

GIS Tips & Tricks

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No Mouse needed: Keyboard Shortcuts

For many of us, it is hard to recall the days of desktop micro-computers before the mouse, Graphic User Interfaces, and “the Ribbon”. But now, there is now an entire generation of GIS-users who have never used a command-line interface to GIS software. However, as many of the currently used GIS packages have their roots in those pre-Windows/GUI days, many of those ancient lines of code remain in the software programs. Among the most useful tips for most GIS software packages is that many “keyboard” shortcuts are still available, if you just know where to look for them.

Prior to the ribbon, in the Microsoft™ Windows environment, some shortcuts were advertised every time you use a drop-down menu. For example, from the FILE dropdown, you could use the combination of the Control Key + the “S” key (Ctrl+S) to save your file. Similarly, from the EDIT dropdown, if you select an area on the screen and then use the Ctrl + C to COPY the selection, you can paste it elsewhere with the Ctrl+V combination. Then, of course, if you want to “undo” an edit, the Ctrl+Z combination does that. By the way, the Ctrl+Z combination still works in many programs.

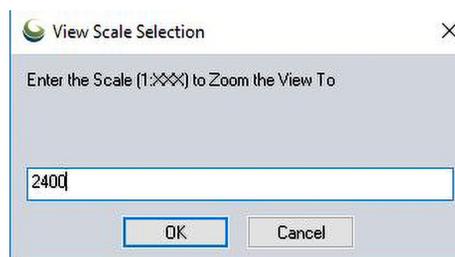
The Keyboard shortcuts in GIS programs are not as obviously advertised, and sometimes difficult to find, so here are some tips.

In GlobalMapper™ (v19 and above), some of the keyboard shortcuts are advertised as in pre-Ribbon Microsoft and a full list can be retrieved from the HELP dropdown.

We have three favorite GlobalMapper™ shortcuts that we use routinely when looking through Lidar data.

Pan and Zoom—Using the Pan and Zoom tools from the navigation toolbar or from the TOOLS dropdown always works, but these locations are sometimes inconvenient especially when you are panning around and also want to zoom-in to get a better look at a feature. The keyboard shortcuts Alt+Z (Zoom) and Alt+G (Grab and Drop) toggle between the tools. Then, if you want to return to the entire extent, just use the HOME key.

Map Scale—For several workflows, we will want to pan to some area of a map and then zoom to a specific map scale to uniformly evaluate features. While you could use the Zoom-in and Zoom-out tools on the Navigation Toolbar while keeping watch on the numeric display of the map scale, it is faster to zoom to the area-of-interest and use the keyboard shortcut Shift+Z to bring up a dialog box:



Type in the absolute scale you require and press <OK> to zoom to that map scale.

File Management—As with most all Microsoft™ Windows programs, the Ctrl+S will save your file (the current workspace), and Ctrl+O will open a new data file (invoke a File Explorer for you to use for navigation). However, with GlobalMapper™, the combination of Ctrl+W will open a GlobalMapper™ Workspace, and Ctrl+U will UNLOAD all loaded data files in a current map and let you start building a new workspace.

GlobalMapper
Open Data Files
Online Sources
Configuration

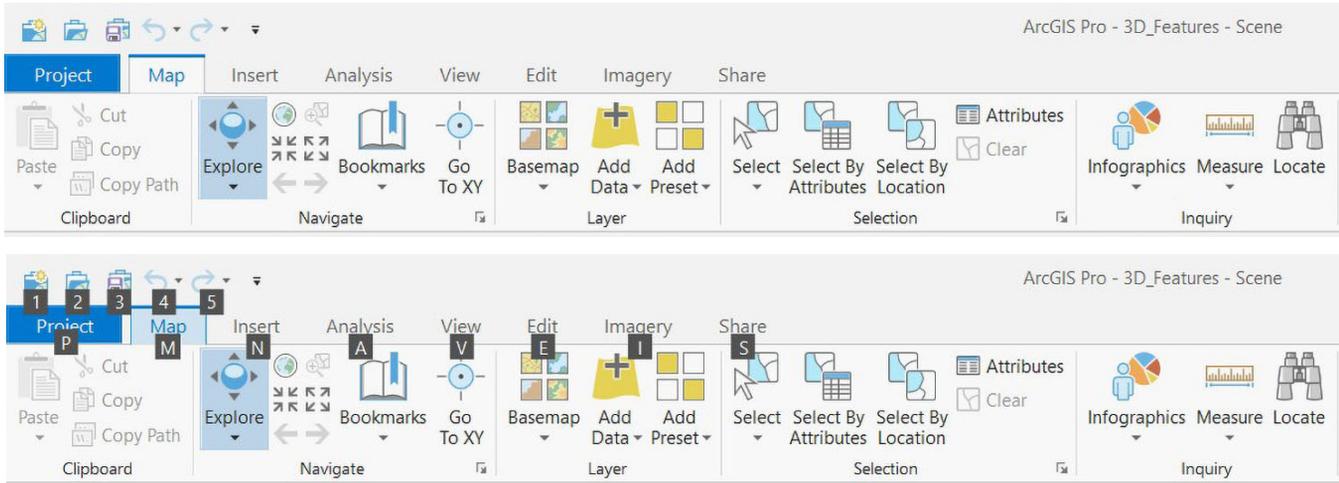
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Along with the “standard” Microsoft™ File Management keyboard shortcuts described above; Save File, Open Project, Copy, and Paste, Esri™ ArcGIS-Pro offers its own keyboard shortcuts. Here are a few of our favorites. You can also download a complete list of ArcGIS Pro shortcuts from <http://links.esri.com/arcgis-pro-shortcuts>.

Toggle between windows—For users who have fairly complex ArcGIS Pro Projects with many tabs, using the Ctrl + Tab keys together will allow you quickly toggle between all of the maps, scenes and reports in the project file. This combination of keys will also allow you to toggle between additional tabs like the Catalog, or Geoprocessing tabs.



Enable Access Keys and show the KeyTips—As many of us start to; or continue to, make the transition from ArcMap to ArcGIS Pro, it can take a bit of time to remember exactly which hotkeys are which. The nice thing about ArcGIS Pro is that you can activate the KeyTips which will show you exactly what hotkey to use for a particular button within the ribbon. All you have to do is press ALT and you will see the KeyTip display in the ribbon just above each of the buttons.

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