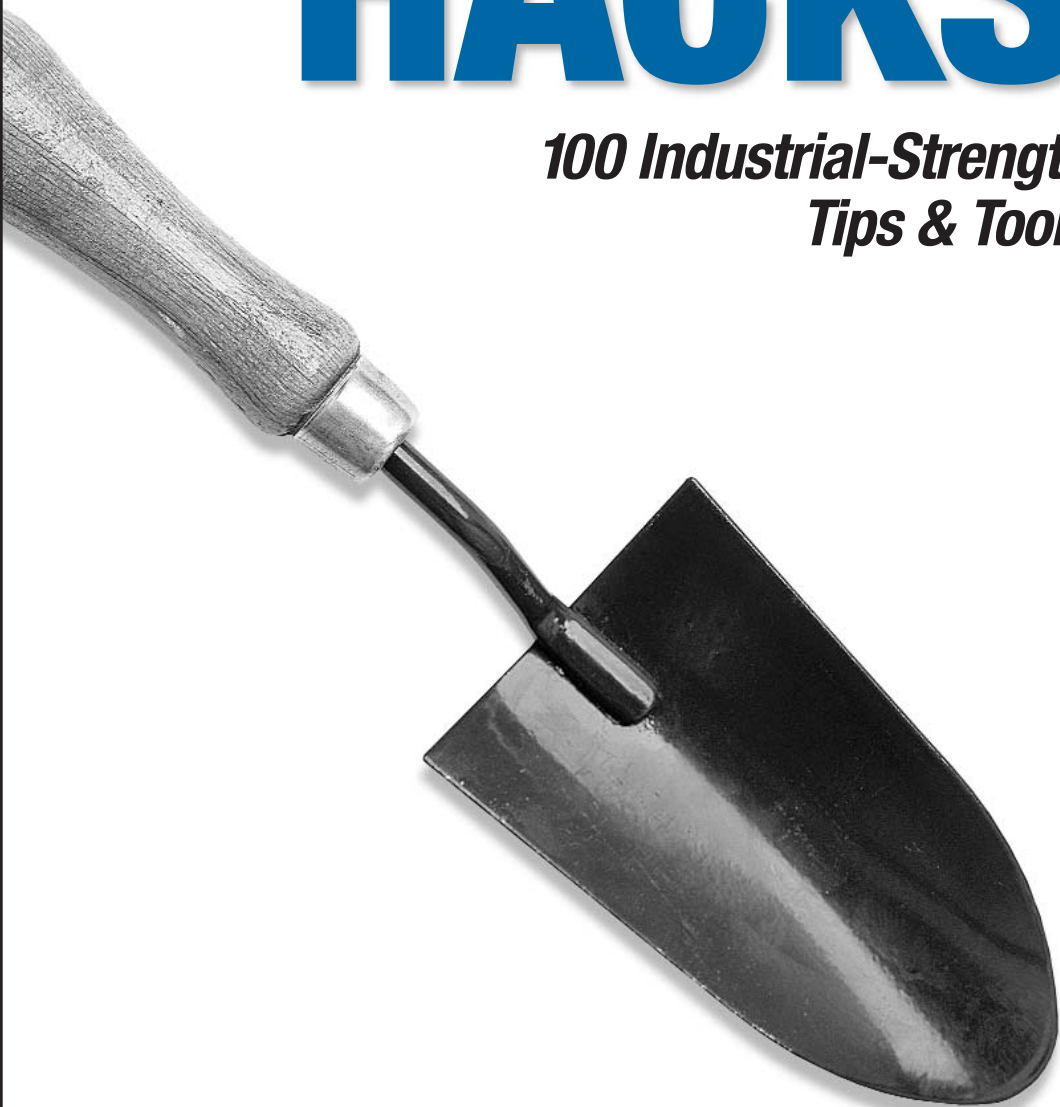


# EXCEL HACKS™

*100 Industrial-Strength  
Tips & Tools*



O'REILLY®

*David Hawley & Raina Hawley*



HACK

#81

## Speed Up Code While Halting Screen Flicker

When you record macros from within Excel, the code it generates often produces screen flicker, which not only slows down your macro, but also makes the macro's activity look very disorganized. Fortunately, you can eliminate screen flicker while at the same time speeding up your code.

One drawback with recorded macros in Excel is that the code produced is often very inefficient. This can mean macros that should take a matter of seconds to complete often take a lot longer and look very unsightly. Also, when you write macros using the macro recorder, all keystrokes are recorded, whether they are meant to be or not. This means that if you make an error and then correct it, the keystrokes required to complete those actions also will be recorded in your macro code.

If you have played around a bit with macros or dabbled in VBA code, you might have heard of the `Application.ScreenUpdating` property. By setting `ScreenUpdating` to `False` at the start of a macro, you will not only stop the constant screen flicker associated with a recorded macro, but also speed up the macro's execution. The reason this method speeds up code is because Excel no longer needs to repaint the screen whenever it encounters commands such as `Select`, `Activate`, `LargeScroll`, `SmallScroll`, and many others.

To include `Application.ScreenUpdating = False` at the beginning of your existing macro, select `Tools` → `Macro` → `Macros`, select your macro, click the `Edit` button, and enter the following code:

```
'  
' a Macro  
' Macro recorded 1/12/2003 by OzGrid.com  
'  
  
Application.ScreenUpdating = False  
'YOUR CODE  
Application.ScreenUpdating = True  
End Sub
```

Note how you set `ScreenUpdating` back to `True` on completion. Although Excel will set this back to `True` whenever focus is passed back to Excel (in other words, when your macro finishes), in most cases it pays to play it safe and include the code at the end.

In some cases, you might find that `ScreenUpdating` is set back to `True` before your recorded macro completes. This can happen with recorded macros that use the `Select` command frequently. If this does happen, you might need to repeat the line `Application.ScreenUpdating = False` in other parts of your macro.