picture will flicker.

To increase the refresh rate:

- Right click a blank part of the Windows desktop and select Properties. Alternatively, select Display from the Control Panel.
- Under the Settings tab click the Advanced button.
- Select the Monitor tab.
- If the Screen refresh rate is less than 75Hz, click the down arrow to the right, and select 75Hz or higher.
- Click Apply
- The screen will go blank for a couple of seconds then a message will appear asking if you wish to keep the new settings. Select Yes or No as appropriate.

Don't select a refresh rate any higher than is necessary to remove the flicker.

Some people are annoyed by a flicker that other people can't see and some people may get unusually tired eyes after using their computer for some time but not be conscious of a flicker.



## Font Viewer

When creating a document you may want to use a font quite different from ones you normally use. In Microsoft Word and many other programs you can step down through the list of fonts installed on your computer and see a sample of each one. If, like me, you have got more than two hundred fonts, this can be a tedious process and, by the time you get to the end of the list, you have forgotten the names of ones earlier on that may have been OK for the job in hand. *AMP Font Viewer* is a freeware program from [www.ampsoft.net/utilities/FontViewer.php](http://www.ampsoft.net/utilities/FontViewer.php) that, amongst other things, allows you to print out a sample of all your fonts so you can keep them in a folder beside your computer. This makes font selection so much easier.

Here is a sample of the printout



By the way, the font I use in these newsletters is Comic Sans MS.

### Print Screen Keys

If you are compiling a document and you want to include an image from your computer screen, you can use the Print Screen key on your keyboard. On its own, the Print Screen key copies everything that is on your screen into the Windows clipboard but if you hold down the Alt key while you press Print Screen, only the active window will be copied if you have more than one window visible. The active window is the one in the foreground with a blue title bar at the top.

From the clipboard, the image can be pasted into a document or other file by right clicking the mouse and selecting paste or, as I prefer, using CTRL V on the keyboard.

In bygone days, the Print Screen key used to send the screen image straight to the printer - not now.

### Upgrade Your Monitor

Are you still using a 15" monitor? Advantage Computers in Grey Street have 17" ex lease monitors for \$69. They are in good condition and have a six month warranty.

### One of My Favourite Web Sites

The Geological and Nuclear Sciences earthquake web site at [www.gns.cri.nz/what/earthact/earthquakes/index.html](http://www.gns.cri.nz/what/earthact/earthquakes/index.html) gives details of recent earthquakes as well as a lot of other interesting information including images from volcano cameras at White Island, Mount Taranaki, Mount Ngauruhoe and Mount Ruapehu. There's even an article describing how to build your own seismograph!

### **Still Christmas Shopping?**

Here's an idea for that computer literate friend or relative - a USB Flash Drive, sometimes known as MicroDrives.

These gadgets are not much bigger than a digital clinical thermometer. They plug into the computer's USB port and behave just like a floppy or hard disk drive. The cheapest holds 128 MB of data (88 floppy disks) and costs about \$50 and range up to 2 GB in capacity. No software installation is required with Windows XP or Me computers. They are just the bees knees for transferring data between computers.

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