

ArcMap Tweaks and Tools Enhance Productivity

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Customizing ArcMap can eliminate needless mouse clicks and speed up processes by making the tools and features you use all the time readily accessible. This article demonstrates how some free tools and simple modifications to ArcMap can improve productivity. Incorporate these changes to

- Organize toolbars.
- Dismiss the Layout toolbar.
- Add the Selectable Layers tab to the Table of Contents.
- Stop saving thumbnails.

To make these modifications available by default when you start ArcMap, save them to the Normal.mxt, the default template for ArcMap.

Organizing Toolbars Using Toolbar Manager 1.0

Choose View > Toolbars or right-click on an existing toolbar, and a seemingly random listing of toolbars appears. It is difficult to quickly locate a toolbar to switch it on or off. Toolbar Manager 1.0, a tool written by Tom Schwartzman, organizes these toolbars into logical groups. Toolbars can be switched off and on as groups, and groups can be customized. There are two ways to invoke the manager—from a button in the graphic user interface (GUI) and from a tab in the Table of Contents. Be sure to read the installation instructions for both versions of the tool that are provided in the readme included with the download. This tool can be downloaded from the ESRI ArcScripts Web site at no charge. Go to arcscrips.esri.com/details.asp?dbid=12598.

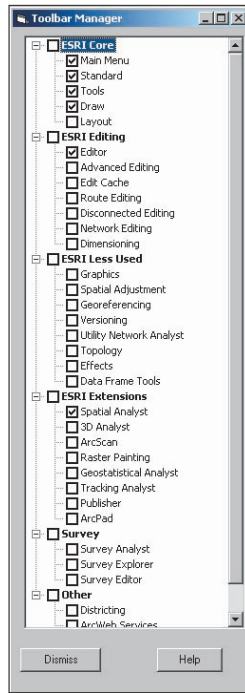
Switch Off the Layout Toolbar

The Layout toolbar is automatically displayed when changing from Data view to Layout view. However, when switching back to Data view, the Layout toolbar remains visible but inactive. The author has written some code, shown in Figure 1, that will automatically turn off the Layout bar when reverting to Data view.

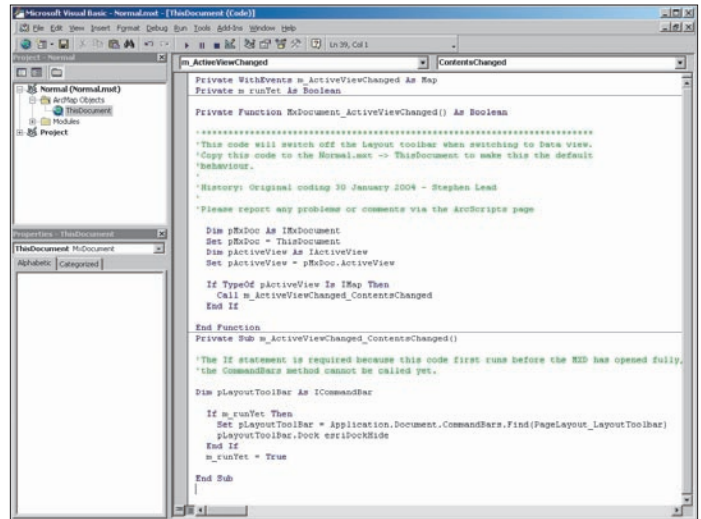
To add this code, open a blank map in ArcMap and choose Tools > Macros > Visual Basic Editor. In the editor, expand the Normal (Normal.mxt) folder and click on ThisDocument. Copy the code into the code window. Save the .mxt file. This code may also be downloaded at arcscrips.esri.com/details.asp?dbid=13285.

Selectable Layers Tab

Setting selectable layers through ArcMap by choosing Selection > Set Selectable Layers repeatedly can be time-consuming. Using



Toolbar Manager, a handy tool available from the ESRI ArcScripts site, organizes ArcMap toolbars into logical groups.



Add the script for automatically turning off the Layout toolbar in Data View to the Normal.mxt.

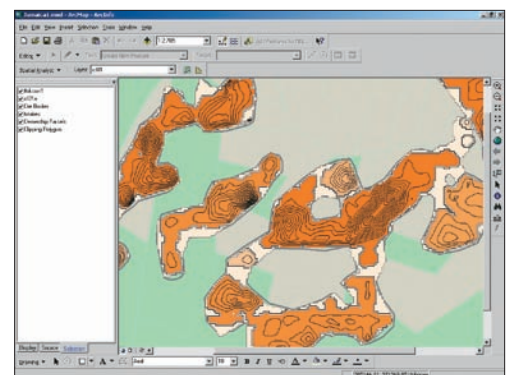
the code shown in Figure 2 provides a faster method by adding a tab in the Table of Contents that allows selectable layers to be set.

To add this code, open a blank map in ArcMap and choose Tools > Macros > Visual Basic Editor. In the editor, expand the Normal (Normal.mxt) folder and click on ThisDocument. If the code for switching off the Layout toolbar was added previously, scroll down to an area below it and copy the code in Figure 2 into the code window. Save the .mxt file. A tab called Selection will be added to the Table of Contents. This code may also be downloaded at arcscrips.esri.com/details.asp?dbid=13302.

Stop Saving Thumbnails

By default, ArcMap saves a thumbnail of the current view extent when saving the map document. With complex datasets or when fine tuning the appearance of a map, this can take a long time. If system resources are limited, turning off thumbnail saving can often lead to more stable performance.

Turning off thumbnail saving can be accomplished two ways. Manually turn off thumbnails through the interface by choosing File > Map Properties and unchecking the box next to Save Thumbnail Image with Map in the lower left corner of the Map Properties dialog box. To turn off thumbnail saving by



Another script will generate a tab that sets selectable layers from the Table of Contents.

default, call the code in Figure 3 from the MxDocument_NewDocument function.

Conclusion

These quick and simple modifications can save steps and improve performance. For additional information on tailoring ArcMap functionality and appearance, see the ESRI Press book, *Getting to Know ArcObjects—Programming ArcGIS with VBA*. Suggestions on how to get started programming and detailed information on coding guidelines can also be found in the ArcObjects Developers Help, an optional item on installation CD-ROM, or go to ArcObjects Online (arcscrips.esri.com).

CODE FIGURES:

```

Private WithEvents m_ActiveViewChanged As Map
Private m_runYet As Boolean

Private Function MxDocument_ActiveViewChanged()
  _As Boolean

  '*****

  'This code will switch off the Layout toolbar when
  'switching to Data view.
  'Copy this code to the Normal.mxt -> ThisDocument
  'to make this the default
  'behaviour.
  '
  'History: Original coding 30 January 2004 -
  'Stephen Lead
  '
  'Please report any problems or comments via the
  'ArcScripts page

  Dim pMxDoc As IMxDocument
  Set pMxDoc = ThisDocument
  Dim pActiveView As IActiveView
  Set pActiveView = pMxDoc.ActiveView

  If TypeOf pActiveView Is IMap Then
    Call m_ActiveViewChanged_ContentsChanged
  End If

End Function
Private Sub m_ActiveViewChanged_ContentsChanged()

  'The If statement is required because this code first
  'runs before the MXD has opened fully, so
  'the CommandBars method cannot be called yet.

  Dim pLayoutToolBar As ICommandBar

  If m_runYet Then
    Set pLayoutToolBar =
    _Application.Document.CommandBars.Find
    _(PageLayout_LayoutToolBar)
    pLayoutToolBar.Dock esriDockHide
  End If
  m_runYet = True

End Sub

```

Figure 1: Code for switching off the Layout toolbar

```

Public Sub SelectableTab()

  'Add the Selectable Layers tab to the TOC. Copy this
  'code to the Normal.mxt -> ThisDocument
  'to make it available by default.

  Dim pMxDoc As IMxDocument
  Set pMxDoc = ThisDocument
  Dim i As Integer
  For i = 0 To pMxDoc.ContentsViewCount - 1
    If pMxDoc.ContentsView(i).Name = "Selection" Then
      pMxDoc.ContentsView(i).Visible = True
      pMxDoc.UpdateContents
      Application.RefreshWindow
    End If
  Next i

  'Don't prompt to save the MXD if this is the only
  change
  Dim pDocDirty As IDocumentDirty2
  Set pDocDirty = ThisDocument
  pDocDirty.SetClean

End Sub

Private Function MxDocument_NewDocument() As Boolean

  'Add the tab when creating a new MXD
  Call SelectableTab

End Function

Private Function MxDocument_OpenDocument() As Boolean

  'Add the tab when opening an existing MXD
  Call SelectableTab

End Function

Public Sub TurnOffThumbnail()
  'Turn off the Save Thumbnail option for the MXD 'to
  'save time
  Dim pMxInfo As IDocumentInfo
  Set pMxInfo = Application.Document
  pMxInfo.SavePreview = False
End Sub

```

Figure 2: Code for setting selectable layers from the Table of Contents

Figure 3: Code to stop saving thumbnails