question time

This month we offer advice on the size of a PC's case, a batch file problem following an upgrade to Windows 95, choosing anti-virus software, creating foreign characters, and printing a hard copy of your folder structure in Windows 95

Q I am planning to buy a desktop computer with a compact case that has a 1Gb hard drive and no spare drive bays. Is there any difference between the types of case (desktop, tower, etc) and will a compact one cause any problems for expansion?
Tim Durston, Bodmin, Cornwall

A The size of a PC's case does make a difference when it comes to expansion. Compact cases tend to have less room for expansion cards than, say, a tower case, but they usually have at least one spare slot. Drive bays are only important if you plan to add extra drives. Providing it has a 3.5in floppy drive and a CD-ROM drive, then a 1Gb hard drive should give you everything you need.

Q I recently upgraded to Windows 95 from Windows 3.11. With my previous setup, I added a CALL statement after WIN in my AUTOEXEC.BAT file to start a batch file. The batch file then copied several directories from one hard drive to another every time I quit Windows, acting as a simple backup routine.
After the move to Windows 95, I have been unable to do the same thing as I cannot modify the Shut Down routine. Do you know of a way of calling my batch file after shutting down?
Alan Ward, Verwood, Dorset

A As far as we know, there is no way to execute a file after selecting 'Shut Down' from the Start menu. If, however, you choose 'Restart the computer in MS-DOS mode' after choosing 'Shut Down', then Windows 95 will process a file called DOSSTART.BAT before dropping you to the C:\ prompt. The file is a normal batch file and is in your Windows folder. Simply add commands to this file to get Windows 95 to execute them after choosing the Restart option. Your machine can be turned off once the commands have been finished.

Q How can I get pictures from a camcorder into my PC? I have a Gateway Pentium 120 with 24Mb of RAM, an ATI GX Mach 64 PCI video card and Windows 95. The camcorder is a Canon UC8Hi. My intention is to use PhotoFinish 3.0, as featured in the September edition of *What PC?*, to edit the pictures from the camcorder.
Paul H Blampied, St Helier

A Video editing on a PC requires a separate video card that accepts an input from a video camera and digitises the footage before storing it on the hard drive. The Fast Electronics FPS 60, reviewed in this month's In Brief section, is one such card, but there are dozens of different ones available to suit your needs and budgets.
Video editing also requires plenty of hard disk storage and so a removable hard disk drive like the Iomega Jaz may be a sensible purchase. We'll be running a Computer Class on using a PC for video editing in one of our upcoming issues, so it might be worthwhile holding off your purchase until then.
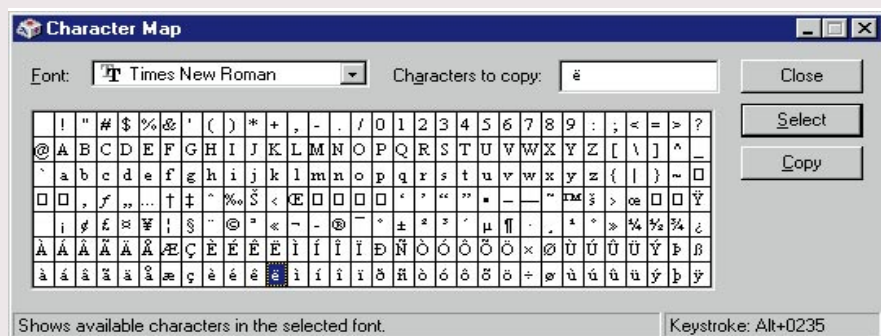
Q Having just bought my first PC, I have a long list of questions to ask. Top of the list is: what anti-virus software should I use to get all-round protection, including risks via Internet access?
I've read several articles and lots of software ads, but of ▶

Q Is there any way of getting foreign characters into my word processor documents other than using Windows' Character Map? While the language I'm using (Albanian) has only a few letters which are different from the English alphabet, I keep thinking that life could be easier. I am using Windows 95.
G J Hall, Liverpool

A Each time you select a letter in Character Map by clicking on it, you'll see a four-digit code appear in the bottom of the window. In your word processor, if you hold down the 'Alt' key on your keyboard and then type the code using the numeric keypad (this won't work with the regular number keys), the letter will appear. Every character has a code like this (ë has a code of 0235, for example) and although this method is hardly intuitive, if you only want a few special characters, you'll soon remember the codes you need.

course all the manufacturers claim to produce the best package. I can't afford the top-priced programs, so how do I weigh up the 'mid-market' offerings, such as McAfee, PC-cillin95, etc?
Andy Williams
Andy-Erik@msn.com

It is difficult to choose anti-virus software, because you can't find out if it works until you actually have a virus. Reviews can be very helpful here, as they usually show the results of tests done under controlled conditions. Look out for a roundup of anti-virus software in the February issue.

In the meantime, you could try downloading some anti-virus software from the World Wide Web. There are all sorts of shareware programs available which you can try for free and you only have to pay if you decide to keep using them. A good place to start is a Web page called 'Anti-Virus Resources on the Internet' (www.securenet.org/avlinks.html). This includes links to commercial sites and newsgroups as well as sites from which you can download software.
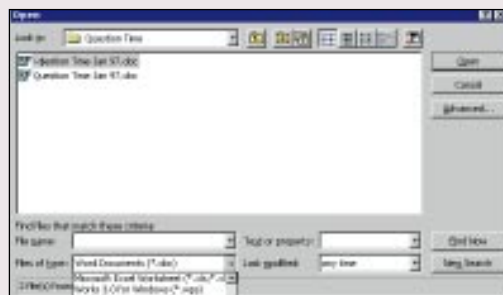
As far as protecting files downloaded from the Internet is concerned, any anti-virus package is capable of this – simply scan the file before executing it. Some anti-virus software goes further, however, and integrates with your Web browser to scan downloaded files automatically.

My problem is not a major one, it's more a question of aesthetics. I want to add a 'Format A:' command as a shortcut item on my Start menu in Windows 95. However, when I try entering 'Format A:' as the description, Windows complains and informs me that I cannot use the colon symbol (:) or other symbols (/,\,l,*,etc) in the description. Is there a way round this, to enable

Q We have a very basic PC system that we are just about to replace with a Pentium machine with 16Mb of RAM. One of the software packages we use most often is Microsoft Word 5.0 for DOS. Over the years we have built up a large collection of documents, such as standard reports and letters.

With our new PC we will be buying the latest version of Microsoft Office 7.0 for Windows 95. Will we be able to use all our old documents with the new version of Word, or are we destined to spend weeks setting everything up from scratch?
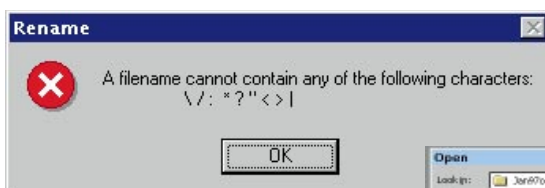**Patrick Phelp, Paignton, Devon**

A With each new release of Word, Microsoft has ensured that file filters are included for all the previous versions of the product.

When you install Microsoft Office, therefore, make sure you choose the 'Custom Install' option and select the Word 5.0 filter for installation. When this has been done, you will be able to open your old Word documents without any problems.

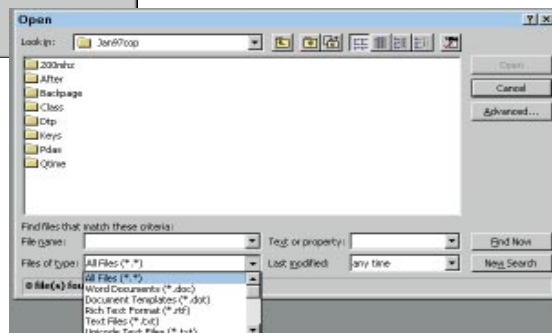me to have to 'Format A:' looking as I wish?
Adrian Vivaldi,
South Ockenden, Essex
Vivaldi@spuddy.mew.co.uk

A Unfortunately not. All items on the Windows 95 Start menu are stored as shortcut link files within the Windows\Start Menu folder (with an extension of .LNK). Even though Windows 95 caters for long filenames, it does not allow the symbols you outlined to be appended to those filenames, so

it's not possible to include them in your item descriptions.

Using Windows 95, is there any way of printing a folder structure from Windows Explorer? So many folders seem to be created that a hard copy would enable
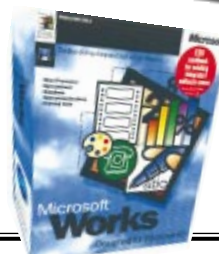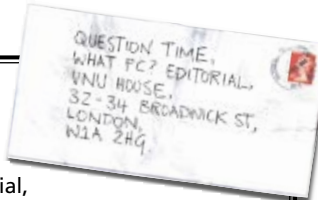

me to keep track of them.
Mr A B Collyer, Gillingham, Kent

A Windows Explorer lacks a printing feature, so it's not possible to output a hard copy of your folder structure. However, there is an enhanced version of Explorer available, called ExplorerPlus, that will let you do this – and a lot more besides.

ExplorerPlus is part of the PowerDesk 1.1 utilities suite, reviewed in the August 1996 issue of *What PC?*

PowerDesk 1.1 costs £24.95 and you can contact the distributor, Roderick Manhattan, on 0181 875 4444.

W e regret that we cannot provide readers with individual replies but, if you have a question or problem you want to share with other readers, write to us at: Question Time, *What PC?* Editorial, VNU House, 32-34 Broadwick St, London W1A 2HG.

If possible, please include details of your hardware and preferably copies of your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files – and for Windows problems, your SYSTEM INI and WIN.INI files.

The writer of every published letter will receive a FREE COPY of either *Microsoft Works 95* or *Microsoft Publisher 95*. Please state which you would prefer.