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## What are these terms I keep hearing about... Cut and Copy and Paste?

Last week, we talked about some [smartphone tips and tricks](#) that some folks wish they would have known years ago. This week, we continue with some commands that I literally use every time when I'm on my computer or smartphone. On computers as well as smartphones and tablets, there are very powerful commands that make us users very productive. Quite possibly the most powerful commands are actions that allow us to "Cut," "Copy," and "Paste." Let's start with why or when you would ever use these commands.

### Cut

Let's suppose that you are typing many sentences, and after you type them, you realize that you want to remove, or delete an entire sentence. For example:

Sentence one. Sentence two. Sentence three.

If you didn't want Sentence two, you could highlight or select it...

Sentence one. **Sentence two.** Sentence three.

And then issue the "Cut" command which would result in the following:

Sentence one. Sentence three.

This was a simple example, but now imagine you wanted to do this for an entire paragraph.

### **Copy and Paste**

Now let's suppose you want to copy a long sentence. For example, you want to repeat the first sentence below at the end.

This is a really important sentence that I want you to read.

[Blah blah blah]

First, highlight or select it...

This is a really important sentence that I want you to read.

[Blah blah blah]

And then issue the "Copy" command which would result in the text being copied to a storage area called a clipboard (more on this later). You would then position the cursor at the end, and then issue the "Paste" command which would result in the following:

This is a really important sentence that I want you to read.

[Blah blah blah]

This is a really important sentence that I want you to read.

This is another simple example, but imagine the sentence was very long, and you didn't want to have to retype all of it.

### **Clipboard**

We mentioned the clipboard above, but now let's talk a little more about it. The contents of the clipboard persist, i.e., the contents remain until something else is placed into the clipboard. Using the last example above, after issuing "Paste", I could have invoked "Paste" two more times which would have resulted in the following:

This is a really important sentence that I want you to read.

[Blah blah blah]

This is a really important sentence that I want you to read. This is a really important sentence that I want you to read. This is a really important sentence that I want you to read.

So, we know that the clipboard is populated by the "Copy" command; however, it is also populated by the "Cut" command which gives us the ability to easily "move" something. If we go back to our first example, let's say that we wanted the second sentence to be moved to the end. First, we highlight or select it:

Sentence one. Sentence two. Sentence three.

Invoke “Cut”:

Sentence one. Sentence three.

Move the cursor the end of “” and then invoke “Paste”:

Sentence one. Sentence three. Sentence two.

### **Beyond Text**

These examples have all used typed words, but these three commands are limited to text. They can also be used on images, files, calendar invitations, etc.

### **How to Use**

On your personal computer, you could invoke the “Cut” or “Copy” commands by highlighting or selecting the desired text and then either clicking on “Edit” in that window’s Title Bar, and then selecting “Cut” or “Copy”, or by learning the keyboard shortcut for this command:

Cut: Ctrl + X (Windows) or Command + X (MacOS)

Copy: Ctrl + C (Windows) or Command + C (MacOS)

On your smartphone, once the text is selected by tapping on a single word in that sentence and then dragging the start and end position of the selection, you will see commands appear... tap “Cut” or “Copy”.

For “Paste”, you would position the cursor to the desired location, and on your personal computer, you could invoke the “Paste” command by either clicking on “Edit” in that window’s Title Bar, and then selecting “Cut” or “Copy”, or by learning the keyboard shortcut for this command:

Cut: Ctrl + V (Windows) or Command + V (MacOS)

On your smartphone, once the cursor is positioned to the desired location, you can tap on top of the cursor once and you will see commands appear... tap “Paste”.

### **Tech Coach Assistance**

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### **Bonus**

In the image at the top of this column (and below) is an example of using Cut, Copy, and Paste using an image editor. It's a good example of using these powerful commands that I use every day.

1. I selected this area of the image and issued "Cut"
2. I then "Paste"d that image on my forehead
3. I then selected my left eye and issued "Copy"
4. I then "Paste"d my left eye above my right ear
5. I then "Paste"d my left eye below my right ear

