

(Approx. 619 words)

## THIS AND THAT

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You never know what your program will remember when you close it.

For that reason, if the last file you used in the program happened to be on removable media which has been detached from the computer, you might face a real problem the next time you turn on your computer. So, before terminating whatever program is using a file located on the removable media, CLOSE the file located on that media. Next, still in the program you have been using, locate on your internal hard disk any file which that program will recognize. Open it. You don't have to work on the file, just open it and close it so that the last file used by the program was from the hard disk. You don't necessarily have to do any editing of the file, but you can re-save it as an added step to help the program remember where it found the last opened file, or you can just close it without re-saving it. On my C:\ drive I keep a text file created in MS Notepad titled freecell. You guessed it, that is where I save a list of the games I have failed to win (in other words, LOST). It isn't particularly important, so if it somehow becomes corrupted or deleted, it can always be replaced with new information. This file is easily accessed and opened, after which, for a little added security, I re-save it before closing it.

Hopefully this satisfies the computers lust for usable information. I have spent too much time thinking a program had taken a permanent dive before remembering that the last work I did before turning off the machine was on a file located on a floppy disk, a camera memory card (either in a card reader or in the camera itself), or from some other form of removable media no longer accessible by the computer. If a file can no longer be physically accessed, many programs go into an endless loop trying to find it, causing your program to appear to be failing.

If you are lucky, using every trick you can think of, you might get the program to respond to a command to open a file on the hard disk. My all-time-favorite, Paint Shop Pro went to a "White Screen Of Death" recently every time I tried to use it. When my brain's memory kicked in I remembered the last thing I had done before closing PSP earlier was to download pictures from my camera's memory card. The memory card had been in a card reader and was removed to put it back in the camera AFTER I closed PSP. Downloading the camera photos was the last work I did before closing PSP. When next opening the program and getting that "WSOD" (see above), I found that even though various messages told me the program was not responding, the mouse would

still operate and I was able to get "File/Open/ etc. etc." to open a photo located on my hard drive. Problem solved, at least for that incident.

Of course, you can never count on anything happening exactly the same way twice. So maybe, instead of "Death" for PSP it should just be "White Screen Of Coma." But your program might just stop working with no change in the screen at all. Quoting one of our knowledgeable members, "it all depends" on how the programmers wrote it.