

# SKYPE HACKS

*Tips & Tools for Cheap Calls  
from Your Computer*



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## Add Fast-Dial Shortcuts to Your Menu or Desktop

Add shortcuts to your menu or desktop for your most frequently called contacts.

Works with: Windows version of Skype.

When making a Skype call, the typical procedure goes something like this: double-click the Skype icon in the system tray or the Skype shortcut on the desktop, navigate to the Contacts tab, find the entry for the contact you want to call, and then double-click on it. Now, for some people of leisure, all this clicking is a great adventure. For the rest of us who must work for a living, wouldn't it be nice to make that call with as little as just one double-click? Fortunately, this is possible with the Windows version of Skype, as we can add shortcuts to the Windows desktop or menu for our most frequent calls.

### Menu Shortcuts

Navigate to Skype on the Windows menu (select Start → All Programs → Skype), and right-click on the Skype icon. A pop-up menu should appear, from which you should choose Create Shortcut. This will create a shortcut under the Skype menu (see [Figure 4-9](#)).



Figure 4-9. A newly created menu shortcut for Skype

Next, right-click on the new shortcut (Skype (2)) and choose Properties. This will open a window in which you can edit the properties of the shortcut you have just created (see [Figure 4-10](#)).

With the Shortcut properties window open, you should follow these steps:

1. Go to the General tab and rename the shortcut. In the example in [Figure 4-10](#), the shortcut has been named echo123.
2. Go to the Shortcut tab and in the Target box, enter a command such as this: "C:\Program Files\Skype\Phone\Skype.exe" "/callto:echo123". Pay particular attention to the use of quotes, and if necessary, change the path to the *Skype.exe* executable.
3. If you want to associate a hotkey sequence with the shortcut, click on the Shortcut key text box and enter the key sequence you want to use for this shortcut—for example, `ctrl + shift + E`.



4-11). Double-clicking on a fast-dial desktop shortcut will start a call to whomever you have entered as the `/callto:` name (or to the regular phone number, if you're a SkypeOut subscriber).



Figure 4-11. Desktop fast-dial shortcuts for Skype and for echo123

Second, you can simply right-click anywhere on an unoccupied area of your desktop. From the pop-up menu that appears, select `New → Shortcut`. This will create an empty shortcut on your desktop, as well as open the Shortcut Wizard. Use the `Browse...` key to find `Skype.exe` (see Figure 4-12).

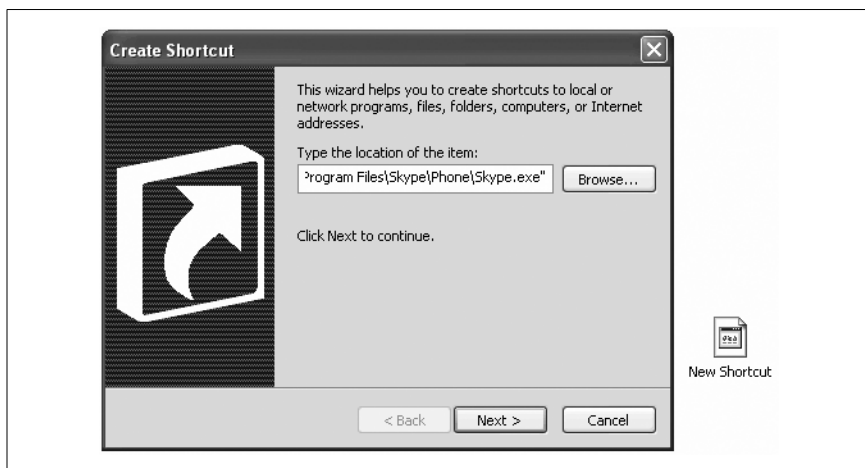


Figure 4-12. The newly created desktop shortcut and the Shortcut Wizard

In effect, the shortcut we're creating will run Skype from the command line, and as such we can add command-line options. The command-line option we will add is `/callto:Skypeuser`, where `Skypeuser` is the name of the Skype user we want to contact when we double-click on the shortcut. Under "Type the location of the item" in the wizard, add the `/callto:` command-line option after `Skype.exe`, like this: `"C:\Program Files\Skype\Phone\Skype.exe" /callto:echo123`". Pay particular attention to the use of quotes, and if necessary, change the path to the `Skype.exe` executable. Click `Next`, then name the shortcut, and then click `Finish`. Now you should have a freshly minted fast-dial shortcut on your desktop, like that shown in Figure 4-11.

## Add Fast-Dial Shortcuts to Your Menu or Desktop

Note that a careful naming convention for your Skype desktop shortcuts will pay dividends when it comes to organizing your desktop. This is particularly true if you have more than a few shortcuts. Using a short prefix, such as Skype-, for shortcut names will mean that when you organize your desktop icons by name or file type, all your fast-dial shortcuts will group together nicely as a block. This should make finding and calling your most frequent Skype contacts quicker and easier still.

With this hack, calls are now just a double-click away!