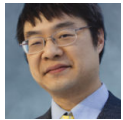# Holding down the shift key when right-clicking lets you pin things to the Start menu even when you might have been better off not doing so

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Raymond Chen

Holding the shift key when calling up a context menu is a convention for indicating that you want to see additional advanced options which are normally hidden. One of those options is *Pin to Start menu*. What is this doing as an extended command? The *Pin to Start menu* command normally appears on the context menu of a program or a shortcut to a program. The Start menu pin list was intended to be a launch point for programs, so if the item you pick isn't actually a program, the *Pin to Start menu* item will be hidden. Furthermore, only items on the local hard drive will show *Pin to Start menu*. This avoids ugliness if the user accidentally pins a file on a network drive or removable media, and the network is down or the removable media is removed. (Or, if the removable media is a floppy drive or CD-ROM, freaking out the user by spinning up the drive to get the properties of the shortcut.) The shift key override was aded as an escape hatch, like the double-Ctrl+Alt+Del, in case there was some situation discovered after Windows XP shipped where it would be reasonable to pin a non-program or a shortcut on network or removable media to the Start menu. For example, ClickOnce application are not recognized as executables because their extension is not .exe but rather is .appref-ms. But you can use the shift key override to pin them to your Start menu. With great power comes great responsibility: If you manually override the *Pin to Start menu* logic, then it's your problem if you pin something that ends up making your life miserable.

Update: Upon closer examination, I've discovered that my characterization of what the shift keys accomplishes was incorrect. The shift key does not let you force-pin files on the network or removable media. It only lets you force-pin files that aren't programs.

Raymond Chen
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