

The Shortcut bar



The Shortcut bar can be used as the launch pad for all your teaching resources. Whilst other toolboxes can only contain Activstudio tools, the Shortcut bar can contain links to other programs, to your favourite resource folders or to resources themselves.

The Shortcut bar is one of the first toolbars that Activstudio users see when they first open the software. Ironically, however, it is often one of the last toolbars to be used in practice. The Shortcut bar's lack of icons means that users sometimes don't even realise that it exists. The Shortcut bar's potential, however, is partly in the very fact that it contains so few icons.

As with many aspects of Activstudio, and of course with teaching as a whole, organisation is the key. To make full use of the article, it may be worth planning ahead and deciding which programs outside of Activstudio you are most likely to need during lessons.

Where is the Shortcut Bar?

Many users mistake the third column of icons on the Main toolbox for the Main toolbox itself. This third column, however, is the Shortcut bar. You can open or close the Shortcut bar using the Roll In/Out button.

Adding links to programs

You can launch your favourite programs from the Shortcut bar in the following way: If there is an icon on your desktop, simply drag the icon from the desktop onto the Shortcut bar. Otherwise, via your desktop's Start menu, right-click on the program you want and create a copy of the shortcut on your desktop. This shortcut can be dragged into the Shortcut bar.

Adding folders

If you have particular folders of resources for individual classes or topics, give yourself easy access to them by placing them on the Shortcut bar. From your desktop open the window containing the folder you want. Just drag the folder from its original location to the Shortcut bar.

Adding individual resources

Are you studying a particular topic which requires repeated use of an image or text? Drag it from your flipchart into your Shortcut bar and you'll have quick access to it over and over again.

Tool tips

When you add a link to the Shortcut bar, it will appear on the bar as an icon. Right-click on this icon to open the Keystroke Definer box. In this box you can, in particular, specify the Tool tip for your icon, which can be particularly useful if you have a number of folders, with the same icon, on the Shortcut bar.

If you add an Activstudio resource to the Shortcut bar, right-clicking on the resource will open a thumbnail preview.

User Defined Buttons

Instead of dragging icons into the Shortcut bar, you can add a blank button to the bar and then define what you want the button to do. These blank buttons are called User Defined Buttons. Two User Defined Buttons are already available in the default Shortcut bar. Add more User Defined Buttons to your Shortcut bar from the Tool Store.

Right-click on the User Defined Button in the Shortcut bar to open the Keystroke Definer box. A number of

options are available here to help you when working at an Activboard:

Special Keystrokes	Define a keystroke here, so that when you click on the User Defined Button it will perform this keystroke (eg Ctrl + S would save your work; Ctrl + C would copy a selected resource, etc)
Key Text	Type in a text and clicking the User Defined Button will place the text on the page.
Program/File	Use the Browse button to search for a program or file to launch using the User Defined Button

Deleting items from the Shortcut bar

If you decide you want to delete an icon on the Shortcut bar, open the Tool Store and drag the relevant icon into the Tool Store. This is the way to delete any icons from the Shortcut bar. Note that the icon will not be placed in the Tool Store.

Saving your Shortcut bar

Activstudio's full flexibility and practicality comes in the fact that once you have taken the time to define the Shortcut bar you can save that layout for future use. This means that you can create different layouts for different classes or subjects and then reload them when they are needed. This is particularly useful when saving Shortcut bar layouts, but note that your whole set of toolboxes will be saved with this profile. Select the Main Menu button then select **Toolbox Customize>Toolbox Layout>Save As**.