Windows Tweaks Guide

For

Windows XP   **Windows Vista**   **Windows 7**

By

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Windows Tweaks Guide

Introduction

This e-book is the complete system optimization guide for all Windows users. Here you will get step-by-step information how to tweak and optimize the different operation system of your computer: **Windows XP/VISTA/Windows7.** Tweaking isn't just about making the computer faster. It is about getting things done faster. Tweaking done in the full context of this guide can provide a slight but noticeable speed boost, tighten security, increase reliability, and improve the user experience. Some tweaks may free up a small amount of memory but in return it will take you more steps to perform a task. Using these optimization tricks will help your operation system run faster and more efficiently - even on old computers.

Important Notes on This Guide

1 - Tweaking is best done on a fresh install.

2 - Get as much memory (RAM) as you can afford. RAM is fast and Vista will take advantage of it.

3 - Use 2 (or more) hard drives. This will speed up access to files and provide a good backup location.

4 - You know how to recover from problems. You should understand the effect a tweak will have before you do it.

5 - Proper Hard Drive Configuration. Properly setting up your hard drives allows for both increased performance and reliable backups.

6 - Maintain Your Computer. Disk cleanup and defrag is the fastest and easiest way to speed up your computer.

7 - In no way is any of this intended for any computer that is in or connects to a domain or corporate network.

8 - Read through this entire guide before doing anything.

Usage Instruction

Once downloaded, first extract the PDF file from the .ZIP archive using the built-in Windows compression utility or other compression utilities. Then use the free Adobe Reader or Foxit Reader software to read the PDF file. If you have any issues viewing them, the best solution is to update your archival and/or PDF reader software, or try the alternative software.

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Tweaks for Windows XP

How much you decide to tweak your machine is a matter of personal preference. The truth is that, in general, Windows XP is a remarkably well running and self-tuning OS. Microsoft can only take it so far because of the differences in both computer hardware and personal preferences. Fortunately, tweaking your machine can be rather easy with the right information. That is what this guide is all about, giving you the information you need so that you can decide which tweaks you do and don't want to use.

Before You Begin Tweaking XP

Basic Requirements

There are three key requirements you must meet before being able to use this guide successfully:

1. You should prepare backups of all your important information prior to undertaking any of the changes detailed in this guide. Follow the instructions in the Backup & Recovery.

2. You should have an original Windows XP installation DVD. Do not undertake the tweaks in this guide if you don't have a XP DVD as you may not be able to reverse certain changes or fix any problems which may occur.

3. You will need access to an Administrator level User Account to make the majority of the changes in this guide.

Backup and Restore

You can take the process of backing up as far as you want it to go. A successful and complete backup strategy should incorporate multiple backup methods and redundancies.

Back up Files

To back up your files to an external hard disk drive.

1. Click Start, point to Accessories, point to System Tools, and then click Backup.
2. The Backup or Restore Wizard appears. Click Next.
3. On the Backup or Restore page, click Next.
4. On the What to Back Up page, click All information on this computer, and then click Next.
5. On the Backup Type, Destination, and Name page, click Choose a place to save your backup, and select your external hard disk drive. Then click Next.
6. On the Completing the Backup or Restore Wizard page, click Finish.

7. Windows Backup saves a copy of your files to your external hard disk drive. When the backup is complete, click Close.

System Restore

System Restore Service creates system snap shots or restores points for returning to at a later time. Every time you install a program or new driver, plus on a schedule, this service creates a "restore point" to roll back to if a problem occurs.

1. Click Start, point to All Programs, point to Accessories, point to System Tools, and then click System Restore.
2. On the Welcome screen, click Restore my computer to an earlier time, and then click Next.
3. On the Select a Restore Point page, select the date from the calendar that shows the point you'd like to restore to, and then click Next.
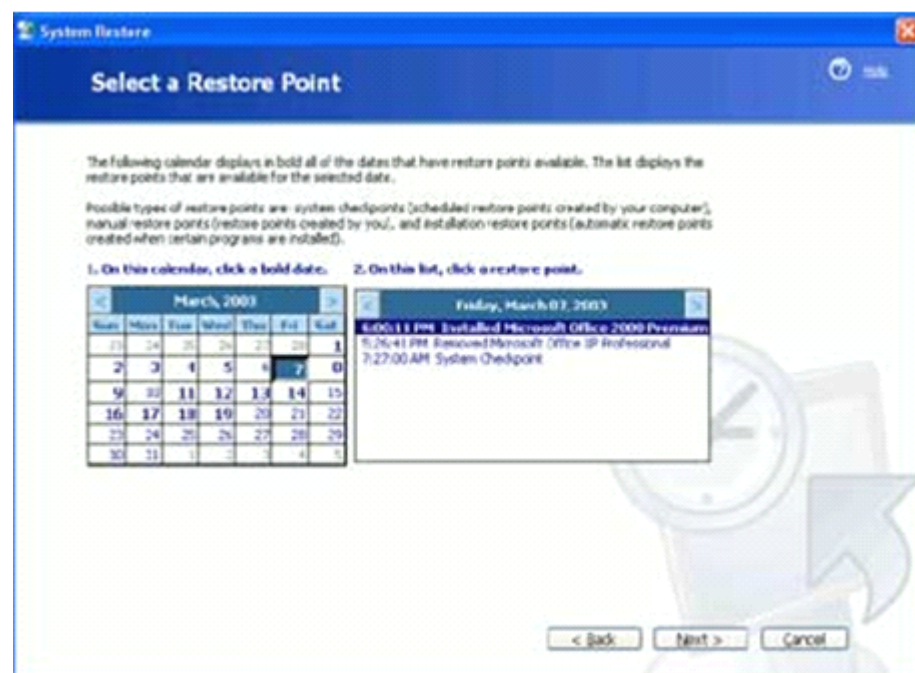
4. On the Confirm Restore Point Selection page, verify that the correct restore point is chosen, and then close any open programs.
5. Click Next if you are ready to proceed or click Back to change the restore point.
6. The computer will shut down automatically and reboot. On reboot, you'll see the Restoration Complete page, and then click OK.

After reviewing the stability of your system, you can choose another restore point or undo this restoration. Just open System Restore and make the appropriate choice. After you use System Restore, you'll have an additional task. Undo my last restoration, on the System Restore Welcome page. Remember that you'll have to reinstall any programs that were installed after the restore point.

If System Restore doesn't work in Normal Mode, it might work in Safe Mode. To use System Restore in Safe Mode, press the F8 key during reboot and choose Safe Mode. When your computer starts in either Safe Mode or Normal Mode, System Restore can be used to capture a working previous state. System Restore can't be opened unless the system is bootable into one of these modes.

Remove Old System Restore Points

If you have System Restore enabled, and want to remove all System Restore points other than the most recent one, thereby freeing up a great deal of disk space, under the "More Options" tab click the "Clean Up" button under the "System Restore" section. Click Yes on the subsequent prompt, and then click the OK again.

Tweaks for Startup

Windows loads up a range of programs into memory during its startup procedure, including drivers and programs needed to provide the main functionality in XP, just prior to showing the Windows Desktop or the logon screen. In this section, we will discuss how to speed up Windows XP startup; it will also touch the issue affecting computer startup.

Modify Startup Programs

Several operations are happening in your computer before it gets up and running. Some of these operations have nothing to do with your usual computer use, but automatically starts as your computer boots. What you should do is to inactivate these files.

Click Start, then Run, and type "*msconfig*"; the system utility configuration window appear which contain check boxes; go to Startup. This will give you the list of programs that automatically start when you turn on your computer. Choose the programs that you wish to disable and click "apply". Restart your computer to complete the process.

Remember: Never disable programs if you don't know their function; make sure to uncheck files that you know will have no detrimental effect to your computer operations.

Uninstall Unused Programs

Many of the startup programs can be removed as they are not necessary for the specific functionality you require. Importantly, removing unnecessary startup programs will help reduce Windows startup time, and also reduce background resource usage.

To do this, go to Add/Remove Programs in the Control Panel; select the files you wish to permanently remove. This step will remove unnecessary programs completely from your computer.

Improved Hard drive

Adding more memory and upgrading to a faster hard drive affect your computer experience from booting to shutting down. Check your motherboard to see what and how much upgrade you can do. Changing to faster hard drive, say 5400 RPM to 7200 RPM will definitely be a noticeable difference.

Delete and Repair Files in Windows Registry Improved Hard Drive

Computer slowdown is primarily attributed to Windows registry. Your Windows registry contains a lot of "entries" over time even if you have deleted the origins of these entries.

Go to Start> Run and type "*regedit*" (without quotes) and press Enter and launch the Registry Editor

You can clean the registry manually, but it is not suggested especially if you don't know exactly what you are doing-you may even cause irreparable damage in your system. You can take advantage of software that scans your computer for files or entries that are invalid and empty, and then the software removes or repairs these entries. Overall, the registry can dramatically speed up Windows XP startup.

Disable Services that Run at Start-up

Constantly running in the background of XP are services--processes that help the operating system run or that provide support to applications. Many of these services launch automatically at start-up. While you need many of them, some are not required, and they can slow down your system when they run in the background.

A better way of disabling services at start-up is via the Services computer-management console. Run it by typing services.msc at the command prompt. The Services computer-management console includes a description of all services so that you can know ahead of time whether a particular service is one you want to turn off. It also lets you pause the service so that you can test your machine and see whether that service is needed.

When you find a service you want to disable, right-click it and choose Properties. In the Properties dialog box that appears, choose Manual from the Startup Type drop-down list. The service won't start automatically from now on, but you can start it manually via the console. If you want the service disabled so that it can't run, choose Disabled. To test the results, turn off any services that you don't want to run by clicking Stop the Service in the left pane, or by right-clicking the service and choosing Stop.

Here is a list of some common services you might want to stop from running at start-up.

Service	What it does

Portable Media Serial Number	Retrieves the serial number of a portable music player attached to your PC.
Task Scheduler	Schedules unattended tasks to be run. If you don't schedule any unattended tasks, turn it off.
Uninterruptible Power Supply	Manages an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) connected to your PC.
Automatic Updates	Automatically checks for Windows updates.
Telnet (service available on XP Pro only)	Allows a remote user to log in to your computer and run programs. (This will not be found on all versions of XP Pro.)
Wireless Zero Configuration Service	Automatically configures a Wi-Fi (802.11) network card. Disable this only if you're not using a Wi-Fi network card.

Tweaks for Shutdown

Delete and Repair Files in Windows Registry Improved Harddrive

It's not only start-up that you'd like to speed up; you can also make sure that your system shuts down faster. If shutting down XP takes what seems to be an inordinate amount of time, here are a couple of steps you can take to speed up the shutdown process:

To shut down XP without clearing your paging file, run the Registry Editor (click Start > Run, then type regedit in the Run box) and go to:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Control\Session   Manager\Memory Management

Change the value of ClearPageFileAtShutdown to 0. Close the Registry, and restart your computer. Whenever you turn off XP from now on, the paging file won't be cleared, and you should be able to shut down more quickly.

Closing Any Running Programs When You Shutdown Your Computer

This tweak reduces the time that XP takes before automatically closing any running programs when you give it the command to shutdown.

Go to Start, run, and then type regedt32 and press Enter. Find
'"HKEY_CURRENT_USER\ControlPanel\Desktop"

Right click WaitToKillAppTimeout and select 'Modify' and then change the value to 1000, and press enter.

Right click HungAppTimeout and select Modify. Change the value to 1000, and press enter.

Tweaks for Mouse

Adjust Your Windows XP Mouse Pointer Settings

Although you often do not think about your Windows XP mouse pointer, it's something you use every day you work on your computer. Perhaps you don't like the way the mouse is working, such as the fact that Windows XP often does not recognize when you want to double-click an icon. Or maybe the mouse pointer is too hard to see on your screen? The following tip shows you how to access your Windows XP mouse pointer settings for further customization.

1. Click the "Start" button.
2. Click "Control Panel".
3. If a pop-up menu appears when you click "Control Panel", select "Mouse" and skip steps 4-5.
4. Otherwise, the "Control Panel" window should appear.
5. If the window says "Pick a Category", click on "Printers and Other Hardware", and then click "Mouse". Else, just double-click the "Mouse" icon.

From here you can adjust a variety of mouse pointer settings. When done, click "OK" to close the dialog box. Then close the "Control Panel" window.

Stop Hiding the Pointer When Typing

Normally, whenever you type in Microsoft Word, Notepad, or most other software packages, Windows hides the mouse pointer. While this may clean up the screen by removing a possibly annoying arrow, some people would rather know where their mouse pointer is at all times. To disable this "feature", do as follows:

1. Open Windows XP's Mouse Control Panel.
2. On the "Mouse Properties" multi-tabbed dialog box that follows, select the "Pointer Options" tab.
3. Uncheck "Hide pointer while typing".
4. Press "OK" to close the dialog box.

Automatically Move Mouse Pointers to Dialog Boxes

Tired of moving your mouse pointer to the center of the screen whenever an application in Windows XP displays a dialog box? Would you rather the mouse pointer just automatically move to the dialog box so you can simply click the left mouse-button to select the default action?

You can enable a feature called "Snap To" that saves you from moving your mouse pointer whenever you wish to click "OK" or "Yes" to confirm an action.

1. Open Windows XP's Mouse Control Panel.
2. On the "Mouse Properties" multi-tabbed dialog box that follows, select the "Pointer Options" tab.
3. Underneath "Snap To", check the box next to "Automatically move pointer to the default button in a dialog box".
4. When done, press "OK" to close the dialog box.

If you later wish to disable the "Snap To" feature, repeat the above steps but uncheck the box.

Enable or Disable the Pointer Shadow

Depending on how your Windows XP system is configured, when you move your mouse pointer you may notice a small shadow around it. While some find this aesthetically pleasing, others would rather just see a plain mouse pointer.

To configure the mouse pointer shadow option:

1. Open Windows XP's Mouse Control Panel.
2. On the "Mouse Properties" multi-tabbed dialog box that follows, select the "Pointers" tab.
3. Near the bottom of the dialog box, check or uncheck "Enable pointer shadow" as desired.
4. When done, press "OK" to close the dialog box.

Tweaks for Start Menu

Switch to Classic Start Menu

To change it, right click on the Start button > choose Properties > click on the Start Menu tab > check Classic Start Menu.

Organize Start Menu

Go to START > PROGRAMS > right click > EXPLORE, repeat and this time right click EXPLORE ALL USERS.

If you have created multiple users, it is a good idea to check each one to make sure that they have all your programs. Some programs need to be installed under each user account. (You may want to open all your applications now to make sure they work.) And then reboot.

Display All Programs Menu

You can select the "Start Menu" option to use the Windows XP default menu system. It has many advantages over the Windows Classic menu system. Click on the Customize button next to it and under the General tab, choose settings to taste. If you want to remove the Frequently Used

Programs listing normally available on the Start Menu under the pinned items, set the "Number of Programs on Start Menu" option to 0 and click 'Clear List' button.

Under the Advanced tab, you can tick 'Open submenus when I pause on them with my mouse' to speed up menu access, and un-tick "Highlight newly installed programs" as it is generally unnecessary.

Access the Start Menu during Full-Screen Setups

When you install new software on your machine, it is highly recommended to close down all of your currently running programs in case the setup program needs to modify key operating system files. To encourage this, many setup programs go into full-screen mode, hiding your taskbar.

Tweaks for Desktop

Tuning Your Desktop

Unless you're a graphic designer or something similar, you probably don't need the 32-bit (highest) color depth on your desktop and can get by easily with the less processor-intensive setting of 16 bits (medium) instead. If you've got a good video card, the card itself does the processing and changing this setting won't make a difference; but on cheaper hardware with shared video memory, doing this may boost performance a bit.

Go Control Panel -> System -> Advanced -> Performance -> Settings -> Adjust for best performance. Enabling this setting basically replaces the default XP theme with the classic Windows 2000 theme by disabling all of XP's fancy visual effects.

Removing the Background Image on Your Desktop

Right click the Desktop click Properties, and go to the Desktop Tab. change the wallpaper to None. This will greatly speed up windows xp and while you are at it go to the Settings Tab, Colour Setting, and change it to Medium (16 bit).

Tweaks for Themes

Reduce the overhead associated with WinXP's new Themes. This is valid for Windows XP Home and Pro.

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select Performance and Maintenance

4. Select System
5. Select Advanced Tab
6. Under Performance, select the Settings button
7. Select Visual Effects Tab
8. Select "Adjust for best performance."
9. Select the Ok button

With the Classic Control Panel:

1. Go to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select System
4. Select Advanced Tab
5. Under Performance, select the Settings button
6. Select Visual Effects Tab
7. Select "Adjust for best performance."
8. Select the Ok button

Tweaks for Taskbar

Create a Toolbar to Access Drives and CDs

Need to have quick access to your hard drives, CDs, "My Documents" folder, and other removable media such as USB flash drives? Just click and hold on the "My Computer" icon and drag it to the side of your screen. A new toolbar is created. Here are some more tips:

1. Get rid of the text "My Computer" by right-clicking on the toolbar and un-checking "View Title".
2. Make the toolbar always appear on top of other windows by right-clicking the toolbar and checking "Always on top".
3. Make the toolbar only visible whenever you move your mouse to the toolbar's edge of the screen. Right-click the toolbar and check "Auto-Hide".
4. To remove the toolbar, right-click it and choose "Toolbars", then uncheck "My Computer".

Remove the Taskbar Balloon Help

Occasionally the Windows XP Taskbar pops up help in the form of small balloons. If you find these balloon tips intrusive, you can disable them via a registry patch.

To disable the balloon tip notifications, access Microsoft Knowledge Base article from below link:

http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;en-us;307729

Remind: while the balloons can be intrusive, if you have automatic updates turned on that require

user intervention before downloading or installing updates, removing the balloon tips will cause you to never see these important updates.

Display a Disabled Taskbar Clock

Normally the Windows XP Taskbar contains the system clock on the right side in the Notification Area.

You need to do is right-click an empty area of the Notification Area, choose "Properties", click the "Taskbar" tab when the "Taskbar and Start Menu Properties" dialog box displays, check the "Show the clock" box, and click "OK". But what if the "show the clock" checkbox is grayed out / disabled?
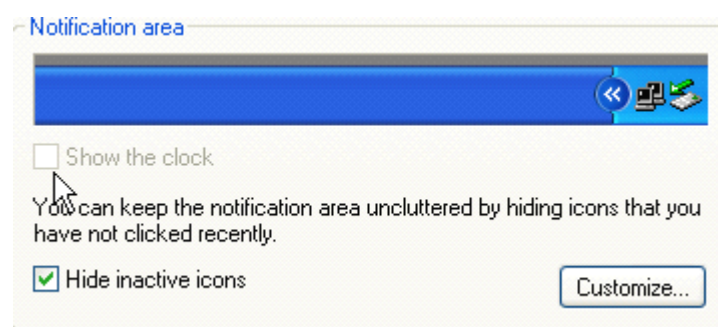
Tweaks for Graphics

Adjust Visual Effects

Here are three tweak levels for you:

Level 1 - uncheck all except "Use drop shadows for icon labels on the desktop", "Smooth edges of screen fonts", and "Use visual styles on windows and buttons" > click Apply and OK.

Level 2 - uncheck all except "Use drop shadows for icon labels on the desktop", "Smooth edges of screen fonts" > click Apply and OK.

Level 3 - Choose the option Adjust for best performance > click Apply and OK.

Reduce Visual Effects

Visual Effects can make Windows XP look good, but displaying all the visual items can waste system resources.

To optimize, go to Start, right click My Computer, and go to the Advanced tab in the Performance area click Settings, and choose "Adjust for best performance".

If you still want to keep the look of Windows XP, you can leave the last 3 check boxes selected. It is recommended that you do uncheck these boxes when installing a big or graphics heavy program.

Disable Specific Visual Effects

To control which visual effects Windows XP uses

1. Click Start, right-click My Computer, and click Properties.
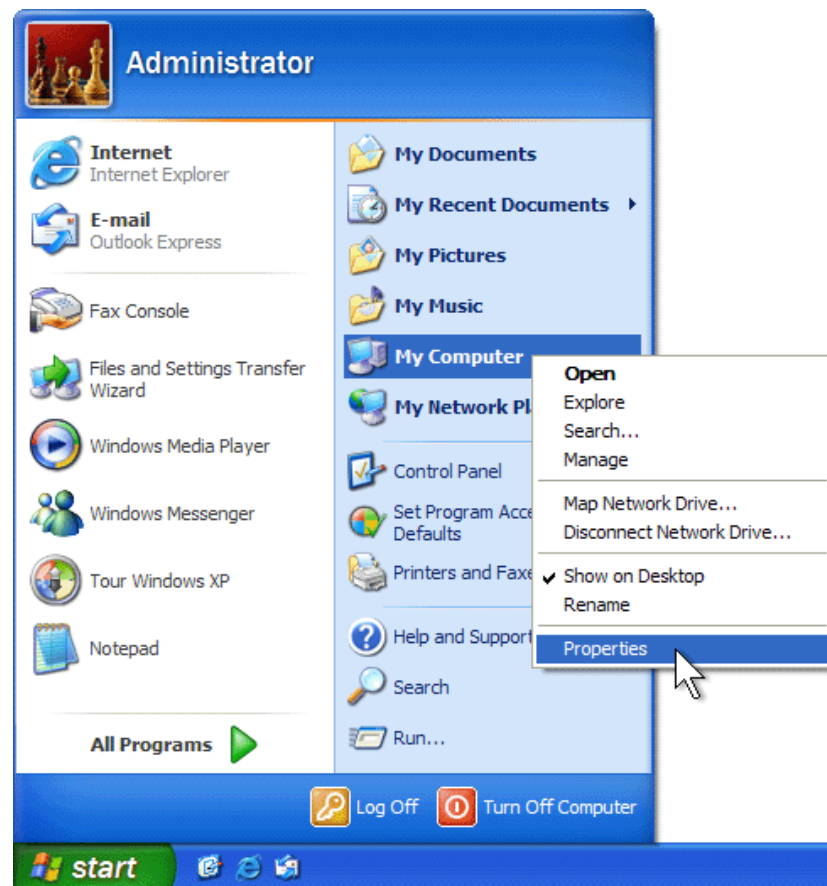
2. The System Properties dialog box appears. Click the Advanced tab. In the Performance area, click Settings.
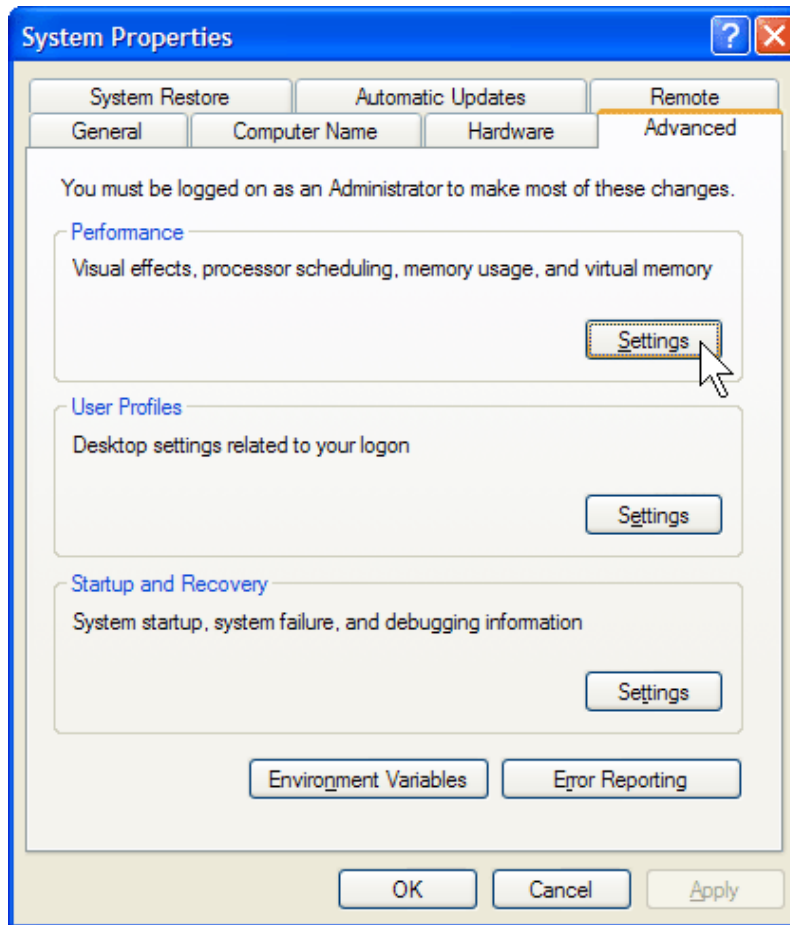
3. The Performance Options dialog box appears. On the Visual Effects tab, select the Custom option.
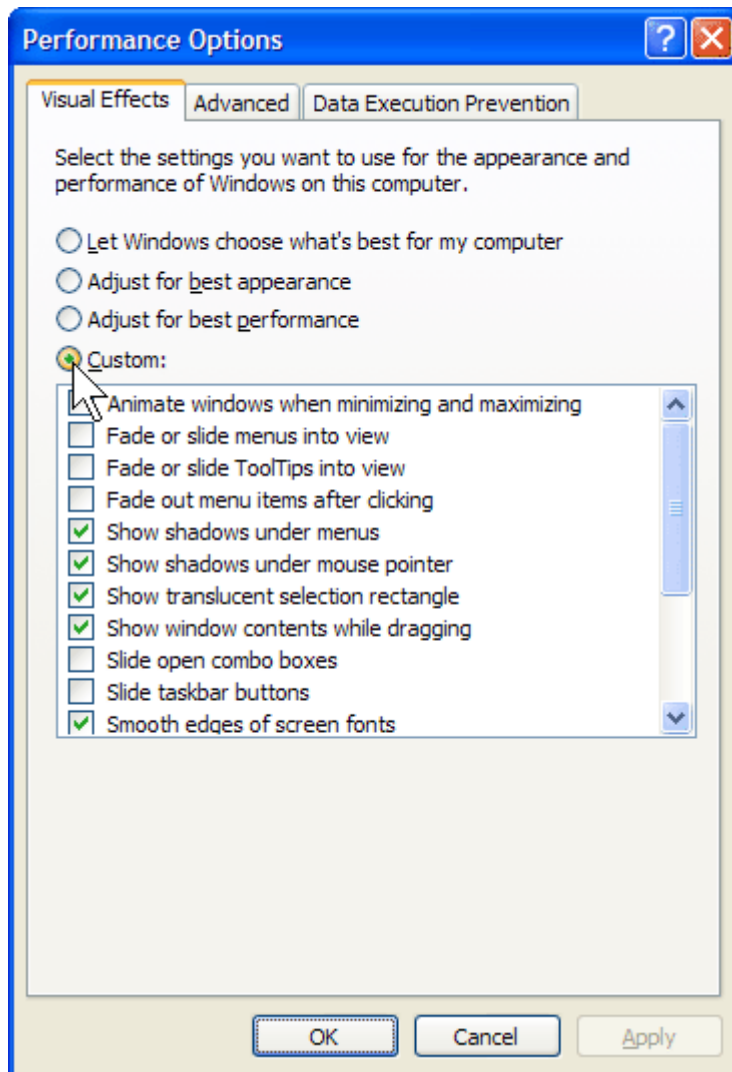
4. Clear the check boxes for the visual effects you want to disable.
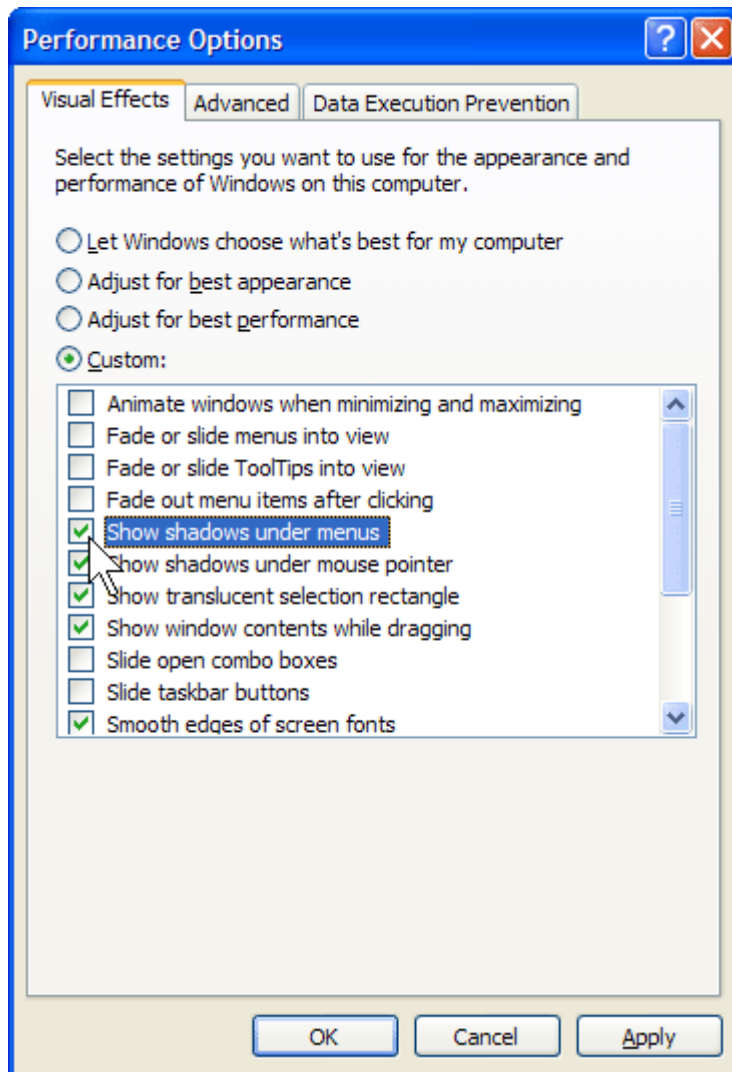
5. Click OK.
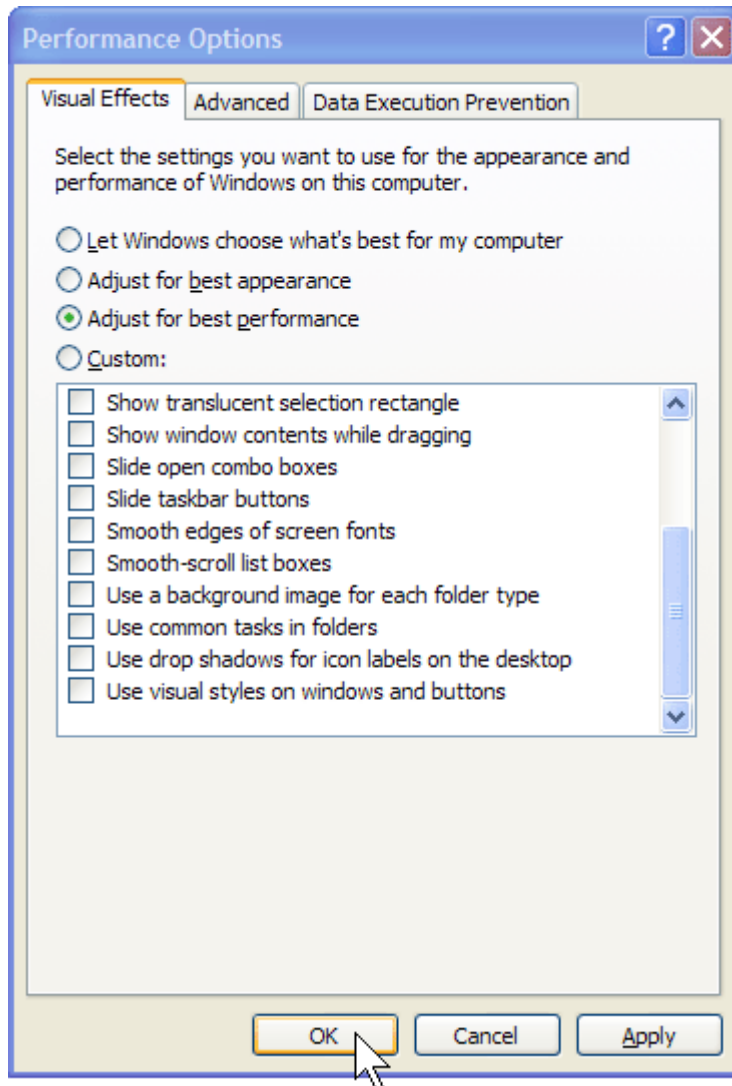
6. You are returned to the System Properties dialog box. Click OK.
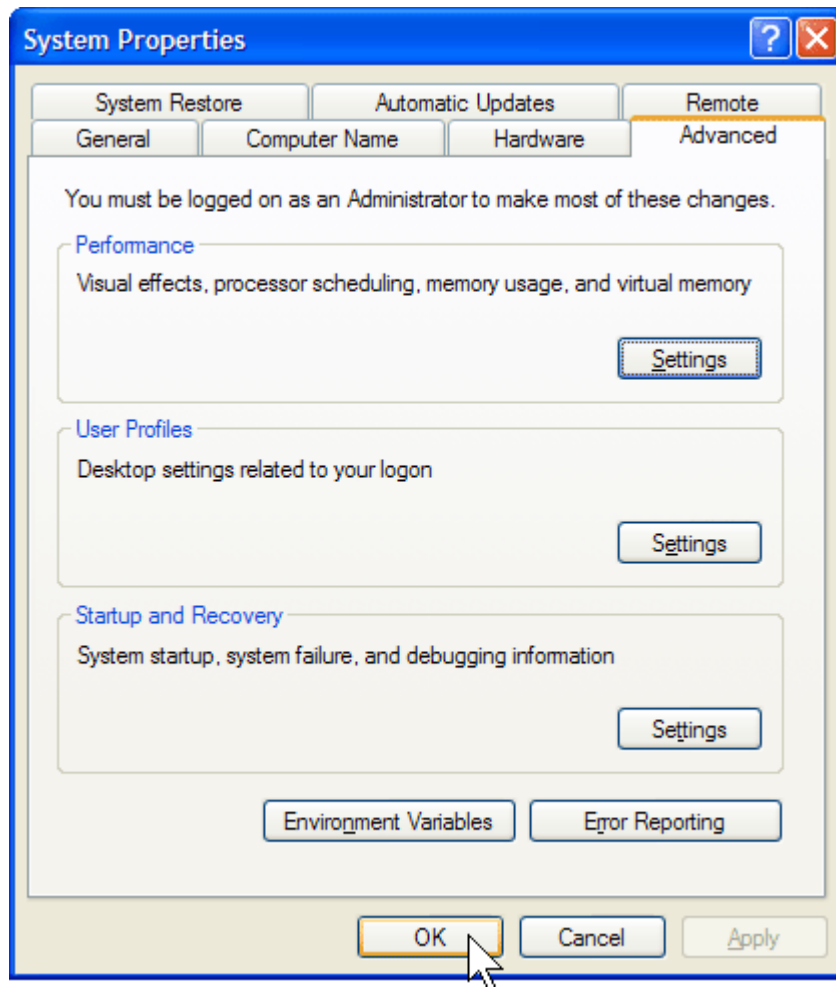
Tweaks for Memory

Windows uses your Hard Drive as swap memory but its default configuration can cause a major loss of performance with the memory swap file getting moved around.

Select System icon from the Control Panel - Performance and Maintenance, select Advanced Tab, select Performance areas, and click on Settings Under virtual Memory click Change. The Initial and Maximum size should be equal otherwise Windows will keep resizing the file. The optimal memory setting for users with 128 MB+ is approximately 1.5-2 times the RAM size, users with 64 MB should use a 2 times multiple. You should also locate Virtual Memory on your fastest drive or striped RAID volume, placing it on the non-boot drive, can help increase performance. Defragment after setting this to minimize fragmentation and force the swap file to get located on the fastest part of your disk. Third party defragmenters can optimize the swap file.

Disable Paging Executive

XP pages data from RAM memory to the hard drive. We can stop this happening and keep more data in RAM, resulting in better performance. Users with a large amount of RAM (256MB+) should use this setting. The setting we change to disable the 'Paging Executive', is

DisablePagingExecutive. Changing the value of this key from 0 to 1 will de-activate memory paging.

Input/Output Performance

This improves performance of large file transfers. If this entry does not appear in the registry, you will have to create a REG_DWORD value called IoPageLockLimit. The data for this value is in number of bytes, and defaults to Zero which equates to 512KB on machines that have the value. Most people using this tweak have found maximum performance in the 8 to 16 megabyte range, so you will have to play around with the value to find the best performance. The value is measured in bytes, so if you want, 12MB allocated, it 12 * 1024 * 1024, or 12582912. As with all these memory tweaks, you should only use this if you have 256MB or more of RAM.

Shortening Menu Delay

You can shorten the delay when menus open up by using Regedit to edit:
HKEY_CURRENT_USER / Control Panel / Desktop / MenuShowDelay By default, the value is 400, but changing it to a smaller value, such as 100, will speed it up.

Optimizing Memory Use is to Clear Out the Prefect Folder on Your XP Machine

Windows saves information about apps you've started and stores this information in this folder so that the next time you boot, portions of these apps can be preloaded into memory in case you plan on running them again. Prefect is a new and very useful technique in Windows XP. However, after using XP some time, the Prefect directory can get full and have obsolete links in the Prefect catalog, which can slow down your computer significantly.
Suggestion: Open C:\Windows\Prefetch and delete the obsolete files, reboot. However, if you don't have a real good reason to delete these files, just leave them be. Let the system handle this folder.

Boot Prefecting

Windows XP speeds up system boot by observing the code and data needed each time the system is booted and prefecting the necessary file contents early in the boot process. This prefecting is not done until the third boot of the system, when sufficient information is available to make the perfecting most effective. The files observed during system boot will be used in the disk layout process mentioned above. Additional information on the prefetcher and the Windows XP boot process can be found at Fast Boot/Fast Resume for the Windows Platform.

Application-Launch Prefecting

Windows XP also uses prefetching when launching applications. The files and the contents of the files accessed by each new process are observed and recorded. No prefetching can be done for the first launch of an application, so first launches are often considerably slower than subsequent

launches. About 85% to 90% of the improvement is realized after just one launch of an application; with the remaining speed improvement coming after the system has had an opportunity to adjust the disk layout with information specific to this application.

Tweak UI

Download and Install Tweak UI

To use Tweak UI, your computer must be set up for English. Also, you must have Windows XP Service Pack 1 or higher, or Windows Server installed.

To download Tweak UI, visit microsoft.com and search for "*tweakui xp*". After Tweak UI has been installed, click the "Start" menu, choose "Programs", "Powertoys for Windows XP", then "Tweak UI". Now, you're set to really start tweaking your computer!

Hide Taskbar Notification Icons

Normally, Windows XP will show notification icons on the taskbar when it needs to get your attention for a variety of reasons, such as low disk space, too many icons on the desktop, etc. If you find these notifications annoying, however, you can hide them:

1. Download and run Tweak UI for Windows XP.
2. When the "Tweak UI" window appears, click "Taskbar and Start menu".
3. Uncheck "Show taskbar notification icons".
4. When done, click "OK" to close the dialog box.

Show Internet Explorer Image Toolbar for Smaller Images

By default, in Internet Explorer 6, when you hover your mouse pointer over an image of at least 200 pixels, an image toolbar will appear allowing you to save, print, or email the image. However, if you'd like the image toolbar to appear for smaller images:

1. Download and run Tweak UI for Windows XP.
2. When the "Tweak UI" window appears, click "Internet Explorer" in the left pane to expand the menu.
3. Click "Image Toolbar".
4. In the right pane, next to "Minimum image size", make this number as small as desired. Lower this all the way to 1 and even 1 pixel "spy" images will cause an image toolbar to be displayed if you hover the mouse pointer.
5. When done, click "OK" to close the dialog box.

Stop Warning of Low Disk Space on the Taskbar

If you are logged into your Windows XP system as an Administrator, if your disk space starts to

run low, a warning will be displayed as a popup balloon on your Taskbar. In case you are not able to monitor your free space constantly, this warning might keep you from completely filling up your hard drive, rendering your computer unusable.

If for some reason you do not wish to receive this warning on your Taskbar, make the following tweak with Tweak UI:

1. Download and run Tweak UI for Windows XP.
2. Click "Taskbar and Start Menu" in the left pane.
3. Uncheck "Warn when low on disk space".
4. Click "OK" to close the Tweak UI dialog box.
5. You will need to logoff and back onto your system.

Color Your DOS Prompt Text

While the Windows XP DOS prompt lets you change the default foreground and background colors for text, there is a somewhat-hidden feature that lets you select text in a prompt window and change just the color of the selected text. This may be useful for highlighting text in a prompt, then taking a screenshot of the prompt and using it for printouts or for documenting processes. First, to enable this feature:

1) Start Tweak UI
2) Click the "Command Prompt" link.
3) Check "Enable selection coloring.
4) Click "OK" to close Tweak UI.

Note: This is enabled, open a DOS prompt. Highlight text, then press CONTROL-0, CONTROL-1, etc. or any combination through CONTROL-9 to change the background color of the selected text. Or, press ALT-0, ALT-1, etc. or any combination through ALT-9 to change the foreground color of selected text in the DOS prompt.

Show Better Thumbnails

When you enable "Thumbnail View" for a folder containing pictures, Windows XP creates thumbnails for them so you can see the contents of image files without having to open them in an image editor or viewer. While this is extremely convenient, the default thumbnails may look less than desirable. If you like, you can use Tweak UI for Windows XP to increase the quality and size of the thumbnails to better preview your images.

1) Run Tweak UI for Windows XP
2) Click on the "Explorer" link then select "Thumbnails".
3) Underneath "Image quality", move the slider all the way to the right or "High".
4) Underneath "Thumbnail", raise or lower the thumbnail size (in pixels) as desired.

Note: Larger thumbnails may take up more hard drive space, use up more memory, and may take longer to generate and refresh. However, they may look much better than smaller thumbnails.

When you are done, press "OK" to close Tweak UI.

Note: You will have to refresh previously generated thumbnails to take advantage of the new settings.

Change or Remove the Explorer Shortcut Arrow

Tired of seeing arrows on Windows XP Explorer shortcut icons? Would you rather see a more transparent arrow or none at all? If so, you can make this change with Tweak UI:

1. Run Tweak UI for Windows XP.
2. Double-click "Explorer" in the left pane to expand the tree.
3. Select "Shortcut" in the left pane.
4. In the right pane, choose one of the following Shortcut Overlay radio button:
* Arrow (default)
* Light Arrow
* None
* Custom (this lets you choose a custom arrow, perhaps one you create with an icon editor).

Note: changing this setting affects all users on the system.
5. When done, click "OK" to close the dialog box.

Change Slide Show Timing

When you open a folder in Windows XP containing images, you can double-click an image to preview it in a new window. Then, if you press F11 from this new window, you can start a slide show of all recognizable images in the current directory (note that Windows XP will not recognize all image types but just a few such as .BMP, .GIF, and .JPG).

Normally, the images appear onscreen for 5 seconds (5000 milliseconds) and then the next picture appears. If you would like to shorten or lengthen the amount of time images appear onscreen, use Tweak UI.

1) Run Tweak UI for Windows XP.
2) Click the "Explorer" link.
3) This should expand the tree. Click "Slide Show".
4) Next to "Time per picture (ms)", enter the amount of milliseconds you would like each image to appear before the next one shows onscreen. For example, if you want images to appear for 2 seconds, enter 2000. If you want pictures to appear for 7 seconds, choose 7000.
5) Click "OK" to close Tweak UI.

Give Internet Explorer Toolbar a Background Texture

Want to change the look of Internet Explorer? With Tweak UI, you can give the top toolbar background a patterned texture or a bitmap image. Choose from the standard bitmaps in Windows XP, grab an image from your digital camera or scanner, or download an image from the Internet.

1) Run Tweak UI for Windows XP
2) Click on the "Internet Explorer" link, then select "Toolbar Background".
3) Check "Use custom background for Internet Explorer toolbar" and click the "Change..." button to browse for and select a picture. Click the "Apply" button.
4) Open Internet Explorer, and preview your changes. If you like the new toolbar background, click "OK" in Tweak UI. Else, click the "Change..." button in Tweak UI, find another background, and try again until you are satisfied.

If you want to remove the toolbar background, just uncheck the "Use custom background for Internet Explorer toolbar" button in Tweak UI.

Remove the Places Bar in Dialog Boxes

Normally, when Windows XP applications show an open or save dialog box, on the left side of the box is a Places Bar, a list of favorite places to open or save files from or to, plus a list of top-level locations on your computer. These may be places such as the Desktop, the "My Documents" folder, "My Computer", etc.

If you do not often open or save files from/to these Places, you can completely hide this from most dialog boxes with Tweak UI.

1) Start Tweak UI.
2) Click the "Common Dialogs" link.
3) This should expand the tree. Click "Places Bar".
4) Select the radio button "Hide places bar".
5) Click "OK" to close Tweak UI.

Don't Automatically Optimize the Hard Disk

Normally, whenever your system is idle for a period of time, Windows XP will use this idle time to defrag (optimize) your hard disk. This way, files and software should open faster. While most people welcome this task, especially since the defragmenting occurs when you are not normally running your computer, there may be times where you want to disable this:

1) Start Tweak UI.
2) Click the "General" link.
3) In the right pane, scroll down the "Settings" area and uncheck "Optimize hard disk when idle".
4) Click "OK" to close Tweak UI.

Remove Account Name from the Start Menu

Normally, the Windows XP Start menu shows your current account name at the top. If you are the only one accessing your machine, or if you just don't want this displayed, do the following:

1) Start Tweak UI.
2) Click the "Taskbar and Start Menu" link.
3) Uncheck "Show name on Start menu".
4) Clock "OK" to close Tweak UI.

Tweaks for Scheduled Task

A Scheduled Task is something that you can setup to run at a certain time. For example, maybe you want to open Macromedia Dreamweaver every Monday at 4:00PM. Here is how.

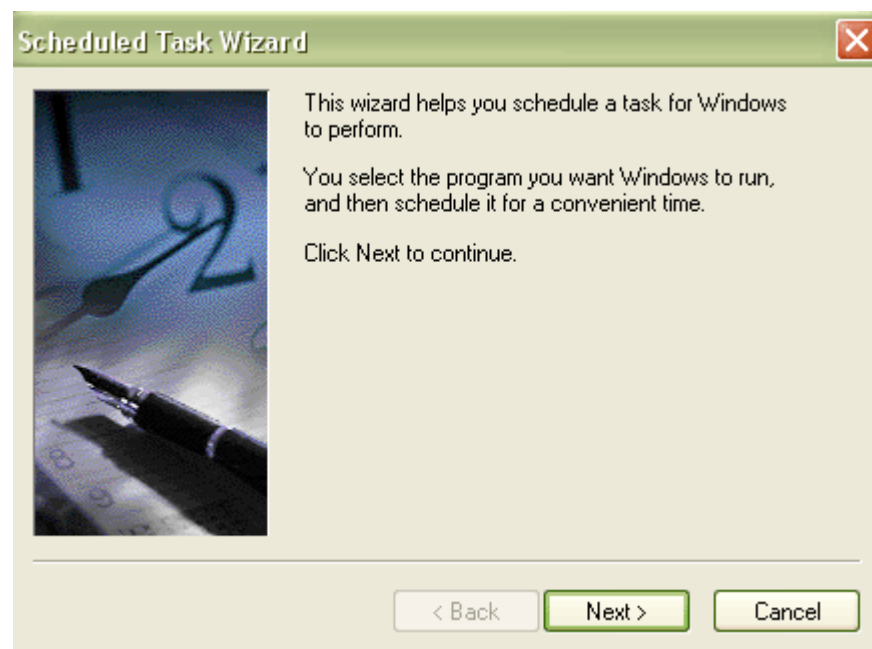Firstly, Open up Control Panel.
Then look for Scheduled Tasks and click the icon.
That will then bring up the Scheduled Tasks window.
Now to setup a new task, we need to press: Add Scheduled Task,
That then brings up the wizard. This wizard will help you setup your task.

Press next.

Select the application you want to run, and press next.
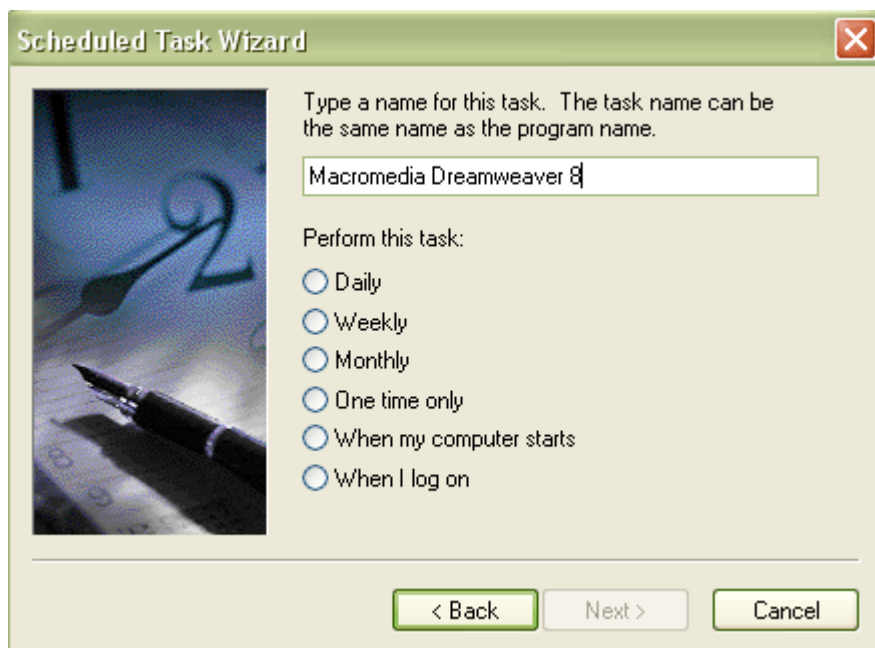
Enter the name of the task, select when you want it to run.

Select the exact time, and what day you want it to run on. You can select more than one day. Then hit next to finish the process.

Tweaks for ClearType

Enable ClearType

ClearType provides support for vastly improved font display on colour LCD monitors, high-quality TFT and standard CRT screens, and whilst ClearType is enabled by default in Internet Explorer 7, it isn't enabled in XP. Compare the difference:

To enable ClearType and make any adjustments to suit your eyes, go to the Microsoft Typography pages
http://www.microsoft.com/typography/cleartype/tuner/Step1.aspx

And follow the simple instructions. You can adjust ClearType in the Control Panel after installing the software at the link.

Tweaks for Processor Scheduling

This tweak is impossible to explain without getting into the technical ins and outs of binary values, bit pairs and bit masks. Suffice it to say, it forces short, variable length processor timeslices to be allocated to foreground processes three times more often than those timeslices given to background processes.

Start regedit and navigate to the following key:

[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Control\PriorityControl]

Change the value of Win32PrioritySeparation to 26 hexadecimal, which is 38 decimal, save the changes and reboot.

As with the cache tuning tweak, this particular tweak should not be applied to a system that is running either SQL Server or Internet Information Server (IIS) unless you are certain that you want to slow down those background processes.
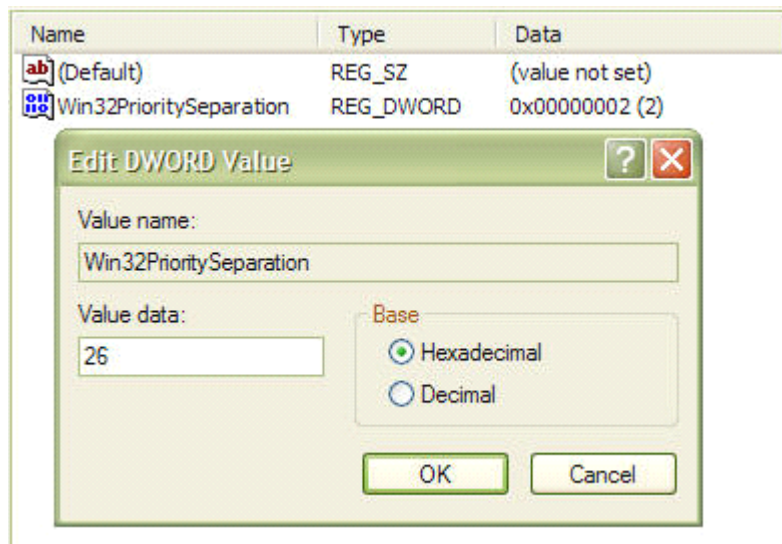
Tweaks for Hardware

Souping Up Your Hardware

The easiest (and cheapest) way to boost your hardware is to add more RAM, and if you're using graphics-intensive programs, you should have a lot of it installed. A faster hard drive can also boost performance--but replacing the drive that has your boot volume requires a bit more work, unless you have a disk-cloning utility and know how to use it. Replacing your processor with a faster one also requires some technical knowledge, and overclocking your existing processor can be a dodgy thing as well, so don't go there unless you know what you're doing.

Optimizing Your Hard Drives

Hard drives tend to fill up over time with unneeded applications, temporary files, system restore points, and other junk. System Restore by itself has 12 percent of your boot volume space allocated. This is probably way too much for the average user's needs, so you can decrease this to a reasonable level. To do it, choose Control Panel > Performance and Maintenance > System Restore, then click on System Restore Settings. On the screen that appears, drag the slider until it reaches the percent of hard drive you want allocated, and click on OK.

Do the same for your Recycle Bin, which by default uses up to 10 percent of each volume. Together, that's almost a quarter of your hard drive potentially used up, which for today's desktop computers that typically have hard drives of 80GB or larger is a lot of space! To decrease the space used by the Recycle Bin, right-click on it, choose Properties, and drag the slider until it reaches the percent of the hard drive you want allocated, and click on OK.

There's also Internet Explorer's cache. The default allocated space is usually more than sufficient for most web browsing. Free up lots of space for other uses. To do it, in Internet Explorer choose Tools > Internet Options, and in the Temporary Internet Files section, click on Settings. Then drag the slider until you reach the amount of disk space you want to use for the files, and click on OK.

Then there are the various temporary files created by different applications like those in Microsoft Office. You can clean out old temp files and a lot of other useless stuff by running Disk Cleanup. And of course, don't forget to defragment your hard drive from time to time--do it often if you create and delete a lot of files as part of your work or install and uninstall applications frequently.

Convert Your Hard Drive to NTFS

If your drive is using FAT16 or FAT32, you can gain performance by converting it to NTFS.

To do so, click on the start menu, go to Run, type cmd. type "*CONVERT C: /FS:NTFS*" (without quotes). Follow the instructions and your drive will be converted to NTFS. Bear in mind that NTFS drives can only be accessed by Windows 2000/NT/XP and Vista. Older versions of Windows are only compatible with FAT, FAT16 and FAT32.

Tweaks for Windows Built-In

Turn Off the XP Security Center

Purpose: Free up system resources.

Open the Services MMC: Press the Windows and R keys > in the resulting window type *services.msc* > in the resulting window scroll down to Security Center and double-click on it > In the "Startup type:" box use the arrow to scroll down to choose "Disabled" click Apply and reboot, or, click Apply and click the button that says Stop.

Disable Error Reporting

Purpose: Free up system/network resources.

More information:
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;288186&sd=tech

This "feature" calls home to Microsoft and sends info about system errors. Click on the Error Reporting button on the bottom of the window > check the box that says Disable Error Reporting > uncheck the box that says But notify me when critical errors occur. Click OK to close the window. Close out of these windows by choosing Apply/OK but leave the System Properties window open.

Turn off Automatic Updates (or make a set schedule)

Purpose: Free up system/network resources.

More information:
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;EN-US;306525

Now, before you do anything here you need to consider a few things. Windows Update is an essential step in protecting your machine. Geeks know that MS used to release their updates on Wednesday. This allowed you to schedule Windows Update for late Wed. night or early Thur. morning. Since MS, in its infinite wisdom, decided to change their weekly updates to a monthly semi-schedule, we can't do that anymore. If you are the type of person who keeps track of techie news, you'll know the minute updates are released. With this in mind, we'll disable Automatic Updating…

Click on the Automatic Updates tab > uncheck the box next to "Keep my computer up to date"

Open Each Folder in a Separate Part of Memory

(Recommended for 512MB memory and higher) (W/512MB memory or more)
Purpose: System stability.

More information:
http://www.microsoft.com/resources/documentation/windows/xp/all/proddocs/en-us/folderopt_open_separate.mspx

Open My Computer (press the Windows & E keys) > go to Tools > Folder Options > View and check the box in "Launch folder windows in a separate process".   Reboot now.

Note: This IS NOT a performance tweak it is a stability tweak. Quote from Microsoft: "When you open each folder window in a separate part of memory, the stability of Windows can be increased. However, this process uses more memory, and may cause your computer to run more slowly."

Turn Off System Sounds

Purpose: Free up system resources.

What this does is disable the Sound Scheme. The sound scheme contains things like the sound you

hear when you click on something.

Go to Start > Settings > Control Panel > Sounds and Audio Devices. Click on the Sounds tab. First save your current scheme, click on the Save As... button, enter a name, and click OK. Next, in the upper most box, click on the arrow on the right side and choose No Sounds and click Apply at the bottom right. While you are here, click back on the Volume tab. You can enable/disable the system tray volume icon here by checking/unchecking the box Place volume icon in taskbar. When you are finished, click OK to exit.
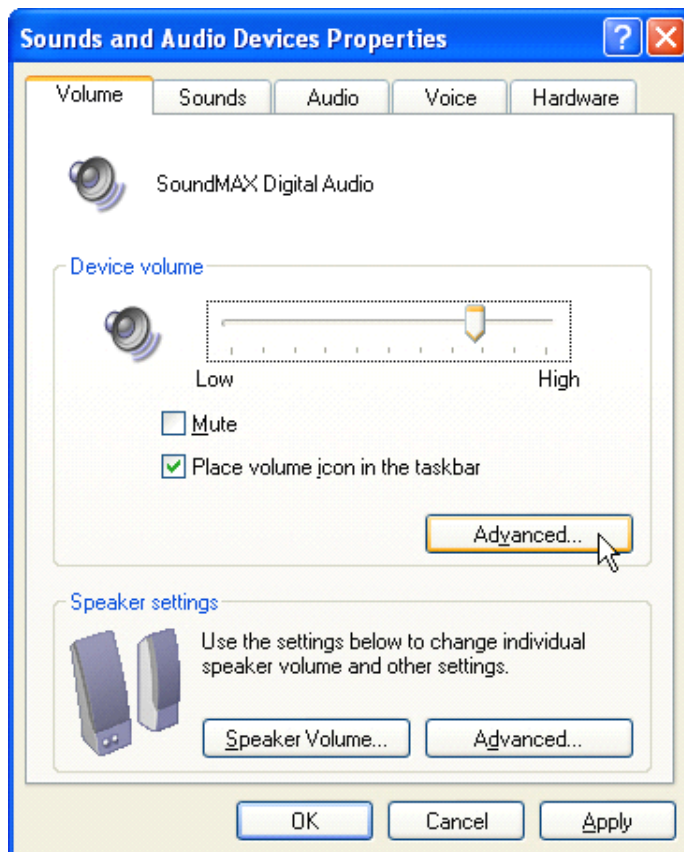
Don't Use Wallpaper

Purpose: Performance. Free up disk space.

More information:
http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/setup/personalize/look.mspx

To eliminate wallpaper: Right-click on a blank area of the desktop > choose Properties > click on the Desktop tab > in the area that says "Background" choose (None) > to change the color of the desktop, click on the arrow next to "Color:" and pick your color > click Apply and OK.

Move Print Spool Directory

More information:
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;308666&sd=tech

This tweak is most effective if you move it to a separate drive from your OS, preferably the first partition on that disk or the second partition on that disk if you are using the first for your page file.

Create a new folder on that partition called PrintSpool > now go to START > Printers and Faxes > click on File at the top left of the window > scroll down and click Server Properties > click on the Advanced tab > type the COMPLETE path to the PrintSpool folder you just created (i.e. - D:\\PrintSpool)

Move My Documents Folder

Right click on the My Documents folder > choose Properties > Click on the Move... button > Expand My Computer and choose the drive you want to move it to > click the Make New Folder button and name it anything you like > click Apply > a screen will pop-up, click yes.

Don't Hibernate

Purpose: Performance

More information:
http://technet.microsoft.com/zh-cn/library/bb968968(en-us).aspx
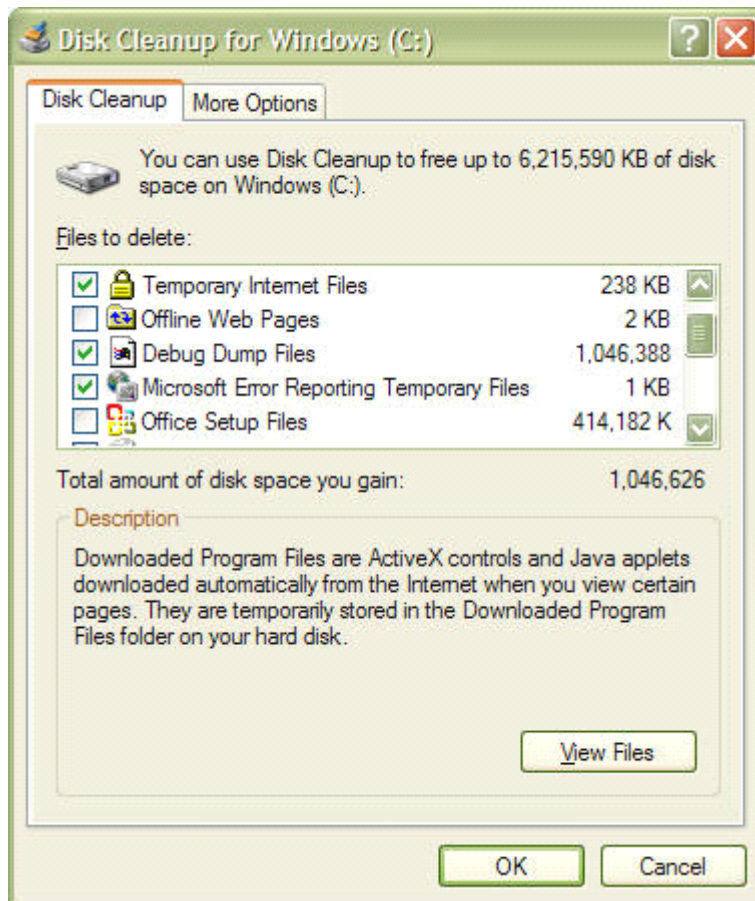http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,1846181,00.asp

Hibernation can have an impact on performance. To disable it go to Start > Settings > Control Panel > Power Options > click on the Hibernate tab > uncheck Enable hibernation.

Tweaks for Disk Cleanup

Disk Cleanup Utility

Use the XP Disk Cleanup tool (Accessories menu, System Tools) often:

The Disk Cleanup utility will take a while to run on laptops when you execute it for the first time so be prepared to sit around for a while, or maybe read a good book. However subsequent cleanups will run much quicker if you perform this task regularly.

The Disk Cleanup utility will empty your Internet Exploder cache, but if you use the Firefox browser, you'll have to empty its cache manually. On the Tools menu, select Options then select the Privacy tab. In the Private Data group, click Clear Now, then click Clear Private Data Now. Make sure that you don't clear passwords unless you really want to do that.

Schedule Disk Cleanup

This guide will show you how to make Disk Cleanup a Scheduled Task in Windows XP.

The Disk Cleanup utility provides the ability to automatically find and remove unnecessary Windows files, old System Restore points, and unwanted Windows components. To access the Disk Cleanup utility go to Start> Run and type "*Cleanmgr.exe*" (without quotes) and press Enter, or look for it under your Start > Program >Accessories > System Tools menu.

First we have to establish the parameters you want Disk Cleanup to use:
Go to Start > Run > type cleanmgr /sageset:50 . Ensure there is a space between cleanmgr and / > click OK

In the resulting screen, choose your options by checking the boxes. Click OK.
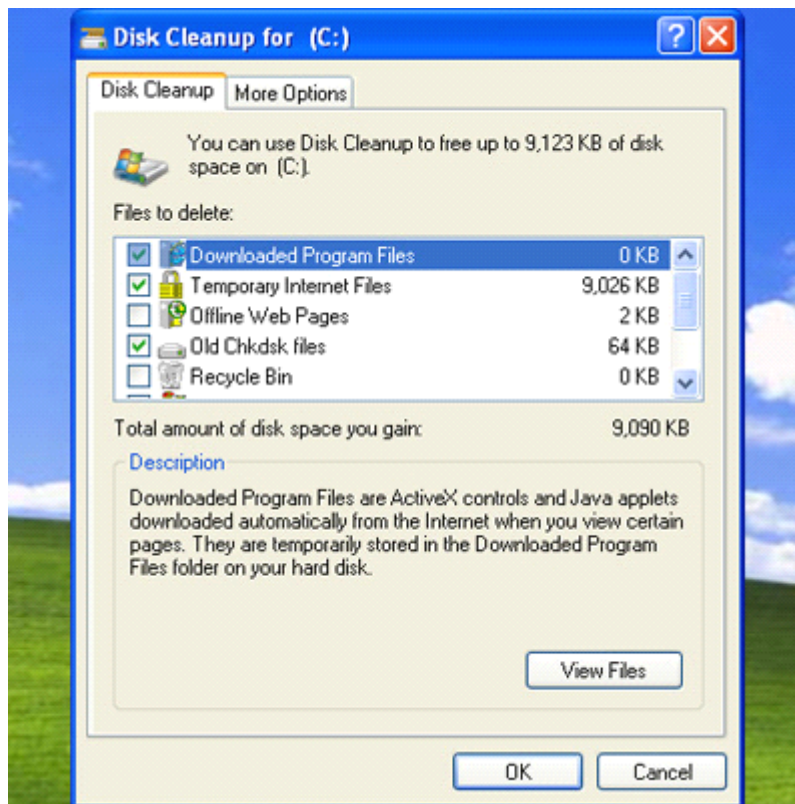
Now that we have established what we want Disk Cleanup to do, we need to schedule it to run:
Go to Start > Settings > Control Panel > Scheduled Tasks > Add Scheduled Task > the Scheduled
Task Wizard will appear, click Next.

Scroll down until you see Disk Cleanup, click on it once to highlight it and click Next.

Pick a name for the task, Disk Cleanup is fine. Pick how often you want the task to run. Daily is recommended. Click Next

Choose a time. Make sure the time doesn't conflict with any other tasks. Click Next.

Enter the user name and password. Click Next.

Verify your settings are correct.

Check the box next to Open advanced properties for this task when click Finish.

Click Finish

In the resulting screen you should only have to type /sagerun:50. Ensure there is a space between .exe and /.
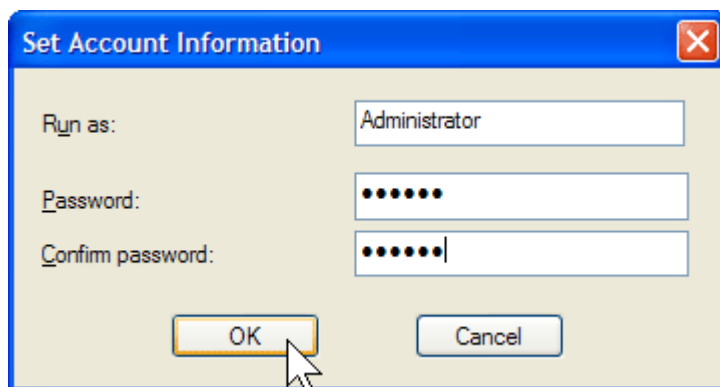
Click Apply.

Enter your password. Click OK to close out the 2 screens.

Advanced Disk Cleanup

You can access more disk cleanup options by going to Start > Run, typing "*cleanmgr/sageset:1*" (without quotes) and pressing Enter. In the dialog box which opens, tick the items you wish to clean and then click OK. Now to execute this extended cleanup at any time, go to Start> Run and type "*cleanmgr/sageset:1*" (without quotes) and press Enter, and cleaning will commence immediately. Note that this method will clean all your drives – you can not choose a specific drive to apply it to, so keep this in mind before using this method in case you do not want any other drives affected by Disk Cleanup in this way.

Go to Start > Run > type *cleanmgr /sageset:50*. Ensure there is a space between cleanmgr and / > click OK.
In the resulting screen, choose your options by checking the boxes. Click OK and let it do its thing.

You can use this command at any time for regular disk cleanups.

Tweaks for Defrag

Defragmentation

When files are stored on disk they are stored in blocks. A set of blocks can be contiguous or fragmented. Contiguous means adjacent. A contiguous file is composed of a sequence of blocks that is stored in an unbroken chain. A fragmented file has gaps in the block sequence, and the gaps are usually occupied by blocks that belong to other files. If a file is fragmented, or non-contiguous, the hard disk has to skip expanses of blocks as it tries to read a file from start to end, which means that fragmented files cause slower performance.

Regularly defragment your hard disk, every week if necessary, and certainly at least once a month. Also defrag your disk after deleting a large number of files, cleaning out your browser cache, uninstalling applications, or after using the Windows Disk Cleanup Utility.

Defrag the Hard Drive

Go to Start > Accessories > System Tools> Disk Defragmenter. Highlight the drive you installed XP on, usually C >click the Defragment button. This will take a while. When finished shut down and restart. If you use a 3rd party defragmenter, use that instead of Windows defragmenter.

Defrag again after installing your applications and games. After that, there should be little need to do it again for a while unless you delete/uninstall/reinstall a lot of stuff.

Schedule Disk Defragmenter

This guide will show you how to make Disk Defragmenter a Scheduled Task in Windows XP.

Go to Start > Settings > Control Panel > Scheduled Tasks > Add Scheduled Task > the Scheduled Task Wizard will appear, click Next.
In the next screen, click the Browse button.
Go your C drive > WINDOWS folder > system32 folder > find the file named defrag.exe (NOT dfrg.msc) and double click it
Pick a schedule. If you spend a lot of time with your computer and install/uninstall programs choose weekly, otherwise monthly should be fine. Click Next.
Choose a time. Make sure the time doesn't conflict with any other tasks. Click Next.
Verify your settings are correct.
Check the box next to Open advanced properties for this task when click Finish.
Click Finish

In the Run: box, at the end of the line that says
C:\WINDOWS\system32\defrag.exe, type c: ensuring there is a space between .exe and c:

Tweaks for Drivers

This is valid for Windows XP Home and Pro. Download and install ALL updated drivers from the hardware manufacture sites. Reboot again.

Tweaks for System Tray

Remove any excess icons (all of them, basically) from the system tray (lower right) and recheck the services to ensure nothing else was installed (like NVIDIA's "driver helper"). Contrary to popular belief, those little "quick access" icons take up a lot of room.

If you just have that quick access to those programs, place them in the "quick launch bar" (located in the lower left by default, where IE and "Show Desktop" buttons are). The icons will not clutter your desktop and you can easily hit them from any normal windows application. To top it all off, they do not take up memory or resources constantly running in the background. Another plus, this will reduce your boot up time.

Tweaks for Page File

Tuning your pagefile can improve performance, especially if you have another hard drive to which you can move your pagefile.

Set Page File Size

Go to Start, (Settings), Control Panel, System.

Go to the Advanced tab. Click the Settings button under Performance.

Now switch to this Advanced tab, and click on 'Change' under Virtual Memory.

You will see the 'Initial Size (MB)' and the Maximum Size (MB)'.

Change 'Initial Size' to the same value as 'Maximum Size' then click set.

NOTE: This setting will help your gaming process by speeding up your computer.

ADDED NOTE: When your computer consumes your computer's hard drive and uses it as RAM, it is referred to as thrashing. Thrashing is bad for your computer and buying a RAM (it's not that expensive) is much more worthwhile.

Adjust the Paging File to a Respectable Level

This is valid for Windows XP Home and Pro.

Where do you find it?

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select Performance and Maintenance
4. Select System
5. Select Advanced Tab
6. Under Performance, select the Settings button
7. Select Advanced Tab
8. Under Virtual Memory, select the Change button
9. Adjust as needed, or select "No paging File," then select the Set button
10. Select the Ok button to apply the settings
11. You must reboot for the changes to take effect

With the Classic Control Panel:

1. Head to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select System
4. Select Advanced Tab
5. Under Performance, select the Settings button
6. Select Advanced Tab
7. Under Virtual Memory, select the Change button
8. Adjust as needed, or select "No paging File," then select the Set button
9. Select the Ok button to apply the settings
10. You must reboot for the changes to take effect

If anything, create (preferably on a separate partition), a paging of constant size. For example, select Custom Size and place 1000 in "Initial" and 1000 in "Maximum" Size boxes, then click Set

Button. This will reduce the amount of work needed to dynamically resize the paging file, usually when you need it most.

Some definitions need to be explained:

Physical RAM ~ The amount of Memory (RAM) installed on a system. Physical RAM is "way" faster than a "paging file."

Paging File ~ The file that is located on your hard drive that "acts" like Physical RAM but is way slower.

Virtual Memory ~ The name used for the sum of Physical RAM and the Paging File. In other words: Physical RAM + Paging File = Virtual Memory. You cannot "disable" Virtual Memory even if you disable the Paging File. Meaning, 2 GB RAM + 0 MB Paging File = 2 GB Virtual Memory.

If You Have Two or More Hard Disks, Move Your Pagefile

There is no point in moving your pagefile if you have a single disk, even if the disk has multiple partitions, so this tweak requires at least two hard disks. It relies on the assumption that your second or subsequent hard disk is used much less than your system disk (the disk that your operating system and applications are installed on) so there is less disk activity on it, which means the pagefile can be accessed much more quickly on that drive. In addition, Input/Output (I/O) to and from the second disk is performed in parallel to any I/O on the first disk, which means Windows is not trying to batter the heads across the hard disk as it tries to load files at the same time it is accessing the pagefile.

Tweaks for Indexing Service

Disable the Indexing Service

Purpose: Free up system resources.

More Information:
http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;899869

The indexing service scans your hard drive and indexes files to help speed up searching. It runs in the background using up memory and processor time, and is generally thought to be unnecessary by most nerds and/or geeks.

To disable the Indexing Service, open My Computer(press the Windows & E keys), Right-click on the hard drive, go to properties and click on the check box to clear the check mark next to "Allow indexing service to index this hard drive for faster searching". Click OK. It may take a while for the operation to complete. Once you have done all the drives, reboot.

If you are experiencing "random" slowdowns and "high" CPU usage for no reason, these two services are the most likely cause of the problem. These services are also a major cause of "missing" disk space. System Restore Service could be taking up 3 GB of space, just on its own.

System Restore Service creates system snap shots or restores points for returning to at a later time. Every time you install a program or new driver, plus on a schedule, this service creates a "restore point" to roll back to if a problem occurs. This service would have been nice in the Win95 days due to plenty of problems occurring (new DirectX version every 15 minutes) but not required for the "much" more stable WinXP. A rather GOOD (and possibly the only) reason to use this "feature" is to roll back your OS after installing an unknown program or testing software.

NOTE: If you disable this service, your previous "restore points" will be deleted. If, for what ever reason, you do not want this to happen, do not disable this service.

While you are there, you can disable and stop the Indexing Service:

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select Performance and Maintenance
4. Select Administrator Tools
5. Select Services
6. Select "Indexing Service" (Double Click)
7. Select General Tab
8. In the Startup type: select "Disabled"
9. Select the Ok button to close the panel

With the Classic Control Panel:

1. Go to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select Administrator Tools
4. Select Services
5. Select "Indexing Service" (Double Click)
6. Select General Tab
7. In the Startup type: select "Disabled"
8. Select the Ok button to close the panel

Or you can
•Click Start, Run, type *services.msc* then press enter or click OK
•Scroll to the "Indexing Service" in the right-hand panel and double-click it
•Change the Startup type to Manual or Disable and Apply
•Click the Stop button and wait for the service to stop then click OK

Tweaks for Add/ Remove Programs

This is valid for Windows XP Home and Pro. Go to the "Add Remove Programs" and click the "Windows components." Here, take out all the crap you do not need.

After Removing the unused Windows components, ensure that you check back up on the services that you disabled. Some like to go back to Automatic after playing with the Windows components (namely COM+ and Help and Support).

You may also adjust a file to "allow" you to remove other Windows components, such as MSN Messenger. Here is how:

NOTE: You will need to enable "hidden file" viewing to see the inf files.

IF YOU ARE SCARED, DO NOT MODIFY THE FILE. Also, you may experience a delay of around 30 seconds or more when loading up Outlook before you can do anything. Putting Messenger back will allow Outlook to function properly again. If you use MSN Explorer, Messenger will also be running in the background.

Go to your Windows\inf folder. The default is ~ c:\windows\inf

Edit the file called "sysoc.inf"

Remove the reference of "hide" in this line:

msmsgs=msgrocm.dll,OcEntry,msmsgs.inf,hide,7

To make it look like this:

msmsgs=msgrocm.dll,OcEntry,msmsgs.inf,,7

You may also remove all references to "hide" in all of the other lines as long as you KEEP the commas. Some components you cannot "uncheck" in the add/remove programs GUI. If you do get them to uninstall, you are on your own.

Tweaks for Remove Unnecessary Windows Files

Remove Unnecessary Windows Files

To remove unnecessary Windows files at any time, open the Disk Cleanup utility and under the main Disk Cleanup tab you can safely tick the following:
1) Recycle Bin
2) Setup Log Files
3) Temporary Files
4) Catalog files for the Content Indexer

Also tick the "Temporary Internet Files" option if you want to clean out your Internet Explorer cache. Click OK when done, and OK again. This will remove a lot of unnecessary files on your system and may take a while.

Clear Recently Used File List in MS Word

To remove certain documents from the File menu, select CTRL | ALT | - (the minus key next to the zero key). This will change the mouse pointer to a thick bold horizontal line. Select the File menu and click whichever document you want to remove from the list. This trick can also remove actual menu settings such as "Save", "Save As", etc. If this occurs (or you select the wrong thing), search the C:\ drive for normal.dot and delete it. Open word again and everything should be back to normal!

Tweaks for Remote Assistance and Remote Desktop Sharing

Purpose: Security. Free up system resources.

More Information:
http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/helpandsupport/rafaq-general.mspx

Click on the Remote tab. Uncheck both check boxes and click Apply and then OK.

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select Performance and Maintenance
4. Select System
5. Select Remote Tab
6. Uncheck both "Remote Assistance and Desktop Sharing" options
7. Select the Ok button to apply the settings

With the Classic Control Panel:

1. Go to Start
2. Select Control Panel
3. Select System
4. Select Remote Tab
5. Uncheck both "Remote Assistance and Desktop Sharing" options
6. Select the Ok button to apply the settings

Tweaks for Network Printers and Folders

Microsoft has a habit of putting convenience features into their operating systems that are convenient only to a small, select group of users. One such feature in XP is the automatic search for network printers and folders. Automatic search periodically polls your network to check for new shared resources and adds relevant icons into My Network Places if anything is found.

Microsoft's documentation on this feature is contradictory. In one sentence Microsoft state that the feature "does not add a great deal of overhead to your Windows XP computer's work load", implying that it does add some overhead, though they are not willing to state the level of that overhead. In the same documentation Microsoft proceed to state that if you have a small network where few resources are added or infrequent changes are made, or if you use a laptop that is regularly disconnected from the network then "having Windows XP use any resources at all to perform this chore might be counter-productive", thus implying greater overhead than Microsoft are willing to admit to.

You can manually search your network for new printers in the Add New Printer Wizard, and you can manually locate new computers and shares on your network using standard URI notation in Windows Explorer, for example:

\\machine_name\share_name

If you wish to prevent XP from regularly searching your network and performing "counter-productive chores" then follow these simple instructions:

•Open the Control Panel and select Folder Options. If you use the Control Panel Category View you'll find Folder Options under Appearance and Themes.
•Click the View tab.
•In the Advanced Settings list, click to clear the Automatically Search for Network Folders and Printers check box.
•Click OK.

Tweaks for IE8 & Firefox

Internet Explorer 8

1) Increase Max Connections

This tweak may be able to increase your page loads and possibly your download speed.

The easy way:

Go here and click on the Fix It icon: How do I configure Internet Explorer to download more than

two files at one time?
http://support.microsoft.com/kb/282402

Clicking on that icon will download the file EnableTenIEDownloadSessions.msi. Double-click it to run it.

This change adds the following to the registry:

[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Internet Settings]
"MaxConnectionsPerServer"=dword:0000000a
"MaxConnectionsPer1_0Server"=dword:0000000a

2) Internet Explorer lighting-fast startup

This tweak tells Internet Explorer to simply 'run', without loading any webpage. (If you use a 'blank' page, that is still a page, and slows access. Notice the 'about:blank' in the address bar. The blank html page must still be loaded.) To load IE with 'nothing' [nothing is different than blank]:

1. Right-click on any shortcut you have to IE
[You should create a shortcut out of your desktop IE icon, and delete the original icon]
2. Click Properties
3. Add -nohome [with a space before the dash] after the endquotes in the Target field.
4. Click OK

Fire up IE from your modified shortcut, and be amazed by how fast you are able to use IE!

3) Registry tweaks to fix IE8 slowness

If you are experiencing problems with IE8 being slow to load pages, especially when multiple tabs are involved, the following registry tweak might be worth a try. This tweak is simply registering a DLL that should have been registered as part of the IE 8 installation.

1.   Click Run, type *cmd* and press Enter.
2.   In the Command Prompt window, enter this text and press Enter: *regsvr32 actxprxy.dll*
3.   Restart your computer.

4) Clearing Google Internet Search History

To clear the search box on google.com or the history of any text box:

1. Select "Internet Options" from the Internet Explorer "Tools" menu.
2. Select the "Content" tab at the top of the "Internet Options" window.
3. In the "Personal information" section at the bottom, click the "AutoComplete" button.
4. On the AutoComplete Settings window, click on the "Clear Forms" button.

5. You will get a window asking you to confirm clearing the history.

6. Click "OK", and you're done.

Firefox

1) Disable IPV6:

Open Firefox > in the address bar type about:*config* > scroll down to the line: network.dns.disableIPv6, double-click it to change its value to true.

2) Disable Automatic Image Resizing:

Open Firefox > in the address bar type about: config > scroll down to the line: browser. Enable automatic_image_resizing, double-click it to change its value to false.

3) Remove the Search pane:

Open Firefox > go to View > Toolbars > Customize. Click (and hold) in the search box and drag it into the Customize Toolbar box.

Eight Easy Tweaks for Super Fast Web Browsing

Fast loading web pages while surfing the Internet may have more to do with your web browser settings and preferences than your Internet connection speed.

Try these easy Firefox tweaks and you will see that you are surfing the Internet from 3 to 30 times faster!

To get started, open your Firefox web browser. In the address/location bar type [about:config] and then press your Enter key. (NOTE: DON'T TYPE THE BRACKETS.)

Tweak #1:

In the Filter bar, type [network.http.pipelining]. Then, double-click on this line under Preference Name in order to change the value from false to true.

Tweak #2:

In the Filter bar, type [network.http.pipelining.maxrequests]. Then, double-click on this line under Preference Name and change the value from 4 to a higher number anywhere from 10 to 30.

Tweak #3:

In the Filter bar, type [network.http.proxy.pipelining]. Then, double-click on this line under Preference Name in order to change the value from false to true.

Tweak #4:

In the Filter bar, type [network.dns.disableIPv6]. Then, double-click on this line under Preference Name in order to change the value from false to true.

Tweak #5:

In the Filter bar, type [plugin.expose_full_path]. Then, double-click on this line under Preference Name in order to change the value from false to true.

Tweak #6:

In the Filter bar, type [network.protocol-handler.external.ms-help]. Now, you are going to create a new Preference Name with an Integer Value. To do this, right-click on this line under Preference Name and select New, then Integer.

In the New Integer value box type in [nglayout.initialpaint.delay] and click OK. Then in the Enter Integer value box type [0] (that's a zero) and click OK.

Tweak #7:

In the Filter bar again type [network.protocol-handler.external.ms-help]. Now, you are going to create another new Preference Name with an Integer Value. To do this, right-click on this line under Preference Name and select New, then Integer. In the New Integer value box type in [content.notify.backoffcount] and click OK. Then in the Enter Integer value box type [5] and click OK.

Tweak #8:

In the Filter bar again type [network.protocol-handler.external.ms-help]. Now, you are going to create another new Preference Name with an Integer Value. To do this, right-click on this line under Preference Name and select New, then Integer. In the New Integer value box type in [ui.submenuDelay] and click OK. Then in the Enter Integer value box type [0] (that's a zero) and click OK.

Now, close your web browser and restart it. You'll see how much faster web pages are loading.

Tweaks for Windows Vista

Vista Usage Notes

For the most part, its usage is similar to that of previous Windows versions. However, there are a range of changes which impact on the way you will go about using Vista and this guide. This section briefly highlights the most important of these changes.

Search Box

Throughout this guide you will refer to Start > Search Box as a place to input particular text, often to launch a program or Windows feature. This Search Box is actually an Instant Search Box which

appears (among other places) at the bottom of the Start Menu when you click the Start button. Strictly speaking it is not a command line interface like the Windows Run box-which you can access by pressing WINDOW+R or using the Run item on the Start Menu (when configured appropriately). However it is much quicker to use than going through menus to find a shortcut, or typing an exact executable or command name in the Run box, so I refer to it constantly in the guide.

User Account Control

Vista has changed the way users are allowed to make major changes to the system. To start with you will need to be using (or have access to) an Administrator-level user account if you want to implement most of the changes in this guide. The default account that you create when first installing Vista is one such Administrator-level account, so start by logging into that account when using this guide.

When User Account Control (UAC) is enabled, you will be prompted to Continue prior to making any system-level changes; this is normal. Click the Details button on the UAC prompt to ensure you will be running the program you expect to be running. In some cases older programs not designed specifically for Vista may not launch properly or have full functionality when UAC is enabled, because they do not ask for Administrative access to the system even when it is required. In such cases, launch the program by right-clicking on its executable or launch icon and select "Run as Administrator" to ensure it will have full functionality.

Importantly: Even if you find it annoying, do not disable UAC to start with because aside from security issues, if you choose to enable it again in the future, due to file and registry virtualization your settings for any currently-installed programs may be lost. Keep UAC enabled initially both for security and consistency purposes, and once you've finished reading this guide you will have enough information to properly consider whether to keep it enabled or not and the impact that this choice will have.

Administrator Command Prompt

Related to UAC is the fact that if using an MS-DOS Command Prompt to make command-line based changes, you will often require what is known as an "Administrator Command Prompt" to successfully use certain system commands. There are several ways to access an Administrator Command Prompt.

1. Go to Start > Search Box and type "cmd" (without quotes), then right-click on the "cmd.exe" item which appears at the top of the Start Menu and select "Run as Administrator".
2. Go to Start > Search Box and type "cmd" (without quotes), then press CTRL + SHIFT + ENTER.
3. Go to Start > Search Box and type "cmd" （without quotes）, then right-click on the "cmd.exe" item, select "Send To>Desktop" to create a shortcut on your Desktop. Right-click on this shortcut,

select Properties click the Advanced button and tick "Run as Administrator". You can now use this shortcut to always launch an Administrator Command Prompt as required.

If ever a particular command line option is not executing properly or appears to have no impact, it is most likely because you need to use it in an Administrator Command Prompt without requiring a re-confirmation through UAC, because it already has elevated privileges.

Notification Area

This is a relatively insignificant change, but it should be noted that Microsoft now refers to the area at the bottom right of the screen in the Taskbar (next to the clock) as the Notification Area, not the System Tray area.

Windows Aero Interface

An obvious feature new to Vista is the Windows Aero glass-like interface. The Windows Desktop is no longer simply a 2D environment, under Vista the Desktop always runs in Direc3D mode, so it can have both 2D and 3D elements at the same time. To see if you are running Aero and to demonstrate its 3D capabilities, press WINDOWS + TAB to trigger Vista's 'Windows Flip 3D' task switching interface.

Before Using This Guide

Please read the following information before attempting to make any change using this guide.

Basic Requirements

There are three key requirements you must meet before being able to use this guide successfully:

1) You should prepare backups of all your important information prior to undertaking any of the changes detailed in this guide. Follow the instructions in the Tweaks for Backup and Tweaks for Restore chapter.
2) You should have an original Windows Vista installation DVD. Do not undertake the tweaks in this guide if you don't have a Vista DVD as you may not be able to reverse certain changes or fix any problems which may occur.
3) You will need access to an Administrator level User Account to make the majority of the changes in this guide.

Please make sure you meet all three requirements above, because if you experience any problems you will not be able to fix them. At the very least you must have Administrator level access to the system.

Tweaks for Backup

Backup

Many people lose data everyday due to various reasons: virus infections, accidental deletion, hardware & software failures, power failures and so on. To protect yourself from data losses, you can create a backup so that you will easily restore it when needed. Using Windows Vista's Backup and Restore center, you can easily backup your personal files or the entire system. You can create a manual backup or schedule automated backups which will add the new files or the modified files into your original snapshot.

File Backup has been improved to make data protection simpler and more thorough, and two new features, Windows® Complete PC Backup and Restore and Shadow Copy, have been added. System Restore has been redesigned to be more robust and to support more system repair scenarios.

The new features rely on Volume Shadow Copy Service in one way or another. This is a service that creates point-in-time copies (referred to as "shadow copies") of a volume and keeps track of changes made between shadow copies.

While these new features, all of which are available from the new Backup and Restore Center (see the snapshot below), all allow you to back up and restore data, each is very different. But together they provide broad protection against various forms of data loss throughout the lifetime of your computer.
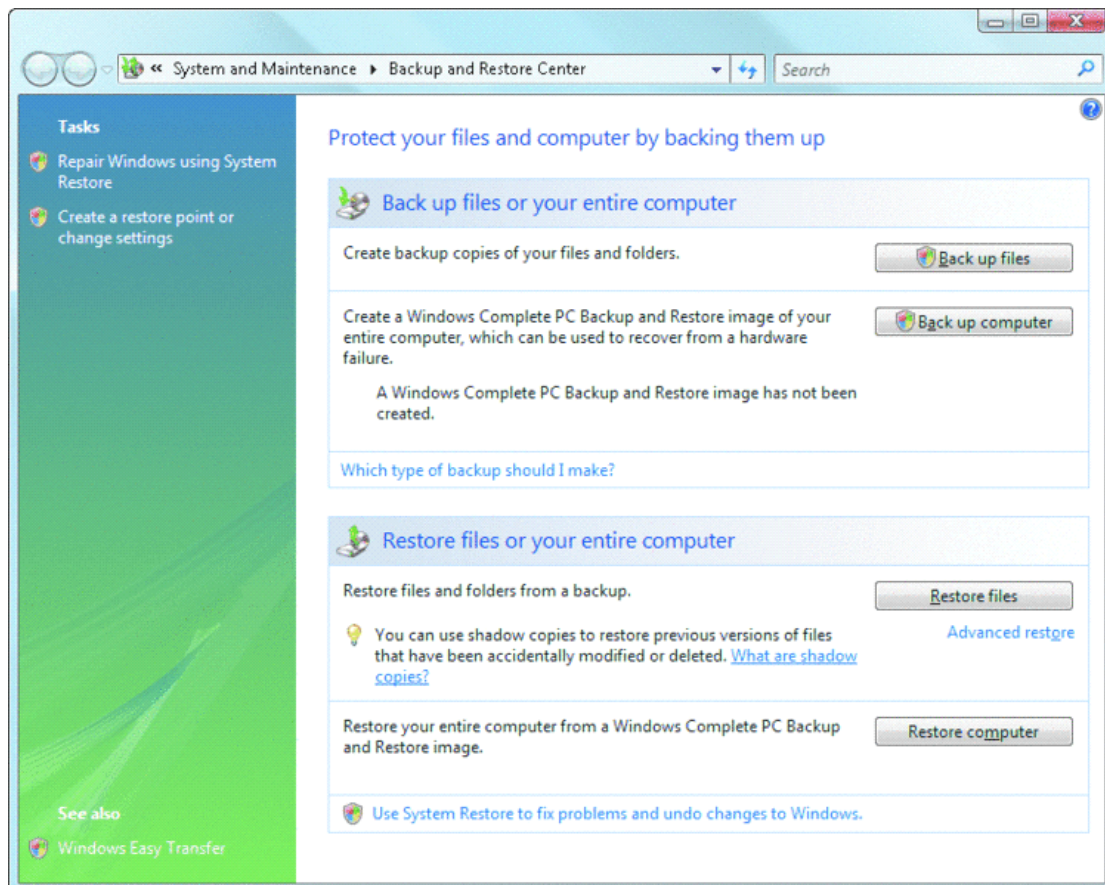
On top of this, the backup section offers another two options: *Back up files* and *Back up computer*. The first option will create a backup of your personal files and folders and the second will create a complete backup of your entire computer. It is recommended to create a full back up of your computer just after you have set up your computer for the first time. Windows Vista will take a snapshot of all your programs, settings and files. You can use this snapshot if your computer ever stops working and restore it to the original state.
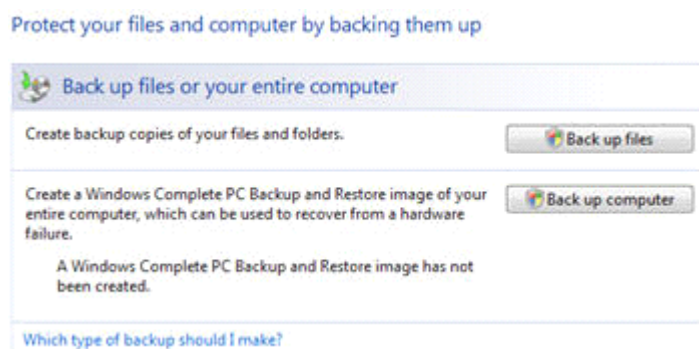

Backup Your Personal Files and Folders

To start the procedure, click on the Back up files button and the wizard will start.

In the Back Up Files window you will have to select where to save your backup. You can select a partition from your hard disk, a CD, a DVD or a shared folder from your network.

In the next window, you will see a list with all your partitions except the one selected as the location for saving your backup. The partition on which Windows Vista is installed will be selected by default. Now you can choose to include or exclude other partitions from the backup procedure. After you have made your selections, click on "Next".

The wizard will now ask you to select the types of files you want to have backed up. You can choose any of the following: pictures, music, videos, e-mail, documents, tv shows, compressed files and additional files. Select the file types you want to include in the back up and click on Next.
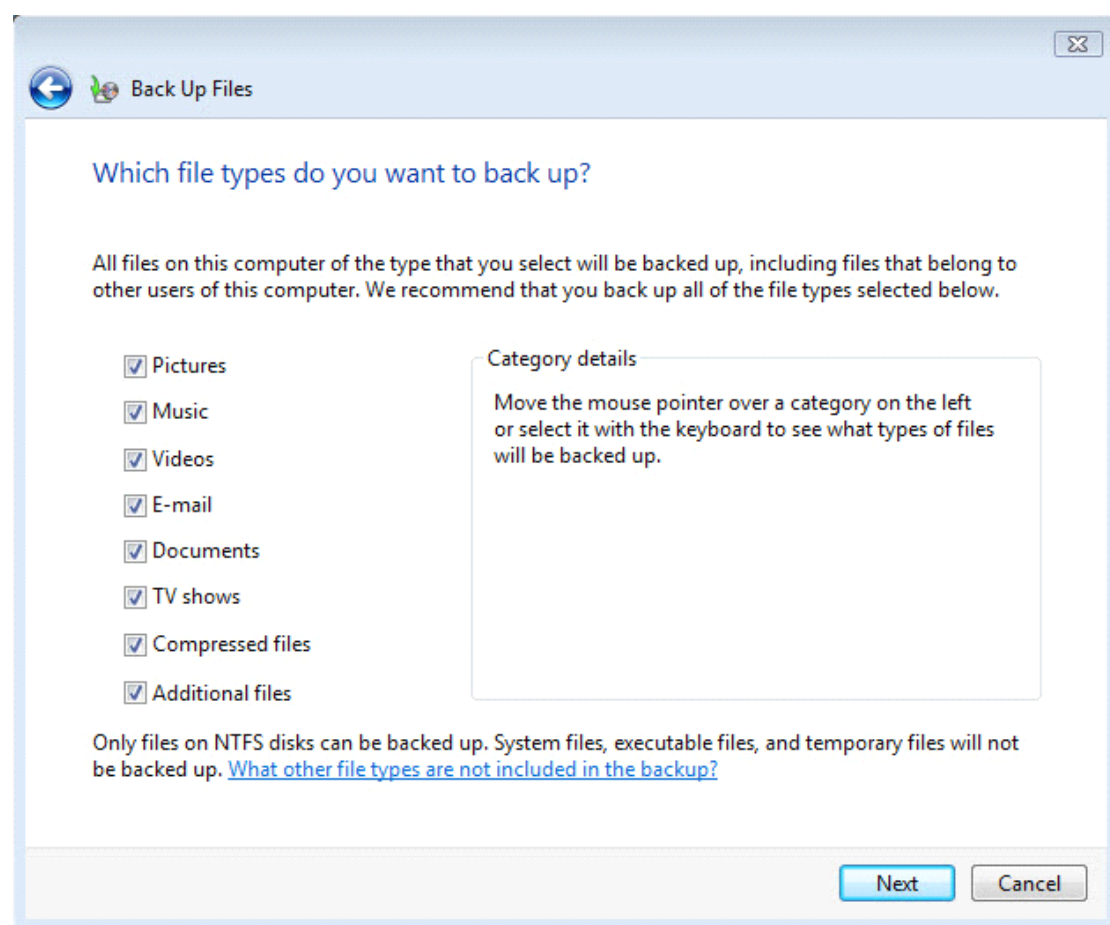

In the next window you will be asked about the frequency of the back up process. You can have daily, weekly of monthly backups. The scheduled backups will include only the new files or the modified files to the initial backup which you are about to complete.

Create the settings you want and then click on Save settings and start backup.
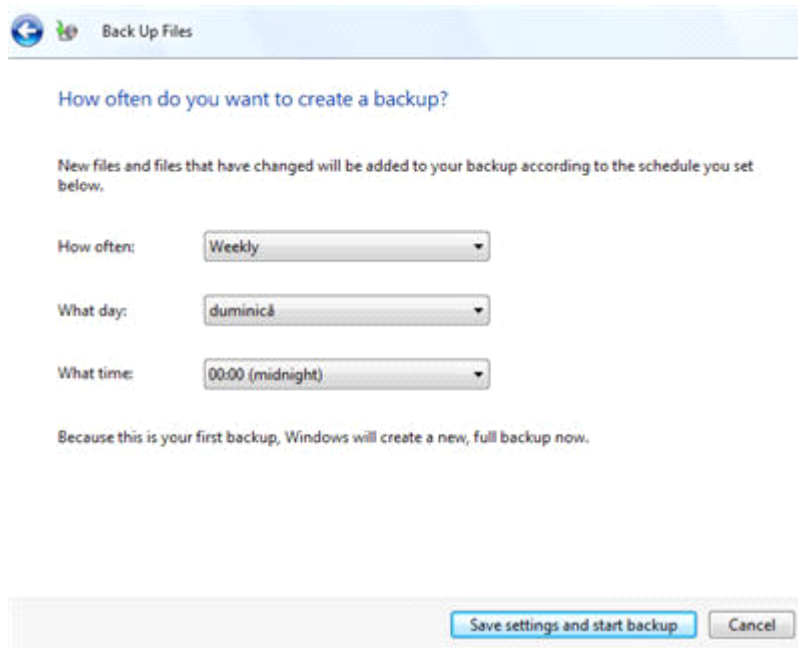
The backup process will start. First it will make a shadow copy, then it will scan the selected partitions for files and folders and then it will create the desired backup.
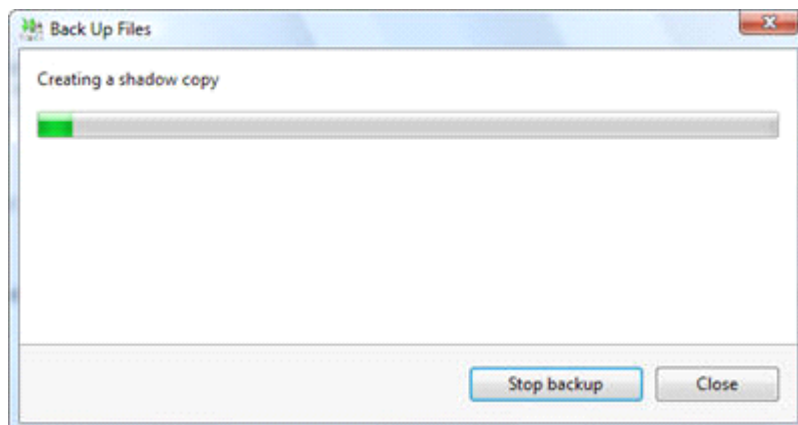
Depending on your system and on how much data you want to backup, the procedure will take from a few minutes up to a few hours. You can stop the backup at any time by clicking on Stop backup.

When the backup is completed you will see a balloon tip notification showing up on your screen, indicating "File backup has completed successfully".

Scheduling Complete PC Backup

Scheduling a regular Complete PC Backup is one way to ensure you have recent images of your entire computer. Complete PC Backup is not schedulable through the control panel, but you can work around this by creating a new task in the Task Scheduler. If you choose to schedule

Complete PC Backups, it is suggested that periodic monitoring to verify that backups completed successfully.

1. Go to Task Scheduler (which you'll find in the Accessories\System Tools folder in the All Programs portion of your Start menu).
2. Click Create Task.
3. Go to the General tab.
4. Type a descriptive name, such as Scheduled Complete PC Backup.
5. If you want the task to run regardless of whether you're logged on, click Run whether user is logged on or not.
6. Click Run with highest privileges.
7. Go to the Triggers page.
8. Click New and then specify when and how often the scheduled backup will take place.
9. Go to the Actions page.
10. Click New.
11. Under Program/Script, type wbadmin.
12. In Add arguments (optional), type the following command, adjusting the target drive letter as necessary:

If you want to include additional volumes that are not the system, boot, or Windows Recovery Environment volumes, use the following statement instead, substituting the appropriate drive letters (separated by commas) for E and F:

Note that the command should always include all critical flag. Not having this flag risks excluding important system volumes from the backup, which would lead to failure during restore.

13. Configure any other task-related settings.
14. Click OK.

**Rescheduling or Turn off Your Automated Backing Up**

If you want to change the settings of the automatic backup procedure, go to the Backup and Restore Center and click on the Change settings link beneath the Backup files button.


Alternatively, you can use the start menu search box, type "backup" and click on the Backup Status and Configuration shortcut.
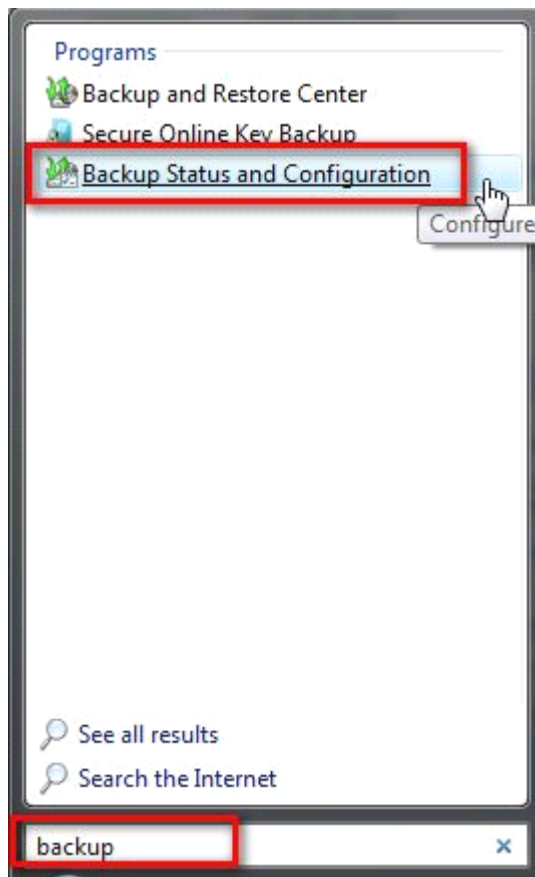
The Backup Status and Configuration window will open. Here you will see the latest information about your backups.
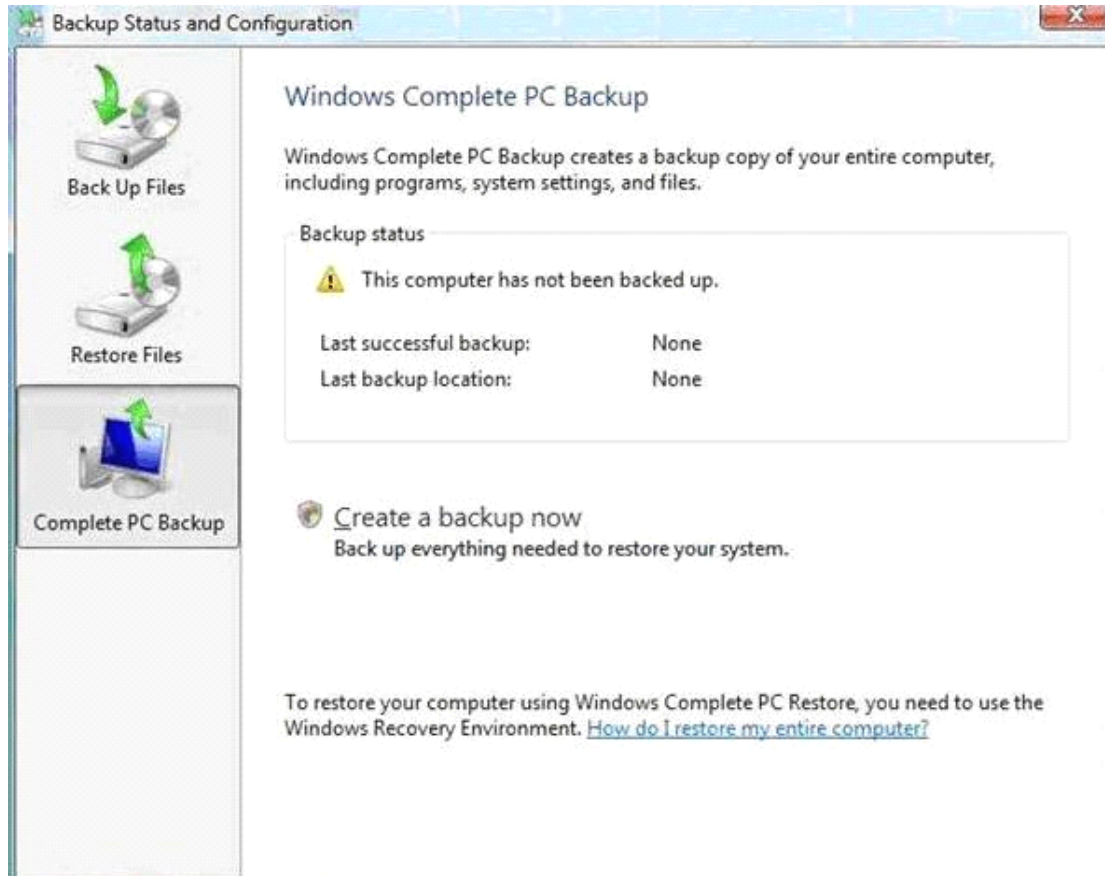
If you want to make a new backup, click on the Back up now button. To change the current settings click on the Change back up settings button. You will notice that if you want to change the settings, you will have to go through all the steps described in the screenshots above: selecting the drives, selecting the file types, selecting the schedule, and finally you will have to choose if you want to create a new backup or you just to save the settings and exit.
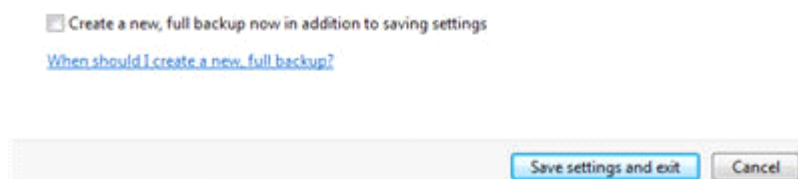
If you want to disable the automatic backup, click on Turn off.
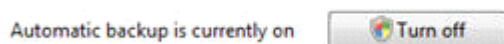
Once you have finalized making all the desired changes, close the window.
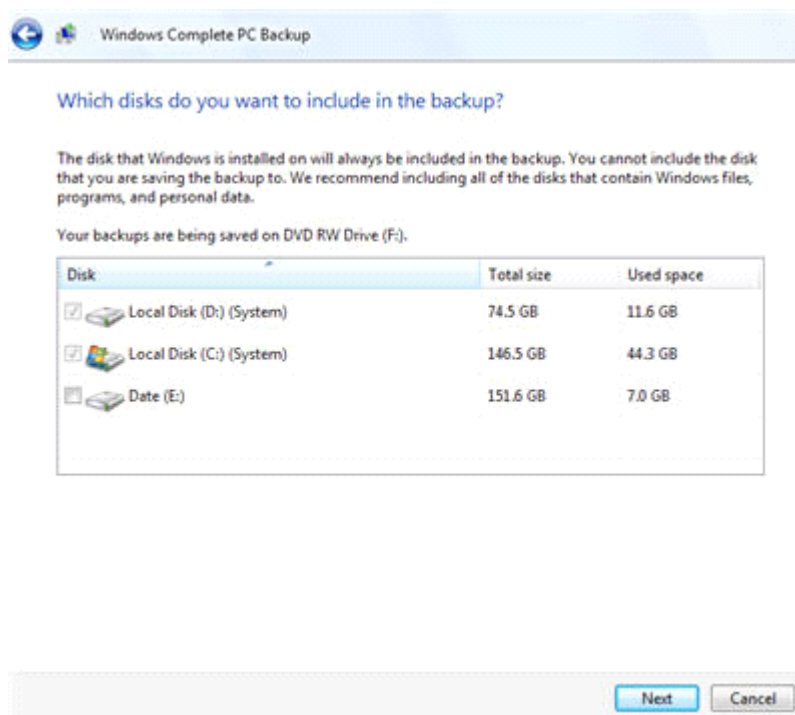
Creating a Complete PC Backup

To create a complete backup of your PC, go to the Backup and Restore Center and click on Back up computer to start the procedure.

Create a Windows Complete PC Backup and Restore image of your entire computer, which can be used to recover from a hardware failure.

Back up computer

A Windows Complete PC Backup and Restore image has not been created.

The wizard will start and it will ask you where you want to save the backup. You can select a hard disk or one or more CDs/DVDs. Make sure you have enough CDs/DVDs or sufficient space on your hard disk and then, after you have made your choice, click on Next.

In the next window you will need to select the partitions which you want to include in the backup. Make the appropriate selections and click on Next.

Windows Complete PC Backup

Which disks do you want to include in the backup?

The disk that Windows is installed on will always be included in the backup. You cannot include the disk that you are saving the backup to. We recommend including all of the disks that contain Windows files, programs, and personal data.

Your backups are being saved on DVD RW Drive (F:).

Disk	Total size	Used space
Local Disk (D:) (System)	74.5 GB	11.6 GB
Local Disk (C:) (System)	146.5 GB	44.3 GB
Date (E:)	151.6 GB	7.0 GB

Next   Cancel

In the last window, the wizard will show you a summary of your backup settings: the backup location and the disks which will be backed up. In the Backup location field it will show you the number of DVDs required or the hard disk space required to save your backup.
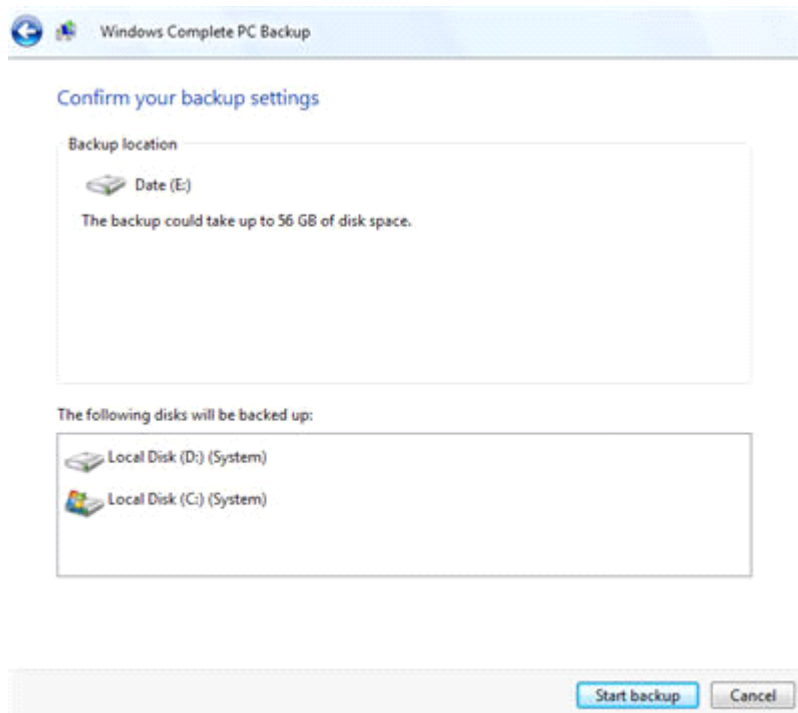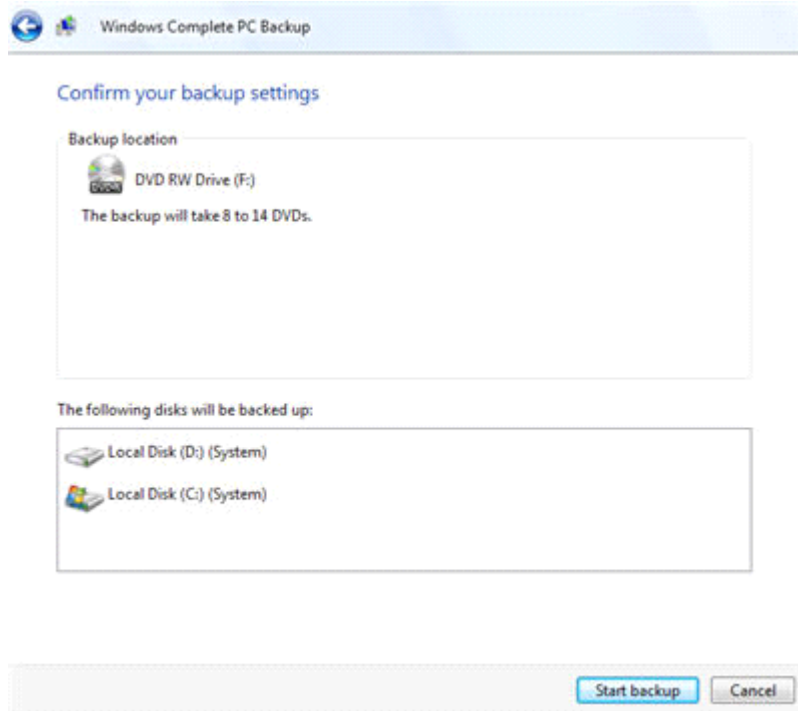
Click on the Start backup button and the procedure will begin.

Tweaks for Restore

Complete PC Restore

Now imagine that one sunny afternoon, you decide to use your laptop while sitting by the pool. Unfortunately, you slip on some wet tiles and your laptop dives into the pool. It's beyond repair and you have no choice but to buy a new one. Since you used the Complete PC Backup tool, you can restore your system to the new laptop — don't have to spend a lot of time manually reinstalling each application and reconfiguring them with your personal settings. Performing a Complete PC Restore is straightforward. At startup, use the Windows Vista installation disk to boot into the Windows Recovery Environment and attach the device that contains the system image. Choose the appropriate image, and then the restore process begins.

After the restore is finished, you should perform a file restore from your latest file backup. Since the computer is reverted to a time prior to the chosen file backup, it does not contain a record of this backup in the catalog. Therefore, you can select Advanced restore | Restore files from a backup made on a different computer | Restore everything from this backup. At last, you'd better start a new full backup to protect your newly restored data.

System Restore

System Restore is enabled by default. You can access the System Restore wizard by choosing Repair Windows using System Restore, available on the upper-left part of the Backup and Restore Center (it can also be accessed in the Accessories\System Tools folder in the All Programs portion of your Start menu). If you select "choose a different restore point" and click Next, you can see that restore points have already been created at various points while you was setting up your laptop, installing applications, and performing backups.

In Windows Vista, System Restore uses Volume Shadow Copy Service to keep track of block-level changes over the selected volumes. This makes System Restore more robust and allows it to support a broader range of repair scenarios.

Also new, System Restore can now run while your regular Windows installation is offline. This is done using Windows Recovery Environment, allowing you to repair your system even if Windows is unbootable.

Remove Old Restore Points

If you keep System Restore active: To remove old system restore points go to Start > Programs > Accessories > System Tools > Disk Cleanup > select the drive XP is installed on and click OK > click the More Options tab > in the System Restore section, click the Clean up button and Yes in the resulting screen.

Tweaks for Auto Login

Having a machine set to automatically login is a serious security risk, especially for laptops.

Press the **Windows + R** keys > type **netplwiz** > uncheck **Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer**> in the resulting screen pick the appropriate User and type in the password and click **Apply**.

Tweaks for Auto-Start Applications

Take a look at the two sections to get control over your startup applications and speed up your computer:

Disabling Auto-Start Applications with the System Configuration Utility

1. Click on the Start Button and key in msconfig and hit Enter.
2. Click on the Startup tab.
3. Remove the check next to any items that you do not want to startup and click OK.

Disabling Auto-Start Applications with Windows Defender

1. Click on the Start Button and type in Windows Defender and hit Enter.
2. Click on the Tools from the top menu bar.
3. Click on Software Explorer.
4. Hit Show for All Users.
5. Select an application and then click either Remove or Disable.

Tweaks for Task Scheduler

Create a Task in Vista Task Scheduler

1. Open the Control Panel (Classic View), click on the Administrative Tools Icon and Click on Task Scheduler
2. Click on Continue in the UAC Prompt
3. In the left pane click on Task Scheduler Library folder to highlight it.
4. In the right pane, click on New Folder.
5. Type in a name you want to for this task. For example, Disk Cleanup and click on OK.
6. In the left pane, click on the new Task Folder.
7. In the right pane, click on Create Task.
8. Under Name, type in a name for the task.
Note: For example, Disk Cleanup. When you create a task in a task folder, you must name the task. No two tasks can have the same name if they are in the same task folder.

9. Under, Description, type in a description of the task.

Note: The task description is optional, but recommended to help remember what it is for.

10. Under Security options, select the options you want.

Note: By default, a task runs within the security context of the user who scheduled the task and only runs if that user is logged on when the task is triggered.

11. Click on the Triggers tab. Click on the New button.

12. Click on the drop down arrow for Begin the task. Select what will be the trigger to run the task

13. Under Settings, select how often you want to the task to run.

14. Under Advanced Settings, select any settings you want.

15. Click on OK.

16. You will now see the trigger listed.

17. Click on the Actions tab.

18. Next to Action, click on the drop down arrow.

19. To start a program

Tweaks for Date and Time

Set the Date and Time in Windows Vista

1. Click on the Control panel from the Start menu.

2. Go to "Clock, Language and Region."

3. Click "Date and Time."

4. Click the "Date and Time" tab and then "Change Date and Time." Enter your password if prompted to do so.

5. Double-click the hour. Click the up or down arrows to set the correct hour, or type it manually.

6. Double-click the minutes. Use the up or down arrows to set the correct number of minutes after the hour, or type it manually.

7. Select the correct month from the dropdown menu on the calendar to the left of the clock.

8. Click the correct date on the calendar.

9. Set the correct year by using the up or down arrows next to the box with a year in it.

10. Click "OK" when you have finished setting the date and time.

11. Select "Change Time Zone" to change the time zone on your computer.

12. Choose your preferred time zone from the list on the "Time Zone Settings" dialogue box.

13. Select the "Automatically adjust clock for Daylight Saving Time" box to have your computer's clock automatically updated for Daylight Savings.

14. Hover your mouse over the clock on the right side of the desktop to change the time from the sidebar

15. Expect two buttons to appear: "Close" and "Options." Click "Options."

16. Choose a name for your clock from the Options menu, as well as decide whether or not to display the second hand. Note that you can also change the time zone from here.

Tweaks for Fonts

Install a font

1. Open Fonts by clicking the Start button, clicking Control Panel, clicking Appearance and Personalization, and then clicking Fonts.
2. Click File, and then click Install New Font. (If you don't see the File menu, press ALT.)
3. In the Add Fonts dialog box, under Drives, click the drive where the font that you want to install is located.
4. Under Folders, double-click the folder containing the fonts that you want to add.
5. Under List of fonts, click the font that you want to add, and then click Install.

Uninstall a font

1. Open Fonts by clicking the Start button, clicking Control Panel, clicking Appearance and Personalization, and then clicking Fonts.
2. Click the font that you want to uninstall. To select more than one font at a time, press and hold down CTRL while you click each font.
3. On the File menu, click Delete. (If you don't see the File menu, press ALT.)

Desktop Fonts

1) Change the Desktop Background Image

1. Right-click the Windows Vista background. An options box pops up.
2. Click on "Personalize," and then on "Desktop Background," which takes you to another options box.
3. Choose the image type you want from the drop down location menu or browse for the specific file folder in which you store your images and photos. Windows Vista loads some background choices onto your computer automatically so you are sure to find something that interests you, or you can choose your own favorite photo.
4. Select the background image you want for your desktop.
5. Decide how you want the image to be positioned on the desktop--for example, tiled, centered or stretched--and click the appropriate button. Vista allows you to see what the image looks like in each option, so comparison is easy.
6. Click "OK" and watch your image change. Repeat the steps to change the desktop image again.

2) Change the Desktop Font Size

1. Click the Start button and then "Control Panel."
2. Type "Adjust font size" into the search box. This takes you directly to the "Personalization: Adjust Font Size (DPI)" option box.
3. Click "Custom DPI" at the bottom corner of the box.
4. Adjust the percentage to normal size until you see the size you prefer and click "OK." Go

through the steps to change the size again or return it to normal.

Tweaks for Personalization

Almost every change you like to make you do it in the 'Personalization' section in the 'Control Panel'. So you can click 'Start' -> 'Control Panel' -> 'Personalization'. Or you click the right mouse button on your desktop and click 'Personalize'.

Change the Resolution in Vista

Here you select the resolution you think it works best for you. The higher you set the resolution, the smaller everything will be displayed and the more you can view on you screen.

For example you choose as resolution 1024 by 768 pixels. Then click the 'Apply' button. Now the new resolution will be set. Then another small window appears and counts back from 15 seconds. During this time you can decide whether you like this resolution or not. If yes, click 'Yes'. Otherwise click 'No' and try another resolution.

To change the resolution in Windows Vista you click 'Display Settings' in the 'Personalization' window.

Change the Theme

Personalize Windows Vista by changing the theme.

A theme is a collection of visual settings. To select a theme you click on the 'Theme' link in the 'Personalization' window.

In the dropdown list you can select theme. Then in the sample area you can see how Vista will look like using that theme. Click 'Apply' to choose this theme.

If you like to change the settings of theme, you click on the 'Save As' button and you give you theme a name. Default your theme will be saved in the 'Documents' folder using the name 'My Favorite Theme'.

Set Color and Appearance

Personalize Windows Vista by changing the colors and the Appearance.
Click on the 'Windows Color and Appearance' link in the 'Personalization' window to configure the color you like. This screen looks a bit different if you don't use the Aero interface.

Here you choose the color you like for your windows.
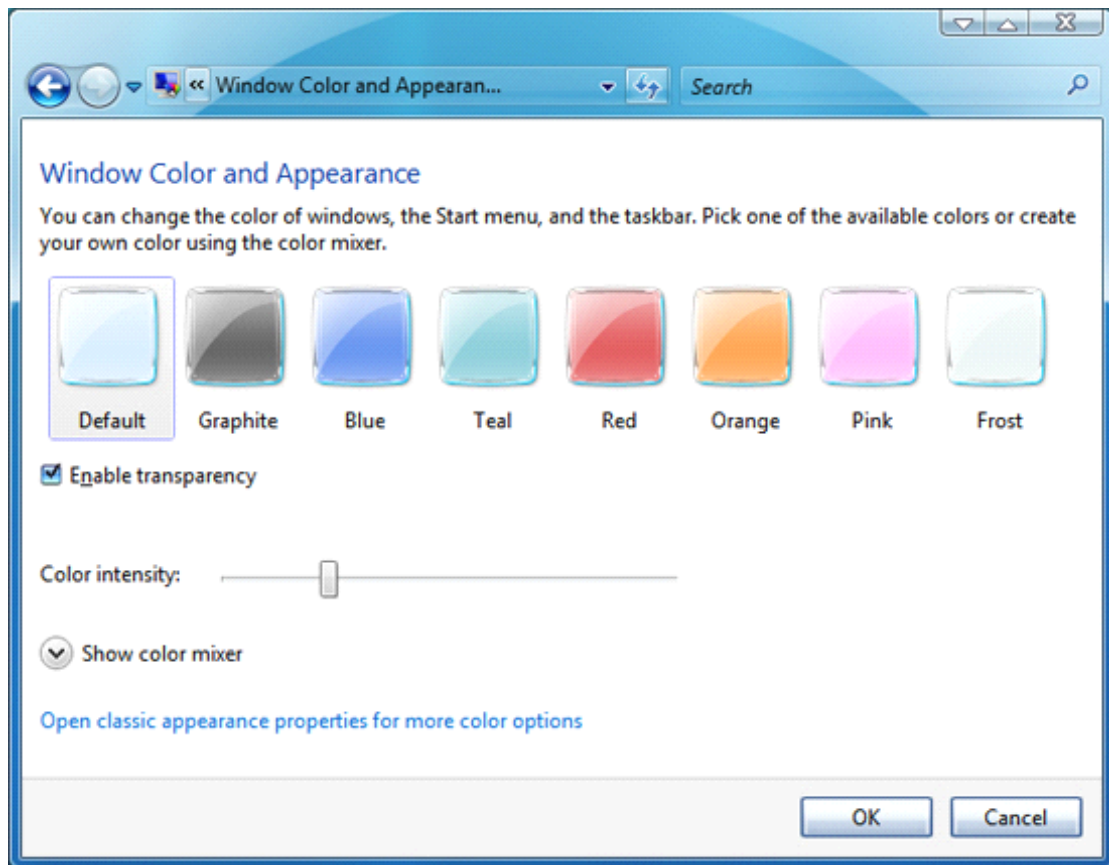
Change the Desktop Background

You can also personalize Windows Vista by changing the desktop background.

You can choose every picture or color as desktop background. Click on the 'Desktop Background' link in the 'Personalization' window.

In the 'Desktop Background' window you click on the 'Picture Location' dropdown list for choosing a category. To choose a picture from your own personal pictures folder you choose 'Pictures'.

You can also browse for a picture using the 'Browse' button. You double click on the picture you like to set as desktop background.
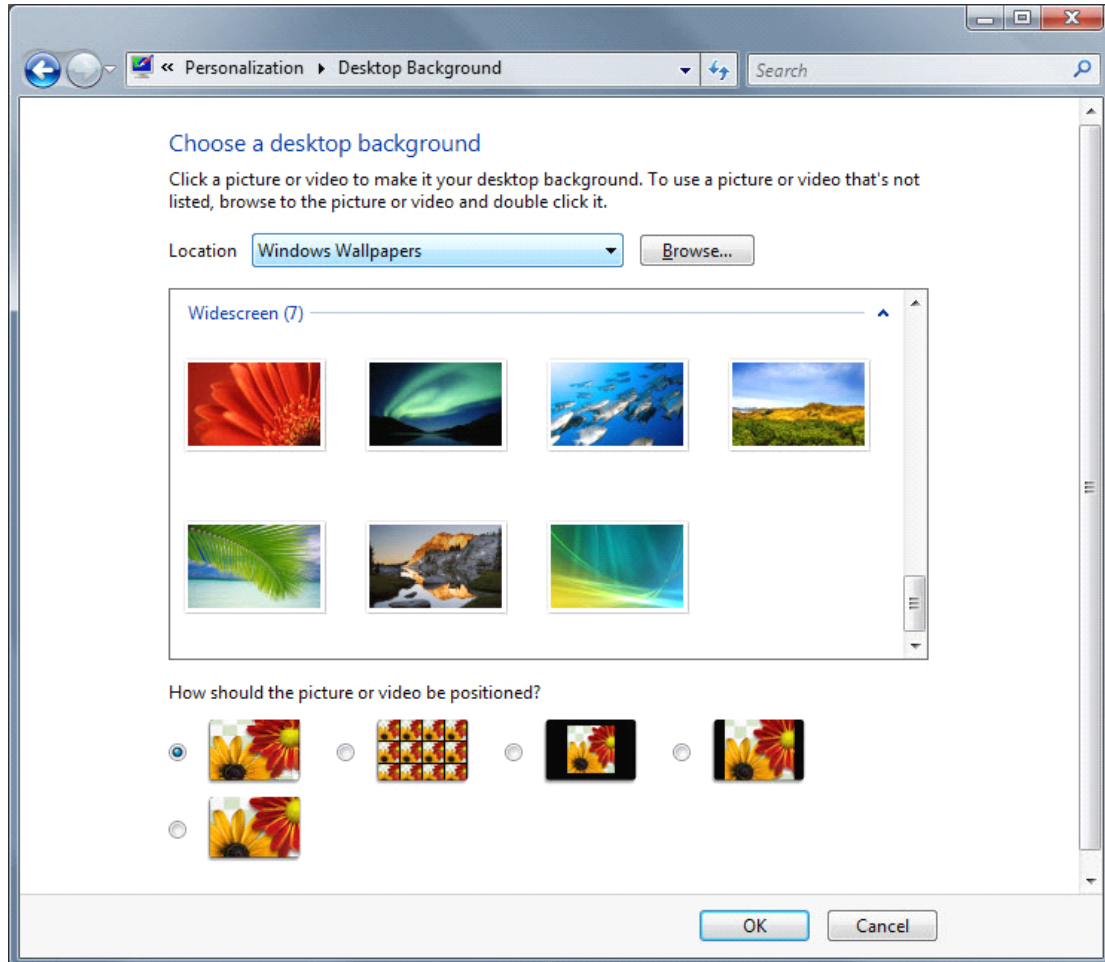
Enable ClearType

Performance isn't just about the speed of your system, it includes being able to clearly see the text on your screen. ClearType provides support for vastly improved font display on colour LCD monitors, high-quality TFT and standard CRT screens, and whilst ClearType is enabled by default in Vista's Internet Explorer 7, it isn't enabled in Vista as a whole. Compare the difference:
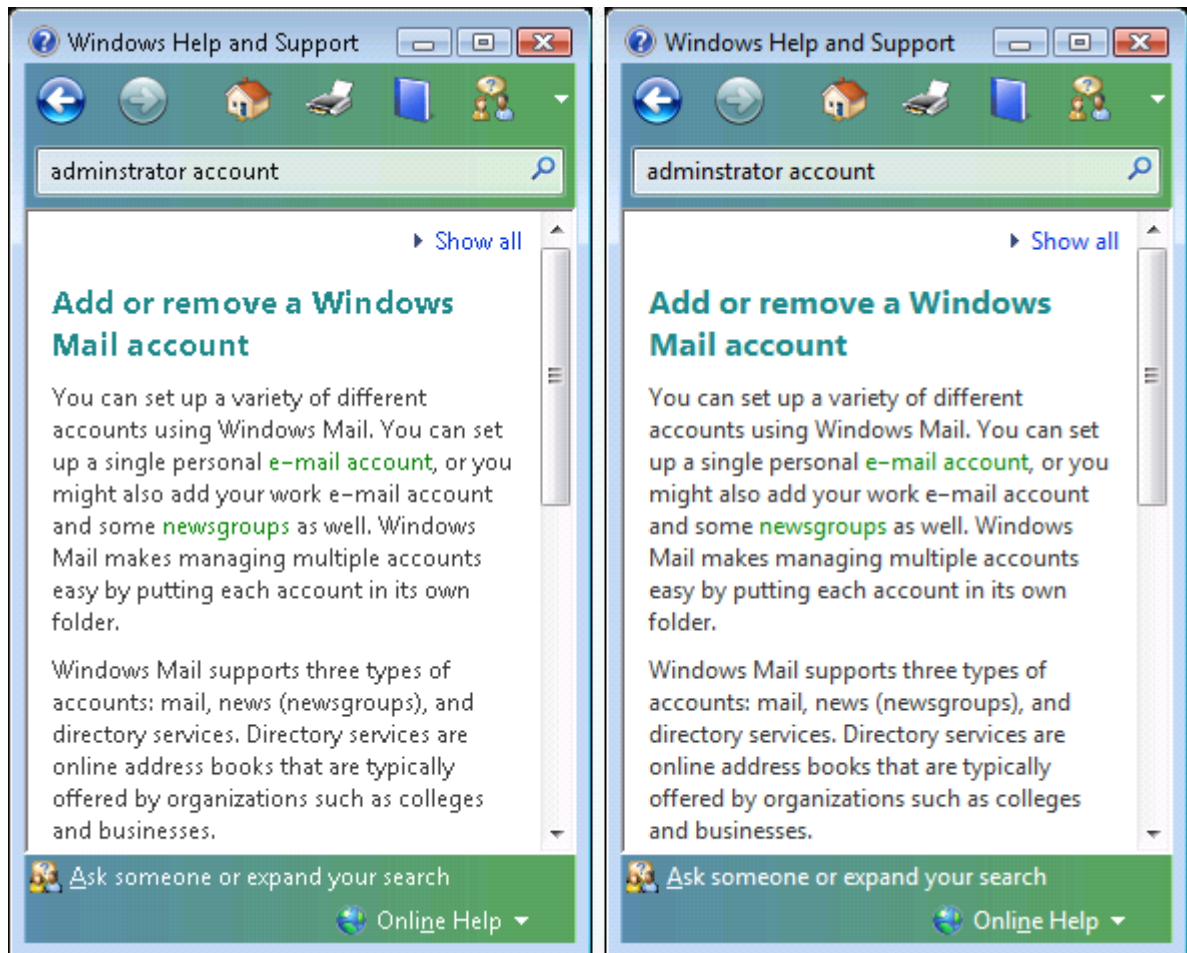
Just look at the difference for a moment. Can you argue against ClearType being a performance enhancement?

You can enable ClearType by right-clicking the Desktop and selecting the "Personalize" menu item, then select "Window Color and Appearance", click "Effects" and select "Use the following method to smooth edges of screen fonts", select ClearType from the dropdown list.

Tweak for Glass Window Borders

Adjust Vista Glass Window Border:

1. Right click on your desktop and select Personalize.
2. Click on Windows Color and Appearance.
3. Click on Open Classic Appearance Properties.
4. Click Advanced.
5. Select Border Padding in the Items drop down box.
6. Increase or decrease border size.
7. Hit OK, OK and OK.

Tweaks for Turning off System Sounds

What this does is disable the Sound Scheme if you just find the sounds to be annoying. The sound scheme contains things like the sound you hear when you click on something.

Go to **Start** > **Settings** > **Control Panel** (or Start > Control Panel) > **Sound**. Click on the **Sounds tab**. First save your current scheme, click on the Save As... button, enter a name such as "1", and click OK. Next, in the upper most box, click on the arrow on the right side and choose **No Sounds** and click **Apply** at the bottom, right.

Tweak for Start Menu

Remove Default Programs Link from the Start Menu

The "Default Programs" Control Panel in Windows Vista provides the ability to configure whether certain programs should be the default for various file types, tasks, and protocols, as well as AutoPlay settings.

1. Right-click an empty area of the Windows Taskbar and choose "Properties".
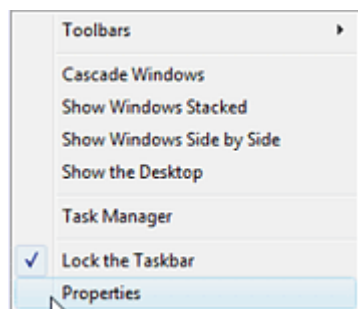
2. When the "Taskbar and Start Menu Properties" multi-tabbed dialog box appears, click the "Start Menu" tab.
3. Next to the "Start menu" radio button click the "Customize" button.
4. When the "Customize Start Menu" dialog box appears, uncheck "Default Programs".
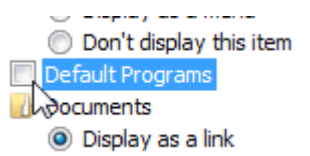
5. Click "OK" on the dialog boxes to close them.

Customize Start Menu Power Buttons

There are two new power buttons on the Windows Vista start menu that behave differently than in previous versions of Windows. The main button, that looks like a power button actually puts your computer to sleep, not really turning it completely off. The other button locks your computer. It is suggested that you can turn it off completely to save some power when you are sleeping.

Follow the steps below to customize these buttons to work how you want them to work:

1. Click on the Start Menu and type in Power Options and hit Enter.
2. Click on Choose what power buttons do on the side menu.
3. Configure the buttons.
4. Hit Save Changes.

Organize the Start Menu

In fact, old style start menu is more organized which means to help you get things done faster. If you wish to switch to this, right-click on the **Start** button and choose **Properties**, check **Classic Start** menu, click **Apply**.

1. From the default style start menu:

Add and remove features, right-click on the **Start** button and choose **Properties**, click the **Customize** button.

In the resulting Window:
-For Computer, Control Panel, and Documents check Display as menu.
-Check the Run box
-under System administrative tools, check Display on the All Programs menu and the Start menu.
-click OK, and then Apply.

Organize Start Menu
- Go to **START** > **All PROGRAMS** > right click **EXPLORE**, repeat and this time right click **EXPLORE ALL USERS**. Double click to open the **Programs** folder. Create your folders using names like: Sound, Pix, Video, Office, Apps, etc. To do this right-click in an empty space in the window and choose **New** > **New Folder** and name it. Then drag or cut and paste the old folders into the ones you made. If you like, you also can cleanup your desktop by renaming icons to one line names (right click > RENAME), and moving them to where your want them on the screen. If you have created multiple users, it is a good idea to check each one to make sure that they have all your programs. Some programs need to be installed on each user account. (You may want to open all your applications now to make sure they work.) Shut down your computer.

Registry Values:
[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Advanced]
"Start_AdminToolsRoot"=dword:00000002
"Start_ShowMyComputer"=dword:00000002

"Start_ShowControlPanel"=dword:00000002
"Start_ShowMyDocs"=dword:00000002
"Start_ShowRun"=dword:00000001

2. From the classic style start menu:

Add and remove features, right-click On the Start button and choose Properties, click the Customize button > Check the following boxes:

-Display Administrative Tools
-Display Run
-Enable dragging and dropping
-Expand Control Panel
-Expand My Documents
-Expand Network Connections
-click OK and then Apply.

Organize Start Menu
- Go to **START** > **PROGRAMS** > right click **EXPLORE**, repeat and this time right click **EXPLORE ALL USERS**. I create my own folders using names like: Sound, Pix, Video, Office, Apps, etc. To do this right-click in an empty space in the window and choose **New** > **New Folder** and name it. Then drag or cut and paste the old folders into the ones you made. If you like, you also can cleanup your desktop by renaming icons to one line names (right click > RENAME), and moving them to where you want them on the screen. If you have created multiple users, it is a good idea to check each one to make sure that they have all your programs. Some programs need to be installed on each user account. (You may want to open all your applications now to make sure they work.) Shut down your computer.

Registry Values:

[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Explorer\Advanced]
"StartMenuAdminTools"="YES"
"StartMenuFavorites"=dword:00000000
"StartMenuLogoff"=dword:00000000
"StartMenuRun"=dword:00000001
"CascadeControlPanel"="YES"
"CascadeMyDocuments"="YES"
"CascadeNetworkConnections"="YES"
"ClassicViewState"=dword:00000000

Smaller Icons on Start Menu

The icons located on the Windows Vista Start Menu default to large. For many users, the personal preference will be for those icons to be much smaller. Here is how:

1. Right click the Taskbar and click on Properties
2. Click the Start Menu tab
3. Click the Customize button
4. Scroll down to the bottom of the list
5. Uncheck the Use large icons checkbox
6. Click OK twice.
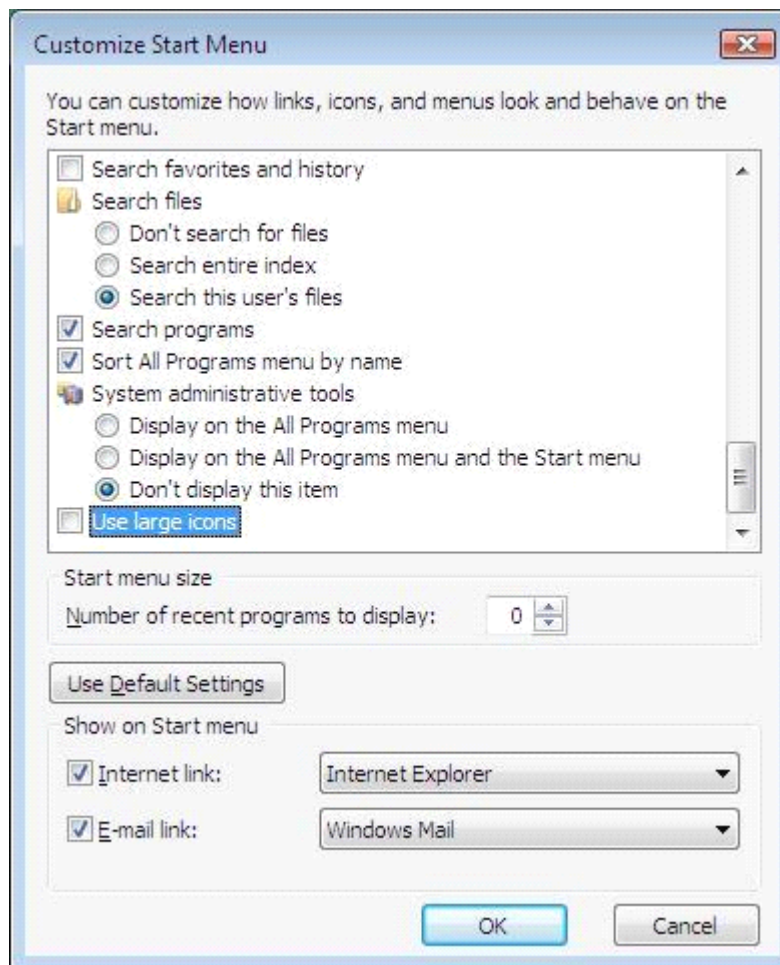
Speed Up Start Menu Search

The search box on the new Start Menu in Windows Vista can be very useful for everyday tasks. This search box is very powerful because not only does it search the start menu and control panel, but it also searches your pictures, documents and even your e-mails. The scope of the search is very wide and you can see some performance benefits if you narrow it down to just searching the start menu and control panel. Follow these steps to optimize your start menu search:

1. Right click on the start button and select Properties.
2. Click on the Customize button.
3. Remove the check from Search Communications.

4. Set Search Files to Don't search for files.

5. Click OK.

6. Click OK once more.

Other Start Menu Options

Right-click on the **Start** button and choose **Properties**.

In the **Start Menu Pane** under **Privacy**, deselect:

-Store and display a list of recently opened files

-Store and display a list of recently opened programs

Click **Apply**.

In the **Taskbar Pane** uncheck:

Group similar taskbar buttons

Show Quick Launch

Show window previews (thumbnails)

Click **Apply**

Tweaks for Windows Sidebar

Turning Off Sidebar

This can use a significant amount of memory and some gadgets eat RAM wholesale. If you do not want your Sidebar to start automatically, please do the following steps:

1. Right clicking the Windows Sidebar icon in the system tray

2. Click Properties

3. Uncheck the Start Sidebar when Windows starts checkbox

4. Click OK

Uninstall a Sidebar Gadget

For various reasons you may wish to completely remove an installed Windows Vista Sidebar gadget. Perhaps you no longer use the gadget, or perhaps you downloaded and installed a Windows Sidebar Gadget and it did not work for your system. To perform an uninstallation:

1. Right-click on the Windows Sidebar icon in the tray area of the Taskbar and choose "Add Gadgets".
2. The Gadget Gallery, a list of installed Sidebar Gadgets, appears. Right-click the Gadget you wish to remove (you may have to switch pages to find the Gadget) and choose "Uninstall" from the pop-up menu that appears.

You will be prompted whether or not you wish to uninstall the gadget. Choose "Uninstall" from the dialog box that appears.

Tweaks for Disk Defragmenter

Windows Disk Defragmenter

Information is written to or deleted from your hard drive; portions of individual files will become

fragmented and physically spread out all over the drive. This happens because as Windows starts writing the data for a file onto the drive, when it reaches an occupied portion of the drive it jumps to the next available empty spot and continues writing from there. So a single large file may actually be in several separate chunks in various locations on your drive. The more the files on your system are fragmented, the more time your hard drive takes to find all these fragments and access the information it needs at any time. It's like trying to read a book with the pages out of order. This can clearly reduce drive performance and increase the potential for stuttering and loading pauses.

Windows Disk Defragmenter is a built-in utility that performs a very important function: it finds all these file fragments and puts them back together in the same location on the disk, preventing the degradation of your hard drive's performance. To access the Windows Defrag utility, go to Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools.

Turn Off Disk Defragmenter Immediately If You Have Accidentally Deleted a File

If you have accidentally removed a file on your Windows Vista system, immediately disable the disk defragmenter for all drives or, at the very least, the drive where the deleted file was located.

Normally when files are removed, the files are not zeroed-out on the hard drive; rather the pointers to where the files were located are modified, marking the areas where the files were once located free for reuse. Windows Vista's Defragmenter, when performing drive optimization, may notice these now free locations as areas where data can be placed permanently, or as temporary areas to hold data when moving information from one location to another.

Change Volumes to Automatically Defragment

By default, when Windows Vista's Disk Defragmenter runs on a schedule, it attempts to defragment every volume on your computer, including all drives and partitions. There may be circumstances, however, where you wish this tool to only work on particular volumes and not to automatically defragment new volumes as they are added. Thus, to change this setting:

1. Click the "Start" button and type disk defragmenter, then click "Disk Defragmenter" when it appears. Or, click the "Start" button; select "All Programs", "Accessories", "System Tools", then "Disk Defragmenter".
2. Confirm you wish to run this tool if User Account Control (UAC) prompts you.
3. The "Disk Defragmenter" dialog box appears. Click the "Select Volumes" button.
4. The "Disk Defragmenter: Advanced Options" dialog box appears. Check the boxes next to volumes (disks / partitions) you wish to defragment and uncheck the other boxes. Also, uncheck the box "Automatically defragment new disks" if you wish the Disk Defragmenter to not automatically defragment new volumes when they are added to your machine.
5. Click "OK" on the dialog boxes to close them.

Turn Off Automatic Defragmentation

The disk defragmenter in Windows Vista is set to run on a schedule, automatically defragmenting drives to help keep your computer running optimally. However, there may be circumstances where you wish to disable this task:

1. Click the "Start" button and type disk defragmenter, then click "Disk Defragmenter" when it appears. Or, click the "Start" button; select "All Programs", "Accessories", "System Tools", then "Disk Defragmenter".
2. Confirm you wish to run this tool if User Account Control (UAC) prompts you.
3. The "Disk Defragmenter" dialog box appears. Uncheck "Run on a schedule (recommended)".
4. Click "OK" to close the "Disk Defragmenter" dialog box.

Change Defragmenter Schedule

The disk defragmenter in Windows Vista automatically runs on a schedule. There may be reasons that you need to change how often and when it runs:

To make this change:

1. Click the "Start" button and type disk defragmenter, then click "Disk Defragmenter" when it appears. Or, click the "Start" button and select "All Programs", "Accessories", "System Tools", then "Disk Defragmenter".
2. Confirm you wish to run this tool if User Account Control (UAC) prompts you.
3. The "Disk Defragmenter" dialog box appears. Click the "Modify Schedule" button.
4. The "Disk Defragmenter: Modify Schedule" dialog box appears. Choose how often this task should run (daily, monthly, or weekly), the day of week or month to run (if applicable), and the time.
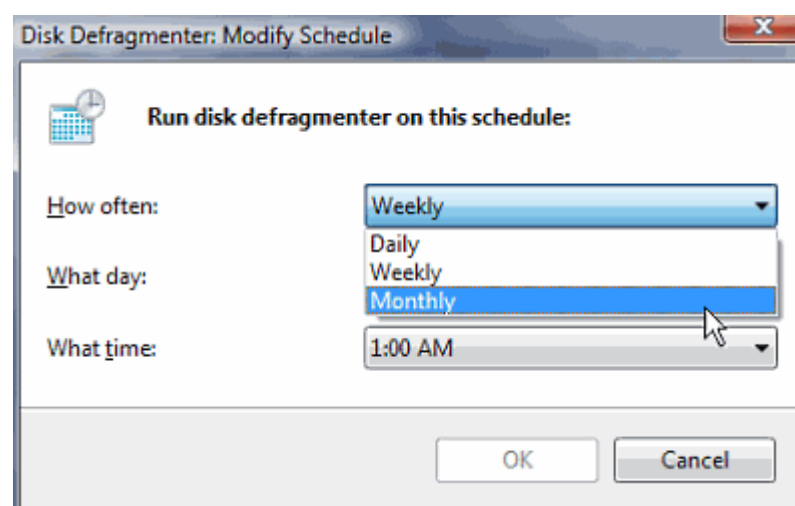
5. Click "OK" on the dialog boxes to close them.

Alternate Defragmenters

For enhanced performance, consider using a third-party defragmenting tool.

Tweak for Mouse

Control the Mouse Pointer with the Keyboard

Some people may have difficulty using a mouse in Windows Vista. If you or someone you know falls into this group, you may be interested in a feature called Mouse Keys.

Mouse Keys allows you to control the mouse pointer with the keyboard. When this feature is active, you can use the numeric keypad to move the mouse:

To enable this feature:

1. Click on the Start button and type in ease of access
2. The "Ease of Access Center" link should appear. Click it.
3. When the "Ease of Access Center" dialog box appears, scroll down to "Explore all settings" and click "Make the mouse easier to use".
4. When the mouse settings appear, check "Turn on Mouse Keys".
5. Click the "Set up Mouse Keys" link to configure this feature. Options include:

* Enabling / disabling a keyboard shortcut that turns Mouse Keys on or off
* Display a warning or play a sound when enabling / disabling Mouse Keys
* Adjusting the pointer acceleration and top speeds
* Adding the ability to press Ctrl to speed up the pointer or Shift to slow it down
* Enabling Mouse Keys when Num Lock is on or off
* Displaying a notification icon in the Windows Taskbar

6. Click the "Save" button to activate this feature (you may have to scroll down in the dialog box to find the "Save" button).
7. Close the "Ease of Access Center" window.

Automatically Move the Mouse to a Dialog Box

The more you use Windows Vista, the more you see dialog boxes in the operating system and virtually every application. Unfortunately, when dialog boxes appear, they often appear in the center of the screen or some other location away from your mouse pointer, forcing you to first move the mouse pointer to the dialog box and then click a button to perform an action or respond to a message.

If desired, you can enable a feature called "Snap To" that automatically moves the mouse pointer to the default button whenever dialog boxes appear. While this feature may prove to be a

convenience, if you enable it, be careful when you click your mouse as you may accidentally click "OK" or "Yes" to a dialog box without actually reading its information.

1. Open the Windows Vista "Mouse Properties" dialog box.
2. Click the "Pointer Options" tab.
3. Underneath "Snap To", check the box.
4. Click "OK" to close the "Mouse Properties" dialog box.

Change Settings Related to the Mouse

Windows Vista provides several options to adjust how your mouse pointer operates. You can adjust the mouse acceleration speed, double-click recognition, the visual mouse pointer itself, and more.

To access the Mouse Properties:

1. Click the Windows button, selecting "Control Panel" from the menu.
2. If "Control Panel Home" is selected in the left pane of the Control Panel, click "Mouse" in the right pane. Otherwise, "Classic View" will be selected in the left pane. In this case, double-click "Mouse" in the right pane.
3. The "Mouse Properties" dialog box will appear. Note that depending on your hardware, the dialog box may differ slightly from the below screenshot.

Tweaks for Graphics and Interface

Tweaks for Aero

One of the things that make Vista well is the new Aero interface.
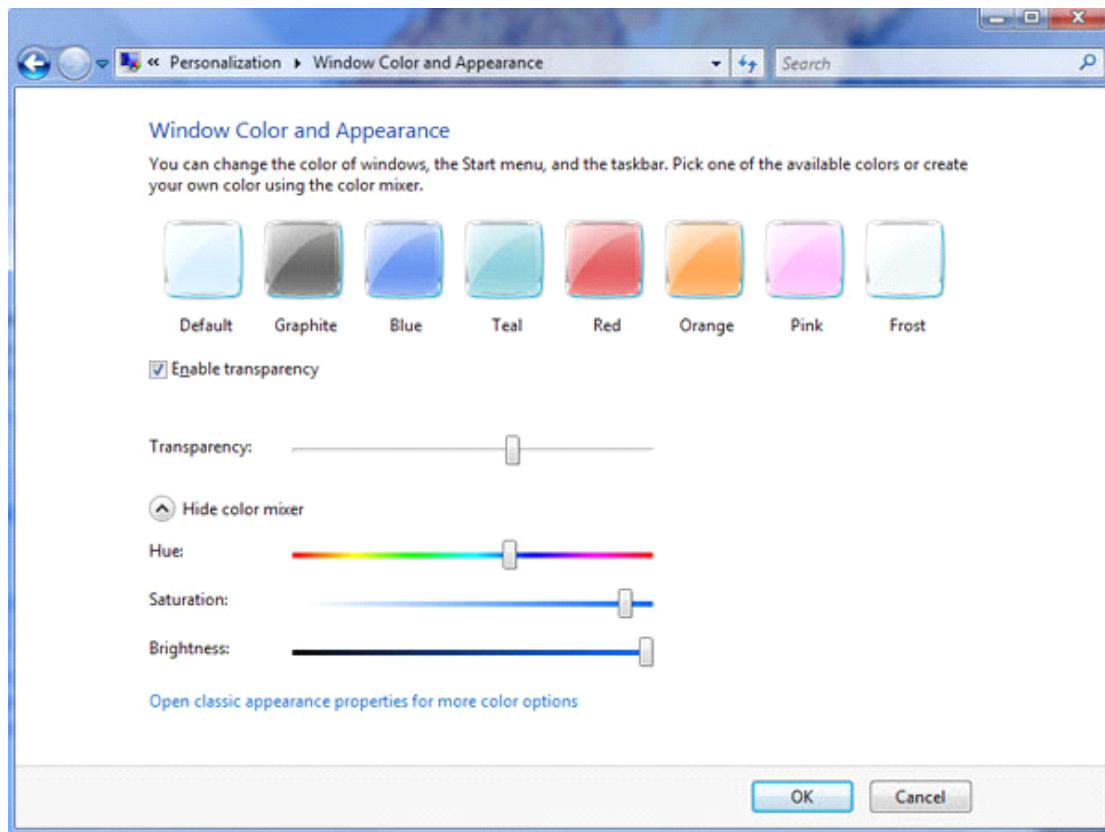
1) Disable Aero

While most of you know the key to tweaking a machine for performance involves the culmination of numerous tweaks. But many benchmarks have shown no real correlation between disabling Aero altogether and increased performance.

Right-click in an empty space on your desktop, choose **Personalize** > click on **Window Color and Appearance** > click on **Open classic appearance properties for more color options** > under Color scheme: choose **Windows Vista Basic** > click **Apply** and **OK**.

2) Disable Transparency

This can make Aero a little "snappier". Right-click in an empty space on your desktop, choose **Personalize** > click on **Window Color and Appearance** > uncheck **Enable transparency**. While you're there you can change the look of Aero by choosing a color which you like most.

3) Enable New Vista Aero Cursors

With the latest post-beta 2 builds, Microsoft has included new Aero cursors that are not turned on by default. Follow the steps below to use the new cool looking cursors:

1. Right click on your desktop and select Personalize.
2. Click on the Mouse Cursors item to select a different mouse cursor scheme.

3. Change the Scheme from None to Windows Aero.

4. Click OK to see the new Aero mouse cursors.

Disable Pop-up Balloon

If you are tired of pop-up tips showing up all over the interface. With group policy editor, you can easily stop them from showing up for good.

1. Start up the group policy editor by clicking on the start button and keying in gpedit.msc and pressing Enter.

2. Expand User Configuration, Administrative Templates and Start Menu and Taskbar.

3. Select Remove Balloon Tips on Start Menu items, right click on it and select Properties.

4. Select Enable and hit OK.

5. Close Group Policy Editor and you are finished.

Display Background Image across Multiple Monitors

If you are a multi-monitor Windows Vista user, two monitors make doing multiple tasks at one so much easier. If you are working on an article or trying to be creative in Photoshop, everything is just much easier because I always have multiple applications open at once. One possibility that you wanted to use a very large and wide photo as your background that would like cool displayed across both monitors.

Follow these steps in to display a large image across multiple monitors:

1. Right click on the background and select Personalization.

2. Click on Desktop Background

3. Select a background image that is at least as wide as the combined resolution of both of your monitors.

4. Next, this is the step that most users would never even think about trying: Select the Tile picture positioning option as shown below. This is the only option that will display your background image across multiple monitors.

5. Hit OK

Your background image is now displayed across both monitors instead of having the same image displayed on both monitors.

Fine-Tune Desktop Icon Size

Windows Vista has many new icon sizes. Using a simple mouse scroll wheel trick that was primarily used in Internet Explorer to change the text size for years, it is now possible to change the icon sizes of almost any window you are in, including the desktop.

While on your desktop, hold down the CTRL key and scroll your mouse up for larger and down for smaller icons. You can make your icons very small or extremely large.

Tweaks for Indexing Options

This guide will show you how to open the Indexing Options to include or exclude a file to be indexed, change the saved Index data location, rebuild the Index, and restore the default Index settings.

Include or Exclude Folders, Locations and File Types to the Index

1. Open the Control Panel. (Classic View)
2. Click on the Indexing Options icon.
3. Click on Modify.
4. Click on Show all locations if it is not grayed out.
5. Click the little arrow next to the check box for the drive letter to drop down all the folders for that hard drive.
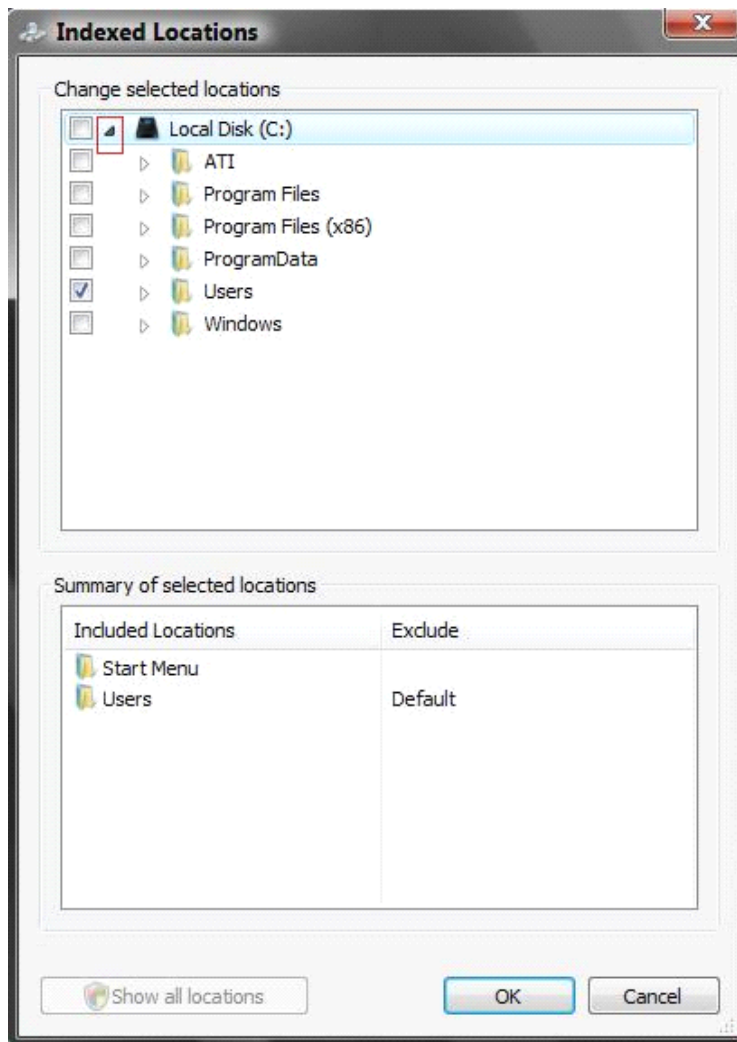
6. Check or Uncheck the folders on your hard drive or other devices listed that you want to included in the index.

Note: The more you add, the longer the search will take.

7. Click on OK when done.

8. Click on the Advanced button.

9. Click on the File Types tab.
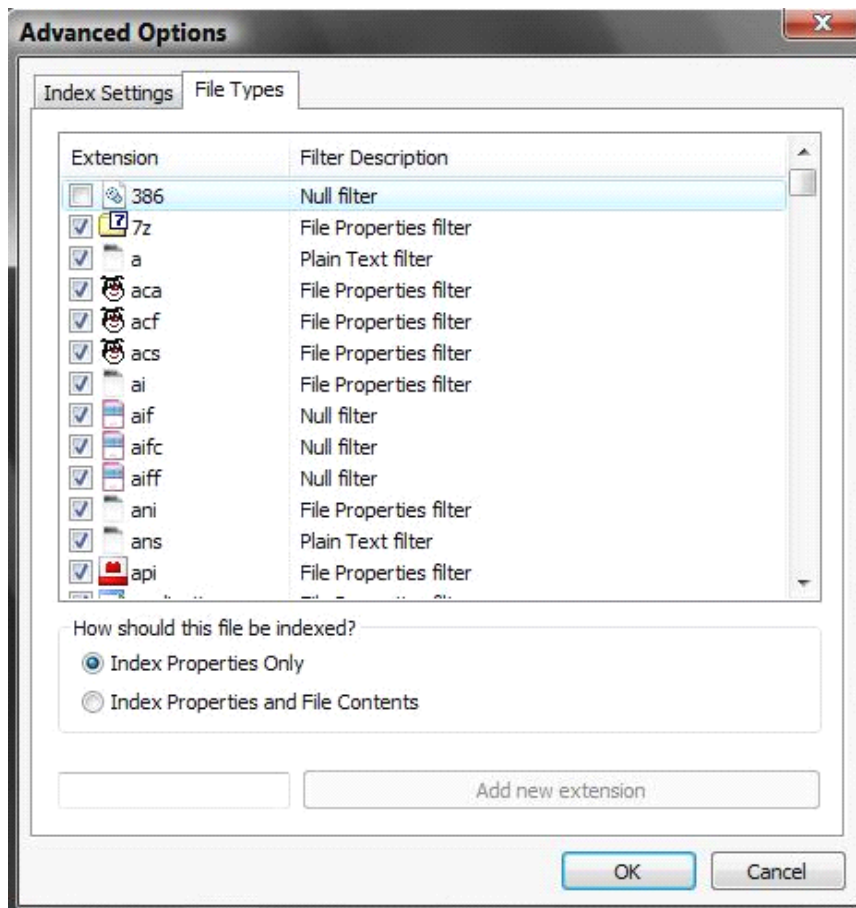
10. Check or Uncheck the file types you want included in the index.

Note: The more you add, the longer the search will take.

11. Choose the option you want for "How should this file be indexed?"

12. Click on OK when done and Close the Indexing Options window.

Change the Saved Index Data Location

1. Click on the Indexing Options icon. (In the Control Panel Classic View)

2. Click on the Advanced button and go to the Index Location section.

3. Either type in the full path of the new location, or click Select New button and navigate to the new location.

4. Click OK to apply.

466x491 34kb JPEG
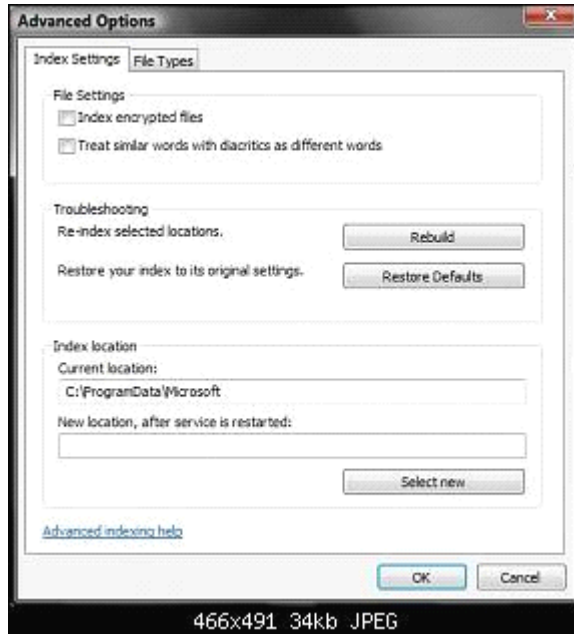
Rebuild the Index

Click on the Rebuild button. (See screenshot above)
Note: Rebuilding the Index will get rid of search results that still show files you deleted by making a new index list. Think of it has the ultimate Update button.

Restore or Reset the Index Default Settings

Note: This will reset all of Indexing settings and search results data back to the default clean state.

1. Click on the Restore Defaults button and click Ok
2. Restart your computer and wait until it has completed.

Tweaks for Recycle Bin

Use Less Room on Your Hard Drives for the Recycle Bin

By default when you delete a file from Explorer or most applications on a Windows Vista system, the file is not deleted but moved to the Recycle Bin. This way later you can recover the file if it was accidentally removed.

Storing old files takes up space on your hard drives, so if room is at a premium you can reduce the Recycle Bin's allotted maximum space:

1. Right-click the "Recycle Bin" icon on the Desktop and choose "Properties".
2. The "Recycle Bin Properties" dialog box appears. Select a drive.
3. Make sure the "Custom size" radio button is checked.

4. Next to "Maximum size (MB)", enter the maximum size in megabytes that the Recycle Bin should take up on said drive.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 for each drive that you wish to change the Recycle Bin size.
6. Click "OK" to close the dialog box.

Remove File Delete Confirmation

If you have User Account Protection enabled and are tired of all of the prompts that you get when you try to delete a protected file then this tweak is for you!

One way to cut down on the number of prompts that you get is to disable the delete file confirmation box. If you are trying to delete a system file you are presented with first the delete confirmation box and then the UAC authorization pop-up boxes. By disabling the delete confirmation box you can get rid of one of the pop-up boxes that you are forced to click through each time.

Follow these steps to disable the Delete confirmation box:

1. Right click on your Recycle Bin on the desktop and select Properties.
2. On the bottom of the Recycle Bin Properties window, uncheck Display delete confirmation dialog.
3. Hit OK and you are finished.

Keep in mind that you will also no longer get a delete confirmation when you delete files that are not protected by UAC. That will allow you to delete a file without any confirmation at all. If you make a mistake and delete a file by accident, just restore it from the Recycle bin.

Tweaks for Visual

Visual Effects

Press the **Windows + Pause Break** keys > in the left pane click on **Advanced system settings.**
In the resulting window, in the **Performance section** click the **Settings...** button.
In the **Visual Effects pane** check your options.
-Enable desktop composition
-Smooth edges of screen fonts
-Use drop shadows for icon labels on the desktop
-Use Visual Styles on windows and buttons
Click Apply

All the options:
Animate controls and elements inside windows
Animate windows when minimizing and maximizing
Enable desktop composition

Enable transparent glass

Fade or slide menus into view

Fade or slide ToolTips into view

Fade out menu items after clicking

Show preview and filters in folder

Show shadows under menus

Show shadows under mouse pointer

Show thumbnails instead of icons

Show translucent selection rectangle

Show window contents while dragging

Slide open combo boxes

Slide taskbar buttons

Smooth edges of screen fonts

Smooth-scroll list boxes

Use a background image for each folder type

Use drop shadows for icon labels on the desktop

Use visual styles on windows and buttons

Disable Visual Effects

If you want a very responsive user interface because you are more interested in getting work done than looking at Vista's wow-factor graphics, then turning off Aero, themes and visual effects has got to be the best idea since sliced cheese spread. You might not like what you see, but it will be faster.

You can disable all of Vista's visual effects by right-clicking the Desktop and selecting the "Personalize" menu item, select "Window Color and Appearance". In the list box under "Color scheme", choose Windows Classic.
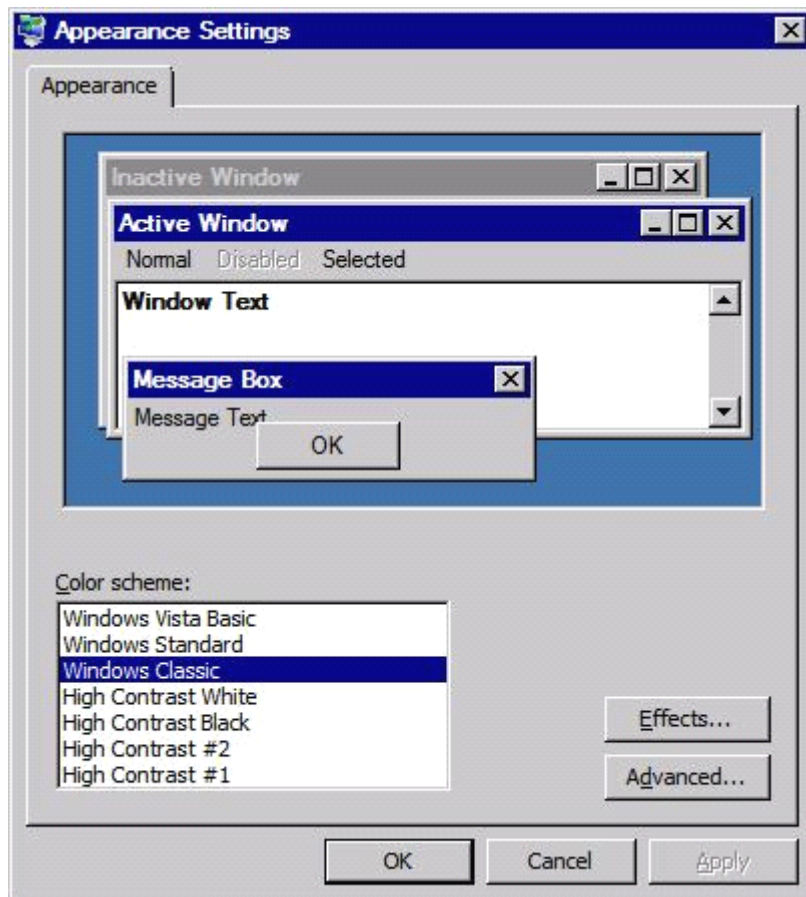
Tweaks for User Account Control

Disable User Account Control (UAC)

Disabling UAC will cripple Internet Explorer 7 & 8's Protected Mode. Protected Mode will show enabled in the Internet Options box but Protected Mode will always read Off in the actual IE window. (Reason # 1,857,343 to use Firefox)

Press the **Windows + R** keys > type **msconfig** > open the **Tools pane**.
Scroll down to **Disable UAC** and click once on that line.
Hit the **Launch** button.

Reg Values:
; Disable UAC
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System]
"EnableLUA"=dword:00000000

Turn Off UAC Prompt

[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\System]
"ConsentPromptBehaviorAdmin"=dword:00000002

"ConsentPromptBehaviorUser"=dword:00000001

Tweaks for Drives

Disable Indexing on Selected Drives

Click on Computer. Right-click on any drives/partition you do not want Indexed.
In the General pane uncheck Index this drive for faster searching, click Apply,
In the resulting window choose Apply changes to drive X:\, subfolders and files, click OK
Click OK or Continue for any pop-ups, and ignore all for any error messages.

Speed Up External Hard Drives

Windows Vista operates external hard drives that are connected with USB differently than internal drives. Write caching is disabled so that you can safely remove the drive at almost any time. This is a great feature for USB thumb drives that are frequently inserted and removed from your computer.   But if you have a large hard drive that is in an external enclosure that you never disconnect from your computer, write caching is also disabled which can decrease performance.

This tweak is going to show you how to increase the performance of your external hard drives by turning write caching back on as well as activating advanced performance. Let's get started:

1. Click on the start button, then right click on Computer and select Manage.
2. Click on Device Manager on the side menu.
3. Expand Disk drives and locate your external drive from the list.
4. Right click on the drive and select Properties.
5. On the Policies tab, select Optimize for performance.
6. Check Enable write caching on the disk and Enable advanced performance as shown below.
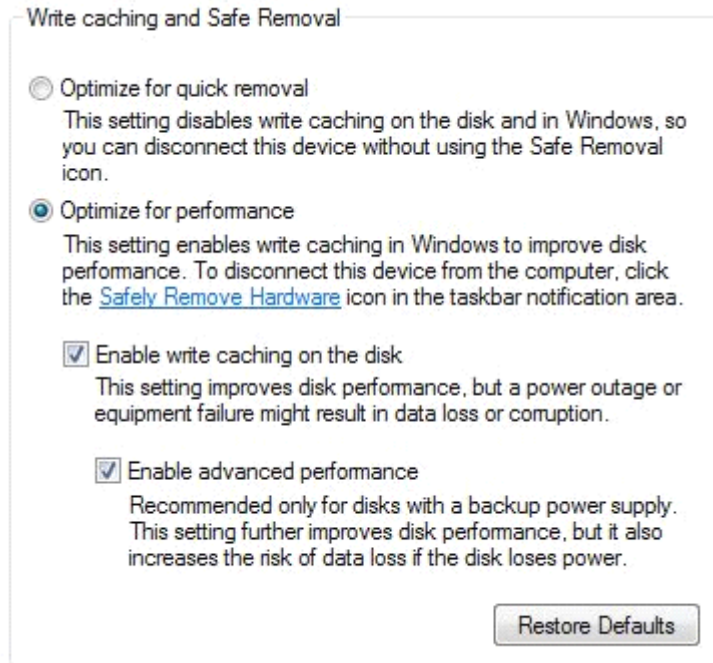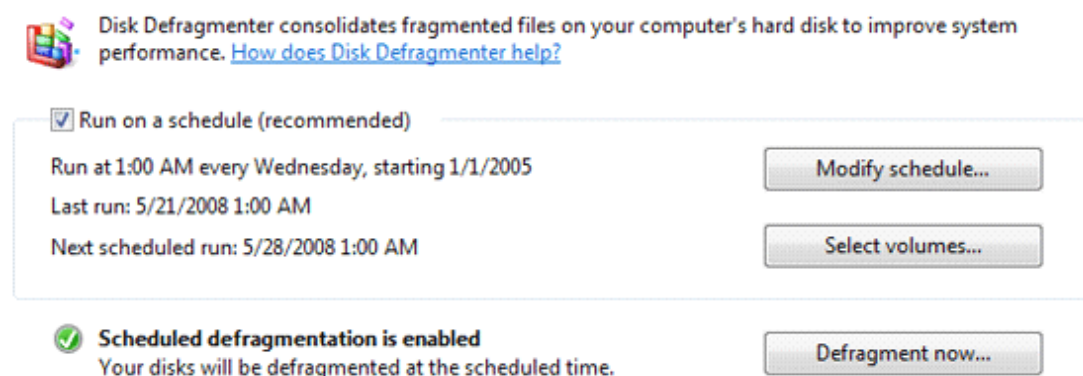
7. Hit OK and reboot.

Scheduling Defrag Hard Drives

The disk defragmenter in Windows Vista was redesigned. If you do not like the new stripped down interface but one welcome addition is easy defrag scheduling.

Click on the Start Button and type in Disk Defragmenter and hit Enter.

Make sure Run on a schedule is checked as shown above.
Click Modify schedule and configure the settings for your computer use.

Defragment Drives Manually

By default, the disk defragmenter in Windows Vista runs on a schedule, defragmenting your drives

at specified times so you do not have to worry about running this task. However, if you notice your computer is running slowly, or if you have the automatic defragmentation turned off, you may need to run this manually.

1. Click the "Start" button and type disk defragmenter, then click "Disk Defragmenter" when it appears. Or, click the "Start" button, select "All Programs", "Accessories", "System Tools", then "Disk Defragmenter".
2. Confirm you wish to run this tool if User Account Control (UAC) prompts you.
3. The "Disk Defragmenter" dialog box appears. Click the "Defragment now..." button.
4. The "Disk Defragmenter: Defragment Now" dialog box appears. Check the boxes next to drives you want to defragment and uncheck the others.
5. Click "OK" to start the defragmentation.
6. You will be prompted that the defragmentation has begun, and the "Defragment Now" button changes to a "Cancel defragmentation" button that you can click to stop the process if desired.

Make Sure Your SATA Drives Are Configured For Max Speed

Vista doesn't always set all the performance options to maximum for your SATA drives.

To set all the options to max, open device manager. Press the Windows + R keys and type devmgmt.msc > expand the Disk drives section by clicking on the plus sign > double-click on the drive you want to configure the click the Policies tab > Check the Optimize for performance button > Check both the Enable write caching on the disk and the Enable advanced performance boxes. See the warnings about power loss? They are there for a reason.

Make Sure Your External Drives Are Configured For Max Speed

This tweak isn't as important unless you are constantly writing/reading to/from an external drive, or, unless you're a Geek!

Press the Windows + R keys and type devmgmt.msc > expand the Disk drives section by clicking on the plus sign > double-click on the drive you want to configure the click the Policies tab > Check the Optimize for performance button.

Tweaks for Security Center & Other Security Related

Stop Security Notifications

You must do this BEFORE you disable the Security Center.

In the **Notification Area** (bottom-right where the time is), right-click on the **Security Shield** and choose **Open Security Center**.
In the left pane of the resulting window choose **Change the way Security Center alerts me**, choose **Don't notify me and don't display the icon**, *poof* the shield is gone!

Reg Value:
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Security Center\Svc\S-1-5-21-some series of numbers, diff on each machine]
"EnableNotifications"=dword:00000000

Note - the value below EnableNotifications is EnableNotificationsRef, it shows the number of times the above value is changed, if you like you may delete but leaving it hurts nothing.

Disable Security Center

See Stop Security Notifications above.
Press the **Windows + R** keys > type **services.msc** .
Scroll down to **Security Center** and double-click on it.
In the resulting window, click in the box next to **Startup type**: and choose **Disable**.
To stop the service now click the Stop button, otherwise the changes will be in effect on reboot.

Disable Windows Defender

Go to **Start** > **Programs** > **Windows Defender** > **Tools** > **Options** > *Uncheck everything*, especially **Use Windows Defender**.
Click **Save**.
You need to do this before you disable the service or else you'll generate an error.

Reg Value:
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows Defender]
"DisableAntiSpyware"=dword:00000001

Turn Off Remote Assistance

Press the **Windows + Pause Break** keys > in the left pane click on **Advanced system settings.**
In the resulting window, switch to the **Remote pane**.
Uncheck **Allow Remote Assistance connections to this computer.**

Reg Value:
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\ControlSet001\Control\Remote Assistance]
"fAllowToGetHelp"=dword:00000000

Turn Off or Configure Automatic Updates

There is no sense in having Windows incessantly checking for updates. Microsoft releases their updates on Tuesdays and usually once a month.

If you are a Geek and hit the tech sites often you'll know when updates are released and you can update manually. Non-Geeks should use the second option.

To Disable Automatic Update:

Launch **Windows Update**, in the left pane click **Change Settings**.
In the resulting windows check **Never check for updates**, click **OK**.

Reg Value:
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\WindowsUpdate
\Auto Update]
"AUOptions"=dword:00000001

To Configure Automatic Update:

Launch **Windows Update**, in the left pane click **Change Settings**.
In the resulting windows check **Install updates automatically** recommended), under **Install new updates**, change the day to **Wednesday** and the time to **1:00 AM**, click **OK**.

Tweaks for Page File

Windows Vista has what is called a Paging File that is located on the hard drive. The paging file acts like additional RAM. If your computer runs out of RAM Windows Vista uses it's paging file as an alternative to the RAM.

Since a computer's hard drive controller can read and write from more than one hard drive at one time moving the paging file to a separate hard drive than Windows Vista is installed on improves your computers performance.

Instead of reading and writing system, program files, and your paging file on one hard drive you can move your paging file to a separate hard drive. With your paging file on a second hard drive the load is split between reading and writing system and program files and reading and writing the paging file.

Before you start messing with your computer's paging file there are things you need to understand so you don't break your computer

• Your computer must have a paging file. Windows Vista and most software rely on the paging file even though your computer has plenty or memory.

• The recommended size of the paging file is 1.5 to 3 times the amount of RAM you have.

• If you move the paging file, it should always be moved to a different physical hard drive. Never use a separate partition on the same hard drive as the C: drive. This will slow your computer down.

• You can have 2 paging files. Each paging file must be on different physical hard drives though. An example would be a paging file on your C: and E: drives.

Move Windows Vista's Paging File

For example, you want to move the paging file from its original location on the C: drive to a separate hard drive called the E: drive.

1. Right-click Computer in the Start Menu.
2. Select Properties.
3. Click Advanced system settings on the left side of the System window.
4. Click the Settings button in the Performance section of the Advanced tab.
5. Select the Advanced tab in the Performance Options window.
6. Click the Change button in the Virtual memory section.
7. Uncheck Automatically manage paging file size for all drives.
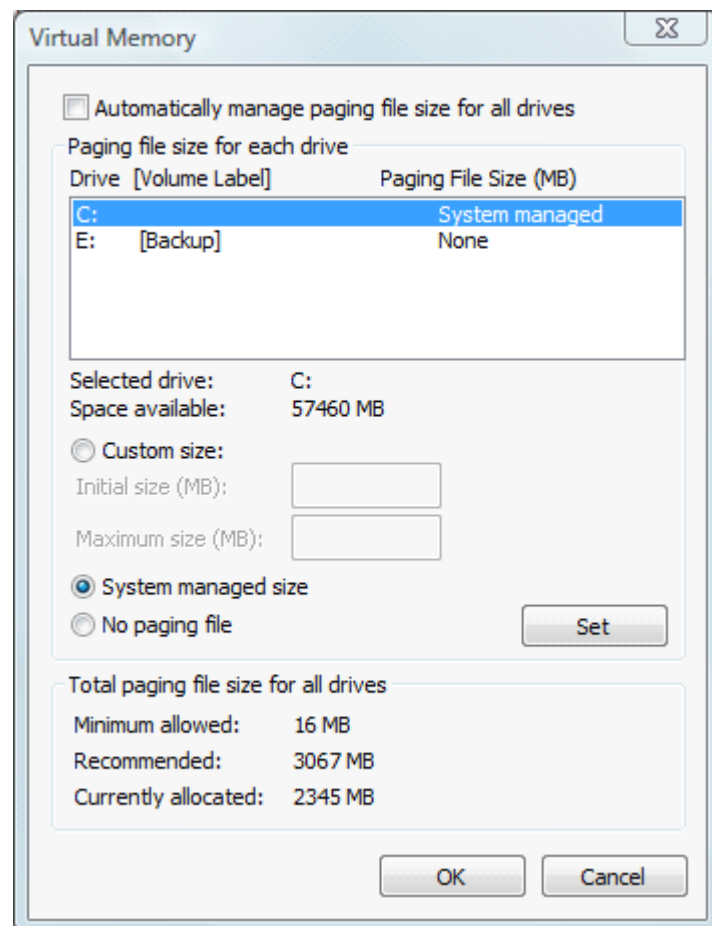
8. Highlight the C drive, select No paging file, and then click the Set button. Ignore any warnings you receive.
9. Select the drive you want to move the paging file to, select system managed size, and then click the Set button.

10. Click OK and then restart your computer to apply the changes.

Use 2 Paging Files for Maximum Performance

Since the hard drive controller on your computer can read and write to more than one hard drive at a time it's possible to have 2 paging files. It's very important that the two paging files are on separate hard drives and not different partitions on the same hard drive.

If you have two or more hard disks, move your pagefile.

There is no point in moving your pagefile if you have a single disk, even if the disk has multiple partitions, so this tweak requires at least two hard disks. It relies on the assumption that your second or subsequent hard disk is used much less than your system disk (the disk that your operating system and applications are installed on) so there is less disk activity on it, which means the pagefile can be accessed much more quickly on that drive. In addition, Input/Output (I/O) to and from the second disk is performed in parallel to any I/O on the first disk, which means Windows is not trying to batter the heads across the hard disk as it tries to load files at the same time it is accessing the pagefile.

Note: A page fault is not an error condition. Page faults occur when the OS needs something that is stored in the pagefile, in other words, a page fault occurs when the computer reads the pagefile. Constant page faulting is indicated by lots of disk activity when, for example, switching applications or starting new ones.

This pagefile tweak will perform best if the second or subsequent drive is empty to start with. Failing that, a disk defragment should be performed before applying this tweak to help ensure a contiguous (unbroken) span of space is available for the pagefile.

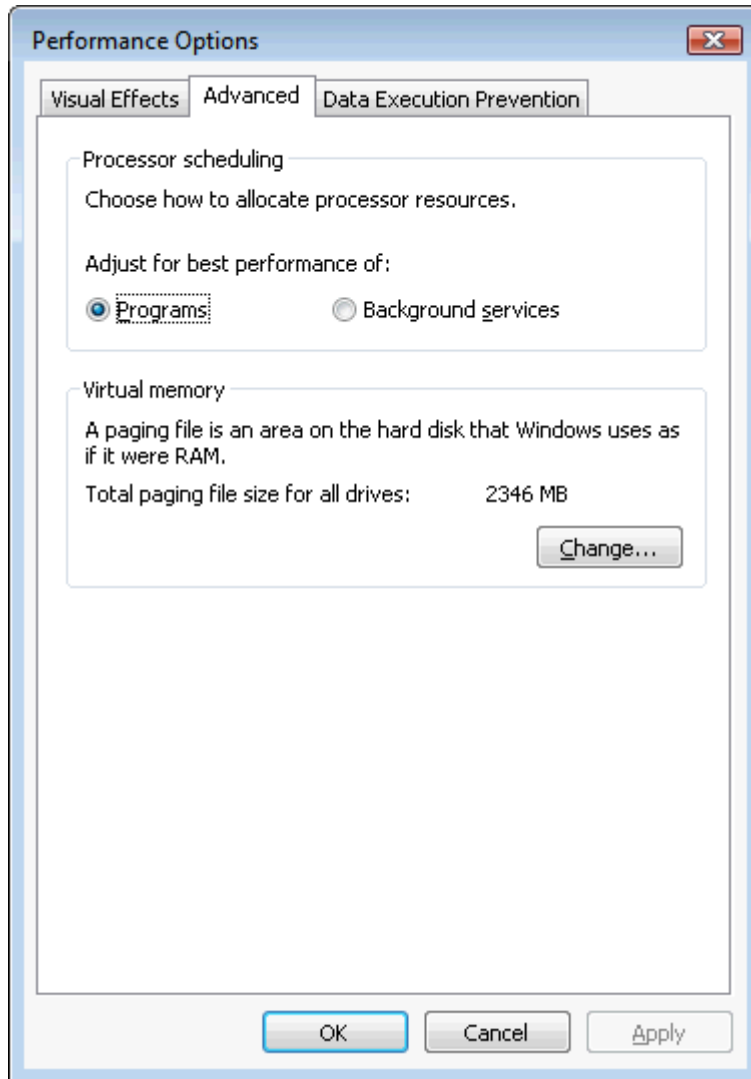Open the Control Panel and select the System applet
Select Advanced system settings:
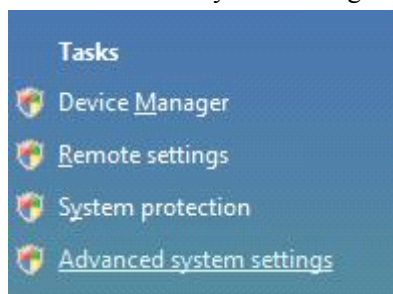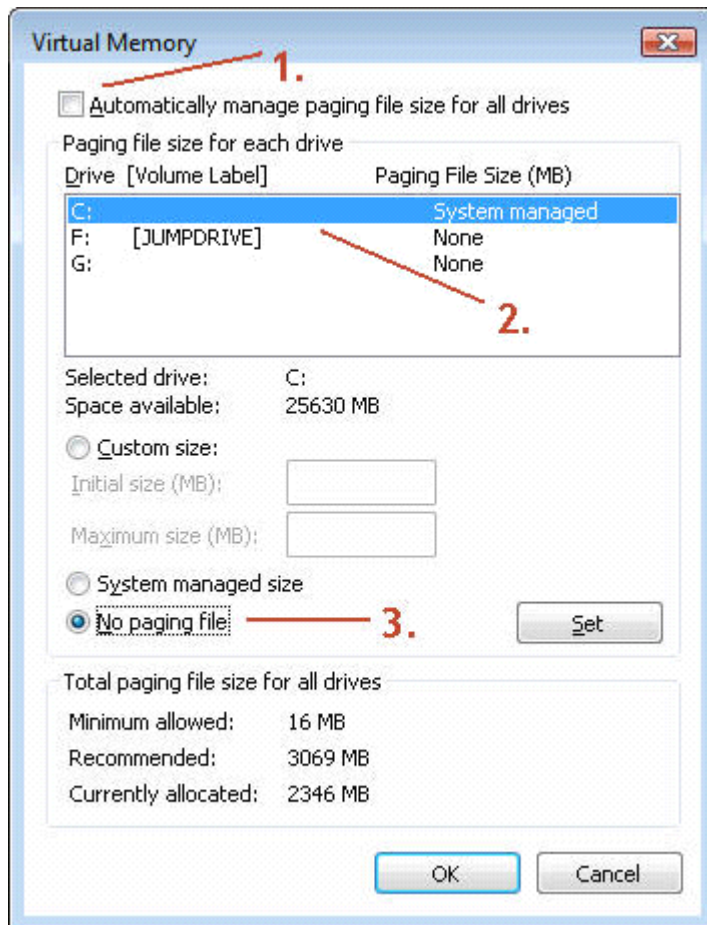

Select the Advanced tab:
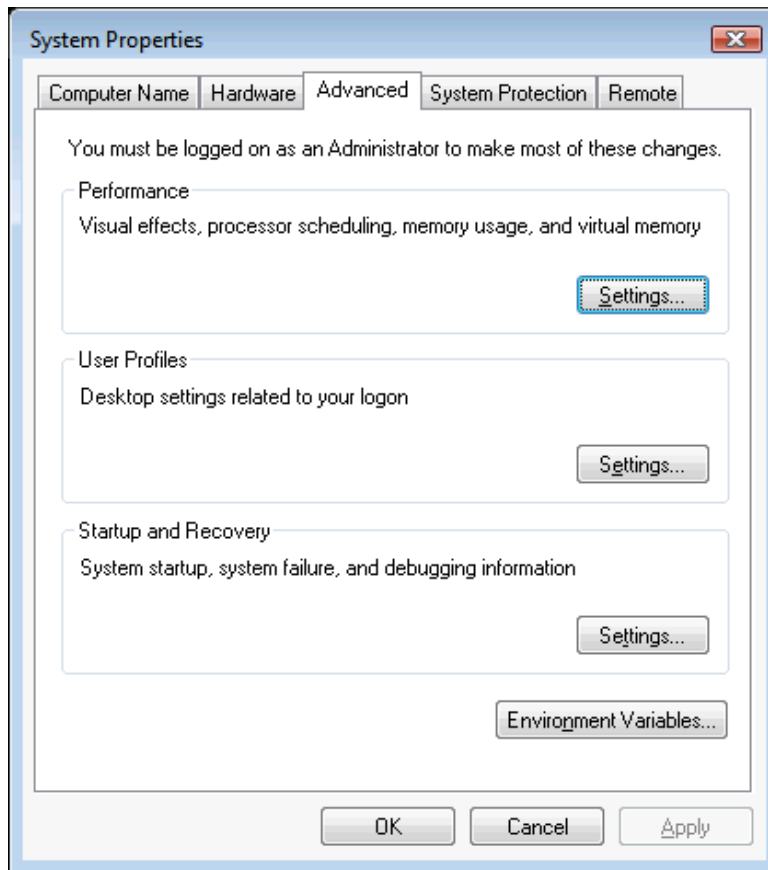
Click Settings under the Performance group and on the Performance Options dialog box, click Change, which is under the Virtual Memory group:
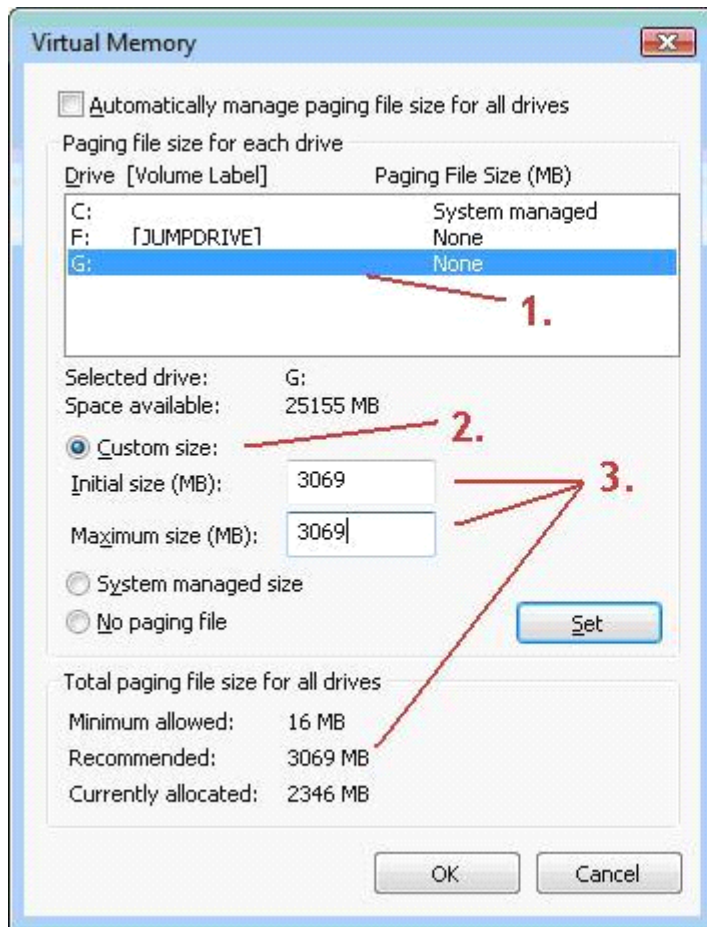
Deselect Automatically manage paging file size for all drives (1.)

Click on the hard disk that currently contains the pagefile (2.), click No paging file (3.), then click Set:

Click on the hard disk that you want to contain the pagefile (1.), then click Custom size (2.) and enter the same value as shown in the Recommended field (3.). Finally, click Set then OK:

Tweaks for Welcome Center

As soon as you install Windows Vista you are bombarded by the Welcome Center that is designed to help beginner Windows users easily configure their new computer. This new welcome screen is a nice feature the first time you start using Windows vista but quickly becomes annoying.

Disabling the Welcome Center is very easy to do and can speed up your boot as well.

1. Start Regedit.
2. Navigate through HKEY_CURRENT_USER, Software, Microsoft, Windows, CurrentVersion, Run.
3. Right click on the WindowsWelcomeCenter key and select Delete.

The next time you restart the Welcome Center will be gone.

Or you can stop Welcome center by unchecking the Run a Startup button at the bottom of the Welcome Center.

Vista Services Recommendations

Giving good, detailed recommendations on Services settings is nearly impossible. These recommendations below assume you are running under an Admin account. Though running as a Standard User in Vista is better than previous Windows versions.

Note - A change in the recommendation for the ReadyBoost service. ReadyBoost, ReadyBoot, and Vista's new prefetching scheme are all tied together. To take advantage of all these options you should leave the ReadyBoost service enabled even if you do not have a ReadyBoost drive. If not the basic scheme defaults back to an XP-like setting. During testing the biggest effect I noticed was a 10-15 second difference in boot times (faster after re-enabling ReadyBoost).

Open your services, Press the Windows + R keys (= Start > Run), type services.msc.
Maximize the window.
You'll see a column labeled Status. Double-click it so that all the services that are started are up top.
These are the only ones you need to worry about. If it isn't started, leave it alone.

See picture below for an example.
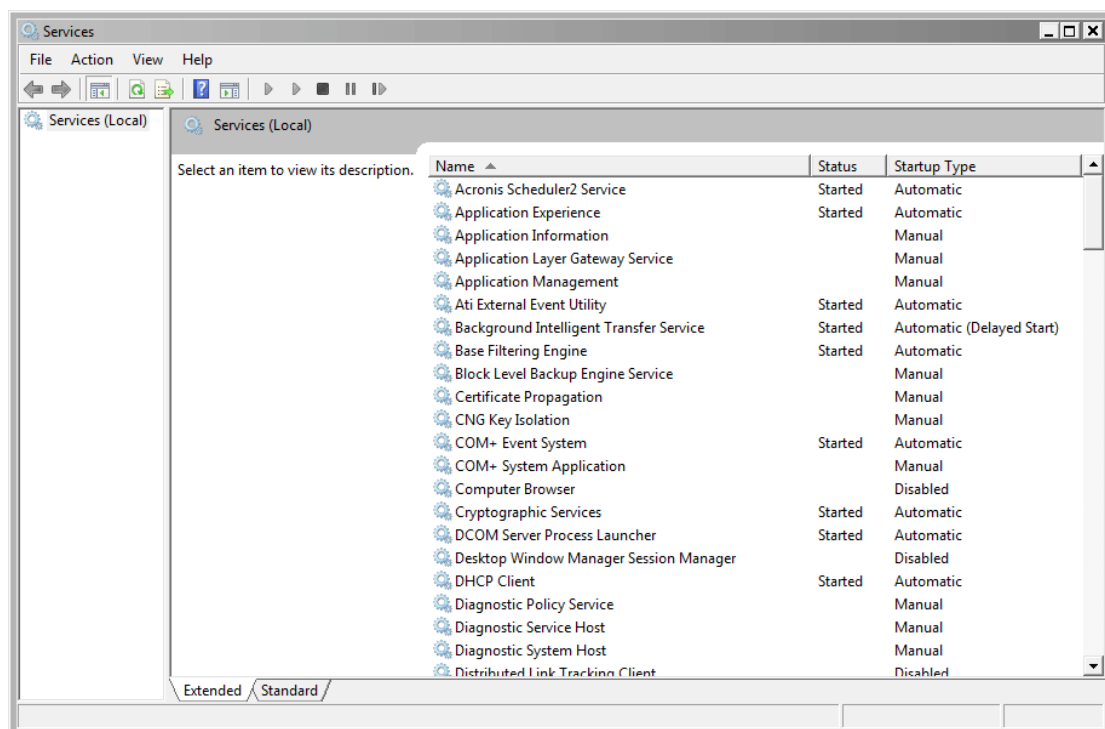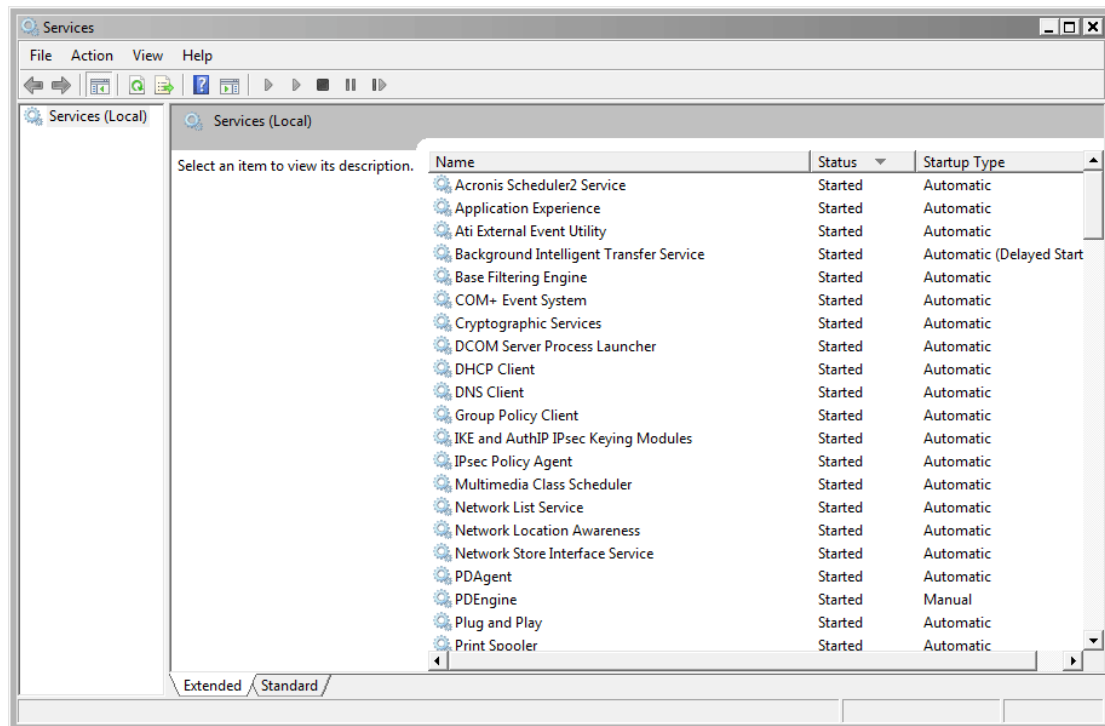
Vista Services Recommendations - Absolute Safe Settings

Vista Services Recommendations – Absolute Safe Settings

If you are not comfortable adjusting Services or do not understand them either leave them alone or use these settings.

Disable	DFS Replication
	Diagnostic Policy Service (change to manual)
	Distributed Link Tracking Client
	IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules
	IPsec Policy Agent
	KtmRm for Distributed Transaction Coordinator
	Offline Files
	Remote Registry (for security reasons)
	Tablet PC Input Service
	Windows Error Reporting Service
	Windows Search (if you do a lot of searching on your computer then leave this alone)

Vista Services Recommendations – Desktop

Vista Services Recommendations - Desktop

	Safe	Networked+ Sharing (non-essential stuff off)	Networked + Not sharing from this computer
Disable	DFS Replication	DFS Replication	Computer Browser*
	Diagnostic Policy Service (change to	Diagnostic Policy Service (change to manual)	Desktop Window Manager Session Manager

manual)	Distributed Link Tracking Client	DFS Replication
Distributed Link Tracking Client	IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules	Diagnostic Policy Service (change to manual)
IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules	IP Helper	Distributed Link Tracking Client
IPsec Policy Agent	IPsec Policy Agent	Function Discovery Provider Host
KtmRm for Distributed Transaction Coordinator	KtmRm for Distributed Transaction Coordinator	Function Discovery Resource Publication
Offline Files	Offline Files	IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules
Remote Registry (for security reasons)	Remote Registry (for security reasons)	IP Helper
Secondary Logon	Secondary Logon	IPsec Policy Agent
Security Center	Security Center	KtmRm for Distributed Transaction Coordinator
SSDP Discovery (for security reasons)	SSDP Discovery (for security reasons)	Offline Files
Tablet PC Input Service	Tablet PC Input Service	Remote Registry (for security reasons)
Terminal Services	Terminal Services	Secondary Logon
Windows Defender	UPnP Device Host	Security Center
Windows Error Reporting Service	Windows Defender	Server
Windows Search	Windows Error Reporting Service	SSDP Discovery (for security reasons)
	Windows Search	Tablet PC Input Service
		Terminal Services
		UPnP Device Host
		Windows Defender
		Windows Error Reporting Service
		Windows Search
		* - if you want to use the Computer Browser service
		you'll need to keep the Server service enabled

Vista Services Recommendations - Desktop, part 2

Vista Services Recommendations – Desktop, part 2

	Not Networked	Tweaked Out (Geeks Only!!!)
	Computer Browser	Computer Browser
	DFS Replication	Desktop Window Manager Session Manager
Disable	Diagnostic Policy Service (change to manual)	DFS Replication
		Diagnostic Policy Service (change to manual)
	Distributed Link Tracking Client	Distributed Link Tracking Client
	Function Discovery Provider Host	Function Discovery Provider Host
	Function Discovery Resource Publication	Function Discovery Resource Publication

IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules	IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules
IP Helper	IP Helper
IPsec Policy Agent	IPsec Policy Agent
KtmRm for Distributed Transaction Coordinator	KtmRm for Distributed Transaction Coordinator
Offline Files	Offline Files
Remote Registry (for security reasons)	Print Spooler
Secondary Logon	Remote Registry (for security reasons)
Security Center	Secondary Logon
Server	Security Center
SSDP Discovery (for security reasons)	Server
Tablet PC Input Service	SSDP Discovery (for security reasons)
TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper	Tablet PC Input Service
Terminal Services	TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper
UPnP Device Host	Terminal Services
Windows Defender	Themes
Windows Error Reporting Service	UPnP Device Host
Windows Search	Windows Defender
	Windows Error Reporting Service
	Windows Event Log (I wouldn't disable this)
	Windows Search
	Windows Time

Vista Services Recommendations – Laptop

Vista Services Recommendations – Laptop
Best results will most likely be achieved in between these 2 categories.

	Safe	Tweaked Out (Geeks Only!!!)
	DFS Replication	Computer Browser
	Diagnostic Policy Service (change to manual)	Desktop Window Manager Session Manager
		DFS Replication
	Distributed Link Tracking Client	Diagnostic Policy Service (change to manual)
	IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules	Distributed Link Tracking Client
	IPsec Policy Agent	Function Discovery Provider Host
	KtmRm for Distributed Transaction	Function Discovery Resource Publication
Disable	Coordinator	IKE and AuthIP IPsec Keying Modules
	Offline Files	IP Helper
	Remote Registry (for security reasons)	IPsec Policy Agent
	Secondary Logon	KtmRm for Distributed Transaction
	Security Center	Coordinator
	SSDP Discovery (for security reasons)	Offline Files
	Tablet PC Input Service	Print Spooler
	Terminal Services	Remote Registry (for security reasons)
	Windows Defender	Secondary Logon

Windows Error Reporting Service	Security Center
Windows Search	Server
	SSDP Discovery (for security reasons)
	Tablet PC Input Service
	TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper
	Terminal Services
	Themes
	UPnP Device Host
	Windows Defender
	Windows Error Reporting Service
	Windows Event Log (I wouldn't disable this)
	Windows Search
	Windows Time

Tweaks for Internet & Networking

Internet Explorer 8

1) Clean IE history

Open Internet Explorer > Go to Tools > Delete Browsing History > Pick the stuff you want to clean. If you Delete all... and in the resulting window check the box Also delete files and settings stored by add-ons, please be careful as this deletes your passwords too > when finished, close Internet Explorer.

2) Increase Max Connections

This tweak may be able to increase your page loads and possibly your download speed.

After a series of testing, it is able to establish 10 and 16 connections under Vista. And you could try to set yours at 16 to reach the max connections. Keep in mind that too many connections could possibly get you banned or disconnected from websites (and others may limit your number).

If you want to do a quick test yourself try this link and hit refresh several times to hit your max:

http://www.spasche.net/files/parallel_connections

The Easy Way

Go here and click on the **Fix It** icon: How do I configure Internet Explorer to download more than two files at one time?
http://support.microsoft.com/kb/282402

Clicking on that icon will download the file **EnableTenIEDownloadSessions.msi**. Double-click it to run it.

This changes adds the following to the registry
[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Internet Settings]
"MaxConnectionsPerServer"=dword:0000000a
"MaxConnectionsPer1_0Server"=dword:0000000a

Firefox

1) Clear Firefox History

Open Firefox > in the top menu go to Tools > Options > click on Privacy and then the Settings... button > check what you would like to clean then click OK, uncheck the box next to Ask me before clearing private data (like you need something else in Vista nagging you) and click OK. Just set the options for the following

2) Clear Private Data

Open Firefox > in the top menu go to Tools > Clear Private Data (you can now use this as often as you like). Close Firefox.
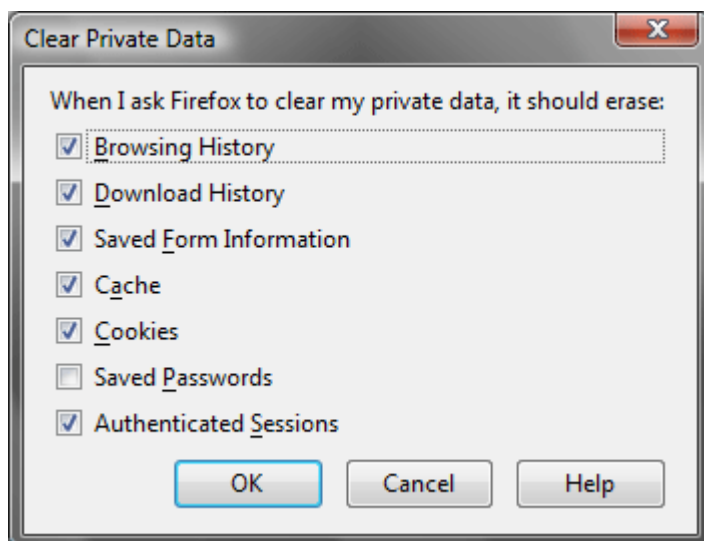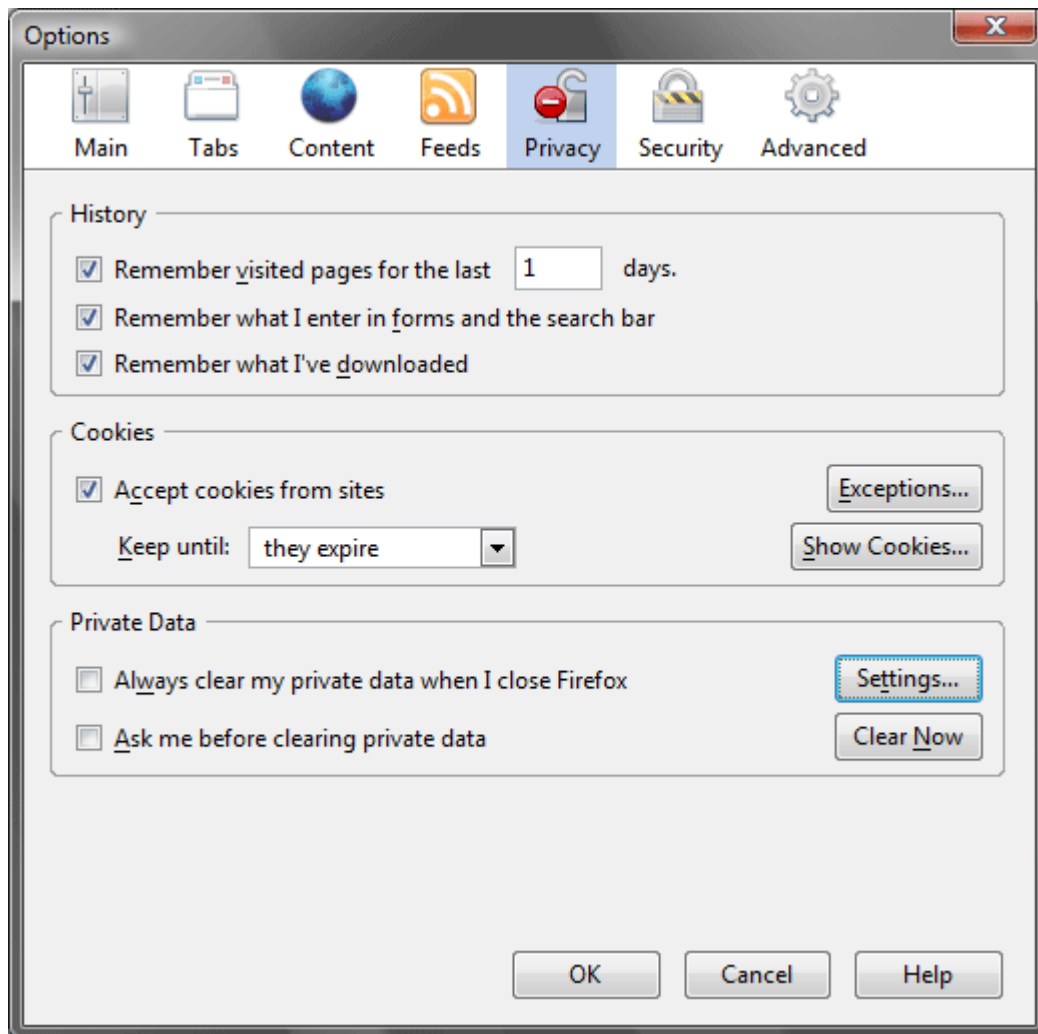
Disable IPV6

Firefox 3 by default resolves IPv6 address first and if that fails then reverts to IPv4. This can sometimes slow down your browser's performance.

Open Firefox > in the address bar type about:config > scroll down to the line: network.dns.disableIPv6, double-click it to change its value to true.

Disable Automatic Image Resizing

Open Firefox > in the address bar type about:config > scroll down to the line: browser.enable_automatic_image_resizing , double-click it to change its value to false.

Remove the Search Pane

Open Firefox > go to View > Toolbars > Customize. Click (and hold) in the search box and drag it into the Customize Toolbar box.

Speed Up Web Browsing with OpenDNS

When you type in a domain name such as wingeek.com in your browser the computer must resolve the friendly name into an IP address of the server to download the web page and supporting files. Windows uses a DNS (domain name system) server to lookup this information. By default, Windows uses your ISP's DNS server. Depending on your provider, the performance of their DNS resolving server varies. Some large national providers are known to provide unreliable and slow DNS servers.

The performance of the DNS server you are using is one component that affects the speed of your internet browsing. Since each domain name you type in must be resolved into an IP address, the amount of time that takes will delay the loading of any web page. Some users with overloaded ISP DNS servers can see delays in multiple seconds before web pages start to load.

OpenDNS provides free alternative DNS servers that anyone can use with any internet provider. Unlike many national internet providers, OpenDNS's DNS servers are very fast and reliable. Using OpenDNS servers instead of your ISP servers will help you speed up your internet browsing by cutting down on the delay between resolving a domain name and getting the IP address so your browser can start loading the web page.
Configuring your computer to use OpenDNS servers instead of your ISP's is a simple change that works in both Windows XP and Windows Vista:

1. Click on the Start Button and type in ncpa.cpl and hit Enter.
2. Right click on your active network connection that you use to connect to the Internet and select Properties.
3. On the Networking / General tab, select Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) (version 4 on Windows Vista & 7) and hit Properties.
4. On the properties screen, select Use the following DNS server addresses and then type in 208.67.222.222 in the preferred and 208.67.220.220 in the alternate boxes.
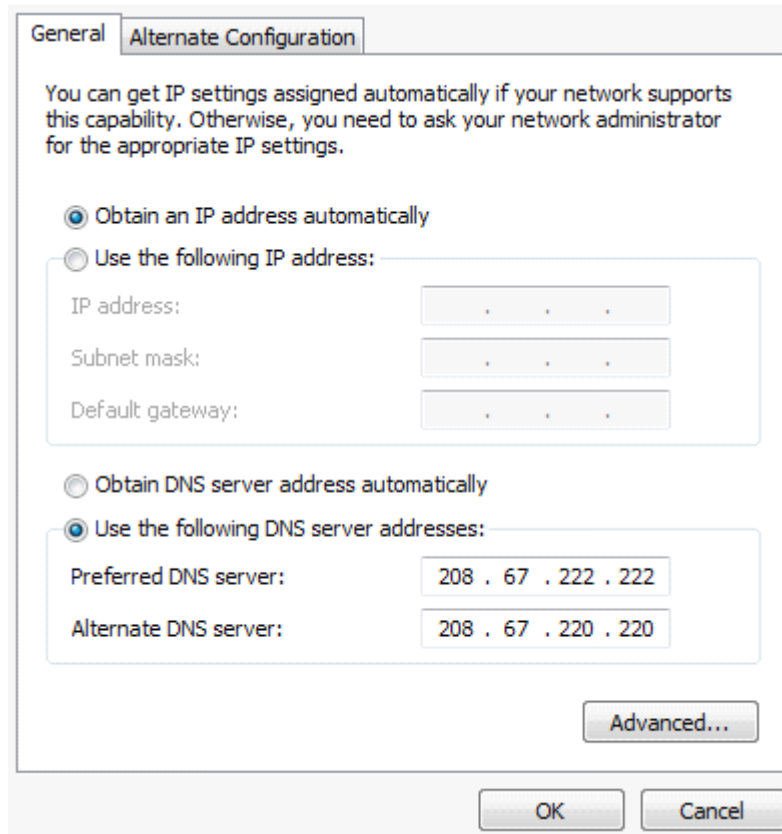
5. Hit OK twice.

Other Network Tweaks

1. Uninstall Remote Differential Compression
This is unneeded in a home network.

Go to Start > Control Panel > Programs > Uninstall a program > Turn Windows Features on or off. Deselect (uncheck), Remote Differential Compression. Click OK and then reboot if prompted.

2. Disable Vista Auto-Tuning
Please read Notes below first!

These are run from the command prompt. Start > Run (or press the Windows+R keys)> type cmd, hit Enter > copy/paste command, hit Enter.

Disable:
netsh int tcp set global autotuninglevel=disable

Enable:
netsh int tcp set global autotuninglevel=normal

Notes - There are any number of variables that can have an effect on your network speed. Some

(usually older) network equipment can do Window Tuning. Some download methods / programs (torrent etc.) may also have issues with Windows Tuning. Please usually do not use this tweak.

Tweaks for Win 7

Windows 7 is Microsoft's most advanced operating system ever. Compared to earlier Microsoft operating systems, Windows 7's changes under the hood improve performance, security, reliability, compatibility, and the user experience. Some people say Windows 7 doesn't need to be tweaked. Tweaking is about more than just performance tweaks. It is about setting up the computer the way you want to use it, maintaining it, and securing it and your data. Tweaking done in the full context of this guide can provide a slight but noticeable speed boost, tighten security, increase reliability, and improve the user experience. However before you start tweaking it, it is recommended that you use Windows 7 in its default state for weeks. There are new features in Windows 7 that may seem like unnecessary bloat at first that you may discover actually help you get things done faster. Tweaking isn't just about making the computer faster. It is about getting things done faster. Some tweaks may free up a small amount of memory but in return it will take you more steps to perform a task.

Install Windows 7 from a USB Thumb Drive

If you're so impressed with Windows 7 on your desktop computer that you want to install it on your laptop, what do you do if the laptop doesn't have a DVD drive? Of course, you could connect a USB DVD drive, if you have one. Or you could put the installation files on a network drive and connect to it over the network.

But here's another option that works surprisingly well: Copy the contents of the Windows 7 ISO image to a 4 GB or larger USB thumb drive (or a flash memory card, if the laptop has a built-in reader). Installing the OS this way is likely to be faster than using a DVD.

Tweaks for Login

Auto Login will be helpful for quick login.
Press the Windows + R keys > type *netplwiz* > uncheck Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer. > in the resulting screen pick the appropriate User and type in the password and click Apply.
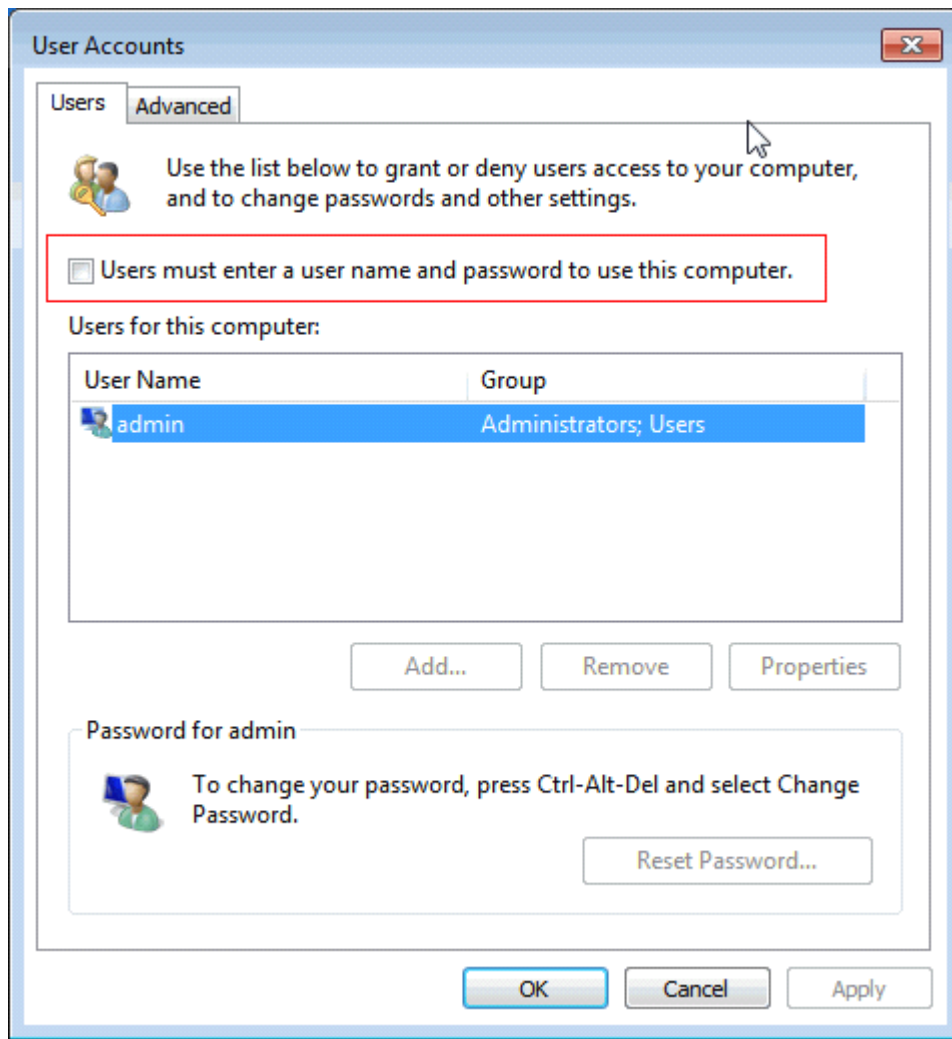
Tweaks for User Account Control（UAC）

User Account Control or UAC is a feature in Windows 7 that asks for permission to do system software tasks and also run programs. Unfortunately, this security feature can become annoying at times. Much less so then it was with Vista's default configuration, but it can be difficult to deal with as well as confuse users with dialog pop-ups that are requesting a "password" to perform actions, but never actually ask for that password (if already logged in as an administrator). If you wish to disable it, here is how to do it:

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **System and Security**
4. Select **Change User Account Control** settings under Action Center header
5. Select the **Continue** button (if UAC is active)
6. Select the slider on the left and drag it down to "Never notify"

7. Select the **Ok** button to close the panel

8. Select the **Yes** button (since UAC is still active) to continue modification of the settings

9. Close the remaining open windows

You will have to reboot for the setting to take effect.

Or just type "UAC" in the Start Menu search field and click the result. The setting of "Never notify" gives a comfortable balance between mindful security and incessant nagging.
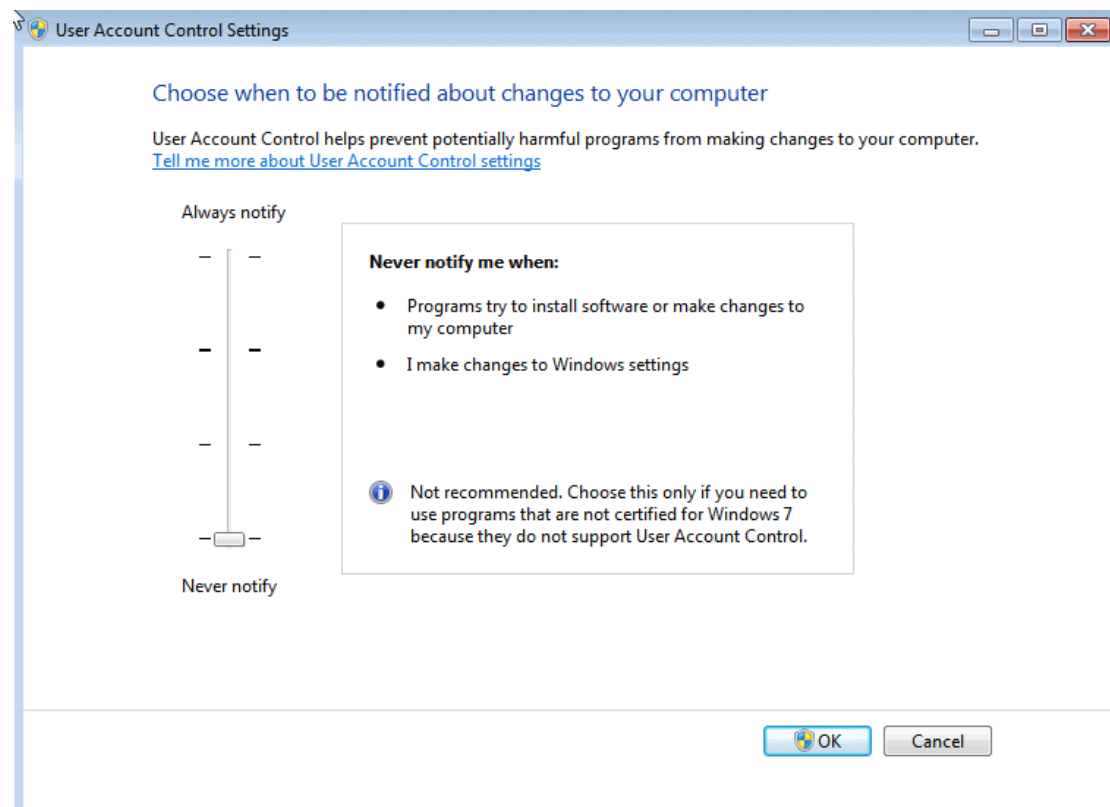
Changing UAC back is as easy as steps 1 through 5 and putting the slider where you desire. Higher is "more secure".

The default level is recommended for most people, but if you make system changes (denoted by a UAC shield on the button) often, you may choose to make it go away.

Tweaks for Jump Lists

Using Jump Lists to Open Programs and Items

Jump Lists are lists of recently opened items, such as files, folders, or websites, organized by the program that you use to open them. You can use a Jump List to open items, and you can also pin favorites to a Jump List, so you can quickly get to the items that you use every day.
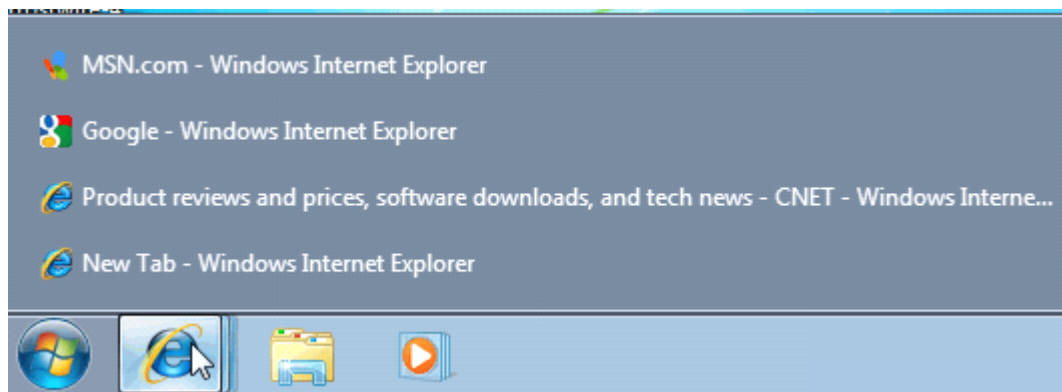
Pin-Up Your Favorites in the Jump List

Explorer's Jump List shows your seven most frequently visited folders, but you can manually bookmark some favorites to the top of the list by pinning folder locations. Just hold right-click on any folder, either on your desktop or from an open instance of Explorer, and drag that folder icon to the Explorer shortcut on the Taskbar. You'll see a message that reads "Pin to Windows Explorer" before you release the mouse button. The folder will appear under a "Pinned" section of the Jump List, and you can remove it by clicking the "Unpin from this list" icon on the right side of the panel.
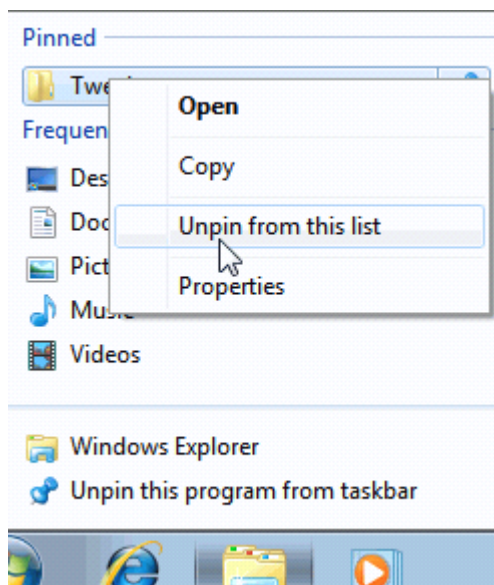
Tweaks for the Appearance of Win7

Fonts

Go to Start menu >click on the Control Panel >click on the Appearance and Personalization >set the fonts here
Font management is much improved in Windows 7. Gone is the "Add Fonts" dialog, replaced with

additional functionality in the Fonts folder. First, the folder shows font previews in each font file's icon (viewed with Large or Extra Large icons). Fonts from a single set will no longer show up as different fonts and are now combined as a single family (which can be expanded by double clicking the icon). You can also toggle fonts on and off by right clicking a font icon and selected the "hide" option. This will prevent applications from loading the font (and therefore save memory), but keep the file retained in the Font folder.
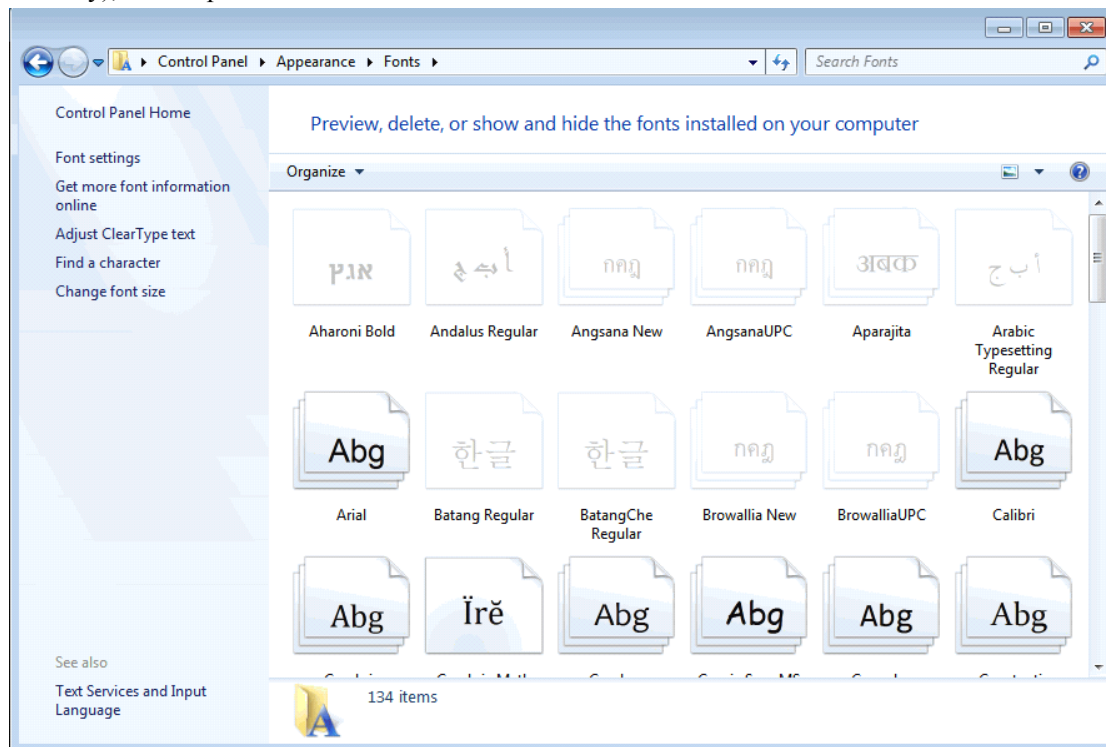
A new font called Gabriola also comes bundled with Windows 7, which takes advantage of the new OpenType and DirectWrite (Direct2D) rendering.

Themes and Colors

Right-click on the desktop and choose Personalize.
In this window double-click to change Themes.
Change the visuals and sounds on your computer.
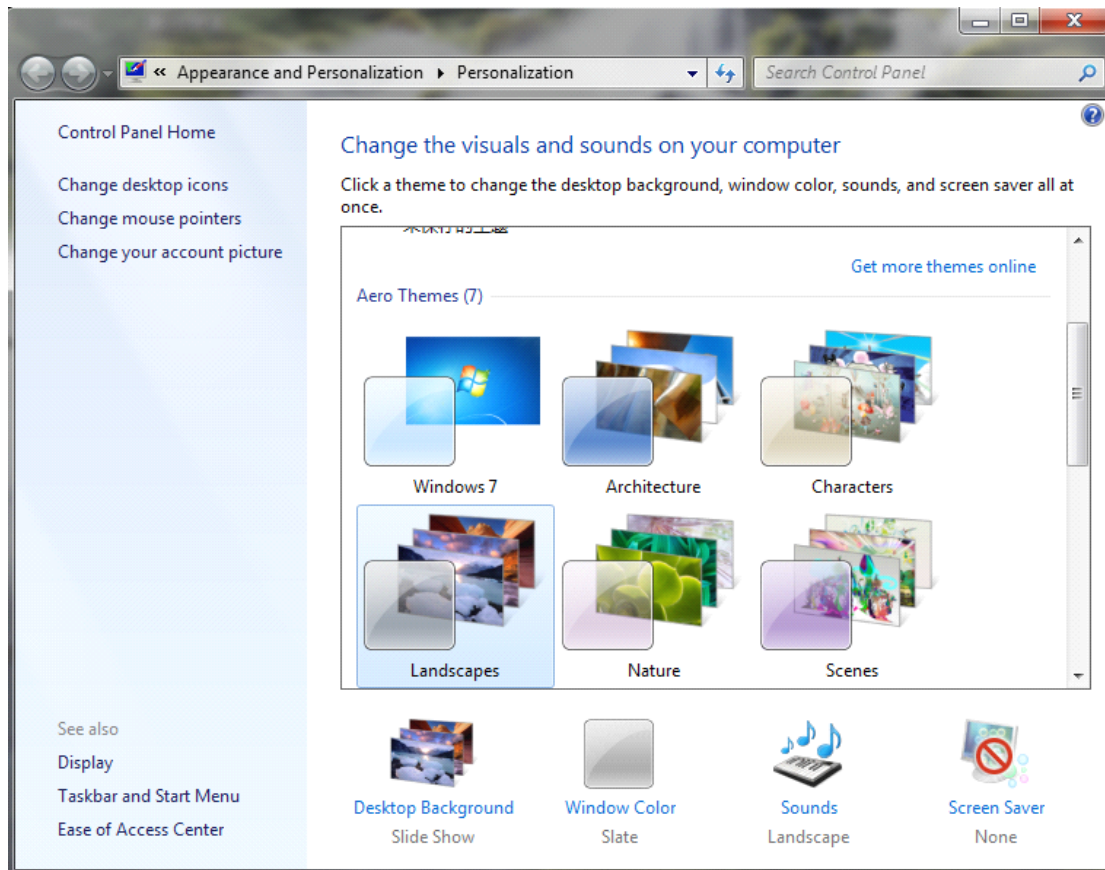
In the above screen double-click on Window Color for more advanced settings.
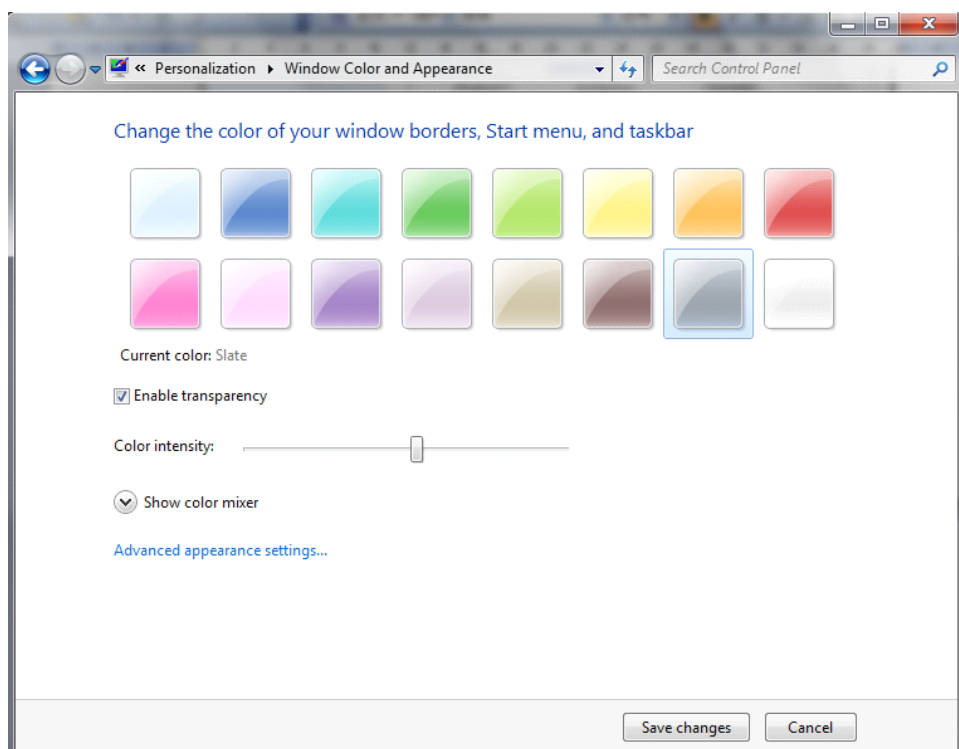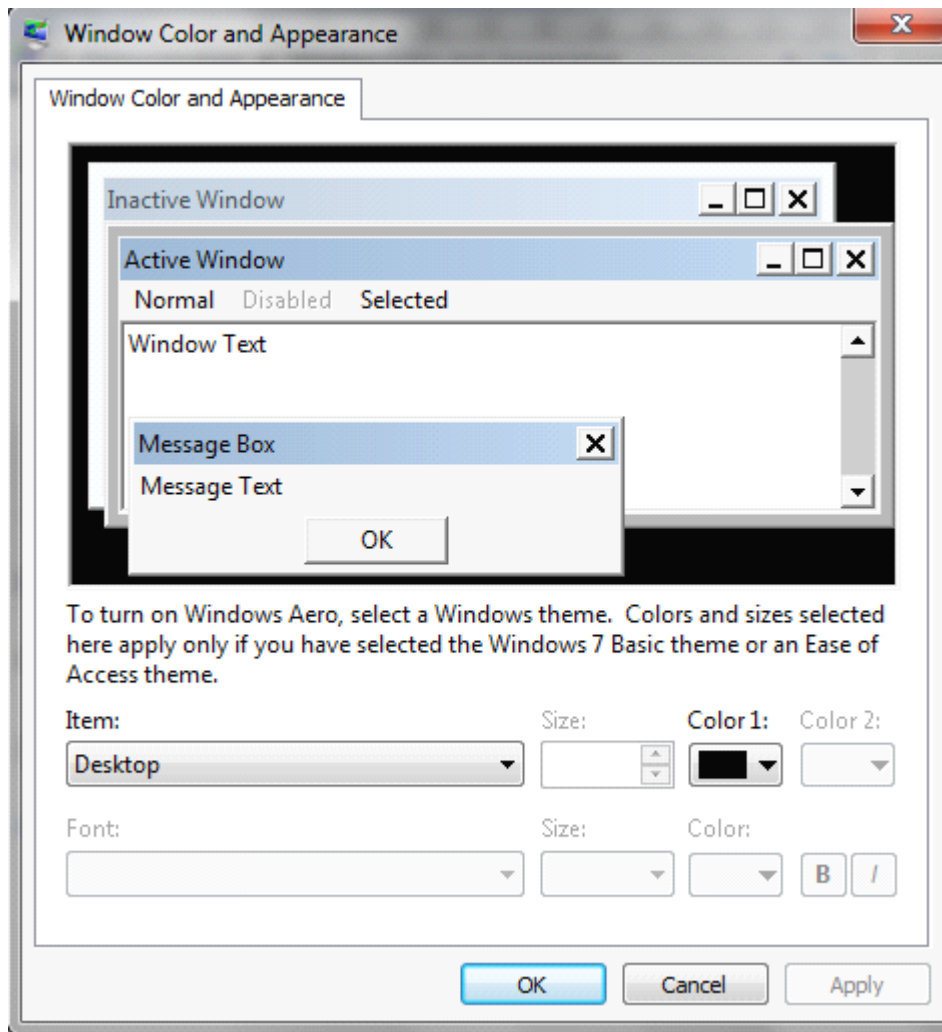
In the above screen double-click on Desktop Background to make a Solid Color your background. Right-clicking on any picture anywhere on your computer will give you the option of Set as desktop background.

*Settings in the Active Title Bar section effect several others and is the quickest way to change many color /font settings.

Aero

Reduce the overhead associated with Windows 7 new Theme. As a side note, the new Aero is a big reason to upgrade to Windows 7. However, if you are using an older system that does not meet the recommended requirements to run the Aero Glass engine or have a system that does not have Windows 7 certified driver support, disable the themes to make it look like Windows 2000/XP (with its new theme disabled) and save the memory.

Also, in order to get back Aero Themes selection (after performing these steps, they will be grayed out of selection), you will have to reverse (enable) the features and reboot.

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **Appearance and Personalization**
4. Select **Personalization**
5. Select **Theme**
6. Under Basic and High Contrast Themes, select "**Windows Classic**"

Fine tune visual performance options:

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **System and Security**
4. Select **System**
5. Select **Advanced system settings** (on the left side)
6. select **Advanced tab**
7. Select **Settings** button under Performance
8. Select "**Adjust for best performance**"
9. Select the **Ok** button

In order to shrink up the task bar to be only "one line", you will need to check another box located here:

1. Right click the taskbar where there is nothing at
2. Select **Properties**
3. **Taskbar** tab
4. Check **"Use small icons"**
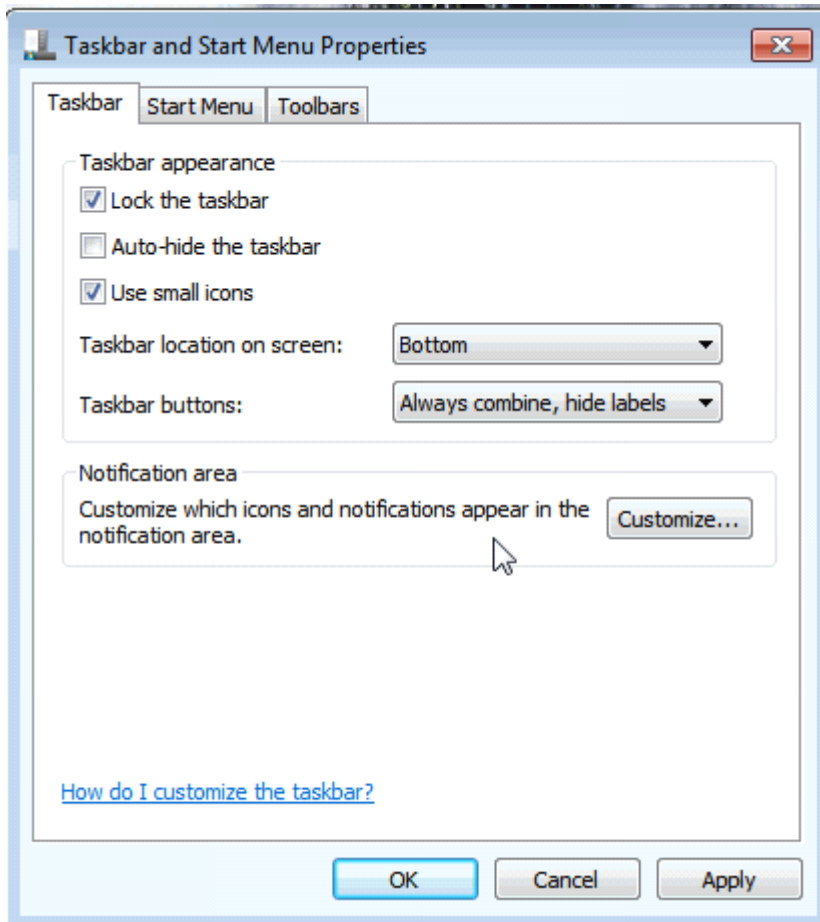
After that, Disable and Stop the Themes service.

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **System and Security**
4. Select **Administrative Tools**
5. Select **Services**
6. Select "**Themes"** service (Double Click)
7. Select **General Tab**
8. In the Startup type: select "**Disabled**"
9. In the Service status area: select "Stop"
10. Select the **Ok** button to close the panel

You may also want to disable the Desktop Window Manager Session Manager Service

1. Head to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **System and Security**
4. Select **Administrative Tools**

5. Select **Services**
6. Select **"Desktop Window Manager Session Manager"** service (Double Click)
7. Select **General Tab**
8. In the Startup type: select "**Disabled**"
9. In the Service status area: select **"Stop"**
10. Select the **Ok** button to close the panel

Rebooting is not required as each action performed above is applied at the time it is finished.

Taskbar (System Tray)

The programs that you pin to your Taskbar can be moved around to any order you want, whether they're just shortcut icons or actually active applications. We recommend moving frequently used programs and folders to the front of the stack, so it'll be easily to launch them with the aforementioned Windows + [number] shortcut. The Taskbar, if unlocked, can also be dragged to latch to the left, right, or even top of your desktop. Windows 7 improves side-docked Taskbar support with better gradient rendering and shortcut support. It really works well if you're using a widescreen monitor.

Just as the Taskbar icons can be rearranged at will, the icons in the System Tray (actually called Notification Area) can be dragged and set to any order as well. Hidden Icons can be dragged back into view, and you can hide icons by dropping them into the Hidden Icon well – which is easier than working through the Notification Area Customization menu.

Start Menu

This feature allows you to access programs and items with a single click, speeding up your work.

Right-click on the Start button and choose Properties > check / uncheck the boxes in the Privacy section.

-Store and display recently opened programs in the Start menu
This puts recently open Programs in the Start menu. They will appear under items you have pinned there.

- Store and display recently opened items in the Start menu and the taskbar.
This creates a menu flyout for recent items in the Start menu and adds recent items to your Jump lists.
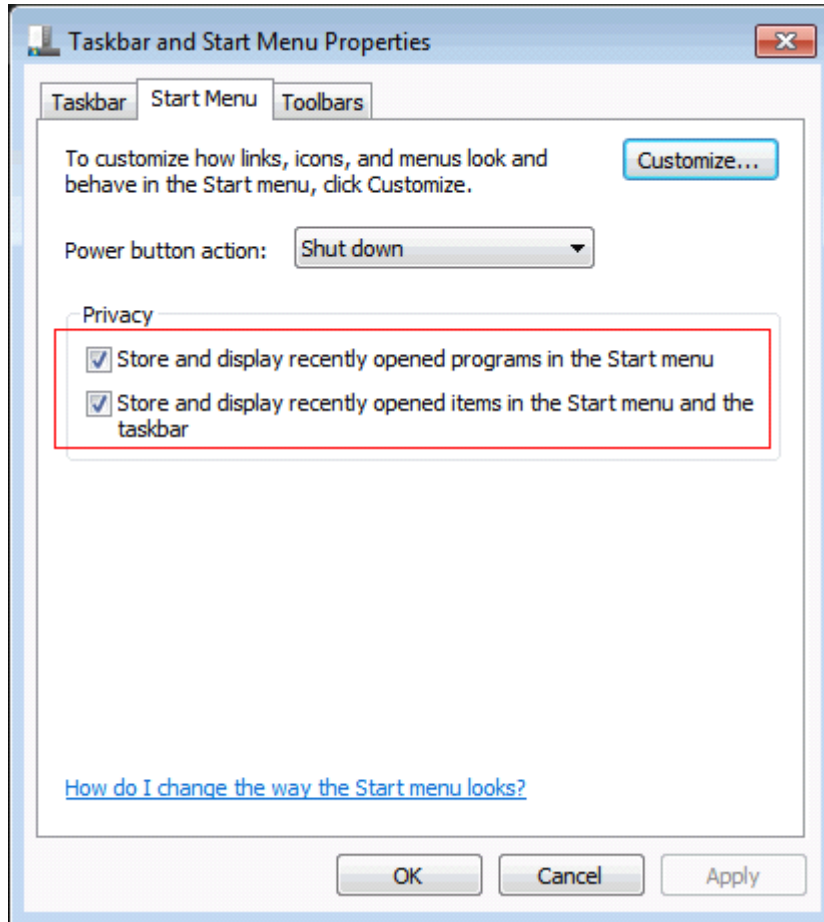
Accelerate Your Start Menu

The Start Menu hasn't changed much from Vista, but there are some notable improvements. The default power button is thankfully changed to Shut Down the system, as opposed to Hibernation, as it was in Vista. This can be changed to do other actions from the Start Menu Properties menu.

Additional customization brings Videos and Recorded TV as links or menus to the right side of the Start Menu, next to your Documents, Music, and Games. Feel free to mess around the Customization options since you can always return to the default Start Menu settings by clicking the "default" button at the bottom.

Changing the Number of Recent Programs / Items Displayed

Right-click on the Start button and choose Properties > click the Customize button.
At the bottom of that window the Start menu size section, change the number(s) in the sections:
- Number of recent programs to display:
- Number of recent items to display in Jump Lists:
- Click OK to apply.
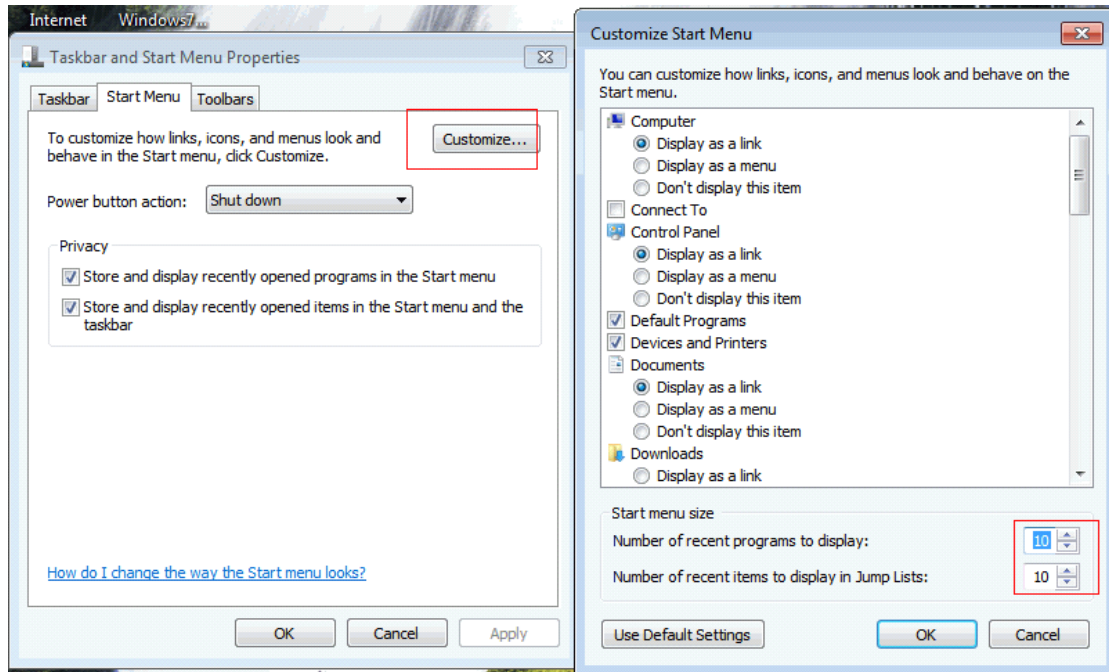
Customize the Appearance of Start Menu

Right-click on the Start button and choose Properties > click the Customize button.

Below is a list of all your options.
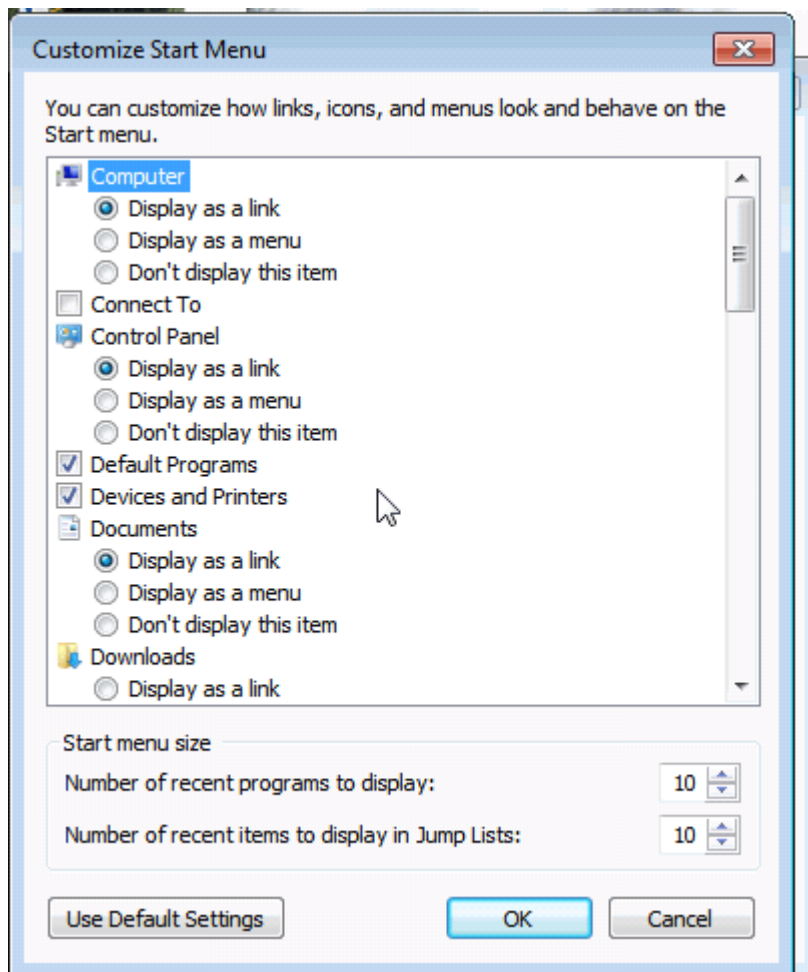
The Notification Area and Action Center

This will give you a quicker access to the things you use and removal of the things you don't.

1) Notification Area

Right-click in an empty area of the Taskbar and choose Properties -> In the Notification area section click the Customize button.
(Also available by going to: Control Panel >Notification Area Icons)

You can either handle all icons the same by checking the box next to:
Always show all icons and notifications on the taskbar.
Or,
Uncheck that box and configure each item individually.
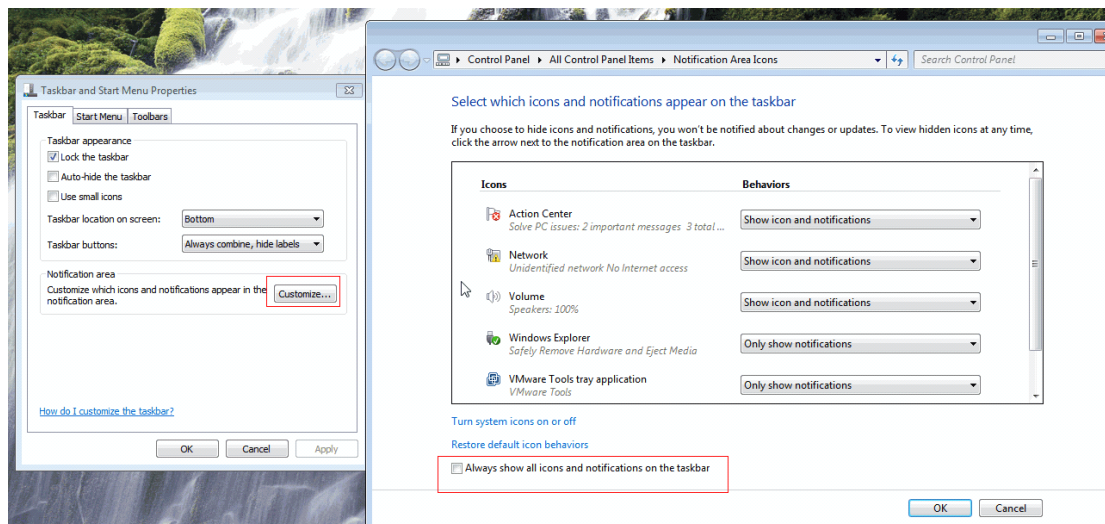
Note - Not everything you see in the window below shows all the time. Some only appear when that program is open.

Click on Turn system icons on or off to configure those.

2) Action Center

Right-clicking on the flag icon in the Notification area and choose Open Action Center. Configure what sections you get messages about by clicking Change Action Center settings. Uncheck unwanted sections.
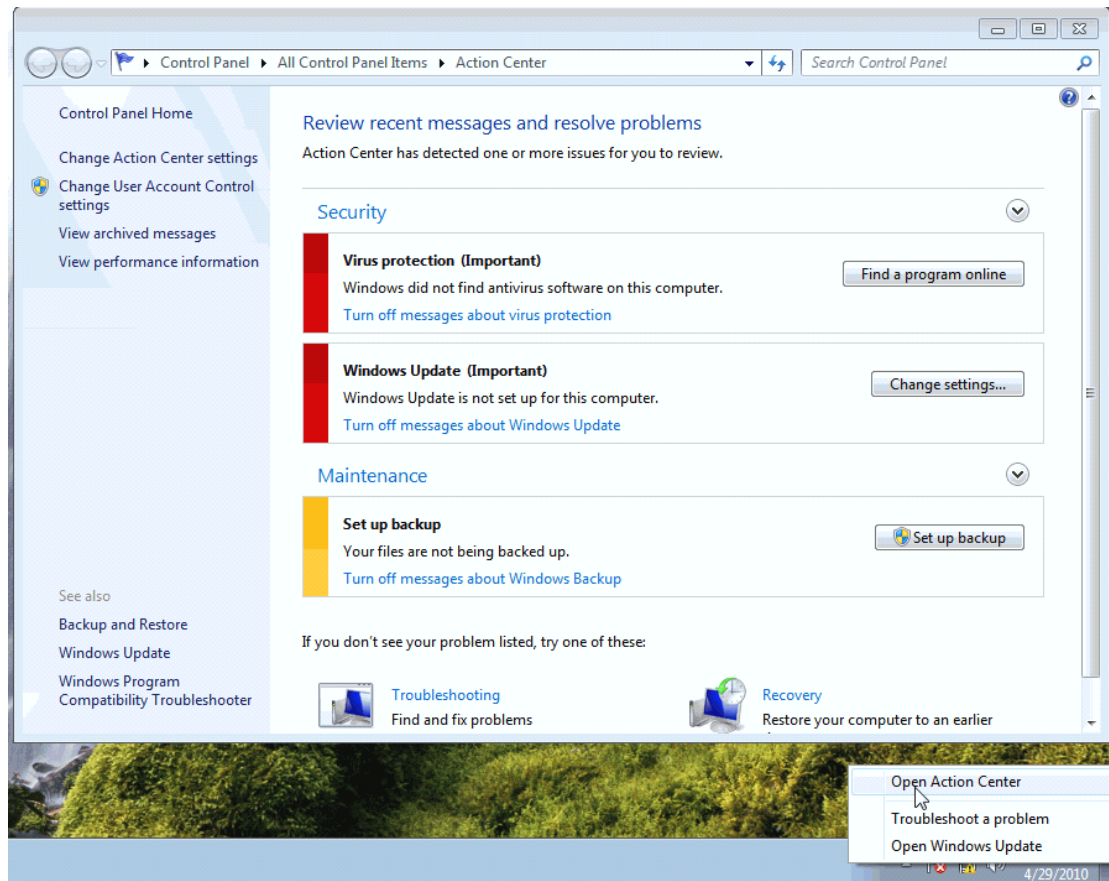
The excess icons should be removed from the system tray (lower right). Contrary to popular belief, those little "quick access" icons take up a lot of room and increase boot time.

Unfortunately, the Action Center is tough to get rid of and the "up arrow" can hide some of those icons. We can fix that as the following steps.

1. Click the "up arrow" in the system tray
2. Select **Customize...**
3. Check **"Always show all icons and notifications on the taskbar"**
4. Select **"Turn system icons on or off"**
5. Turn off the icons you do not wish to use by pulling down the menu selection under Behaviors.
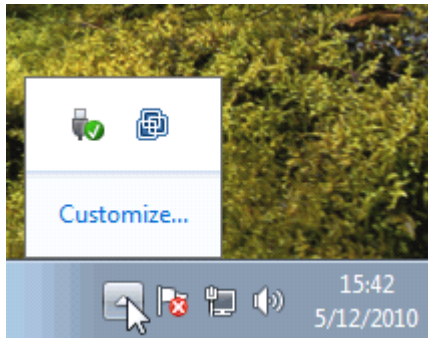
If you choose to disable the Action Center system tray notification, you can always view what "would" be there by:

1. Head to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **System and Security**
4. Select **Action Center**

Using this method, you can check Action Center messages and not be nagged by those "balloon" pop-ups when you are trying to get stuff done.

Tweaks for the Clock

Basic Settings

To get there click once on the time and then click Change date and time settings...
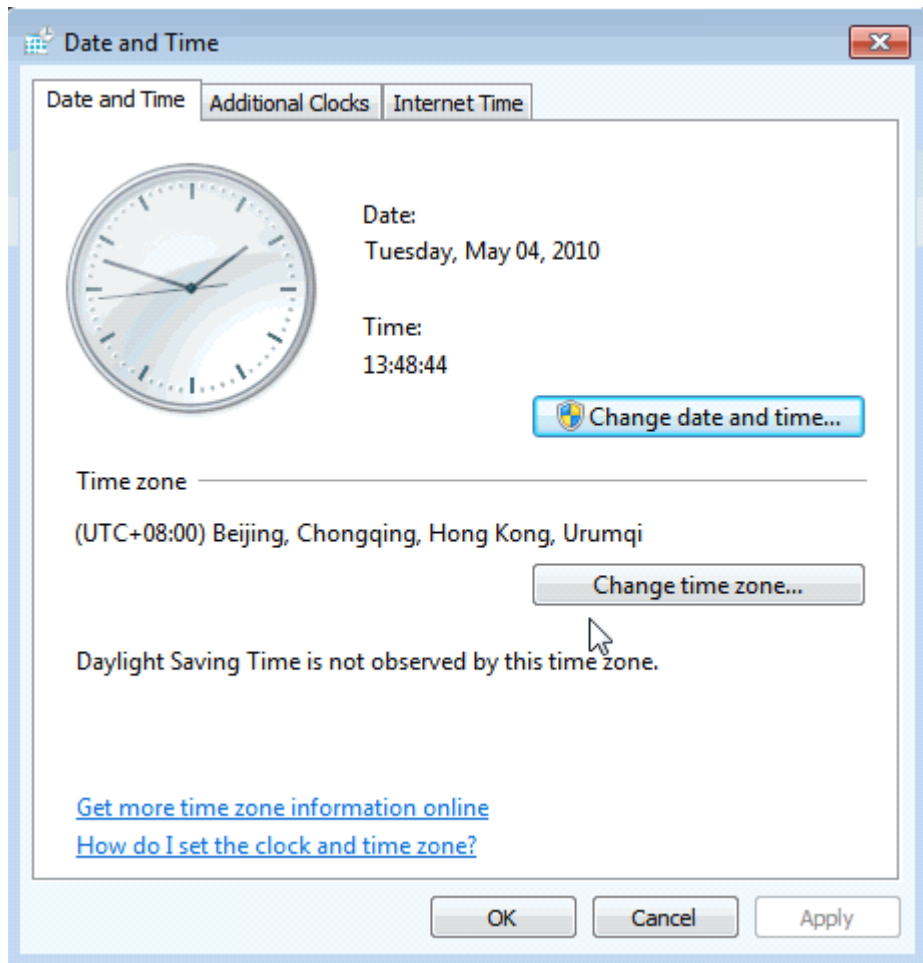
Advanced Clock Settings

To get there go to Control Panel > Region and Language (can't see that section? In Control Panel choose View by > Large Icons)

These options switch settings system wide as well as the clock area. Click on the arrows to see your options.

While other options can change the taskbar clock options, the Short date and Long time sections option is suggested.

For time little h is 12 hour clock, big H is 24 hour clock. Play with the options until you see a format you like.

Click Apply to save your changes.

Tweaks for Keyboard Shortcuts

Windows 7 provides new shortcut key combos to let you do more without mouse. Here are a few to try out:

- Windows + E will open a new Explorer window.
- In Windows Explorer, press Alt + P to turn the preview pane on.
- Windows + P opens the Display Switcher applet.
- Windows + Spacebar shows the desktop (makes active windows transparent).
- Windows Logo Key + Plus (+) key turns on the Magnifier to zoom in on the desktop.
- Windows Logo key + Minus (-) key zooms back out.
- Ctrl + clicking an icon in the taskbar toggles between the open instances of the program.
- Ctrl + Shift + Click: Hold down Ctrl and Shift while launching an application from the Taskbar or start menu to launch it with full administrative rights.
- Windows Logo key + Left or Right Arrow key will shift the active window to the left or right side of the screen and make it fill half the screen (same as dragging the window to the left or right edge of the screen but without using the mouse).
- Windows Logo key + Shift + Left or Right: Arrow key (with multiple monitors) will move the window to the left or right monitor.
- Windows + Up /Windows + Down: If a window is not maximized, pressing Windows + Up will fill it to your screen. Windows + Down will minimize that active window. Unfortunately, pressing Windows + Up again while a window is minimized won't return it to its former state.
- Windows + Shift + Up: Similar to the shortcut above, hitting these three keys while a window is active will stretch it vertically to the maximum desktop height. The width of the window will however stay the same. Pressing Windows + Down will restore it to its previous size.
- Windows + Home: This shortcut performs a similar function to hovering over a window's peek menu thumbnail in the Taskbar. The active window will stay on your desktop while every other open application is minimized. Pressing this shortcut again will restore all the other windows.
- Windows + [Number]: Programs (and new instances) pinned to your Taskbar can be launched by hitting Windows and the number corresponding to its placement on the Taskbar. Windows + 1, for example, launches the first application, while Windows + 4 will launch the fourth. We realize that this is actually one key-press more than just clicking the icon with your mouse, but it saves your hand the trouble of leaving the comfort of the keyboard.
- Windows + T: Like Alt + Tab (still our all time favorite Windows specific shortcut), Windows + T cycles through your open programs via the Taskbar's peek menu.

Tweaks for Windows Features

Microsoft gives you much more flexibility with Windows 7, allowing you to turn off Windows components — such as Internet Explorer, Windows Search, the Gadget platform, and media features — that you couldn't disable in earlier versions of Windows. Here's how:

1. Click Start | Control Panel and select Programs and Features.
2. In the left pane, click Turn Windows Features On or Off.
3. Simply select or deselect the check boxes to enable or disable the various Windows features, then click OK.

Disable Gadgets

Press the Windows + R keys > type control.exe appwiz.cpl > click Turn Windows features on or off > uncheck Windows Gadget Platform and click OK.
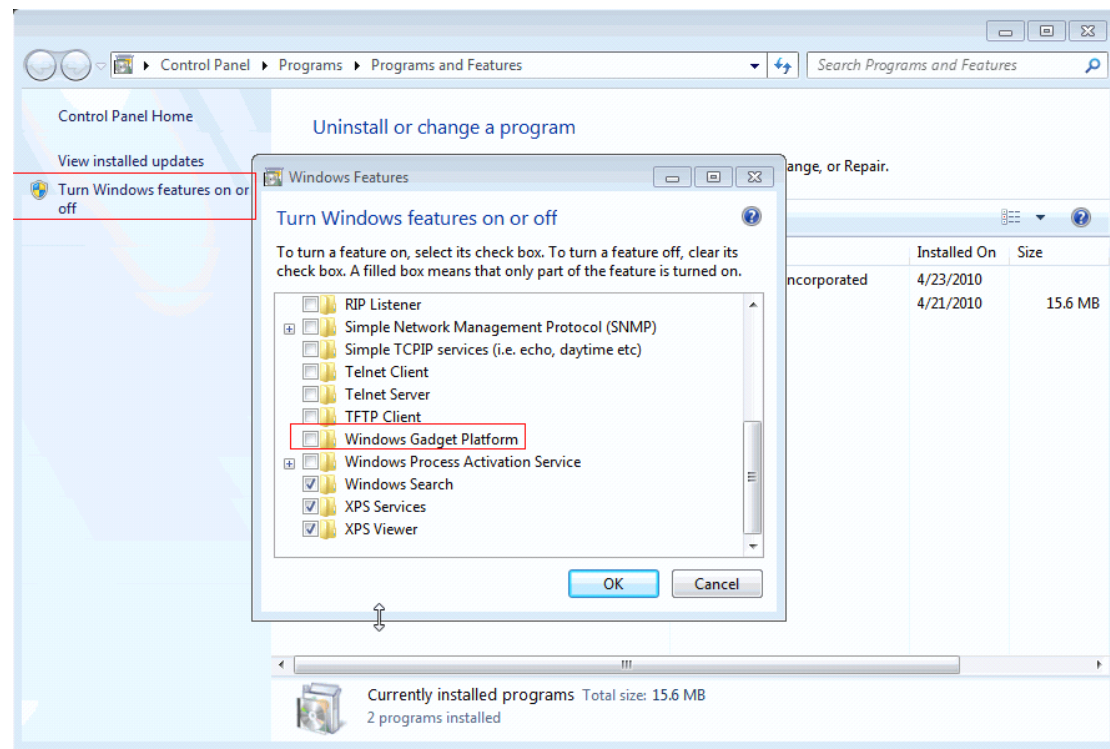
Turn Off System Sounds

Right-click on the Volume icon in your System Tray and choose Sounds > First save your current scheme, click on the Save As... button, enter a name, and click OK > Next, under Sound Scheme: choose No Sounds and click Apply at the bottom, right.
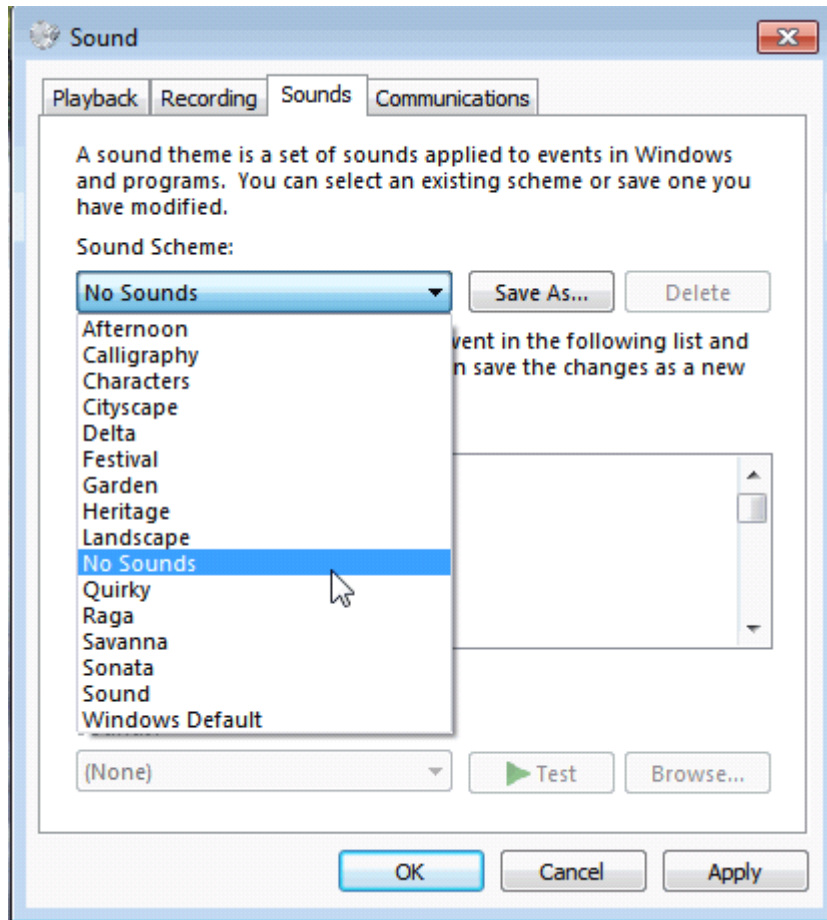
Move Libraries

Right-click on your User Name in the Start Menu and choose Open.

Select the libraries you wish to move and copy / paste them to the new location.

Pick the stuff you wish to be safe from any problems. Such us Contacts, Downloads, My Documents, My Music, My Pictures, My Videos
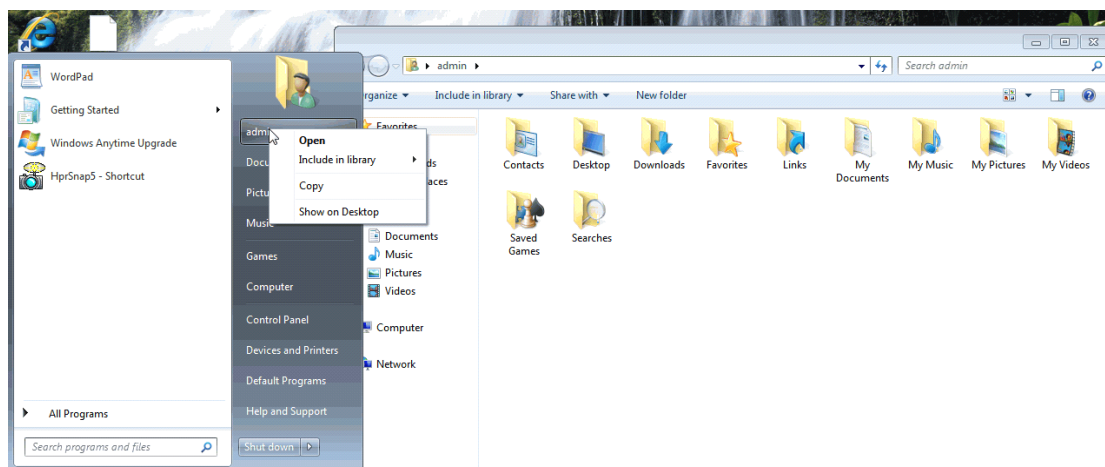
1. Once you have finished copying the files. Go back to the original Library, right-click on each folder you moved.

2. Choose Properties from the menu. In the resulting window, click on the Location tab, and then the Move... button.

3. Browse the location you copied the files to.

4. Click once on the folder you want it moved to and then click the Select Folder button (bottom right of the screen).

This screen will pop up. Click Yes.
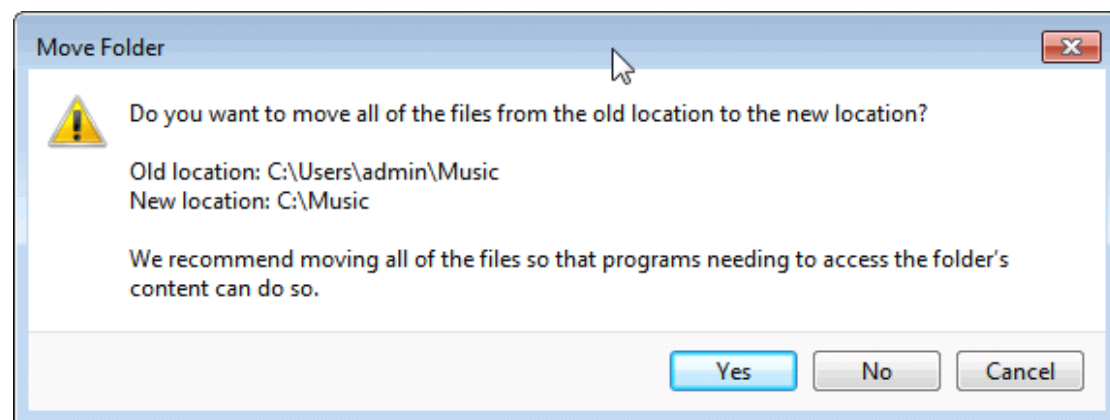
5. Repeat this step for all the folders you copied.

6. Add new folders to Library

7. Right-click on that folder and choose Include in library > and choose the appropriate library.

Make Sure Your SATA Drives Are Configured for Max Speed

Open device manager. Press the Windows + R keys and type *devmgmt.msc* > expand the Disk drives section by clicking on the plus sign > double-click on the drive you want to configure then click the Policies tab > Check the Optimize for performance button > Check both the Enable write caching on the disk and the Enable advanced performance boxes.

Configure or Disable Windows Search

Configure

Type *indexing* in the Start Menu Search Box and choose Indexing Options. Or go to Control Panel > Indexing Options

Click the Modify button to add or remove folders. Libraries and therefore folders added to Libraries are included by default.
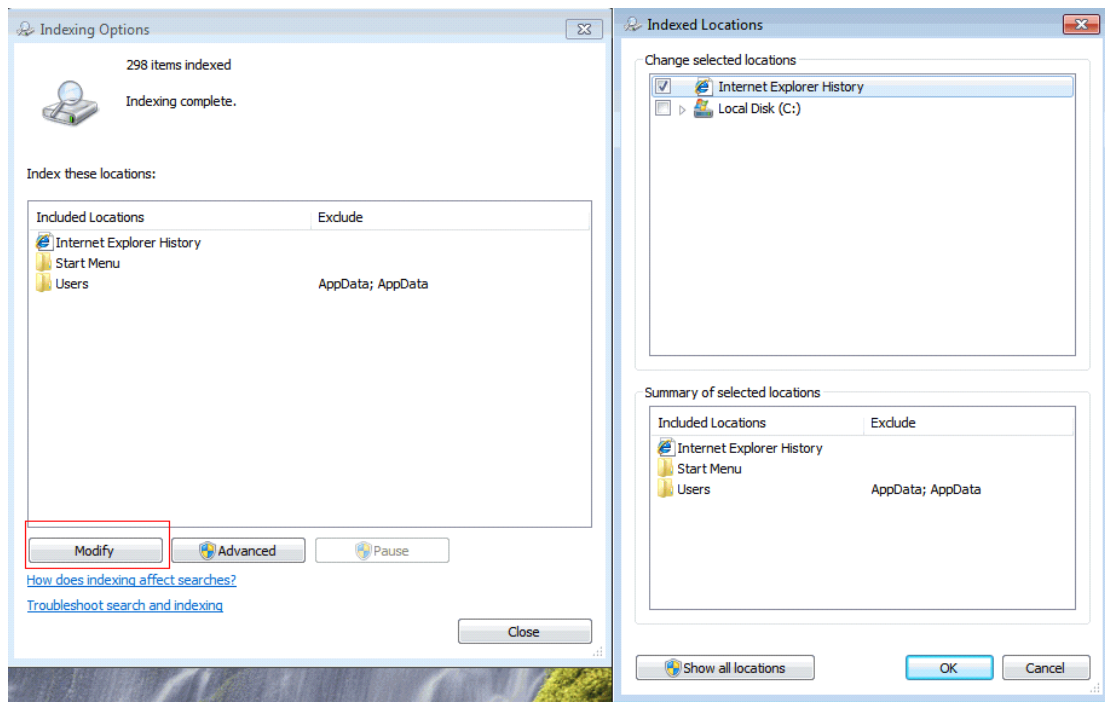
Disable Remote Assistance and Remote Desktop

Note: Remote Desktop is not available on Windows 7 Starter, Home Basic or Home Premium, so the option will not be there.

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **System and Security**
4. Select **System**
5. Select **Remote settings** (on the left side)
6. Select the **Continue** button (if UAC is active)
7. Uncheck "**Allow Remote Assistance connections to this computer** " option
8. Ensure "**Don't allow connections to this computer**" option is checked
9. Select the **Ok** button to apply the settings

Disable Indexing

Option #1 - Disable the Service. Press the Windows + R keys > type *services.msc* > double-click on the Windows Search service > set Startup type to disabled then Stop the service or reboot.

Option #2 - Uninstall it. Press the Windows + R keys and type *appwiz.cpl* > Turn Windows Features on or off > uncheck Windows Search, click OK.

Configure or Disable Automatic Disk Defrag

Press the Windows + R keys > type *dfrgui.exe* (Or click on Start button> All Programs > Accessories > System Tools > Disk Defragmenter).

Click Configure Schedule button > Change Schedule to fit your needs or Uncheck Run on schedule to disable

Disable Superfetch

Press the Windows + R keys > type *services.msc* > double-click on the Superfetch service > set Startup type to disabled then Stop the service or reboot.

Tweaks for Security Related

Configure or Disable Windows Defender

If you have other anti-virus and anti-spyware to protect your computer, then you could disable Windows Defender

To disable it

Option #1 - Disable the Service. Press the Windows + R keys > type *services.msc* > double-click on the Windows Defender service > set Startup type to disabled then Stop the service or reboot.

Option #2 - Uninstall it. Press the Windows + R keys and type *appwiz.cpl* > Turn Windows Features on or off > uncheck Windows Defender, click OK.

To configure Windows Defender

Type *Windows Defender* in the Search box (or go to Control Panel > Windows Defender). Most of the options you want to configure are under Tools > Options.

Configure or Disable Automatic Updates

To change settings type *update* in the Start Menu search box and then enter (or go to Control Panel > Windows Update).
In the left pane double-click Change settings.
To disable Automatic Updates choose Never check for updates (not recommended).

Updated Drivers

Download and install all updated drivers from the hardware manufacture sites. There is no particular restriction to suggest which site you need to go due to the different system components installed in your system. But do your computer a favor and get updated drivers for everything. Contact your PC builder or each manufacture for each item installed in your system.

As with every Windows release in the past, updated drivers fix bugs and also usually increase performance from the default OS drivers installed.

Usually, after the installation of each driver, you must reboot. If the driver installation program does not ask you to reboot, please still try that.

Services

Disable some service will use less system resources and increased security
Networked Using HomeGroup - Safe To Disable
Distributed Link Tracking Client
Media Center Extender Service
Offline Files
Windows Media Player Network Sharing Service

Not Networked - Safe To Disable
Computer Browser
Distributed Link Tracking Client
Function Discovery Resource Publication
HomeGroup Provider
Media Center Extender Service
Offline Files
Server
SSDP Discovery
TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper
UPnP Device Host
Windows Media Player Network Sharing Service

Services You May Want Disable Over Security Concerns
These are set to Manual by default.

The table below lists the services that start automatically (exported straight from the services window as a .csv file). If you do not see a particular service in your Window, do not worry. Not all services are in all Windows 7 versions.

Press the Windows + R keys and type *services.msc* .
Change the order of Services by clicking on the main tab in each column (Name, Description, Status, Startup Type, Log On As).
Clicking the Status tab will order the services by started or not.

Name	Status	Startup Type	Notes
Application Experience	Started	Manual	
Application Information	Started	Manual	

Background Intelligent Transfer Service	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	
Base Filtering Engine	Started	Automatic	
CNG Key Isolation	Started	Manual	
COM+ Event System	Started	Automatic	
Computer Browser	Started	Manual	Not needed if not networked
Cryptographic Services	Started	Automatic	
DCOM Server Process Launcher	Started	Automatic	
Desktop Window Manager Session Manager	Started	Automatic	
DHCP Client	Started	Automatic	
Diagnostic Policy Service	Started	Automatic	enables problem detection, troubleshooting and resolution
Diagnostic Service Host	Started	Manual	used by Diagnostic Policy Service
Diagnostic System Host	Started	Manual	used by Diagnostic Policy Service
Distributed Link Tracking Client	Started	Automatic	Not needed at home.
DNS Client	Started	Automatic	
Function Discovery Provider Host	Started	Manual	Not needed if not networked
Function Discovery Resource Publication	Started	Automatic	Not needed if not networked
Group Policy Client	Started	Automatic	
HomeGroup Listener	Started	Manual	Will not start if you leave HomeGroup.
HomeGroup Provider	Started	Manual	Safe to disable if not using HomeGroup
IP Helper	Started	Automatic	
Microsoft .NET Framework NGEN v2.0.50727_X86	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	
Multimedia Class Scheduler	Started	Automatic	
Network Connections	Started	Manual	
Network List Service	Started	Manual	
Network Location Awareness	Started	Automatic	
Network Store Interface Service	Started	Automatic	
Offline Files	Started	Automatic	Safe to disable if not needed.
Peer Name Resolution Protocol	Started	Manual	Not needed if not networked
Peer Networking Grouping	Started	Manual	Not needed if not networked
Peer Networking Identity Manager	Started	Manual	Not needed if not networked
Plug and Play	Started	Automatic	
Portable Device Enumerator Service	Started	Manual	
Power	Started	Automatic	
Print Spooler	Started	Automatic	This involves more than printing. Some apps use this for file/document conversion too.
Remote Procedure Call (RPC)	Started	Automatic	

RPC Endpoint Mapper	Started	Automatic	
Security Accounts Manager	Started	Automatic	
Security Center	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	
Server	Started	Automatic	If not sharing files safe to disable. However The Computer Browser Service and HomeGroup Listener service depend on this.
Shell Hardware Detection	Started	Automatic	
Software Protection	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	
SSDP Discovery	Started	Manual	Not needed if not networked
Superfetch	Started	Automatic	
System Event Notification Service	Started	Automatic	
Task Scheduler	Started	Automatic	
TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper	Started	Automatic	Needed for older Windows and Linux connectivity. Safe to disable if not connecting to these machines.
Themes	Started	Automatic	
UPnP Device Host	Started	Manual	Not needed if not networked
User Profile Service	Started	Automatic	
Windows Audio	Started	Automatic	
Windows Audio Endpoint Builder	Started	Automatic	
Windows Defender	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	Disable this through Control Panel if not needed. If you install Microsoft Security Essentials it sets this to manual.
Windows Driver Foundation - User-mode Driver Framework	Started	Automatic	
Windows Event Log	Started	Automatic	
Windows Firewall	Started	Automatic	
Windows Management Instrumentation	Started	Automatic	
Windows Media Player Network Sharing Service	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	Safe to disable if not sharing or using advanced sharing.
Windows Modules Installer	Started	Manual	
Windows Search	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	Uninstallable.
Windows Update	Started	Automatic (Delayed Start)	
WinHTTP Web Proxy Auto-Discovery Service	Started	Manual	
Workstation	Started	Automatic	

Or adjust for any additional unneeded services as the following steps:

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Head to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **System and Security**
4. Select **Administrative Tools**
5. Select **Services**
6. Select a service to adjust by double-clicking
7. In the **General tab**, **Startup type** section, select Automatic (Delayed Start), Automatic, Manual or Disabled.

If you like, you can also do: **Start** > **All Programs** > **Accessories** > **Run** > type in *services.msc* > Select **OK**.

After configuring all services that you desire to change, reboot to see the effects of your tweaking.

Note: Do *not* use *msconfig* to stop services. It basically is "disabling" a service. Use the above procedure and set to "manual" instead for testing purposes.

Tweaks for Power Options

Hibernate and Hybrid Sleep

Hibernate and Hybrid Sleep by default create a file called *hiberfil.sys* that is 75% of your RAM in size. This can be a fragmentation issue for your hard drive (also, Windows 7 cannot defrag this file though some third-party defraggers can).

It should also be noted that for a variety of reason hibernate / hybrid sleep has been known to cause many a folk no end of issues (Google search it).

In the end Windows 7 boots fast and the few seconds of Hibernate / Hybrid Sleep does not save you outweighs the aforementioned issues for desktops. It is better performance wise to just shut the computer off when you'll be away from it.

1) To Disable Hibernate / Hybrid Sleep Permanently

Press the Windows + R keys > type *cmd* > type *powercfg.exe* /hibernate off

Note - this removes hibernate / hybrid sleep options from the Power Plan settings. It also deletes hiberfil.sys

Warning - This is a global setting that disables hibernate for ALL power plans. It should not be used on a laptop.)

2) To Re-enable Hibernate

Press the Windows + R keys > type cmd > type powercfg.exe /hibernate on
Source: How to disable and re-enable hibernation on a computer that is running Windows

3) To just disable Hybrid Sleep

Open Control panel Power Options (see below) > select your current plan > choose Change plan settings > go to Sleep > Hibernate after > under setting choose or type Never.

4) To Configure Power Options

Press the Windows + R keys > type *powercfg.cpl* (or go to Control Panel/Power Options).

To disable all power options:
1 - Disable hibernate (shown above)
2 - Choose the High performance plan > Change plan settings > turn all options to OFF or Never.
(Note - You may have to manually type in Never)

Switching Between Power Plans

Quickly switching between power plans is as easy as pressing the Windows + X keys.
This brings up the under publicized and under appreciated Windows Mobility Center.
Click the arrow in the Battery Status section to switch plans.

Add a Windows Mobility Center shortcut to your desktop. There are 2 ways to do this.

1. While in Control Panel drag the Windows Mobility Center icon to the desktop.
Or,
2. Right-click on the desktop and choose New > Shortcut > browse to (or type) C:\Windows\System32\mblctr.exe and click Next > optionally type a different name for the shortcut > click Finish.

Tweaks for Windows Backup and Restore

System Backup and Restore

You can get to your system image without a System Restore Disk by using the Windows 7 install disk but it takes longer to get there. Boot from the install CD > choose Repair > choose System Recovery Options > System Image Recovery.

"System Restore affects Windows system files, programs, and registry settings...System Restore does not affect personal files, such as e-mail, documents, or photos, so it cannot help you restore a deleted file...Restore points are created automatically every week, and just before significant

system events, such as the installation of a program or device driver. You can also create a restore point manually from the Help file.

It is recommended that most users use Windows 7's built-in backup options as well as third party backup options (see below).

Links:

Microsoft - Back up your files (with how-to video)
Windows Backup and Restore Center
Back up and restore: frequently asked questions
What backup settings should I use to maximize my disk space?
Back up the registry

To open Backup and Restore: Type backup and restore in the Start Menu search box (Control Panel (view large icons) > Backup and Restore).

Configure or Disable System Restore

If you use other backup methods and would like to configure or disable the system restore, here below are steps:

Be sure you have another backup / restore option BEFORE you do this. Disabling System Restore means that you will not be able to use Shadow Copies or Driver Rollback.

1. To open System Restore > press the Windows + R keys > type *rstrui.exe*.
or
Go to Start > All Programs > Accessories > System Tools > System Restore
2. To Configure Which Drives To Protect With System Restore or Disable System Restore
3. Press the Windows + Pause Break keys > in the left pane click on Advanced system settings.
In the resulting window, switch to the System Protection pane.
4. Select the drive you want to protect or remove protection from > click the Configure button > pick either "Restore..." or "Turn off..."
5. If removing drives - A pop-up will happen asking "Are you sure...", click Turn System Restore Off, then click Apply.

Tweaks for Cool Tools on Win 7

Windows 7's Own Performance And Information Tools
Located at: Control Panel > All Control Panel Items > Performance Information and Tools > Advanced Tools

Windows Search

The Windows Search Service (or the not installed by default Indexing Service), by default, the service searches the start menu and the user account directory (C: /Users/<account>/) to assist in finding information faster.

Add/Remove Programs

Uninstall Windows 7 features that are unused. You can always put them back on later:

With the default Category Control Panel:

1. Go to **Start**
2. Select **Control Panel**
3. Select **Programs**
4. Select **Programs and Features**
5. Select **Turn Windows features on or off** (on the left side)
6. Select the **Continue** button (if UAC is active)
7. Check or Uncheck needed/unneeded Windows features (such as **Tablet PC Components** or **Windows Gadget Platform**)
8. Select the **Ok** button

Calculate Your Mortgage and Other Math's Tricks

Wordpad and Paint aren't the only upgraded programs in Windows 7. The reliable Calculator applet has been beefed up to do more than just basic arithmetic. In Vista, the Calculator had Standard and Scientific modes. Now, you can toggle between Standard, Scientific, Programmer, and even Statistics modes.
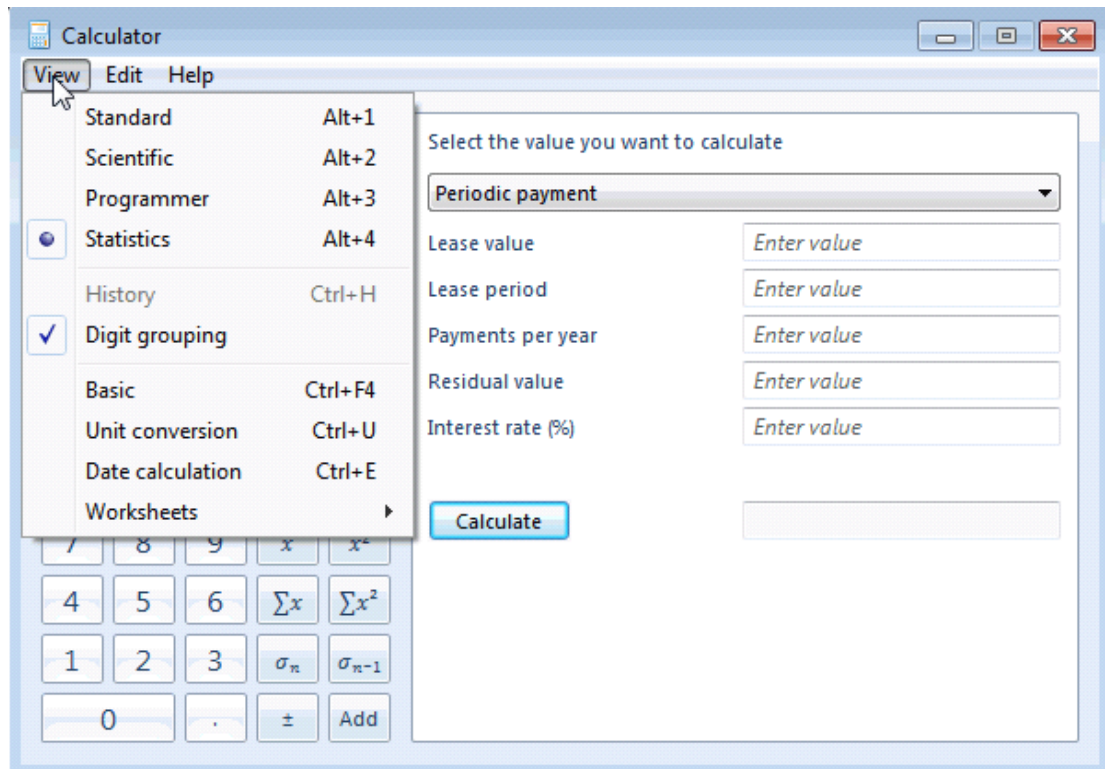
In addition, the Options menu lets you pull out many new automated conversation tools, such has Unit Conversion (i.e. Angles, Temperature, Velocity, or Volume) and Date Calculation (calculate the difference between two dates). More templates give you the ability to crunch Gas Mileage, Lease, and even Mortgage estimates based on any variables you input.
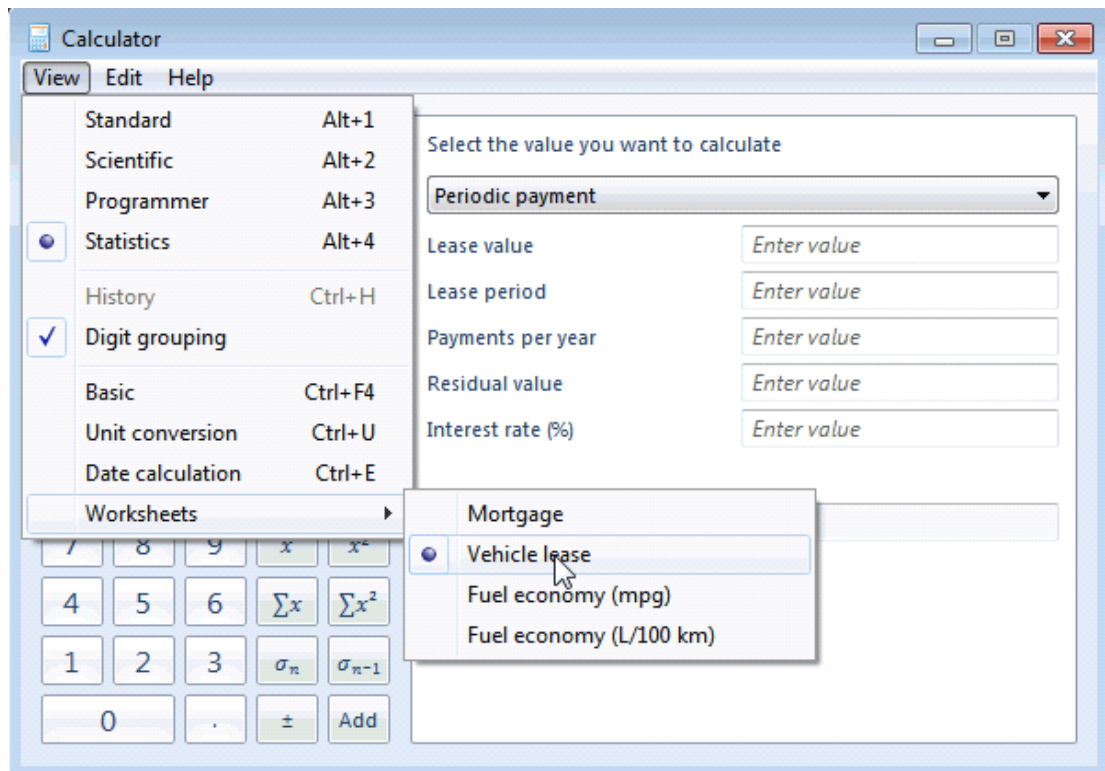
Format the Text in Sticky Notes

Another new feature in Windows 7 is the built-in Sticky Notes application. You'll find it on the Start menu. You've probably already discovered that you can change the color of notes by right-clicking and selecting a new color. You may also have figured out that you can use the Ctrl + B and Ctrl + I shortcuts to format the text as bold or italic. But did you know that you can make bulleted and numbered lists in your sticky notes, and increase or decrease the text size? Here are some handy keyboard shortcuts that work within sticky notes:

- Ctrl + Shift + L (once): Bulleted list
- Ctrl + Shift + L (twice): Numbered list
- Ctrl + Shift + >: Increase text size
- Ctrl + Shift + <: Decrease text size
- Ctrl + U: Underline
- Ctrl + T: Strikethrough

You can format the text within Windows 7's sticky notes with keyboard shortcuts. If you've got a Tablet PC or a touchscreen, Windows 7 Sticky Notes support pen and touch input, too — you can even switch between different input methods within the space of a single note. Sticky Notes is available only in the Home Premium, Professional, and Ultimate editions of Windows 7.
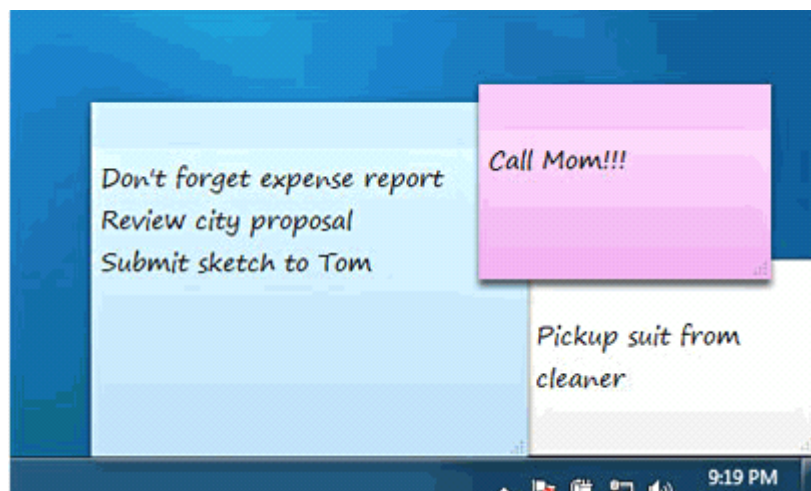
Usage of Sticky Notes on Win 7

Fix MP3 Bug

There's a reason this Windows 7 release is a Beta. The versions of Windows Media Center and Windows Media Player that shipped with the OS have a nasty bug that may damage your MP3 files. By default, Windows Media Player 12 enables a feature that auto fills-in missing metadata on your imported music files, which includes large album art. But filling in this metadata on files that already have large headers will permanently cut away a few seconds of audio from the beginning of the track. Microsoft offers a Hotfix on this page:
http://support.microsoft.com/kb/961367   in addition to a workaround if you don't want to install

the fix:

Workarounds for the MP3 file corruption issue
If you do not apply this update, the most effective workaround is to set the properties of all MP3 files to read-only on local hard disks, removable drives, and network shares that can be accessed by Windows 7 Beta computers. To do this, follow these steps:
1. In Windows Explorer, select and right-click your MP3 files, and then click Properties.
2. On the General tab, click to select the Read-only check box.
3. We recommend that you back up all the MP3 files before you use Windows Media Player or Windows Media Center.

A simpler but less complete workaround is to disable metadata automatic updates in Windows Media Player by setting the Windows Media Player options. To do this, follow these steps:
1. On the Tools menu, click Options.
2. On the Library tab, click to clear the Retrieve additional information from the Internet check box and the Maintain my star ratings as global ratings in files check box.
3. Click OK.

A possible solution to the MP3 files corruption issue

If some of your MP3 files have already been affected, you might be able to restore the corrupted MP3 files to their pre-edit status. To do this, follow these steps:
1. In Windows Explorer, right-click a corrupted MP3 file, and then click Properties.
2. On the Previous Version tab, select an earlier version in the File Versions list, and then click Restore. If multiple edits were performed, you may have to revert to the oldest version that is available.

Get Back Some Vista Features that Missing in Win7

Bring Quick Launch Back

The Quick Launch is superfluous with the presence of the updated Taskbar, but you can still bring it back with the following steps:

• Right-click the Taskbar, hover over Toolbars, and select New Toolbar.
• In the Folder selection field at the bottom, enter the following string:
%userprofile%\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Quick Launch
• Turn off the "lock the Taskbar" setting, and right-click on the divider. Disable "Show Text" and "Show Title" and set the view option to "Small Icons".
• Drag the divider to rearrange the toolbar order to put Quick Launch where you want it, and then right-click the Taskbar to lock it again.

Bring Back the Vista Taskbar Look and Behavior

It's easy to change the taskbar so it will be similar to the old look:

1. Right-click the Start button and select Properties.
2. Click the Taskbar tab.
3. Select the Use Small Icons check box and click Apply.

If you don't like the way Windows 7 combines icons for all instances of an application, you can change that, too. On the same tab, click the down arrow on the Taskbar Buttons box and select Combine When Taskbar Is Full.

This dialog box also allows you to select the taskbar location on the screen (bottom, top, left, or right), customize which icons appear in the notification area (system tray), and decide whether to temporarily minimize all open windows when you place your mouse on the far end (or bottom) of the taskbar (Desktop Preview).

Banish Programs to the System Tray

All active programs show up as icons on the Taskbar, whether you want them to or not. While this is useful for web browsing or word processing, your taskbar can get cluttered up with icons you would normally expect to be hidden away, like for Steam or a chat client. You can keep active instances of these programs hidden away in the System Tray/Notification Area by right-clicking their shortcuts, navigating to the Compatibility tab, and selecting "Windows Vista" under the Compatibility Mode drop-down menu. This only works for programs that would previously hide away from the Taskbar in Vista.

A Welcome Gesture

Windows 7 natively supports touchscreen devices and has incorporated a gesture-based system to navigate the desktop with a stylus. Lucky for you, one of these gestures also works with a mouse. Instead of right-clicking a Taskbar icon to access its Jump List (the new program-specific menu that replaces the right-click context menu), you can hold left-click and drag upwards to smoothly call it up. Clicking and dragging down in the Internet Explorer address bar will also unveil your browser history and related favorites bookmarks. Some of the staff here found this especially useful when running Windows 7 on their Macbook Pros.

Tweaks for Internet & Network

This tweak may be able to increase your page loads and possibly your download speed.

Access Network Connection Properties

To get there:
Right-click on the Network icon in your system tray and choose Open Network and Sharing

Center > click on Change adapter settings > choose the Local Area Connection and/or Wireless Network Connection, right-click and choose Properties.

To get there faster press the Windows + R keys and type *ncpa.cpl* >choose the Local Area Connection and/or Wireless Network Connection, right-click and choose Properties.

*Tip - Yes, you can configure each connection differently!
*Tip - While your here, if you aren't going to use one of the connections, disable it :(right-click > Disable).

Default
Networked, Sharing (no network map)
If you want the Network Map then leave the Link-Layer entries checked.
Not Networked, For Advanced Users Only

Tweaks for Internet Explorer 8 on Win7

Enable or Disable Internet Explorer 8 Individual Tabbed Browsing Taskbar Preview Windows

This will show you how to enable or disable the individual taskbar preview windows in Internet Explorer 8 when using tabbed browsing.

If enabled, each tab used will have its own individual preview window when you hover over the IE icon on the taskbar. If disabled, only one preview window will show on the taskbar when you hover over the IE icon, no matter how many tabs you are using.

To Enable:

1. Go to Tools in the Menu Bar in IE8 and select Internet Options.
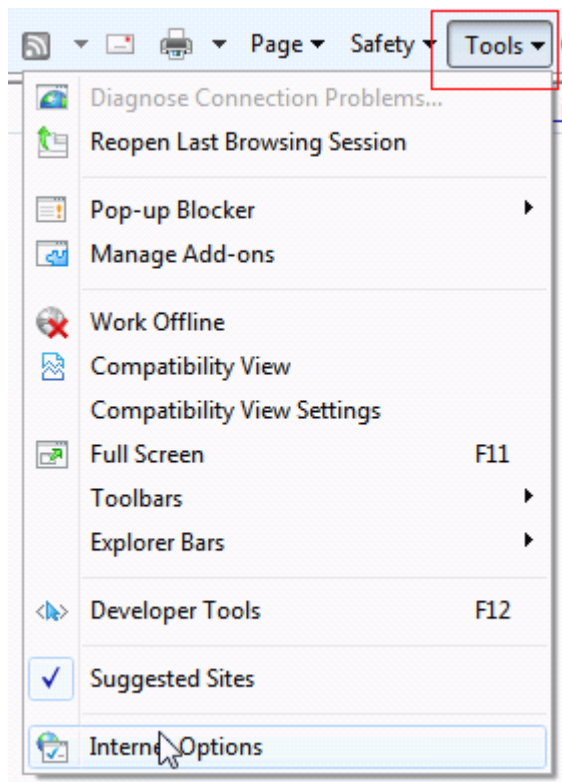
2. Under the General tab, go to Tabs - Settings.
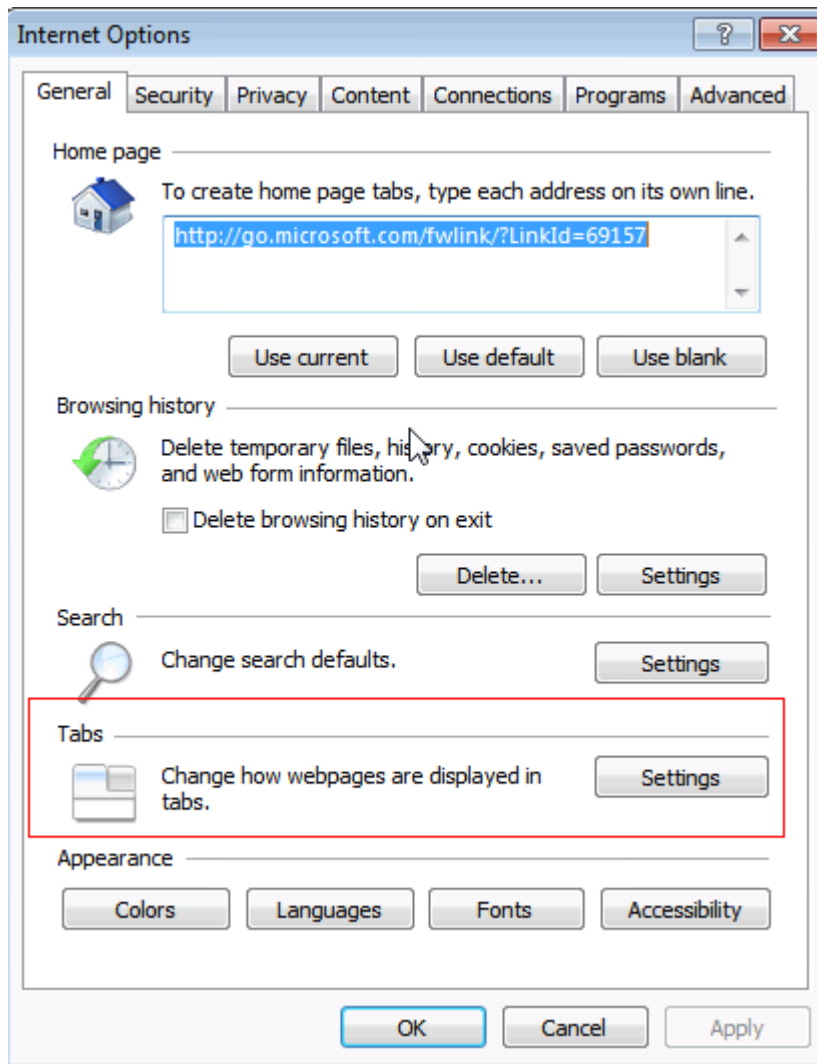
3. Tick the option- Show Previews for Individual Tabs in the Taskbar. Click OK.

To Disable:

Repeat Steps 1-3 above and then untick this option.
Please be aware that all the settings will take affect after a restart of IE.
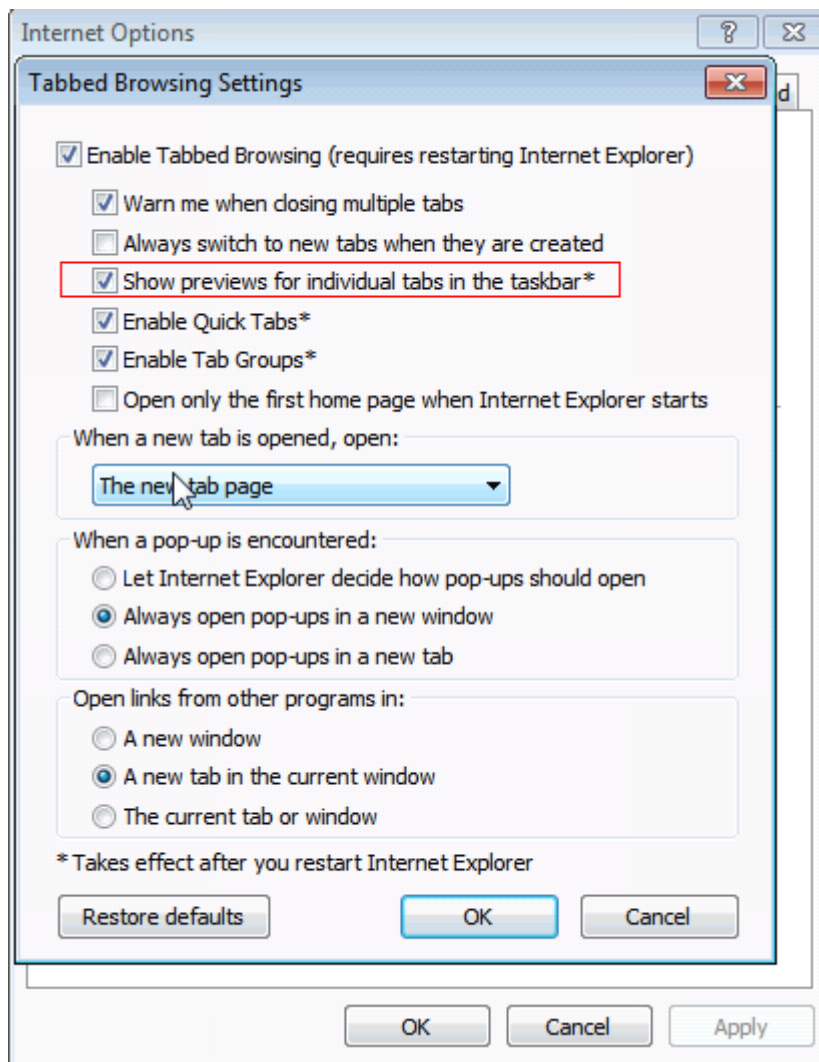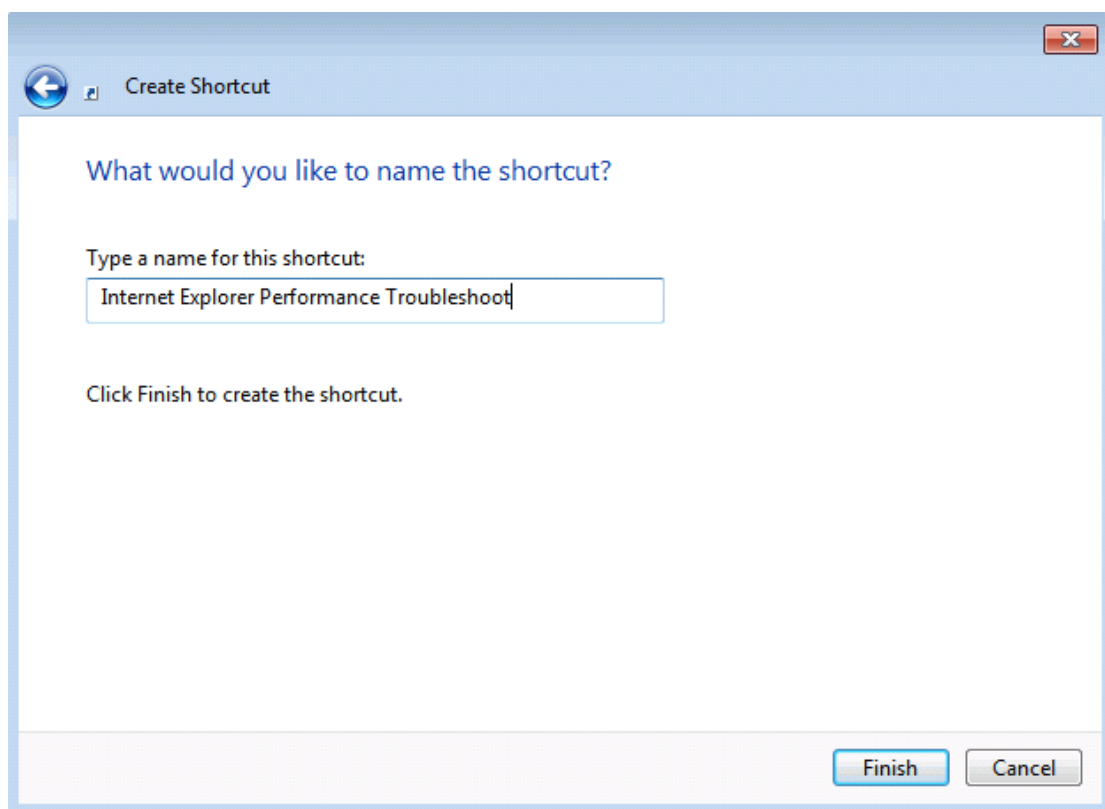
Create a Internet Explorer Performance Troubleshoot Shortcut in Windows 7

1. Right click on an empty area on desktop, and click on New and Shortcut.
2. Type the location below into the location area, and click on the Next button. (See screenshot below)

%systemroot%\system32\msdt.exe -id IEBrowseWebDiagnostic
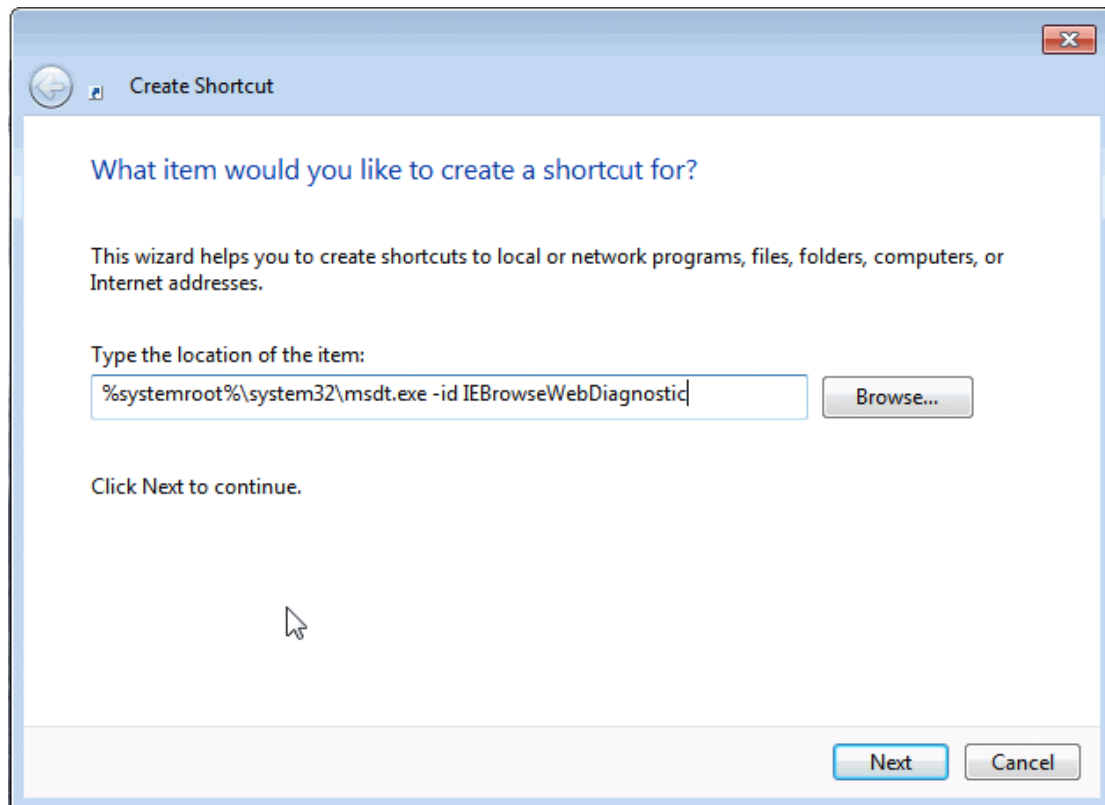
3. Type *Internet Explorer Performance Troubleshoot* for the name, or any name you would like and click on the Finish button. (See screenshot below)

4. Right click on the new Internet Explorer Performance Troubleshoot shortcut on the Desktop and click on Properties.

5. Click on the Shortcut tab, then click on the Change Icon button. (See screenshot below)
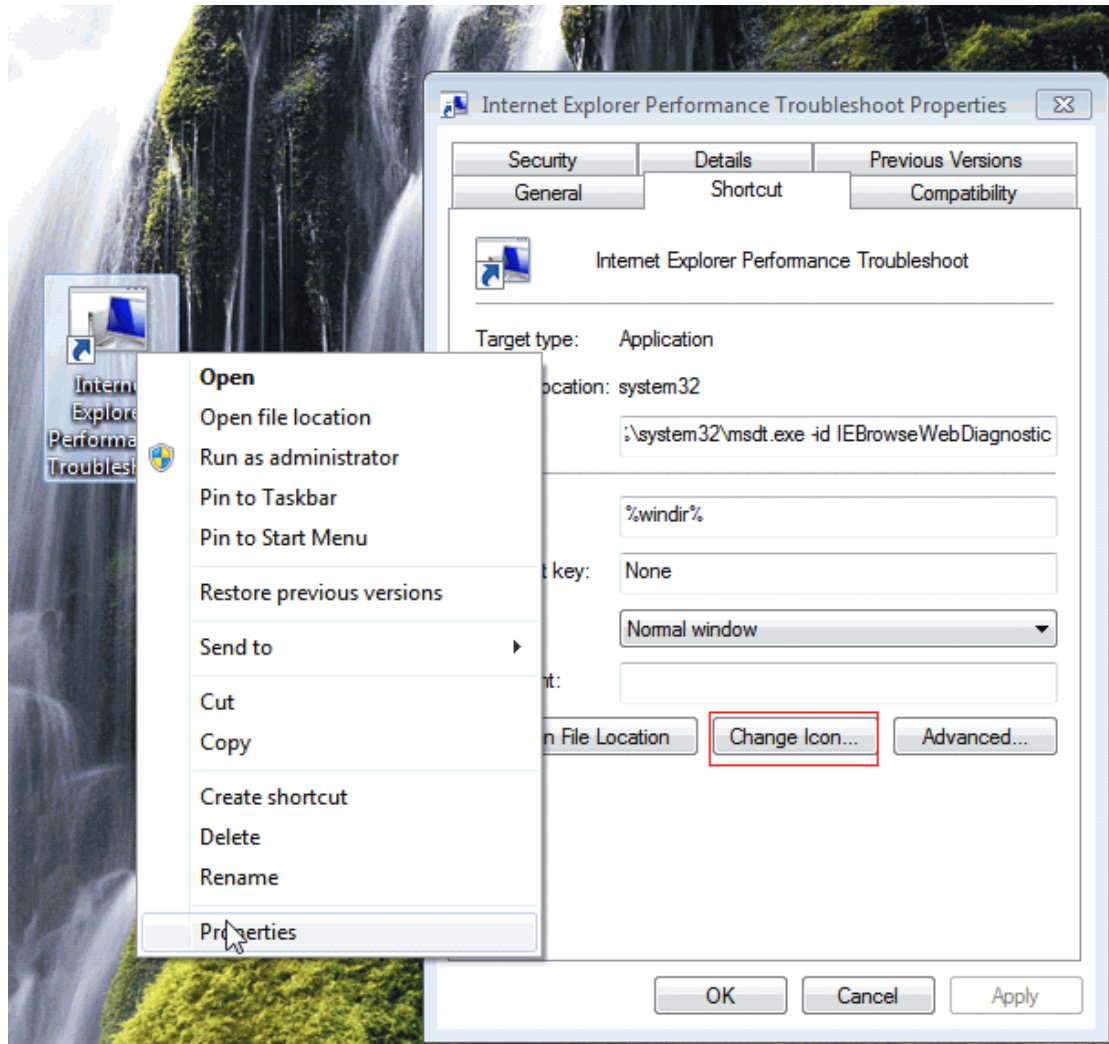
6. In the line under "Look for icons in this file". You can use any icon that you would like.

7. Click on OK.

8. Move the shortcut to where you like for easy use.

Display All Websites in Compatibility View in Windows 7 Internet Explorer

1. Open Internet Explorer.

2. Click on the Tools Command Bar button.

3. Click on Compatibility View Settings. (See screenshots above)
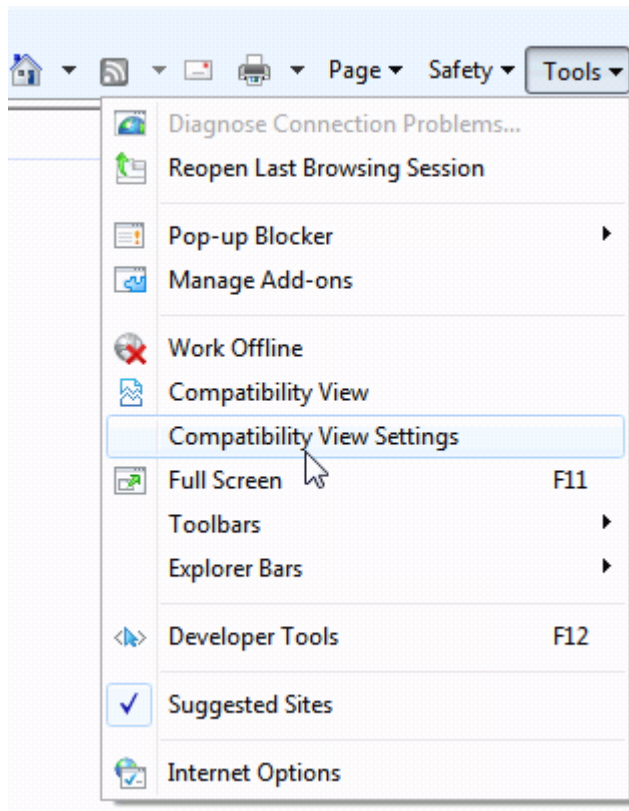
4. If you would like to Display All Websites in Compatibility View, please check the option of Check the Display all websites in Compatibility View box. When it is checked, other options will be grayed out.

If you would like to not Display All Websites in Compatibility View, then please uncheck this option.
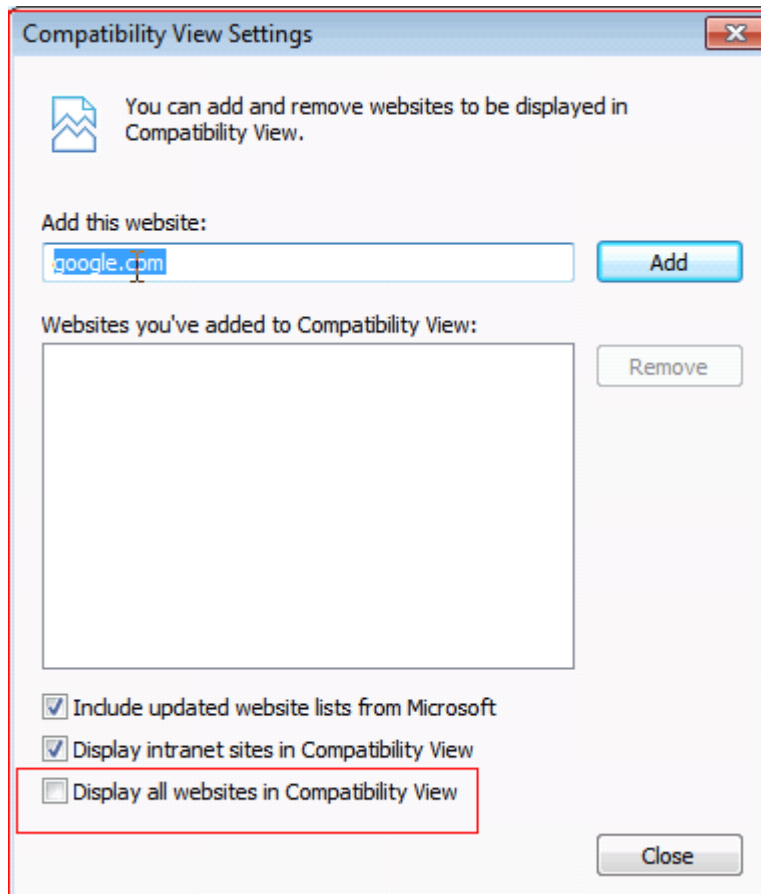
5. Click on the Close button.
6. Close Internet Explorer when done.

**Reset Internet Explorer in Windows 7**

This will show you how to reset Internet Explorer settings to return it back to the default state it was in when it was first installed on your computer with Windows 7. This is useful for troubleshooting problems that might be caused by settings that were changed after installation.

When you delete personal settings, some web pages that rely on previously stored cookies, from data, passwords, or previously installed browser add-ons might not work correctly.

Resetting Internet Explorer's settings is not reversible. After a reset, all previous settings are lost and cannot be recovered.

Here are the steps:

1. Open Internet Explorer. Click on Tools and Internet Options.
2. Click on the Advanced tab, and then the Reset button. (See screenshot below)
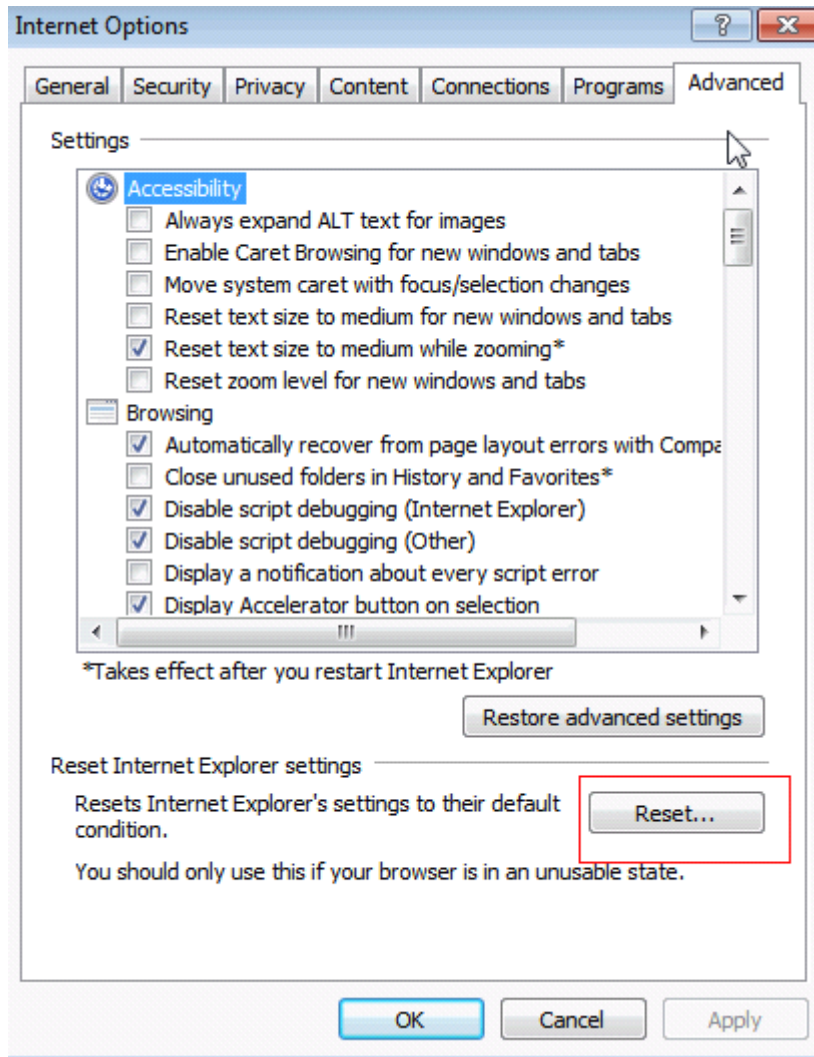
3. If you also wanted to delete your personal settings, then check the box as well, otherwise leave the box unchecked. (See screenshot below)

NOTE: See the table at the top of the tutorial for what will be affected by this. You should check this for a complete reset though.
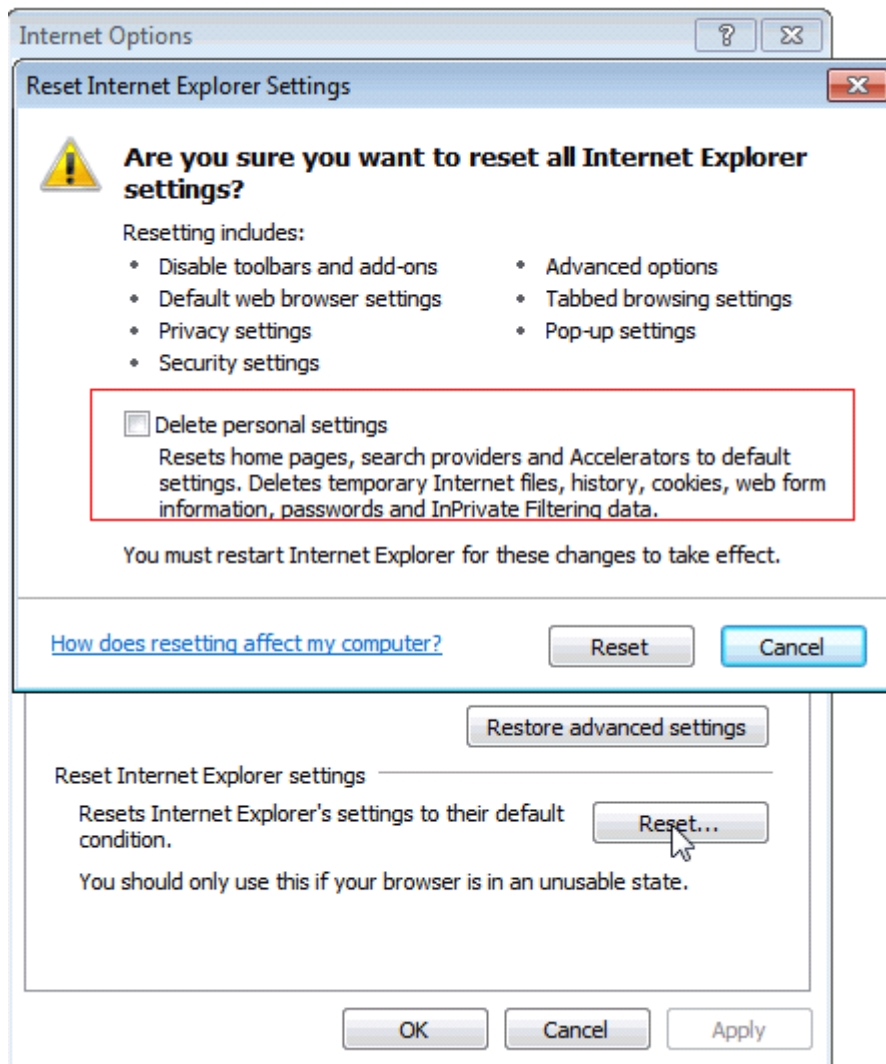
4. Click on the Reset button. And then click on the Close button.

5. Click on OK in the pop-up frame.

6. The reset will take effect the next time you open Internet Explorer.

Set a Default Accelerator in Windows 7 Internet Explorer

This will show you how to Set or Remove an Accelerator as the default provider for that Accelerator category in Windows 7 Internet Explorer.

You can use Accelerators to search text that you select, map, e-mail, translate, or share content from any web page you're currently viewing with just one click. Learn more.

When you first open Internet Explorer, you can accept a selection of default Accelerators included with Internet Explorer. You can also add or remove an Accelerator of your choice for the default Accelerator.

1. Open Internet Explorer.

A) Click on the Page Command Bar icon button and click on All Accelerators and Manage Accelerators. (See screenshot below)
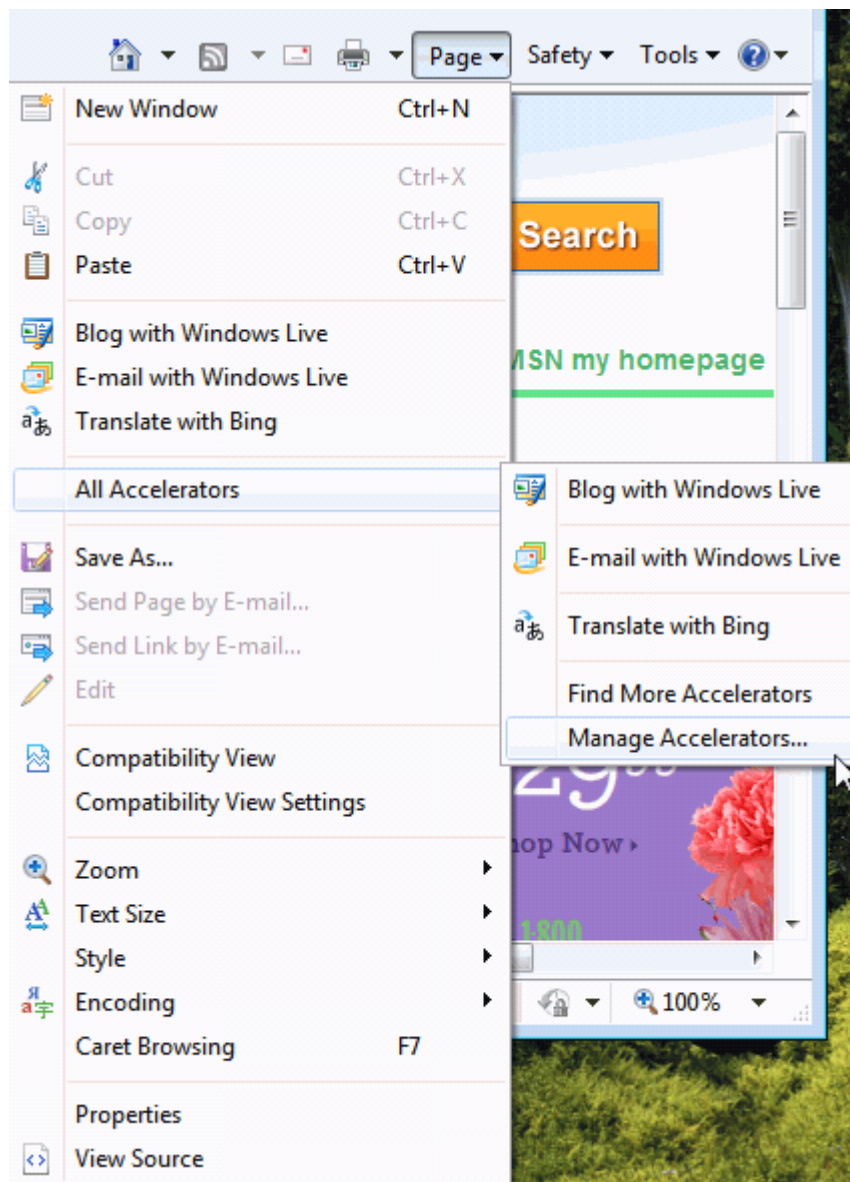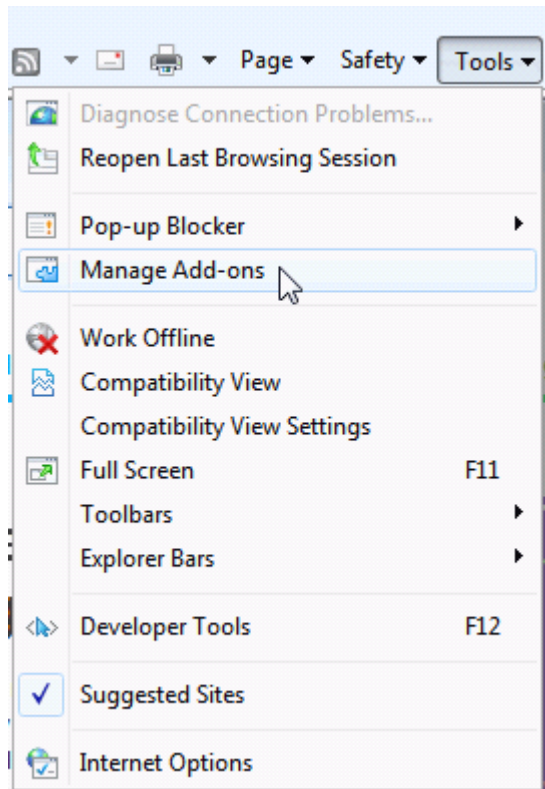

B) Go to step 3 or 4.

2. Open Internet Explorer.
A) Click on the Tools Command Bar icon button and click on Manage Add-ons. (See screenshot below)
B) Under Add-on Types (left pane), click on Accelerators.
C) Go to step 3 or 4.

3. To Set an Accelerator as Default

A) Select an enabled Accelerator add-on that you want to make as the default for that category of Accelerator and click on the Set as default button.

NOTE: If you already have an Accelerator set as default in that category, then it will automatically be removed as the default Accelerator when you set another Accelerator as the default in that same category.

B) Click on the Close button.

4. To Remove an Accelerator as Default

A) Select a currently default Accelerator add-on in an Accelerator category that you want to remove as the default Accelerator and click on the Remove as default button.

NOTE: When you remove an Accelerator as default from a category, it will not have a default Accelerator until you set another Accelerator as default for that category.

B) Click on the Close button.

## Tweaks for Firefox on Win7

Disable IPV6

While the IPV6 is enabled and present on Windows 7 computer, it is hardly used by any application or device as of now. So, you may disable IPv6 on the computer as this may result in better network performance and save CPU memory.

Open Firefox > in the address bar type *about:config* > scroll down to the line:
network.dns.disableIPv6, double-click it to change its value to true.
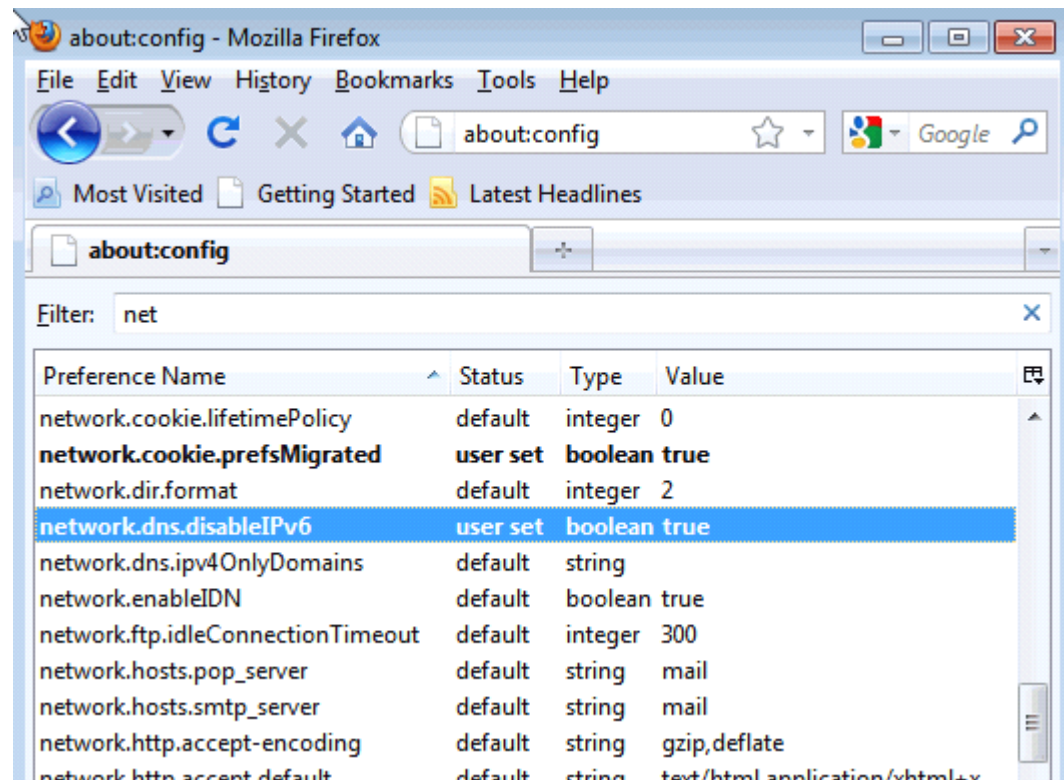
Disable Automatic Image Resizing

Open Firefox > in the address bar type *about:config* > scroll down to the line:
browser.enable_automatic_image_resizing, double-click it to change its value to false.
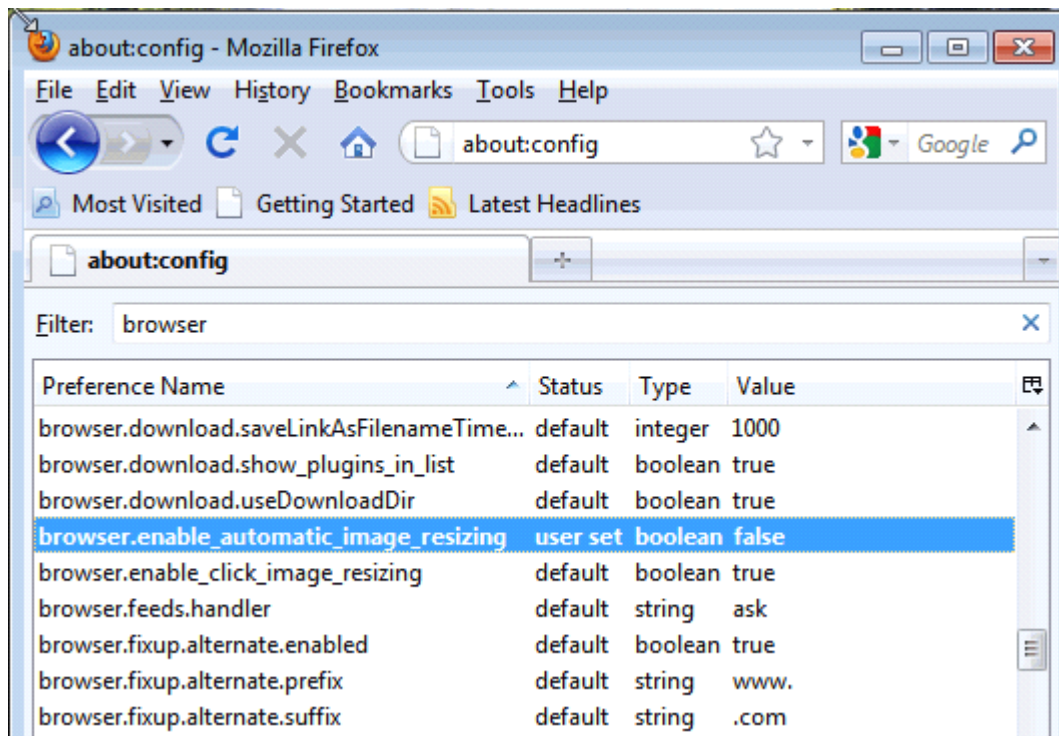
Remove the Search Panel

Open Firefox > go to View > Toolbars > Customize. Click (and hold) in the search box and drag it into the Customize Toolbar box.

Reduce Firefox Memory Usage in Windows 7

When you use the computer, probably running many softwares, each of them needs ram memory. RAM is very important, because the faster the frequency of the RAM the faster the software runs. In this tutorial we will move Firefox to your hard drive instead of memory when you minimize it. When you do that, Firefox will take up much less ram memory.
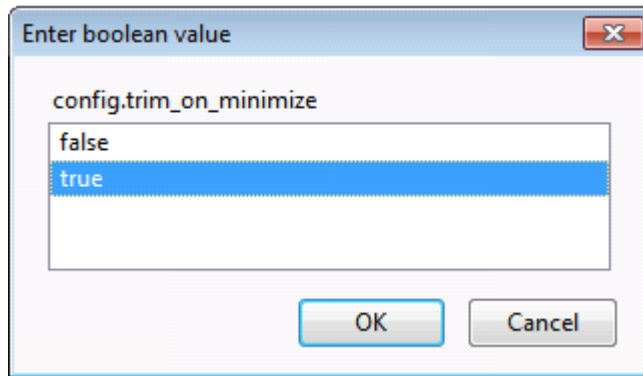
1. Open a new tab in Firefox, then type in *about:config* in the address bar and press enter.
2. After this, a warning message will appear. Click on I'll be careful, I promise!
3. In about:config settings, right click anywhere and select New and Boolean as shown below.
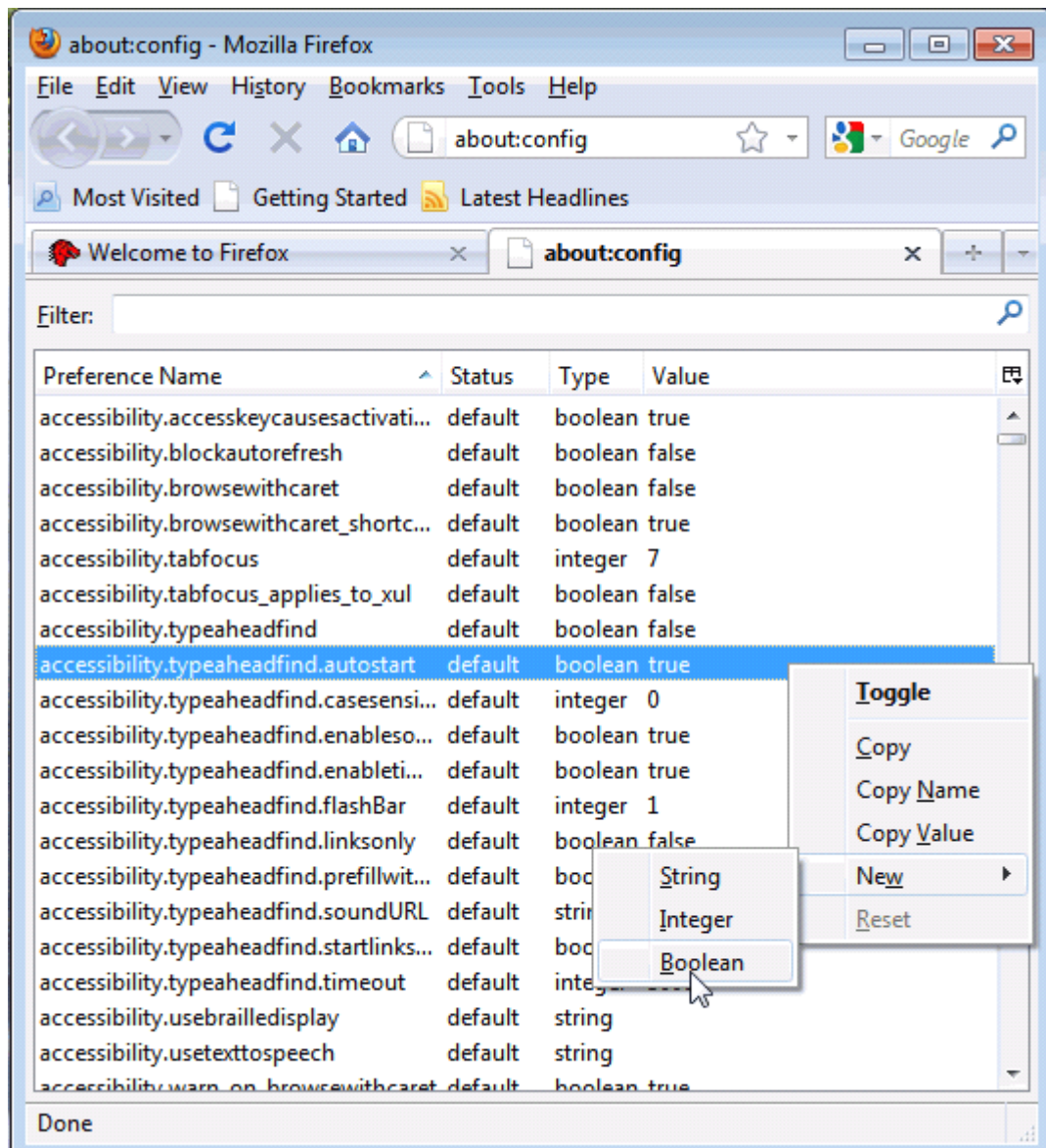
4. In New boolean value, type *config.trim_on_minimize* and click on OK.
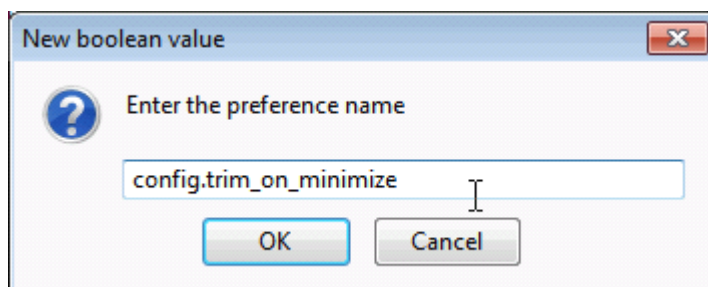
5. Select true and click on OK.

6. Close and restart Firefox for these settings to take effect.

Tweaks for Google Chrome on Win7

Enable Google Chrome Works on Win7 64bits

There are many users reporting that Google Chrome doesn't work with Microsoft latest operating system Windows 7 64 bit version. Here is solution to make Google Chrome Work on Windows 7 64 bit.

Run Google Chrome on Windows 7 64 bit Version

1. Right Click on Google Chrome Icon
2. Add –in-process-plugins after chrome.exe in Target field.
3. Click Apply and save change.
4. Now start Google Chrome and it should work on your Windows 7 64 Bit Version

A click on OK will apply the changes and disable the taskbar previews in Windows 7. Google Chrome will still show the active tab if the user moves the mouse over the taskbar icon but that is the default behavior and cannot be changed.

One of the recent additions to the Windows version of the Google Chrome web browser was support for the Windows 7 taskbar to show preview thumbnails of all open tabs of the web browser in the taskbar. That feature addition caused some controversy as it was not possible to disable it.

All that needs to be done to disable tab previews in the Windows 7 taskbar is to run Google Chrome in Windows Vista Service Pack 2 compatibility mode. The taskbar preview feature is not available in Windows Vista and will therefore stop working.

To do this right-click the Google Chrome executable and select Properties from the context menu. Now switch to the Compatibility tab and check the "Run this program in compatibility mode for" option and select Windows Vista (Service Pack 2) from the list of available options.

A click on OK will apply the changes and disable the taskbar previews in Windows 7. Google Chrome will still show the active tab if the user moves the mouse over the taskbar icon but that is the default behavior and cannot be changed.

Using Jump Lists to open Google Chrome

Jump Lists are part of the new Windows 7 taskbar. The Jump Lists basically provide access to program related options. This can be the most recent documents of Microsoft Word, the latest visited websites in Internet Explorer but also options to create a task like sending an email or opening a new web browser window.

The latest developing version of Google Chrome is now offering Jump Lists support in Windows 7. The Jump List can be opened by right-clicking the Google Chrome icon in the Windows taskbar. The Google Chrome Jump List is divided into four areas of which three are always visible and one only if the user has added at least one item to it.

The Google Browser will display the most visited websites, the recently closed websites and tasks in the Jump List. The most visited and recent websites are directly taken from the web browser's history while the task allow the user to open a new window (either normal or in incognito mode).

The fourth group only becomes available if the user pins an element in the Jump List. This is for example excellent for quickly accessing favorite websites from the Windows 7 Jump List. The latest developer build of Google Chrome can be downloaded from the dev channel page. It is interesting to see that the Google Chrome development team has added Jump List support while the Mozilla Firefox team has not shown any signs that they intend to support that feature in the near future.

Acknowledgement

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